



Newsletter

Waco Iris Society



New for 2024 Iris Show

Single Blossom Entries



Happy New Year and welcome to the first meeting of the Waco Iris Society for 2024! We will meet on January 20th beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the Community Center of Crestview Church of Christ, 7129 Delhi.

We are thrilled to have the NEW American Iris Society's National President, Bonnie Nichols, come and present a program on a new Section we are adding to our Iris Show: **Single Blossom Entries**. The single blossom entry is a place to display a single flower without stalk, foliage, or the presence of buds. The entire em-



phasis is on the beauty of the single blossom. The scale of points for judges is:

- 1. Overall Beauty 40
 - 2. Cultural Perfection 30
 - 3. Condition & Grooming 30
- Total points 100**

Please join us as Bonnie explains this new section and how anyone can enter.

Bonnie and her husband, Hooker, have been growing, showing and hybridizing irises for most of their lives. They are members of the Iris Society of Dallas, and their city garden is jam packed with irises, daylilies, and anything else that blooms. About 4 years ago, they bought 2 acres just east of Terrell and have converted it into a beautiful display garden which was on tour during last year's National Iris Convention. Both Bonnie and Hooker are Emeritus AIS Judges and we are looking forward to them judging this years Iris Show for us. Please join us as we welcome them to Waco.

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It is that time of year again. Everyone is recovering from the hustle and bustle that the holidays bring and trying to get things in order. It is time to put a lot of stuff away until next December, but also time to begin thinking about what needs to be done as spring approaches. I was struggling with the introduction of this article yesterday because I knew that Jerry Keeth was suffering from very serious health issues. Challenged by my concern for Jerry and Mary, I was trying to find a way to make this message meaningful and appropriate. Finally, I completed what I thought would be my opening paragraph. Unfortunately, today, January 10, at exactly the same time I was making final changes and additions to my article, Jerry Keeth passed away. When I learned of his passing, I returned to my computer to make some revisions to my introductory comments. The loss of Jerry Keeth has cast a dark shadow across the hearts and minds of all the club members, including me, making it impossible to write a message that is fun, positive, and uplifting. Such a situation in one’s life brings total emotional upheaval, and the joy and pleasure found in gardening suddenly is diminished. Good health is a treasure not to be taken for granted. Things can change in a moment’s time.

For members of the Jerry Keeth family, and especially for Mary, just know that you are not alone in this time of sorrow and grief. The loss

of Jerry today is certainly devastating to your family. His life touched many people, and he will be greatly missed by everyone in the Waco Iris Society. I am certain the sentiments I have expressed at this time are shared by all members of the club. I know that all the club members will continue to keep you, Mary, and your family in their thoughts and prayers.

While reading last year’s January article, I was reminded of what a different kind of year we are having. If you recall, last year, we had an extremely hard freeze in early December that shocked plants that can normally take the cold temperatures fairly well. This year, we have had a gentler introduction to winter. I had planned to make it a point to record every morning we have had frost. Well, that idea failed miserably. I suppose I should say that the idea was a success, but the implementation was a failure. But I can tell you this much. Here in Gatesville, we had heavy frost on November 22. On December 6, we had another frost. By the end of December, we had had a few mornings with temperatures below freezing and several mornings with frosty rooftops. As I began working on my article Tuesday evening, my thermometer said it was 33° at 10:00 p.m. Our iris rhizomes received another good night of chill. We have had many nights during which the temperature drops below 40° in the early evening and remains there until mid-morning the next

day. Irises do require a certain amount of chilling weather. I think we have already achieved the necessary amount this year. However, the forecast is that we will have more wintry weather within the coming week. We are going to be having some very chilly weather the week prior to our meeting. Monday morning, January 14, the prediction right now for Gatesville is that it will be 7°. Tuesday morning is only a degree warmer. This article might not reach you before all of this occurs, but I hope you have made the necessary provisions for your outdoor plumbing and plants that are subject to freeze. Many plants can handle temperatures in the low 20s, but many will not survive single-digit temperatures. Fortunately, we have received some beneficial rain this late fall and early winter, along with a lot of chilling nights. This has been an interesting fall and up until now, the freezing weather has not brought any really hard freezes. It has been a pleasure seeing one of my rosebushes being loaded with blooms



Belinda’s Dream blooming Dec. 20.

