



Hal & Dorothy Stahly

AIS Region 6 Newsletter

Spring 2015

Indiana ♦ Michigan ♦ Ohio

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Mildred B Smith
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Marjorie Webster
LEWISTON, MI



RVP's Message

Region 6 has lost two dedicated Irisarians. Hal and Dorothy Stahly passed away within days of each other in early January. Hal and Dorothy almost never missed a Region 6 meeting except the last few years due to his eyesight problem and Dorothy could no longer drive. I have known them for over 45 years and have always enjoyed their friendship. There are many fond memories of them and they will be missed.

Have you marked your calendar for June 5 and 6? That is the date the Southwestern Michigan Iris Society is hosting the meeting in Kalamazoo. John Coble, SWMIS President has information in this newsletter (page 20). With the very reasonable registration, the low price of gas, and the reasonable motel rate you will have a very enjoyable low cost weekend. If you have never attended a Regional meeting, why not think of attending and see what we are all about. We guarantee you will have a good time.

In early January I sent out the Application for AIS Affiliation to your club President. To date I have received 6 of the 12 Affiliate applications back. The other half I have not heard from. The deadline for me to receive applications is March 15th. Affiliation with AIS is very important if you have Iris shows or meetings. Affiliated Societies come under the AIS insurance umbrella for all of your iris activities.

Winter started early in Michigan. Snow fall and cold have not been as severe as compared to a year ago but winter has a long way to go yet. We are hoping that weather conditions allow for another spectacular iris bloom season.

There is a list of nominations for officers in this newsletter (page 5), presented by the Nominating committee for 2016 through 2018. If anyone wants to nominate a candidate you can refer to the Region 6 bylaws for the procedure.

Congratulations!

*The IDIS club has been given official approval from **The Median Iris Society** to host the mini-convention in 2017 See the region website for more information*
<http://aisregion6.weebly.com/>

Need a break from the weather?

Check out the videos Tom Bruce has put together showing three of the gardens which will be on tour for the AIS and Siberian conventions in Portland this spring. It is certain to be an amazing time for all who attend!

<http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view/Main/InfoConvention2015>

If you can't make it to Portland make plans now to attend the Region 6 Spring Meeting/Garden tour June 5-6 in MI.



AIS Region 6 Financial Report 1/1/2014 through 12/31/2014

BALANCE FORWARD:	(12/31/13)	\$18,991.02	
	Savings:	\$18,009.69	
	Checking	\$98 1.33	
INCOME:			
	Interest	\$11.21	
	Spring Auction	\$875.00	
	Fall Auction	\$507.00	
	IDIS donation	<u>\$100.00</u>	
	Total	\$1,493.21	
EXPENSES:			
	Newsletters		
	Fall 2013	\$226.58	
	Spring 2014	\$242.74	
	Summer 2014	\$219.86	
	Jody Nolin	Website rental	\$29.00
	Bri Diget	Website set up	\$400.00
		Quarterly	
	Bri Diget	website	<u>\$25.00</u>
		Maintenance	
	Total:		\$1,143.18
TOTAL SAVINGS:		\$18,020.90	
TOTAL CHECKING:		\$1,320.15	
TOTAL ASSESTS:		\$19,341.05	

Peggy Harger-Allen
Region 6 treasurer
1/12/2015

Announcement

An election of new officers will be held at the Fall Region 6 meeting on September 19th. Below are the Candidates for all of the elected region officers.

Regional Vice President-----Barb Bunnell
Assistant Vice President-----Jean Kaufmann
Treasurer-----Peggy Harger-Allen
Indiana State Chairman-----Tom Tomlinson
Michigan State Chairman-----Don Sorensen
Ohio State Chairman-----Jody Nolin

Region 6 Hybridizer

Carol Morgan

‘The Hybridizer Who Isn’t a Hybridizer’

by Carol Morgan

(Note: This article was written by Carol prior to ‘Rayos Adentro’ winning the Williamson-White award in 2014. Carol will be attending the AIS convention in Portland to receive the award.)

It all started when I was little. My mother collected iris by color. She would trade one she had with someone who had a different color she wanted. She didn’t know that they had variety names or that there was such an organization as the American Iris Society. I exhibited an interest when I was only two and a half years old. This was verified by my actions—I picked every bud I could find and brought her a bouquet because I loved her. I can only imagine how disappointed she was to miss the bloom season for that year, and how touched she was that she had so dear a bouquet.

Many years later mom discovered a pictured catalog from Schreiners. I had left home by then (sometime in the 1970s). She ordered a collection from them and was the envy of the neighborhood for the irises she was growing. When she decided to move to Flint, Michigan to be closer to her children, she asked Paul and me to “heel these in for a year till she got her garden ready”. Instead she ordered another bunch of iris from a catalog and told me to keep the ones that were “heeled in”. Behold an instant garden and wonder of wonder, my husband, Paul, liked them well enough to become involved too.

Mom and I then attended an iris show held in Flint by the Central Michigan Iris Society (now disbanded). We were amazed by the ruffles, colors and beauty of the modern irises. We also toured several gardens including Matt and Margaret Kvintus’ garden in Flushing, Marlon Nelson’s garden in Swartz Creek, and Hal Stahly’s garden in Grand Blanc. Hal is the person who encouraged Paul and me to become judges. We began to attend regional meetings and then National conventions.

We were now hooked entirely. Hal Stahly was always interested in promoting iris and their culture and generously offered to teach my children to hybridize. We visited his garden, and he followed through. He even saved the seeds of the children’s crosses for them to grow at home the next fall. That is how I learned to hybridize also.

As years went by, my life became more complicated and even though I continued to be involved with the AIS, I didn’t have time, peace of mind or even the same garden to work. I collected seed and kept records but discarded almost all of the crosses. I liked the miniature tall bearded a lot and saved a cross that I found on Pretty Quirky. Of the twenty seeds only eight grew. Two of them appealed to me and I kept them through two garden moves. They suffered neglect, grew in weeds and poor soil much of the time until I finally arrived in Armada, MI. There I hosted a garden tour for Region Six. The spring was rainy and cold so the TBs were in bud, and the MTBs were blooming. The visitors saw the two seedlings there and raved



about one. Everyone said I should “do something with it”. Until now I had been reluctant to register and introduce it because it was “my baby”, and I thought that I was surely biased by that fact.

