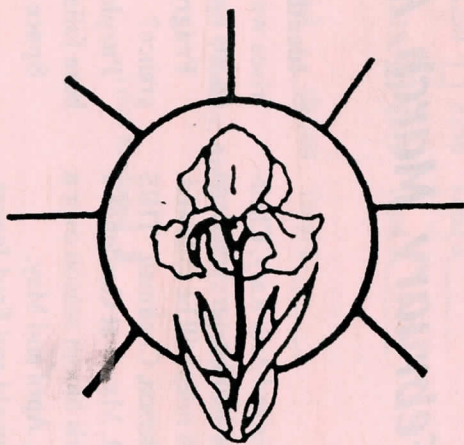


Sun Country Iris News



February 2012

SUN COUNTRY IRIS NEWS

Sun Country Iris Society – February 2012

Volume 43

“Since 1969”

Number 2

President's Message

by Gary Miller

Here we are going into February already and our irises should be coming on in a good way. Did we have a winter? I'm thankful I haven't had to deal with the hardships of snow and all, and happy we don't have to shovel sunshine. As I look out at my iris bed, I get to thinking that if they gave awards for healthiest weeds, I would win hands down.

We have a theme for our spring show and I think it's very fitting for us this year. We need to thank Barbara Andresen for coming up with it so quickly. Our theme for this year is "Arizona Centennial." I hope everyone likes it as well as I do.

Thank you to everyone that signed up for the various committees that SCIS has, a few still need to be filled and we will be passing the sign-up sheet around.

I do hope that everyone's irises are doing well. If you have any blooming, bring them to the meeting and share them with everyone.

We have several members doing the pot watchers and hopefully they are all doing well.

I've rambled on long enough, I hope to see everyone at the meeting.

Pick Up Your Culture Books!

by Deborah Nolan

It's not too late! You can still pick up your AIS full-color Basic Iris Culture book, 3rd edition (2011) at the meeting this month. It is a beautiful guide, and our gift to ourselves for Sun Country's birthday last year. (It took a while to go through the ordering process.)

It starts with explanations and pictures of many of the iris classifications. Next are color pattern terms accompanied by color pictures. Then some advice on buying iris, followed by growing tips by iris type (eg. Bearded Iris Culture, Spuria Iris Culture).

Finally pests and diseases, hybridizing, showing, and AIS awards. It is a great guide and oh, so handy! Bring it to meetings with you, as we refer to it during some of the presentations. Please see Deborah Nolan for your copy.

FEB. MEETINGS

- Feb. 7 Club Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
Valley Garden Center
1809 N. 15th Avenue, Phoenix
- Feb. 16 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
Valley Garden Center
Open to all club members

Programs for February, March, April

by Ardi Kary, Program Chairman

The spring of 2012 is going to be a very busy spring for Sun Country Iris Society members.

The programs for February, March and April will focus on our Exhibits, Spring Show and Potted Iris Sales as well as make preparations for our Fall Rhizome Sales. These are the main activities and events of our club. They go hand-in-hand. We “show” our irises and we “sell” our irises.

February meeting - we will be preparing for the show and both exhibitions. Clemence will tell us a little about Median Irises.

March meeting – Guest Speaker, Eileen Fuimara, on

Artistic Arrangements. We’ll accept Artistic Arrangement entries at the Show and Exhibits.

April meeting – we will prepare for the Spring Iris Show.

Early Iris Exhibit – Francelle Edwards, Chairman. March 24 at Baker Nursery. We need members to sign

(Con’t. on page 9)

SCIS Calendar

Events and Activities

- Feb. 7 Spring Show & Exhibit Preparation
- March 6 Guest Speaker - Eileen Fuimara
Artistic Arrangements
- March 24 Early Iris Exhibit
Baker Nursery
- April 3 Spring Show Preparation
- April 14 Spring Iris Show
Christown Spectrum Mall
- May 1 Photo Contest
- May 5 Late Iris Exhibit – NEW DATE
Gardener’s World
- June 5 How To Grow An Iris
(members bring friends)
- July 3 Photo Show

Feb. Refreshments

If you are unable to attend a meeting when you are scheduled to bring refreshments, please let Barb Andresen know at 602-334-3893 or bjkandresen@netscape.net.