President's Message (cont.)

well into December. I also have Verbena plants blooming in December. The light freezes we have had



Estrella Pink verbena on Dec. 26

did not seem to have a negative impact on these plants. Even though these plants are not related to irises in any form or fashion, their performance this late in the season is likely related to the gradual cooling of temperatures and intermittent rainfall. I am hoping this unusual profusion of growth and color is an indication that conditions have also been beneficial for the development of rhizomes.

If you have been a club member for any length of time, you will know

my usual reminders. February (around Valentine's Day) is a good time to feed your irises with a balanced fertilizer. Also, if you go on a garden stroll right now, you might be discouraged. Many of the irises will do nothing this year. All of that will suddenly begin to change within the next six to eight weeks. I am hoping for a wonderful year with lots of bloom.

There are some things about this time of year that all gardeners can appreciate. Cold days will keep you inside, and it is time to get caught up on some of those inside tasks that have been put aside. And, of course, on those days when one can be outdoors, there is always cleaning, trimming, raking leaves, reworking compost piles or bins, and many other things to do in preparation for the spring garden. One of the great things that I have always enjoyed this time of the year is the noticeable lengthening of the days. Sunrise times may take three or four days to change even one minute, but sunset times are increasing nearly every other day by at least

a minute. Today, on January 10, sunrise was at 7:31, the same as it has been for the past three days. However, sunset has changed from 5:43 to 5:45 in that same time period. By January 20, the day of our next meeting, sunrise will be at 7:29 a.m., and sunset will be at 5:54 p.m. By January 26, sunrise will occur at 7:27 a.m., and sunset will be at 6:00 p.m. By the way, those times are for Gatesville. They could be a minute or two different for you, depending on where you live. I have included that bit of science trivia because it is just another reminder that we do have longer days ahead of us now, and we can begin our annual anticipation of spring. Have a great sunrise or great sunset, or have both. They can be very special this time of year.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our meeting on January 20, 2024, at the Crestview Church of Christ in Waco. The program, which will provide information on exhibiting single blossoms in an iris show, will be

Treasurer's Report by Peggy Cathey

Beginning bal. 11-1-23	\$ 12,724.67	Expenses:	
Income:		AIS Membership	\$ (30.00)
Reimbursement	\$ 22.00	Total expenses	\$ (30.00)
Raffle	\$ 50.00		
Total income	\$ 72.00	Ending bal. 10-31-23	\$ 12,766.67



Meeting Minutes-November 18, 2023 by Jacky Roberts, Secretary

The November meeting was called to order by President Ken Anderson. We had 14 members present. The secretary report was accepted by Carol Lane and seconded by Mary Keeth. The treasurer's report was accepted by Linda Barnard and seconded by Mary Keeth. The A.I.S. Membership drawing was won by Donna Little.

New business, the Iris show date is April 13, 2024 Show Theme: *An Iris Show- Where the Wild Things Are.*

Room has been reserved and contract has been received from hotel..

Next we discussed how many judges were needed. The decision was 2 or 3.

Next we discussed Mileage Reimbursements and Hotel Expenses for the judges. The decision was \$100 dollars a judge, if they traveled 200 miles or further, we will pay for 1 nights hotel. Motion to accept by Carol Lane, seconded by Mary Keeth.

Next we discussed new forms of Iris and if we need to change our show schedule, we will discuss further at the January meeting.

We had a short refreshment break allowing members to check out all Iris brought for prizes for our Bingo game. It was a great success with everyone taking home several new Iris.

I hope everyone had a great holiday and a happy New Year.

Time to Fertilize Already? OH MY! By Peggy Cathey

It is hard to believe, but we are only 4 weeks away from time to fertilize our irises. A good reminder is Valentine's Day. Show your irises



some love by feeding them and getting them off to a great bloom season. Fertilizers recommended are low nitrogen fertilizers such as a 10-10-10 (or any fertilizer that has all three numbers are the same) or something like 10-20-10. Any good organic fertilizer will also work as it feeds the soil as well as the plants.

