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July/August 2016 — Vol. 25 #7/8

Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors A Monthly Newsletter of the Iris Society of Austin

IRIS AUSTIN



NO MEETINGS JULY, AUGUST

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, September 6, 2016 7 P.M.
Greene Room
Pot Luck
**Iris Rhizomes: Pricing and
preparing for Sale of Sept. 10**

EVENTS:

**July 16 – Travis Co. Master Gardeners
Education**

**August 6 – Travis Co. Master
Gardeners Education**

**August 19-20 – “Bridging the Brazos
with Irises,” 2016 AIS/Region 17
Convention in Waco**

**August 20 – Travis Co. Beekeepers
Show and Sale**

**September 3 Austin Cactus &
Succulent Society Sale**

**September 10 – Rhizome Sale, Norris
Conference Center**

**September 17 Texas Bamboo Society
Show and Sale**

**MARCH 25-26, 2017
60th Zilker Garden Festival**

PREPARING RHIZOMES FOR THE SALE

The Iris Society of Austin will meet September 6 in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center in Zilker Botanical Garden at 6:45 P.M. to prepare rhizomes for the sale on September 10 in the Norris Conference Center near West Anderson Lane. This includes pricing and cleaning some dried foliage from the rhizomes.



If members dig clumps of bearded irises for the sale, please wash the plants in a weak Clorox/water solution, take off any dried foliage, and then cut the leaves in an inverted "V," leaving about 4 to 6 inches of foliage. Trim the roots, but always leave most of the root system on the rhizome. Each iris should have its name on a leaf that will remain on the iris for a length of time. Since these are dormant the newly-planted irises will continue to have some dried leaves on either side of the rhizome before new leaves emerge in the center of the "V."

Louisiana and Spuria irises should also be washed, wrapped in a wet paper towel or newspaper to keep the rhizomes damp, and then placed in a newspaper bag or other plastic bag fixed to the rhizome top with a rubber band and name tag with space for the price of the plant.

Pictures of the iris either named or unknown variety can help sell the plant.

When planting the bearded irises, prepare a raised bed by amending the soil with some bone meal and compost. Then place the rhizome on top of a tiny hill, spread the roots over the soil, and barely cover the rhizome. Usually an inch of soil over the fleshy root is fine because a deep watering of the new bed will expose the rhizome or as the roots hold in the soil, the rhizome will remain at the surface.

Louisiana irises are planted about 2 inches deep in soil that is slightly acidic. These rhizomes are kept damp and fed azalea food at least 3 times a year — September Labor Day, February Valentine's Day, and after they bloom.

Spuria irises need rose food scattered over the garden or around the wiry rhizomes as they emerge from dormancy and need water if it does not rain. Any dried foliage is usually removed in July. When the weather cools, these tall plants begin to grow again.

RHIZOME SALE SEPT. 10

The Iris Society of Austin will sell iris rhizomes on September 10 at 9 A.M. in the Norris Conference Center located at 2525 W. Anderson Lane in Austin, 78757. This air conditioned building is off Loop 1 near Northcross Mall and the Wal-Mart with plenty of parking near the front doors.

Ellen Singleton and Tracey Rogers look forward to having another profitable day by offering bearded varieties, Louisiana irises, and Spurias at reasonable prices. Many are grown locally.

Like Louisianas, these irises are heavy feeders and must be fed about 3 times a year. These plants should be planted about 2 inches deep in a separate bed. They are the tallest irises and they can remain in the same garden year after year. They do not have to be separated very often. The weather in 2015-16 really pleased spurias since most of them had beautiful tall bloom stalks for the April show.

All irises need to be planted and growing by the first frost in this area. Do not keep them in plastic bags very long. Do not overwater bearded irises since they can rot. A deep watering is necessary, but an every day sprinkling is not good at all. Avoid using a high nitrogen fertilizer near bearded irises.

For Louisiana irises if it does not rain, then dampen the soil around the rhizomes, but they do not have to stand in water. If planted in a container, then drill some holes in the top of the bucket to allow rain water to escape or purchase some mosquito dunks to place in the bucket when water stands.

Garden Work Day June 4, 2016

Tracey Rogers reports that ten ISA members worked in the new bed, weeding and cleaning up the bed. Volunteers included Don Freeman, Jaime Hadley, Shirley Friesen, Debbie Hood, Dara Smith, Nicholas Sadler, David Kraemer, Marney Abel, Tracey Rogers, and Ellen Singleton.

“Marney, Jaime and I signed all of us in on the volunteer sign in sheet in the Zilker library for 1.75 hours each. We started shortly before nine and wrapped up around 10:30. We didn't really count Nicholas, so it was a total of 15.75 hours for the Iris Society for the month of June.”