Thanks to these members who volunteered to furnish refreshments at our February meeting:

- Drinks & Ice – Kyria Peavy
- Healthy Snack – Lynn Nau
- Dessert – Barbara Vacanti
- Your Choice – Valerie Scioscia



February Birthdays

- Vi ZepedaFebruary 2
- Randy PoolerFebruary 6
- Marvin Edwards February 15
- Christine WardFebruary 16
- LaDean MelbyFebruary 24
- Sally Ragusa.....February 25
- Ed ZwarFebruary 25
- Bob Buckwald February 28

AIS Calendar

- April 16-21 AIS National Convention
Ontario, CA

February Guidelines For Growing Irises in the Sun Country Area

by Ardi Kary

Winter arrived on the 21st of December. The days are getting longer and our irises are getting ready for the spring bloom season. It's time to give our iris plants what they need so they can send up the bloom stalks we look forward to. We want them to do their very best. We have only about eight weeks until the Early Iris Exhibit at Baker Nursery. The Spring Show is only about 11 weeks away and the Late Iris Exhibit is 13 weeks from now. Look at your iris plants and realize they have a lot of work to do before the Exhibit and Show. Make a plan to see that they receive the care they need during these next weeks. The horticulture skills you use now will make a difference with your irises in the garden and on the show bench.

GENERAL – Clean the iris beds. The irises will perform better and you will enjoy your iris beds when they are clean and neat. Remove all the dead leaves and debris.

WATERING – Give your iris plants deep water for proper growth and development of bloom stalks. Do not over water. Irises like to dry out a little between watering. Our days and nights will be getting warmer and the irises are growing at a very rapid rate. Check the soil to see if

watering is needed.

FERTILIZING – Our plants are beginning their spring growth. Use a good well-balanced fertilizer such as 15-15-15 or use a fertilizer high in phosphate (0-45-0) for good root and bloom development. Do not use a fertilizer high in nitrogen. Follow the directions on the package for amount to use and how often to apply.

MARKING AND MAPPING - Match up the plant markers with your map to verify that each iris plant is correctly identified. Then when the irises are blooming, check again to see if what you planted is indeed what you thought you were planting. Use color iris catalogs or the AIS Registrations and Introductions or the AIS online encyclopedia to help identify your irises correctly.

WINNERS – Check your garden to see which bloom stalks will be ready for the Early Iris Exhibit on March 24, the Spring Iris Show on April 14 and the Late Iris Exhibit on April 28. Make sure they are identified correctly. Avoid overhead spray watering; water could leave spots on petals. Remove all bugs before entering in the Exhibits and Show. Give your irises the attention they need at this time of year and they will reward you with beautiful blooms.



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FEBRUARY IRIS CARE

by Gary and Sharon Petterson

SHARPEN PRUNERS: We will bring sharpeners to the meeting for sale.

Gary will demonstrate sharpening to save your hands when you have sharp pruners. Sharp pruners make the springtime cleanup jobs far easier and more effective.

GOPHER CONTROL: Many have asked about gopher control.

We will bring traps to sell. Gary uses two traps and sets them at both ends of the tunnel, then baits them with peanut butter that seems to attract them. Here are a few tips to keep the gophers from smelling the traps: Handle the traps only with gloves and clean traps by pouring boiling water over them. If you use Merit or the Mallet the less expensive look-alike on your iris, it goes to the rhizomes and will kill the gophers if they eat the rhizomes. Gardener's World has two products that contain Merit. One is Bayer Grub Control and Mallet.

We have not had any gophers in the last year. The neighbor with so many gophers got a very expensive gopher blaster that has cleaned his out.

WEEDS: Pre-emergent control: With the recent rains we will have weeds galore. We recommend XL2G, or Amaze for homeowners and iris growers because it is the easiest to use. It is granular with an herbicide impregnated on it. Sprinkle around the plants and water in to activate. It forms a chemical seal that usually lasts 4-6 months if you do not disturb the seal. If you want to control grasses only, use Treflan or Surflan that takes care of grasses and some broadleaf weeds.