So to mark my 60th birthday, I registered that seedling as ‘Rayos Adentro’ (2004). Tony and Dorothy Willott were kind enough to offer to introduce it, and so I entered a new world of iris nut-cases—the hybridizers. Don’t get me wrong, hybridizers are not by any means crazy, but there is an aura that goes with the business. Suddenly, people were asking what else I was planning to introduce, and what I was working to achieve.

Truth is I have had to wait again to continue work because I moved from Armada to Woodland, MI. The property here was in need of many revisions and improvements, so establishing an iris garden took two years. I had to clear away many shrubs that were very overgrown, fill and repair two long ditches from installing underground electric service and a new well, and move existing plants I wanted to save to new beds that I made by hand because I don’t have a tiller.

Last year I obtained a collection of nice MTBs from Chuck Bunnell. Next year they should all bloom. I will be dabbling pollen from those blooms.



Before landscaping work



After clearing overgrown scrubs and landscaping

‘Rayos’ will be a “hard act to follow” because it has been very popular and done well on the ballot. (Thanks to all who have supported me and voted for it.)

What I hope to do is make beautiful, high bud count, disease resistant irises that are distinctive. I am fussy about distinctiveness as I think that there are too many introductions that are nearly the same. That means that there will be few introductions in the future. I throw away the majority of the seedlings that germinate because they are “dogs” or just not unique. I greatly appreciate the opinions of others because I am very aware of the “it’s my baby” bias that can influence a decision.

I am very grateful for the friendships of other successful hybridizers. They are far more knowledgeable than I and are very willing to share their expertise. The American Iris Society has given me the tools to judge whether an iris is a good plant which is important in making the decisions about which seedlings should be kept, worked with, or introduced. Hal Stahly not only taught me to make the crosses, but also stressed the importance of records. I learned that even though an iris is not good enough to introduce, it may have qualities that could be passed along to other seedlings. I also thank God that I now have a garden space where iris seedlings can be grown. Hybridizing is rewarding every spring when the new iris open; it’s like Christmas in May

and June. I shall enjoy the surprises and hopefully find another to share with everyone.



photo by Brock Heilman

As for advice to the would-be hybridizers: try it! Learn all that you can about good iris plants. Be fussy about form, bud count, plant vigor, disease resistance, and distinctiveness. Visit other gardens and cultivate friendships with other pollen dabbers. Be open to criticism. Enjoy yourself.



A Love of Iris by Bob Ammerman

(Note: Bob has been an AIS member for close to 40 years - but not active for a long time due to work conflicts. Bob presently lives in the Louisville, KY metro area (New Albany, IN) and when he was active, participated in the Louisville Area Iris Society. Bob wanted to share this story with fellow iris lovers now that he is growing iris in Indiana.)

We often hear most iris society members tell how they gained their first love of iris from their grandmother. I too fall into that category. Yet I wonder how many have had the privilege to go back to their grandmother's yard to build their own iris bed? My

grandparents and parents were farmers in east central Indiana (Wayne County). I would help my grandmother weed her iris there on the farm. Nine years ago following my mother's death, my brother and I enjoyed the surprise treat of inheriting part of our parents' farms - my grandparents' farm. The soil there is so wonderful, where ours here in New Albany is hard clay. I was inspired to start an iris bed - as a memorial to my grandmother.

The old house no longer stands, but I have kept increasing the size of the bed and planting more and more - now almost 250 varieties. While I know my grandmother does not know, it is fun to think how pleased she would be to know that her grandson is now growing iris in her old yard!

A lesson here: It is not very practical to have a flower bed 165 miles from where you live! I work as a mailman in Louisville, KY - so it is not possible to get to the farm on a regular basis. This past May I got to spend about 3 hours in my iris beds - and did not get back again until July 20th - having had to work six days per week, 10+ hours a day for eight weeks in a row! What was once a lovely iris bed was now a huge mess of weeds! Since then I have been able to get two consecutive non-scheduled days. About 16 hours and many, many sore muscles later, the bed is back in prime condition again. People think I am crazy for such an endeavor - but when you love iris and love the home place, one does what he can!



Above: The garden after 8 weeks on its own.
Below: The garden after Bob's marathon to regain control.

The little building in the background is the old milkhouse where we would bring the milk to keep until the local dairy brought new milk cans and took what had been milked.



A couple of questions from Bob:

*For years I have cut back my iris in the summer - just to allow more air and light to reach down to the rhizomes. ***Is this a bad procedure?*** We are not to cut off daffodils until the foliage dies back. ***Would leaving the iris foliage on until fall encourage better growth and bloom the next spring?***

*Also - farming techniques have been rapidly changing over the years. They now promote "no-till" - saying the plowing allows so many good nutrients to escape from the soil. They encourage planting "cover" crops in off seasons. ***Are we helping deplete the soil for our iris, by digging and keeping the beds so clean?***

John Responds to Questions

By John Coble

"For years I have cut back my iris in the summer – just to allow more air and light to reach down to the rhizomes. Is this a bad procedure?"

Yes. The iris want to grow and mature and put out new increases after they have bloomed. They can only do this with their foliage in the sunshine (and water and nutrients through their roots). You want to grow the best foliage as healthy as possible. As the rhizome increases with stored food made by the leaves, the 'mother rhizome' will 'mature' and set a bloom stalk 'bud' for next year in late July or August. That 'bud' (bloom stalk meristem) will lay dormant until it goes through a cold winter and will begin to grow with spring warmth. This is one reason it is difficult to bloom bearded iris south of Georgia, they have to have a cold dormant period. So for best bloom next year, grow your iris as healthy as you can this summer after bloom. (Just like tulips, daffodils, peonies, etc.) And you will also get better increase fans. It is good garden practice to cut the old foliage off after frost to keep rotting foliage away from the rhizomes. It will also remove iris borer eggs that are laid on the foliage in September and also remove the leaf-spot fungus that often grows on dying foliage.