Irises need a lower nitrogen fertilizer because you are wanting flowers—not a lot of leaves.

Another great additive to the soil is Alfalfa pellets. These are the pellets made for horses, not for rabbits (rabbit pellets tend to have a lot of salt). Work this in and around the plants as best you can without disturbing the roots.

Be sure to put the fertilizer around the base of your irises, not on top of the rhizomes. The recommendation is 1 Tablespoon of fertilizer per rhizome and water it in.



This should be enough to get them through the bloom season. About 6 weeks after bloom (around Father's Day), fertilize them again before they go into their summer dormancy. Between mid September and Halloween, give your irises one last

shot of fertilizer before winter sets in. You won't see a lot of new growth on the surface, but below the ground, they are making new roots and tiny new increases will start to form.





Society

An affiliate of the American Iris Society

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Membership dues \$10/yr.

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We're on the Web!

[http://
www.kenfuchs42.net/
waco_index.html](http://www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html)

Website has been up-
dated—Check it out!



facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/
WacoIrisSociety](https://www.facebook.com/WacoIrisSociety)

Wordsearch: Iris Names Beginning with Winter

W

I N I S U N S H I N E Z H I P B M S T W D X D Z N C
G T G V Q C M Y K J I Y U G I A N T R I M A X Y F W
L R Q H T H E W A T C H M L X P M H Z N O A N L K C
A E O O J Z M B P Y T S O Y C A F J T E T M G C H Q
V A M V A C O M W Z Y S O Q D L A L F K H J V I E U
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E E Z T O R S I Z E N E W U L E Y I F A E L F C P A
F T K E E E X N I U Y H O R C D M B J G V G J I T K
X C C P M V D R Q R D C N Q H L P R E N H E U S R H
V H R M B E R A J N W M D A Y O I Y N N Q R N H P E
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R S A M E E S N R K N M A O H R N K R W D B T W C U
M V L A F L A M E O J D N D C D S T O U C S E S O T
O L F N O S K I E S S S D O E E O A H Q M D N N N P
A H L C P A I P G B R E E Z E N L D Y D K T N C V A
M U M E U L F B L U E S U R V W S V H C Y N O A E G
A H S T K S K G P U T Z R L Q J T E P M S A S L Q E
R N N G V S N O W F L A K E Q Y I N I Q A L J M M A
O Z N O F I U G I I B J S G A W C T N W T R X Y Q N
N R R D H B N R E K H O R Q X G E U E K N A N U P T
A T O Y K L E G I U U S Q J V V B R S J A E L J M E
P G M U X N W O O D L A N D S W S E H J F P O E T Z

Adventure	Dance	Flame	Light	Pearl	Snowflake	Wine
Bird	Dreams	Garden	Magic	Pines	Solstice	Wings
Blues	Dynasty	Giant	Memories	Queen	Song	Wonderland
Breeze	Echoes	Gold	Moon	Reverie	Sonnet	Woodlands
Calm	Embrace	Haven	Morn	Romance	Sunshine	
Camp	Etchings	Haze	Olympics	Rose	Treasure	
Carnival	Fantasy	Horizon	Pageant	Scene	Waltz	
Couture	Festival	Imp	Palace	Shadows	Watch	
Crystal	Fire	Lace	Panorama	Skies	White	

A Sad Goodbye By Peggy Cathey

We are all sad to have to say good-
bye to another club member.



Jerry Keeth
1950-2024

Jerry Keeth passed away peaceful-
ly in his sleep on January 10th.

Jerry might not have shared the
same gardening enthusiasm as his
wife, Mary was, but he supported
her in every way. He loved attend-
ing the meetings. Besides being
members of the Waco Iris Society,
they were also members of the John-
son County Iris & Daylily Society,
Lone Star Iris Society and the Fort
Worth Iris Society. They attended
AIS Region 17 Meetings and were

part of the "Tom Burseen Lunch
Bunch". He loved visiting with all
their iris friends from all over Texas.
He was a great 'kiddier' and could
always make me laugh. He didn't
mind speaking up at meetings when
there was something important to
say.

Please keep Jerry's family in your
prayers and especially Mary. She
will need our support to help her
through this time of grieving.