EXISTING WEEDS: If you have weeds now, you can pull by hand, especially if your ground is moist. Those that have deep roots like mallow can pull out well. Or use a hoe but it doesn't always get the deep roots. You can use a chemical method to spot spray with Roundup or other products that have glyphosate to get down to the root of the weeds.

Gardener's World carries ready-to-use Roundup as well as Remuda or Greenlight Com-Pleet that need to be mixed to spray.

Email sharon@gardenpro.net or call 602-769-7020 if you would like us to bring product to the meeting so we have what all of you want. Remember your pruners to sharpen. If you are not receiving our garden tips newsletter that is private (never get on a junk mail list) email to Sharon (Sharon@gardenpro.net) or visit our website www.gardenpro.net to sign up and learn more about gardening, free classes on many garden topics and our new Farmers Market every Saturday 9-2 at Gardeners World.

We Need Your Iris Photos!

by Vi Zepeda

SCIS is in the process of creating binders for the public sales tables. We would like to feature photos of iris gardens in Arizona. These may be photos you have previously entered in the SCIS photo contests or just photos you have taken in your gardens for your own pleasure.

We want to show the public the variety of irises growing in our region and how easily they can be incorporated into existing gardens. Please bring your photos to the next meeting or send them to vzepeda@cox.net.

We would like to have these binders ready for our spring events and will continue to add photos as they become available. The more variety we have the better, so feel free to submit photos that include friends/family/pets/other foliage. The only requirement is that it feature irises growing in Arizona.

THINKING ABOUT COMPETING IN THE SPRING IRIS SHOW?

by Vi Zepeda

If not, please do so! Whether you are a seasoned irisarian or a newcomer, we encourage you to start thinking about the upcoming events.

To help you prepare we will be featuring hints/reminders/tools in the next three newsletters. There will be valuable information provided at the upcoming monthly meetings. In addition, we will provide a list of things NOT TO DO, steps you can take to avoid disqualification.

We had many suggestions from the clerks after last year's show and will be sharing that information to help you avoid any missteps. We want everyone to do as much as possible prior to the day of competition to make life simpler, not only for those competing but also for the clerks, the judges and those in charge of following up with awards.

There is no reason for anyone to feel uneasy about

competing for the first time when we have so many experts willing to share information and offer support. The first step for any newcomer to take is to walk through his/her garden now and create an inventory of what is growing.

For entries, you will need to know the name/variety of the iris, for example, **Wearing Rubies**. Next you will need to know the classification. Is it a **Tall Bearded, Median, Arilbred, misc.**?

Since you cannot predict what will be blooming the day of the show, you will need an accurate log of what is in your collection.

Start thinking about whether you would like to enter a specimen in the horticulture or the artistic division or both. Information will be provided to help you with each division. Please reach out if you need additional one-on-one support.

IRIS MYSTERIES

by Francelle Edwards

The more I grow and study irises, the more things I find that I don't understand about them. People ask me questions about their irises, and I welcome them, but I have many more questions myself than I have answers.

For years I have tried to find the cause and prevention of pineappling and balding, but I am no closer to it now than at the beginning. This month I have been cleaning my clumps for spring, studying them as I go, and I notice that many are buried in the ground much too deeply. I know I planted them correctly with the tops of their rhizomes barely beneath the surface, but now they have buried themselves so that unless I take a trowel and dig some of the dirt away, they will rot. Someone suggested once that they were trying to escape the summer heat, but growing under two inches of soil is a greater peril than heat.

Have you ever had an iris that did so poorly that you would neither keep it nor give it away? You just tossed the remains of the dying clump up on a bank and forgot about it; then a couple of years later you found it there growing and blooming well with no water or care at all. Perhaps you rescued it and put it back in the garden where again it refused to thrive. The best care of these irises is still a mystery.