The ugly leaf-spot fungus can disfigure and kill tall bearded foliage and the main reason gardeners want to 'cut it off' in summer is to tidy up the garden. The fungus needs to be controlled as much as possible with fungicide sprays and keeping the infections cut off and keeping the plants as healthy as possible – healthy plants can resist the fungus attacks better than weak, overcrowded plants. Overcrowded plants lead to less air circulation – damp conditions around tall bearded iris can promote leaf-spot fungus and rhizome rot. Some gardeners have given up on growing the bearded iris that get leaf-spot and switch to growing more Siberian iris that have better looking foliage all summer in the landscape.

**Also – farming techniques have been rapidly changing over the years. They now promote "no-till" – saying the plowing allows so many good nutrients to escape from the soil.*

Only through water run-off...the main reason we have such muddy water in our rivers. Our garden soils do need to be dug up to get air into the soil and break up a hard structure...roots need oxygen. But too much tilling can ruin the structure by making dust, which turns to brick with water...adding organic matter like chopped leaves or straw or compost can help in keeping small air pockets for the roots, but too much water (like flooding) will still turn it to brick. It *is* work to maintain healthy soil conditions.

**Are we helping deplete the soil for our iris, by digging and keeping the beds so clean?*

Digging will not deplete the soil. Constantly removing and throwing away or burning what the soil grows, will deplete the soil. That is why we have to fertilize the garden (or field), to replace what we have removed...be it rhizomes, leaves, weeds, or corn or trees. We say that the plants 'wear out' the soil. No, WE take what grows OFF of the soil and remove it and don't let it return to the soil. We crop leaves, rhizomes, weeds, seed...and return almost nothing. Welcome to farming 101.



Note: If you have a question send it to John at Ensata Gardens (ensata@aol.com).

Iris Exhibitions Update 2015

by Bob Pries

Show Approval

Remember to send your show schedules for approval to Lois Rose at least two months prior to your show date. Lois prefers to receive schedules via e-mail at lowy222@aol.com as it speeds up the process and saves everyone a little in postage. If you submit your show schedule via e-mail, please include a cover note with your "snail mail" address as Lois must send the official approval and show certificates back to you via U.S. Postal Service.

Warning: Lois will be traveling January 31 - February 8 and again March 2-17, so no shows will be approved during those times. Since March is peak season for show schedule approvals, Lois will return home March 17 to a huge backlog of schedules needing attention and will deal with them in the order in which they were received. So if you are planning a May show, seriously consider getting your schedule to Lois early, even if show date, venue, and some show committee positions are still tentative. Date, place, and committee members do not affect schedule approval and can be changed later by sending Lois an e-mail.



Selecting and Preparing Iris Stalks for a Show

by Debbie Strauss dkstraus@swbell.net

Everyone is encouraged to bring some iris stalks, even if you have never done so before. Here are some tips for selecting and preparing iris stalks for a show. Remember also that if you can't enter the individual stalks in the horticulture, you may do design with them or give them to someone else who is doing designs.

STALK SELECTION

This may be the most critical part. How do you decide what looks good enough to take to a show? Start looking at your garden several days beforehand to see which stalks appear to have potential. If a stalk looks like it will have fresh flowers open by show day and the branching and spacing look good, you may want to mark it with a piece of colored yarn. Some people cut their stalks the night before the show, but I wait until the morning of the show so that I can pick ones which have just opened. If bad weather threatens, however, you may want to cut the stalks and bring them inside ahead of time. You also may not have enough time on the morning of the show to get everything done.

The flowers should have NO faults. This is hard to find, and even harder still to get those perfect flowers to the show. Bent petals, bruised petals, holes from aphids, extra petals, petals pointing in strange directions, and spider webs all detract from the flower's beauty. Tears in the petal are okay as long as they are naturally occurring, and do not deform the petal. Having multiple flowers open is a plus, but not a requirement. You are better off having a stalk with one nice flower than several flowers that are starting to shrivel, have tears, or display other faults. And you want flowers that will look good at the time the judges view them, not just when you see them hours before the show.

Before you start cutting prepare a bucket (or several if needed) of tepid water and add about 1 cup of Karo to it and mix it good. Take it into the yard with you and as you cut each stalk, immediately place it in the bucket. Leave for 30 minutes or so. This will give your stalks time to absorb the water mixture that will condition the stalk and flower so it will not require any more water for the day. It also gives the blossoms a good plumping.

As you survey your iris, if the stalk is leaning badly, don't cut it for a horticulture entry but cut it and bring it for a design for yourself or to give to a fellow member. As a horticulture entry, you won't be able to get it to stand up straight in the bottle, and the flowers will tend to be pointing outwards. If as you check your garden days before the show, and you have a leaning stalk that you think has the potential to be a good show stalk, make sure that you stake it a couple days before the show. This will give the flowers time to change their alignment so that they again are pointing upwards.

Label the irises at home with a split piece of paper with the name written on it, as you cut them so there won't be any memory lapses about the name when you prepare the tag or at the show. Do not write on the stalk. If this is noticed by



the judges, they will take points off. Instead, write the names on a long slip of paper, with a slit in it which you can slip wrap around a branch until you are at the show.

GROOMING

Always cut the stalk as close to the ground as possible. You probably will not keep it that length, but you can always cut it shorter, while it is impossible to make it taller. Usually there is a leaf or two attached near its base. If they are going to end up crammed into the bottle neck and all bent over, take the leaves off! On the other hand, keep any leaf that is attached to the stalk above the bottle neck. Stick the stalk into the bottle and step back. Does the curve of the stalk at the base prevent it from standing straight? If so, you may want to trim off a few inches. Does it look top heavy because all the branching and flowers are well above the bottle? Again, you may want to trim the base of the stalk. Generally, the bottom branch should start a few inches above the neck of the bottle.

Often the bottom branch starts so low to the ground that when you put it in the bottle, the base of the stalk does not touch bottom of the bottle. This can make for an unstable stalk, but having the lower branch right up against the bottle neck makes it look unbalanced. Raise it up to a level that is pleasing, and wedge the stalk at that height by putting cotton or a cut section of stalk into the bottle neck. You can use this same method to hold the stalk in place even if it is all the way down. Make sure, though, that the cotton or pieces of stalk are not sticking up above the neck of the bottle.

SHOW TIME

Bring scissors, cotton balls, a sharp knife, Q-tips, a bottle with extra water, face powder, soft brush, address labels and a pen. Make sure that you get to the show in plenty of time to unload (carefully!), make out tags, and do any last minute touchups or adjustments. Also remember that for some shows, all your stalks need to be transferred and repositioned into the club bottles. There will be a lot of hustle and bustle as people try to get their stalks ready: bottles get positioned on the tables, carts filled with bottles roll across the floor, and others are designing arrangements in the corner. You don't want to be caught short of time. The show committee usually is quite strict as to the cut-off time, after which no further entries will be accepted.

Every stalk entered needs a tag filled out. These are special tags with a bottom section that can be torn off after the judging. To fill out the tag, you will need to know the registered name of your iris, and the type (tall bearded, Siberian, etc.). You will also need to know the division and section codes for each stalk. These can be found in the show schedule. If you are not sure of the name of your iris, please don't guess. Label it a mystery iris or unknown, and leave it for display and ask for name suggestions by leaving a piece of paper by it. It is helpful to have a supply of return address labels handy, as it is quicker to put a label on than to fill out your name and address on a whole lot of tags. Make sure that you fill out both the top and bottom portions of the tag! The bottom portion is folded up by the placement committee and tucked in so that only the name of the iris and the class show. Rubber bands are used to attach the tags to the bottles. They go through the hole in the top of the tag then around the bottle from the bottom so that it hangs around the bottle's neck.

You may only enter one stalk of each variety. A historic tall bearded stalk may be entered either in the Historic Class or the Tall Bearded Class, but not both. If entering the Collection Class (three or more stalks of the same cultivar, etc.), however, you may also enter the same cultivar as an individual stalk.

Your iris stalk is now ready to be confirmed and placed by the show committee. Except for the people assisting the judges, no one is allowed in the area with the stalks once judging starts. Now is the time to get coffee and be nervous! After all judging is finished and the best stalks are moved to the head table, you may go into the show area and see how well your entries did. But even if you aren't on the head table, it's still a lot of fun to see all the different entries, and admire all the irises that you've never seen before. Write down the names of those you might want to buy. Talk to the other exhibitors and the judges to find out how you could have prepared your stalks better. And look forward to the next time!

Best of luck to you all!





American Iris Society Region 6

Active Judges & Apprentices for 2015

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Kathy Devlin	12301 McCrone Rd	Milan, MI 48160		G/E
Deborah Diget	300 Silver St	Battle Creek, MI 49014	269-963-2263	G/E
Peggy Harger-Allen	1595 S 775 East	Whitestown, IN 46075	317-769-6837	G/E
Brock Heilman	PO Box 455	Belleville, MI 48111	734-255-9575	G/E
Frances Holecek	3874 Washington Park Blvd	Cleveland, IN 44105	216-883-2738	M
Rose Holecek	3874 Washington Park Blvd	Cleveland, IN 44105	216-883-2738	M
Judy Hollingworth	124 E Sherwood Rd	Williamston, MI 48895	517-930-0180	G/E
Robert Hollingworth	124 E Sherwood Rd	Williamston, MI 48895	517-930-4429	M
Jean Kaufmann	5140 Cornell Rd	Okemos, MI 48864	517-347-7555	G/E
Inge Mesik	779 -105 th Ave	Plainwell, MI 49080	269-685-9655	G/E
Anna Mae Miller	1700 Bronson Way #155	Kalamazoo, MI 49009	269-349-5934	M
Kathy Moore	501 East Kentucky St	Franklin, IN 46131	317-738-4408	M
Carol Morgan	265 N Main St.	Woodland, MI 48897	269-367-4218	M
Jody Nolin	5184 Cty Rd 20	Rushsylvania, OH 43347	614-507-0332	G/E
Laurel Richardson	654 Phaeton Place	Indianapolis, IN 46227	317-887-0706	G/E
Charles Rumbaugh	3520 Dudley Ave	Indianapolis, IN 45227	317-783-1178	M
Mary Lou Swann-Young	7443 W 500 N	McCordsville, IN 46055	317-703-0483	G/E
Janet Wilke	5406 Boy Scout Rd	Lawrence, IN 46226	317-327-3826	G/E
Mrs Anthony Willott	26231 Shaker Blvd	Beachwood, OH 44122	216-831-8662	E
Doris Winton	7131 E 550 S	Franklin, IN 46131	812-526-9237	M
Lana Wolfe	9730 Auburn Rd	Fort Wayne, IN 46825	260-489-4781	G/E
Donna Wolford	2605 Oakhaven St NE	Palm Bay, FL 32905	321-724-1676	M
Harry Wolford	2605 Oakhaven St NE	Palm Bay, FL 32905	321-724-1676	M



Photo: B.Heilman

ATTENTION SHOW CHAIRPERSON

Share your clubs show with the region. Take photos during your clubs show. Then, please send photos and show results to ddiget@gmail.com for publication in the summer Region 6 newsletter. Deadline for summer 2015 newsletter is June 1. If your show is after June 1 please contact me to make arrangements.

More Questions for John at Ensata

(Note: The following is an email correspondence from Cynthia O. to Ensata Gardens dated Nov 19, 2014)

Good morning, friends,

I was scrolling through choices for my garden, where we have a small patch of very boggy soil in light shade (receives direct sun for only about 3-4 hours in the mornings). I have tried to lighten up the soil, which is turning out to be a chronically damp place that (fortunately) does not seem to be growing any fungus or unhealthy other growth. It occurred to me that Japanese Iris might find this spot perfect.