Rebloomers

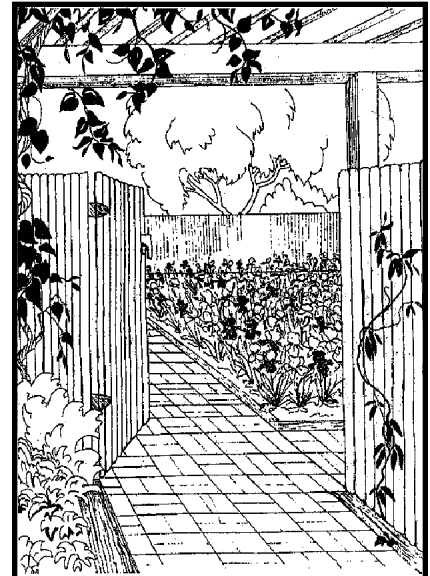
Below: Flight of Fairies is in bloom. I almost missed it because it bloomed low with no stalk.



Above: Marty Richards has been blooming for about a month with more buds to open. The first ones were frozen and I brought one to the last meeting, but they look nice now.



Photos by
Sharon Petterson



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Sun Country Iris News

Sun Country Iris News is published by the Sun Country Iris Society. Contact editor Randy Pooler at dwarfsecy@aol.com. Direct any inquiries to our web site at www.suncountryiris.org or to any of the following board members:
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Directors:
Francelle Edwards.....fjmjedwards@q.com
Barbara Andresenbjkandresen@netscape.net
Vi Zepedavzepeda@cox.net

January SCIS Club Meeting Minutes

by Deborah Nolan

- The meeting was called to order by president Gary Miller at 7:05 p.m. on January 3. The members stood to pledge allegiance to the American Flag. Visitors were welcomed and the new members were introduced.
- Meeting minutes for last month's meeting were in the January newsletter. Ardi Kary moved to accept the meeting minutes and Deborah Nolan seconded the motion. It was voted on and passed by the membership.
- Treasurer's Report will be presented at the next Board and General Meeting.
- Thanks to Sharon Petterson, Rita March, and Barbara Andresen for tonight's refreshments.
- Annual dues are due now to Deborah Nolan. Membership Roster will be issued at the February meeting. Members need to renew in January in order to be included.
- Club members want to continue regular program segments: For Your Information by Francelle Edwards, Basic Iris Culture led by Ardi with member participation, and Garden Products by the Pettersons. These will resume next meeting.
- A slide show from the Fall Rhizome Sales was viewed. We had 15 sales last fall. Locations shown included the state fairgrounds (Home and Garden Show), Harper Nursery, the Stock Shop, and the Gilbert Farmer's Market.
- Ardi Kary led us in discussion of our goals for 2012. Our club purpose is to encourage the cultivation of iris and educate the public about iris that grow in the Sun Country area. In addition to the ever popular tall bearded iris, we can grow medians, arils/arilbreds, Louisiana and spuria iris. Our AIS Spring Show should include all five types of iris. It is scheduled for April 14 at Christown Spectrum Mall center court. The first planning meeting will be January 15 at Ardi's home from 2 to 4 p.m. We have to meet AIS requirements for the Spring Iris Show. The first meeting will choose a theme.
- Iris Exhibits – chairmen needed! We have two iris exhibits this year: the Early Iris Exhibit March 24 at Baker Nursery and Late Iris Exhibit April 28 at Gardener's World. Only 81 days to the Early Iris Exhibit!
- Garden Tours – chairmen needed! – Local member gardens and possibly North Country.
- Club Iris – Gary Miller: SCIS will try to support our members by buying some of the different iris types and offering them through our club iris program. (Members bid for discounted recent introductions. Last year we offered medians, spuria, arils, arilbreds, and TBs.) Also, we will be doing mini presentations this spring on the other kinds of irises. Volunteers were requested. Members discussed the hybridizers whose work does well here. This is also an opportunity for us to support directly our members who are hybridizers. It was agreed that these factors will be taken into account when we order club iris.
- Door Prizes – Chuck Krog: These items are donated. Garden related items are always good. Calendars are also good.
- Refreshments – Barbara Andresen: We have volunteers for the February meeting. Will circulate sign-up sheet as necessary.
- Raffle and Sales Table – Vi Zepeda: Donations requested for sales table. The 50/50 is always good. Both these bring revenue into our club.
- Treasurer – Deborah Nolan: Only about 1/3 of our revenue comes from members (dues, club iris, etc.). The rest of our revenue comes from selling iris – either rhizomes in the fall or potted iris in the spring. We need all members to start planning rhizome donations for the fall when they dig and divide; right now we are dependent on only a few heavy contributors.
- Fall Rhizome Sales – Need a chairman, but Ardi will assist. Meeting will start in July.
- Pot Watchers – Bob Buchwald and Fred Jaeggi are co-chairs for this spring revenue generator. We have 291 pots being fostered by 11 pot watchers.
- Program listing was reviewed. Our first guest speaker will be in March and will offer Judges Training credits.
- Member Handbook – Randy Pooler: Target date is February. We need committee jobs filled and members to renew in order to publish.
- AIS Bus Prizes – The national AIS meeting is in our region this spring. Barbara Vacanti volunteered to coordinate getting approximately 200 bus prizes for the event. Members are encouraged to be on the lookout for prizes to contribute to the cause. Tax deductible receipts are available for your donations from Deborah Nolan, Treasurer.
- Nancy Major told us that SCIS is invited to participate in the Japanese Iris Garden Festival on April 28. We can sell potted iris, but they will want 10% of sales. They would also like some iris to display. Details will be discussed at the Board meeting on January 19.
- Meeting adjourned 8:50 p.m.
- Next Board Meeting: January 19, 6:30 p.m. VGC East room.
- Next General Meeting: February 7, 2012, 7:00 p.m. VGC West room.