I see you no longer print a catalog, but you still have many many beautiful choices remaining. I am inspired! We are in Southern California, in climate zone 10b....we grow citrus, roses, plumeria and too many other choices to list....but this one SPOT needs something, and it needs to have a beautiful group of plants that will be happy with damp feet -- damper than Azalea or Camellia would enjoy.

Would you be kind enough to tell me if this is a good time to obtain/ship iris rhizomes? What would your shipping fees be for zip code 92128? AND if you think our climate is too dry for Japanese Iris, you can just tell me :) I think I'd like to try 3 plants and see how they do, unless you recommend planting them in a crowded grouping. This is entirely new to me, but this garden has been a learning experience since I moved here in April with my 88 year old mom (I'm a retired RN who loves gardening).



We usually have a mild fall, but I am hoping we get a break in our drought - and receive enough rain to really have winter weather this year. I have grown some new-to-me plants successfully in the past (they are still with me and survived the move, thank God!) My Stephanotis is taller than 5' and growing...Hibiscus are giving me blooms every day (still) in a light delicious lavender. I planted two Giant Parasol Mandevillas this Spring, and they are climbing like crazy... and my two Camellias have gained height and width nicely: they are right on schedule for December to January blooms with promising signs of great health, (hooray!) so I am managing to do some things correctly (!!)

I don't know how many Iris I should plant for the space I mentioned (it is approximately 5' by 2'). Perhaps, you can suggest what might be a good beginning number? Height up to 4' is no problem, they will have plenty of head space to grow as tall as they like :) They won't get enough sun to 'burn' bright or vivid colors, which is a blessing. Other than high moisture, the spot is choice.

Thank you for answering my questions in advance. Cynthia

~~~~~  
**Cynthia,**

**It is 15° this morning**, but the wind has stopped blowing around yesterday's 10" of snow. The high today may reach 22°. Our digging shovel is frozen to the wall inside the barn. There are no name tags visible in the commercial garden (they are 6" tall). We call this, "not a good time" to obtain/ship.

Also sorry to say that I think you are at least one zone too far south. All of the iris we grow need a winter dormancy (4-8 weeks of near freezing or below) in order to bloom. They may grow, but will not bloom without the cold dormancy period. They also don't tolerate drought and prefer to have at least damp soil all year long. So that is the main reason you haven't seen any Japanese iris growing in your neighborhood... or offered at a local nursery.

Thank you for the "warm read" about your gardens this morning.

John at Ensata



## INDIANA

### **Chuck and Barb Bunnell**

7941 Peshewa Dr. Lafayette, IN 47905

Phone: (765) 296-6955

Email: [whozher@mintel.net](mailto:whozher@mintel.net)

MDB,SDB,IB,BB,MTB,TB, SIB, LA, SPU, Species, JA

Peak bloom: May

### **Virginia's Iris Garden, Janet Wilke**

5406 Boy Scout Rd., Lawrence, IN 46226

Phone: (317) 327-3826 (Mon-Fri 8am - 6.00 pm)

Email: [janetvigi@yahoo.com](mailto:janetvigi@yahoo.com)

Dwarfs, IB, TB, BB, SIB

Peak bloom: April 15 to May 31 Call on weekends.

Just come and enjoy during the week while I am at work

### **Myers Iris Garden, Matt Myers**

3514 E 500 S Warsaw, IN 46580

Phone: (574) 527-5663

Over 2,000 named varieties of iris

Peak bloom: Mid May to Early June

### **Winton's Iris Hill, Doris Winton**

7131 E 550 South, Franklin, IN 46131

Phone: (812) 526-9237

TB,MTB,IB,SDB,BB and Siberians

Peak bloom: TB's - May 15-30; SIBs - May 25-June 7

### **Joan McFadden**

450 E Cty. Rd. 450N, Seymour, IN

Phone: (812) 523-6273, cell: (765) 749-2477

Email: [jmcfadden100@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmcfadden100@sbcglobal.net)

TB, IB, medians

Peak bloom: May 15, Please call ahead

# Region 6 Display Gardens

## OHIO

### **Dorothy Willott**

26231 Shaker Blvd, Beachwood, OH

Phone: (216) 831-8662 and

### **Rockefeller Park Greenhouse**

750 East 88th St., Cleveland, OH

TB, BB, IB, SDB, MDB, Sib, seedlings

Peak bloom: Varies for type of iris – call for best bloom time.

Greenhouse grounds open every day 8 to 4:30, except holidays. Greenhouse buildings open 10-4 daily. No need to call ahead.

*For the Willott's home gardens, please call ahead*

### **Stick and Thistle Farm, Jody Nolin**

5184 County Rd. 20, Rushsylvania, OH 43347 Phone:

(614) 507-0332

Email: [jody.nolin@gmail.com](mailto:jody.nolin@gmail.com)

A bit of everything, including Spuria and LA gardens

Peak bloom: Mid-May through June, always something blooming!

No need to call



**McFadden Garden**  
Photo: P.Harger-Allen

## MICHIGAN

### **Bunnies and Bouquets, Elaine Johnson**

3524 S. Derby Rd., Sidney, MI 48885 (3/8 mile S. of Sidney, Montcalm Co.)

Many varieties, but mainly TB's

Peak bloom: First week of June

### **Jim and Jill Copeland**

78118 M-40, Lawton, MI 49065

Phone: (616) 624-1968

Email: [jandjcope@aol.com](mailto:jandjcope@aol.com)

IB, TB, LA, SIB, JI, Species and SpecX

Peak bloom: We usually have bloom from May through July.

Visit anytime we are home

### **Ensata Gardens, Bob Bauer and John Coble**

9823 E. Michigan Ave., Galesburg, MI 49053

Phone: (269) 665-7500

Email: [Ensata@aol.com](mailto:Ensata@aol.com)

Siberians and Japanese

Peak bloom: SIB's - 1st week June JI's - last week of June - July 4.

Not necessary to phone ahead

### **J & J Iris Farm, John and Jean Kaufmann**

5140 Cornell Rd., Okemos, MI 48864

Phone: (517) 347-7555

Email: [jejk Kaufmann@hotmail.com](mailto:jejk Kaufmann@hotmail.com)

Mostly TB's, some dwarf and intermediate, a few SIBS

Peak bloom: Last two weeks of May to first 2 weeks June

### **Caressing Breeze Daylily and Iris Garden, Lori Lanford**

3053 Willoughby Road

Mason, MI 48854

Phone: 517-203-4050

Growing TB's, SIB's and JI's

Peak bloom: Late May/Early June

Please call before visiting, evening and weekends.

### **Iriswarehouse & Daylilywarehouse, Scott MacGuidwin & Judy Barton**

1903 Culver Hill Drive

Williamston, MI 48895

Phone: 517-655-9222. Please call in advance so we are at home to greet you!

Golf cart available for those with difficulty walking

Website: [Iriswarehouse.com](http://Iriswarehouse.com)

Email: [contact@iriswarehouse.com](mailto:contact@iriswarehouse.com)

Over 1000 varieties of iris & daylilies

TB's, dwarfs, IB, BB, SIBS

Iris bloom time: Last two weeks of May to 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks in June

Mid-July for daylilies

### **Windwood Gardens Irises, Bob & Judy Hollingworth**

5410 N. Williamston Rd. Williamston, MI

Bob's Cell: 517 930-0180, Judy's Cell: 517 930-4429

Email [cyberiris@att.net](mailto:cyberiris@att.net)

Mostly SIB, some MTB's

Peak bloom: Approx May 25-June 10



*Stick and Thistle Farm  
Photo: J.Nolin*



# *Road to the Dykes*

by Chuck Bunnell

When 'Dividing Line' was introduced, needless to say, the Dykes Medal never entered my mind. Only in the last two to three years did the possibility of winning the Dykes even seem feasible. In retrospect, the road to the Dykes began when Jack Norrick gave me a number of MTBs including 'Bumblebee Deelite' and 'Rosemary's Dream', the best two. For the record, 'Bumblebee Deelite' was runner-up for the Dykes Medal all three years of its eligibility. Those first MTBs and encouragement from Jack began a love affair with MTBs that continues today.



I began hybridizing in 1989 and shifted exclusively to MTBs in 2002. As Jack had to be coaxed into introducing 'Bumblebee Deelite' after it was seen at the 1985 AIS National in Indianapolis, I was coaxed into my first introduction, 'Missus Bee', in 2003 via Miller's Manor Garden after a regional garden tour. Encouraged by 'Missus Bee's' success, seedling G52-1 was introduced in 2005 as 'Dividing Line'. As I struggled to come up with a suitable name for the seedling, my late wife, Linda, suggested, 'Dividing Line', a name with little appeal

to me. Thank goodness the name appealed to virtually everyone else, which became evident at a Region 6 spring meeting in Ohio. The clump of 'Dividing Line' looked as good as an iris could after two years of growth in those Ohio gardens, but how would it grow in other parts of the country? Except for very hot areas 'Dividing Line' developed a reputation for very good growth and bloom. That name reminded people of its distinctiveness.

Evidence of its popularity was given by the minimum time each AIS award was achieved until the Dykes Medal voting. In addition, 'Dividing Line' was awarded the inaugural Ben Hager Cup for median iris at the 2007 AIS National. Unfortunately, I missed that National and learned of the award in a taxi on the way to the site of the Median Iris Society (MIS) Convention that year. To my surprise, 'Dividing Line' won the Hager Cup again in 2009 with me in attendance and subsequently became eligible for the Dykes Medal in 2012. To give credit where it is due, I transferred pollen to the pod parent which provided a seed that became 'Dividing Line', but a higher power than I created the seed.

From my experience, the success of 'Dividing Line' is due to: 1. An exceptional garden plant; 2. An eye-catching flower; 3. A descriptive, memorable name; 4. Enough distribution country-wide to get the exposure needed for judges votes; 5. To repeat Jack Norrick, it's better to be lucky than good. What a pleasure it is to share this award with my wife, Barb, Jack Norrick's daughter.



# Remembering Hal and Dorothy

by Jim Copeland



We first met the Stahly's in 1971 at a Region 6 meeting. Hal was RVP of Region 6. He was hybridizing and very active in activities of AIS. Hal and Dorothy would attend all of the Region 6 meetings and Jill and I became their lifelong friends. Dorothy rarely spoke during any of the business meetings but later became a “key” bidder in her quest to buy some jelly at the auctions. She was totally responsible for the high price that jelly commands at