Submitted for approval by Deborah Nolan

January SCIS Board Meeting Minutes

by Kyria Peavy

- The meeting was called to order by Gary Miller at 6:35 p.m. on January 19, 2012 with eight board members present.
Present: Ardi Kary, Gary Miller, Barb Andreson, Vi Zepeda, Francelle Edwards, Deborah Nolan, Randy Pooler and Kyria Peavy

SPRING SHOW

- Theme – Arizona Centennial - Scheduled for April 14, 2012.
- Randy and Ardi will continue working on the show schedule.
- Christown – We are able to get in at 6:00 a.m. on day of show. Deborah will ensure we have access to water, garbage cans and confirm tables are available for winning iris and potted iris.
- Members who are bringing a large number of irises should notify committee in advance, so committee can make certain enough tubes are available.
- Show rules will be discussed during the February, March and April club meetings and will be added in each month's newsletter as well.
- Ardi suggested listing all awards in the show schedule.
- In 2012 horticulture judges will perform the artistic judging.
- Ardi suggested giving SCIS rhizome gift certificates to the winners rather than hybridizer gift certificates. This will be discussed further at the next committee meeting.
- In 2011 everyone who entered was placed in a drawing for a gift certificate from Ardi's garden. This year how do we encourage more members to participate in the show? Suggestions include:
 - Give a free rhizome to all who enter the show or at least to the novices who enter. Francelle believes if someone wins and has his or her name engraved on a plaque that person should not receive a rhizome.
 - Enter those who do not win an award in a drawing for a SCIS gift certificate?
 - This will be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

WEBSITE:

- Need to either remove or update club history. Definitely need to remove derogatory comments.
- Update Iris Angel page. The wrong contact is listed.
- Update board meeting time from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Show we're an active club and have fun.
- Provide Gayla with a variety of iris pictures to upload to site.
- Would like to find volunteer from the club to act as webmaster, so pictures can be updated often.
- Board will meet next Thursday at Deborah's house to review website and document necessary changes. Changes will be provided to Gayla. This will close out phase 1 of the website. Possibly begin phase 2 modifications to the website after the spring show.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- The website is paid up through April 2012. There are two payments per year. Deborah will ask Gayla if she can explain reason for two payments.
- Finances are in good shape for 2011. Just need to close out all reimbursements/payments for 2011.
- For 2012, Gary and Deborah are both signers on the account and both have view access. Deborah has a deposit card.
- Deborah would like to change financial institutions to one that has more branches.
- Deborah is researching whether or not SCIS is covered under AIS insurance. If so, we can discontinue SCIS insurance.
- The club laptop does not work with Deborah's wireless printer; therefore she will use her computer for all financial maintenance. Barb will store the club laptop at her house and will bring it to the meetings as needed.
- Pot Watchers - Each pot watcher should provide Fred and Bob with the names and number of the iris they are watching at home. A reminder will be included in the newsletter.
- Eileen Fuimara will be the guest speaker at the March club meeting. She will discuss artistic arrangements. Eileen would like to know if anyone is interested in having a separate meeting on artistic arranging.
- We have 37 members who did not receive a color culture booklet and only 17 books remaining. Ardi will look at the member list and decide if more need to be ordered. Members must attend the meeting to receive a booklet.
- A suggestion was made to reinstate the NIIP, however, the club would pay \$25 and the member would be responsible for the remaining cost. The board did not approve reinstating the NIIP.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.
- Next board meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at the VGC.