current Region 6 auctions.

Hal and Bill Simon were totally responsible for the formation of the “Iris Connoisseurs of Michigan” (ICOM) a loosely knit group of anyone interested in iris. The group is still in existence today and welcomes everyone interested in iris.

Hal was always encouraging us to become more involved in AIS activities. In 1973 it was decided that ICOM would host the 1976 AIS Convention headquartered in Lansing, Michigan and that Hal would be Convention Chairman. He asked if we would like to have our garden on tour and we accepted. That set the “hook” for us to become more active in AIS activities. Jill also had developed a desire to increase her hybridizing efforts and after the convention Hal and Dave Niswonger brought pollen to the garden. They went over all of Jill's seedlings with constructive comments and offered pollen from the newest and best iris at the time to use to further the cause. Our garden was not the only one that they visited in the area with their advice and pollen.

In 1977 Hal was elected to Second Vice President of AIS. He went on to become President in 1981 serving a three year term. During his last year as President, he recommended me to become a candidate for the AIS Board of Directors. I was elected and went on to serve for three terms. Hal was also a valuable committee member of the AIS Awards Committee to revise the AIS Awards System in which I was appointed Chairman. He was always very supportive of my undertakings in AIS and his support was greatly appreciated. Hal nominated me to serve as Region 6 RVP for a three year term beginning in 1980 and I was elected to serve my first term as Region 6 RVP.

Hal had an interest in hybridizing for black iris. One of his iris 'Black Flag' (Stahly, 1984) was the darkest iris available at that time. He later became interested in hybridizing other types of iris. He also had a great interest in other types and kinds of plants as one would discover when visiting his garden. Dorothy was also very supportive of Hal and his interests. She was a very gracious and an interesting host during our visits.

In his last several years of life, Hal had some serious health problems. He had macular degeneration in both eyes. He did have peripheral vision but no straight forward vision. He was legally blind. He also developed lung problems and was on 24 hour oxygen. He never was down about his problems but always seemed cheerful and was dealing with his health issues.

One week before his death we received a letter from him. I quote “ I am not able to maintain sufficient blood oxygen so am on continuous oxygen tanks, using an oxygen concentrating machine when at home. My walking is not too bad but I cannot walk far before I'm out of breath. For safety I use a stick or more often a four wheel walker; my balance is not always too good. My eyesight remains about the same; I'm legally blind but have good peripheral vision. In effect , I see everything but can't focus so details are missing”.

“Dorothy is in an advanced stage of dementia with short term memory essentially gone. She has good memory of things from our past and recognizes all of us. Although she does not always want to talk, we often have good , lucid conversation. We are very fortunate in having caregivers in this apartment complex so that it is almost like assisted living but we can still live together. The helpers here check on her every two hours and take care of all her needs. I could not possibly take care of her, but with this arrangement we can live together happily. Our children visit us frequently, some more than others depending on distances. We are thankful for their visits”.

These excerpts from what was probably Hal's last letter exemplify the kind of people Hal and Dorothy were. It was definitely a pleasure to have known them and to have them as friends. Now they are together and we have many fond memories from having known them.

# *AIS & Region 6 Events*

| Year | Date                       | Event & Location                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2015 | April 11                   | SWMIS co-hosting guest speaker Bill Maryott (contact Jill Copeland <a href="mailto:jandjcope@aol.com">jandjcope@aol.com</a> asap for more information)                                         |
|      | May 13                     | IGEI's Annual Garden Tour                                                                                                                                                                      |
|      | May 18 – 23<br>May 24 – 25 | AIS National Convention – Portland, OR<br>Siberian/Species Convention – Portland, OR                                                                                                           |
|      | June 5 - 6                 | Region 6 Spring Meeting, Kalamazoo, MI – Hosted by SWMIS                                                                                                                                       |
|      | July 10 - 12               | IDIS co-hosting American Hemerocallis Society Region 2 summer meeting in Indianapolis (contact John Everitt <a href="mailto:everittjt@gmail.com">everittjt@gmail.com</a> for more information) |
|      | July 25                    | ICOWM's Bus Trip to Cranbrook & other gardens in the Detroit Area (contact Don Sorensen <a href="mailto:djsorensen55@gmail.com">djsorensen55@gmail.com</a> for more information)               |
|      | September 19               | Region 6 Fall Meeting, Fort Wayne, IN – Hosted by NEIIS                                                                                                                                        |

## *2015 Region 6 Iris Shows & Display*

| Date        | Sponsoring Club  | Location                                                           | Additional Information                                        |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 17      | IGEI             | Minnetrista Center, 1200 N. Minnetrista Pky, Muncie, IN            | Entries 9-11 am; Judging 11 am, Open to public @ 1:00 pm      |
| May 24      | NEIIS            | Botanical Conservatory, 1100 S Calhoun St, Fort Wayne, IN          | Set up 8:30 am; Judging 11 am<br>Open to public @ noon        |
| May 30 & 31 | GVIS             | Frederik Meijer Gardens, 1000 E Beltline NE, Grand Rapids, MI      | Judging 11 am; Open to public Sat. 1-5pm, Sun 11-5 pm         |
| May 30      | TCIS             | MSU Plant & Soil Science Building, East Lansing, MI                | Entries accepted 5/29; 3-7pm<br>Open to public 8-2 on 5/30/15 |
| May 30      | SWMIS            | Wenke Greenhouse, 5071 Market St, Kalamazoo, MI                    | Entries 8-10am; Judging 10:15 am; Open to public @ noon       |
| May 31      | NEOIS            | Rockefeller Greenhouse, 750 E. 88 <sup>th</sup> St., Cleveland, OH | 8-10:30 set up; Judging 11am;<br>Open to public 1-4 pm        |
| June 14     | MIO              | Mio Community Center, Mio, MI                                      | Entries 7-10 am; Open to public 1:30-4:30 pm                  |
| June 27     | SWMIS-JI display | Wedel's Nursery, 5020 Texas Dr., Kalamazoo, MI                     | Open to public 9am-4pm                                        |

## *2015 Region 6 Rhizome Sales & Auctions*

| Date            | Sponsoring Club            | Location                                                                     | Additional Information                           |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| May 18          | ICOWM-Spring auction       | Courtland Township Hall, 7450 14 Mile Rd NE, Rockford, MI                    | All types of garden plants.<br>Begins @ 7 pm     |
| June 14         | MIO                        | Mio Community Center, Mio, MI                                                | 1:30-4:30 pm                                     |
| July 19         | IGEI                       | Minnetrista Center, 1200 N Minnetrista Pky, Muncie, IN                       | Open to public 12-4 pm                           |
| July 25 & Aug 1 | TCIS                       | Meridian Farmers' Market, Okemos, MI & Brighton Farmer' Market; Brighton, MI | Open to the public                               |
| July 26         | NEIIS                      | Botanical Conservatory, 1100 S Calhoun St, Fort Wayne, IN                    | Set up 9:30 am; Open to public at noon           |
| Aug 1           | SWMIS                      | Bank St Farmer's Market, 1204 Bank St, Kalamazoo, MI                         | Open to public @ 7 am                            |
| Aug 17          | ICOWM-iris & plant auction | Courtland Township Hall, 7450 14 Mile Rd NE, Rockford, MI                    | All types of garden plants.<br>Begins @ 7 pm     |
| Aug 22          | NEOIS-rhizome auction      | 'Old' Independence Town Hall, 6652 Brecksville Rd., Independence, OH         | Auction from 12 – 5 pm                           |
| Aug 22          | IDIS                       | Sullivan's Hardware Parking Lot, 6995 N Keystone Ave, Indianapolis, IN       | Open to the public 10-4:00pm                     |
| Sept 21         | ICOWM- auction             | Courtland Township Hall, 7450 14 Mile Rd NE, Rockford, MI                    | Iris auction of Paul Black iris<br>Begins @ 7 pm |

# Growing in the Garden

## *Iris cristata*

by Bob Ammerman

I have been collecting wild flowers for 25+ years - transplanting to the woods on our farm as well for my yard. People have told me that it is not possible to get the small wild iris - *Iris cristata* - to transplant and survive. We have several clumps and I keep dividing them and planting more and they seem to thrive. It is so nice to see these early beauties in our yard.

Included in the photo is a clump of wild Phlox - *Phlox divaricata* (sometimes called Wild Sweet William). Not a unique garden specimen - but a fun treat early in the gardening season.



Photo: B.Ammerman

## *An Oddity in the Seedling Garden*

by Don Sorensen

Last year (2014) a seedling appeared in the garden that was a complete mystery. It bloomed mid to late tall bearded season, around 11 3/4 inches tall with 5 buds. It is from tall bearded breeding and bloomed for about 10 days.



A picture of this plant was sent to Paul Black of Mid-America Gardens and created excitement and spirited conversations as Paul has been working on small flowered tall bearded iris.

It may only be a wimpy tall bearded or it could be a genetic oddity. If it continues to bloom as it did this year I am sure I will drive AIS crazy if I request an additional iris classification of DTB (Dwarf Tall Bearded).

Photo: D.Sorensen



## *Spuria Iris Society Invitation*

Here's a personal invitation from all of us: Become a NEW member of the Spuria Iris Society, and as a token of our appreciation a recently introduced Spuria iris (2010 or newer) will be mailed to you FREE (U.S. only). Free Spurias will be by David Niswonger, Lee Walker, Nancy Price, and Terry Aitken. Offer deadline is October 1, 2015 and while supplies last.

# 2015 Spring Regional

John Coble, SWMIS President

**Welcome!** The Southwestern Michigan Iris Society is ready to welcome you to the Region 6 Spring Regional, June 5 and 6, 2015. Yes, we are thinking SPRING... the days are starting to get longer! We will gather folks back from vacations and snowbirds from Florida, and hurry lots of you back from Oregon's peak TB and Siberian bloom! We have our work cut out for us.

We liked the idea of a car caravan to visit the gardens at the last spring regional... so we are formatting this regional the same way (and save all of you the bus bill).

We will get together Friday evening, June 5, at the DAYS INN & SUITES KALAMAZOO. It is located right off I-94 at exit 78, right beside the Kalamazoo airport. The rates are low and there are three restaurants within walking distance for your Friday evening meal before we start meeting at about 7:00PM with light refreshments, lively conversation, a judges training class conducted by Jim Copeland about "common sense in judging iris and shows"... what you should have known, what you should have done, and what you should do as an iris judge! Well, something like that! And anyone not present... well, we'll feel free to talk about you!

After all of the gossip is finished we will show some slides from Region 6 hybridizers of some of their new or upcoming introductions, and maybe what might be at the auction?

We will ask for a show of hands from those that would like to car-pool the next morning and match up cars with bodies.



So think about it, clean up your car and decide if you will bring bodies or a car!

Saturday morning after a light breakfast provided at the motel, the designated drivers will gather their backseat drivers with maps provided in the program, and head out to Deb Diget's garden in Battle Creek for a little more breakfast in the breakfast cereal city! Deb and Dwight have a landscaped garden of TB and Siberian iris, and peonies and hostas. Dwight has been working on a wood and stone patio to overlook the gardens and it is beautiful.

Then tear yourself away from Debbie's labor of love and head back west to Galesburg and Ensata Gardens. Besides hundreds of Siberian iris (in bloom of course!), John and Bob have planted a new bed of Tall Bearded iris for the Regional (and personal enjoyment too). It has been at least 25 years since TB's have been planted and grown here and an old love has been rediscovered. Time has been allotted here for one hour of in-garden judges training on Siberian iris. Others can feed the koi in the four ponds, then we will all eat lunch here and expect Bob has smoked some good pulled pork for sandwiches!

Then it will be time to waddle off to the Copeland's in Lawton for more iris and food. Don't you love these Regionals! Lots of TB's at the Copelands, Jim's Siberians, and Jill's interspecies crosses. We have scheduled time here for the Spring Regional AUCTION. Bring some nice plants and please buy some nice plants... at least bid your neighbor up and burn some calories so we can then EAT AGAIN! It will be time for another (why you drove all this way) Jim Copeland Fish Fry! I need say nothing more.

With full tummies, a trunk full of new plants, and echoes of laughter from a full day of friends... time to return your backseat drivers and other bodies back to the motel parking lot for their cars and head home. (It's light out until 9:30 pm then).

Now wasn't that a pleasant weekend? Glad you could join us.

If you'd like to stay with us longer, please do. Sunday morning Ensata Gardens will be open for return visits and another hour of in-garden judges training will be offered on species/inter-species iris if attendance warrants.

Please sign up for this... or else John will just sleep in! Now don't wait around for something "better to do" shows up for that weekend. Send in your reservations right now and reserve one of the better spots!



**Registration Form**  
American Iris Society (AIS) Region 6  
Spring Meeting and Garden Tour  
June 5 & 6, 2015

Kalamazoo Area, Michigan

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name as you would like it to appear on Badge)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name as you would like it to appear on badge)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee.....# People \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be attending Judges Training on Sunday ( June 7<sup>th</sup>)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ or No \_\_\_\_\_  
(How many?)

Special Dietary Requirements \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Southwestern Michigan Iris Society (SWMIS).

Mail this form and check to:

Jim Welch  
9087 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
[joejoe500@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joejoe500@sbcglobal.net)

**Room Reservations:**

Days Inn & Suites – Kalamazoo  
2615 Airview Blvd.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49002  
269-903-2433  
[daysinnkz@gmail.com](mailto:daysinnkz@gmail.com)

\$64.99 for 2 people. Ask for Southwest Michigan Iris Society