Respectfully submitted by Kyria Peavy, Secretary

Programs for February, March, April

(Con't. from page 2)

up to help with this Exhibit.

Spring Iris Show – Gary Miller and Ardi Kary, Chairmen. April 14 at Christown. This will be our American Iris Society Spring Iris Show. AIS rules will be followed.

Late Iris Exhibit – Sharon Petterson, Chairman. THIS DATE HAS BEEN CHANGED. May 5 at Gardener's World. This really spreads our iris bloom season over a longer period of time March, April and May.

Potted Iris Sales – Bob Buchwald and Fred Jaeggi, Chairmen. We will be selling potted irises at all the above events. We will need members to help with pictures for these pots.

Basic Iris Culture – Members will tell us a little about the five types of irises that grow best for us in our area.

Identify Your Irises – We'll learn how to identify the irises we have growing in our gardens and how to read an iris description.

Fragrance – Which of our irises have the best fragrance?

Purple Base Foliage – Which of our irises have purple base foliage?

Space Age Irises – What is a space age iris?

Our spring meetings will be filled with good information. Organize your SCIS Handbooks and leave space for meeting notes. Bring your Basic Iris Culture booklets. See you at the meetings.

**We need donated bus prizes
for the
2012 National Convention**

SCIS needs garden-related bus prizes for the AIS National Convention this spring, which is hosted by Region 15. Members can ask for donated items from the different nurseries, Home Depot, Lowe's, or any other business that carries garden merchandise.

Items such as sun hats, visors, garden gloves, kneeling pads, hand cream or lotion, gift cards, small garden tools, garden-themed notepads, planners, books, statues, or knick knacks would be perfect.

The items are needed by the March meeting, so we know how many items we have total. Submit your items to Barbara Vacanti.

Anyone that chooses to donate items or spend money to buy items for prizes can get a tax deductible receipt from Deborah Nolan.

The internet link to the AIS National Convention information is [AIS Conventions and Activities](#).

POT WATCHERS

by Bob Buchwald

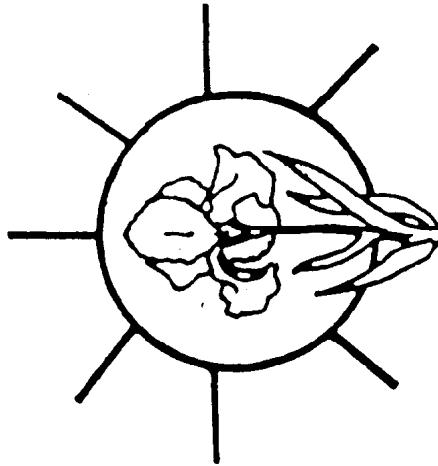
We are beginning to prepare for the upcoming potted iris sales. To facilitate the sales and let our customers know what the individual iris looks like, we will attach photos to each pot.

Sooo, we need each of the pot watchers to compile a list of names of the irises in their possession.

Also indicate the number if you have more than one of the same kind. Once Fred and I receive your lists, we will compile a master alphabetical list and inventory.

Please bring your list to the February meeting or email it to me at lrbuchwald@cox.net.

Sun Country Iris News



February 2012

Sun Country Iris News

RANDY POOLER
P.O. BOX 5411
MESA, AZ 85211



**PREPARATION FOR SPRING IRIS SHOW
AND EARLY & LATE IRIS EXHIBITS**