AIS REGION 17 CONVENTION AUGUST 19 AND 20 IN WACO

Perry Dyer of Blanchard, Oklahoma will be the guest speaker and instructor for Judges Training during the Heart of Texas 2016 AIS Region 17 Convention in Waco on Friday and Saturday, August 19 and 20, in the Hampton Inn and Suites Waco South located off I-35 in the middle of the shopping district. Perry Dyer is a hybridizer of many different kinds of irises including Arilbred 'Prince of Egypt,' Border Bearded 'Soft Spoken,' Intermediate, 'On Golden Pond,' Standard Dwarf Bearded, 'Helter Skelter,' 'Pumpkin Munchkin,' and 'Radioactive,' and Tall Bearded such as 'Aztec Sun,' 'Blazing Saddle,' 'Iron Butterfly,' 'Kitty Dyer,' 'Poetry in Motion,' and 'Pride of Oklahoma.'

Registration is now \$55 and \$60 after July 31. The three-hour Judges Training class for \$5 will be held Saturday morning.

The hotel room rate will be \$109 plus tax and includes a continental breakfast and free WI-FI.

Barbecue will be the evening meal for Friday while the Saturday banquet will be an Italian buffet. After the Saturday Judges Training, lunch is on your own at a nearby restaurant. A Hospitality Room in the Longhorn Board Room will be hosted by the Iris Society of Dallas. It is located near the Bluebonnet Room, where the banquet and meetings will be held. Make your payment for the registration for the convention to Waco Iris Society and send the check or credit card payment to Ken Fuchs, 710 N 11th Street, Temple, TX 76501-3016. kenfuchs42@hotmail.com E-Mail wacoiriss@gmail.com if you have any

questions. Peggy Cathey will assist since the Waco Iris Society will host this fun and educational meeting.

Officers of AIS Region 17 include the following RVP Dawn Boyer, Assistant RVP Peggy Cathey, Secretary Nelda Moore, Treasurer Ramona Howard, Judges Training Dana Brown, Youth Advocate Vicki Howard, Membership Peggy Cathey, Newsletter Debbie Strauss, Historian Jim Landers. Past RVP Gordon Carver is parliamentarian.

The American Iris Society Region 17 is made up of 15 affiliates: Belton, Benson, East Texas, Fort Worth, Iris Society of Austin, Iris Society of Dallas, Johnson County Iris-Daylily Society, Lone Star, North Plains, Permian Basin, Piney Woods, South Plains, Texoma Rainbow, Waco, and West Texas.

REGION 17 NOMINATING COMMITTEE for 2015 represented by Gordon Carver, Ramona Howard, Jim Landers, Vicki Howard, and Bonnie Nichols will present the following officers to be elected during the convention:

Region 17 Vice President (RVP) – Peggy Cathey
of Covington

Assistant RVP – Bonnie Nichols of Dallas

Treasurer – Connie Ford of Flint,

Secretary – Jerrie Cage of Hamilton.

To vote by ballot during the convention for one or more other consenting candidates for any of the above offices a petition submitted by 40 AIS members with not more than 15 in any one area must have been received by the RVP on or before July 1, 2016.

Nominations for outstanding youth of Region 17 must be postmarked by August 1 and sent to Vicki Howard, P.O. Box 113, Rio Vista, TX 76093.

Living at the End of the Road and Growing

Louisiana Irises

By Ron Killingsworth

[from The Blog of the American Iris Society
May 2016]

I spent most of my life in law enforcement. After I retired I started my own business in computer repair, satellite TV and appliance repair. Growing up on a farm, I knew a lot about raising crops but we grew crops to eat or sell, so flowers were not part of the process. My grandmother, however, always had flowers around her home and in her later years grew

many daylilies and even hybridized them. About 15 years ago my sister, Bobbie Ann, and her husband, Stan, decided to retire from Massachusetts and move back to Louisiana. She wanted to grow Louisiana Irises. They purchased 21 acres on historic Caddo Lake in Caddo Parish, Mooringsport, NW Louisiana, and we turned several acres into iris beds. It was hard work preparing all the beds, digging up thousands of irises from a defunct nursery in Garland, TX, and moving them to LA. But the first time they all bloomed I became a “flower nut”.

(Continued on the next page)

Minutes of the Iris Society of Austin
May 10, 2016

The meeting was called to order and presided by Pat Byrne. Minutes from last month's meeting were approved as presented in the ISA Newsletter with the correction that the motion for rhizome purchase is for Spuria and not Louisiana irises.

Announcements:

Region 17 meeting will be August 19-21, 2016 in Waco, TX. There is a registration form available on the Region 17 website (<http://www.aisregion17.org/images/Registration%20form.pdf>).

Treasurer's Report:

The balance at the end of April was \$14,076.62. Current expenses include rhizome orders for the Sept sale from Mid America, Blue Jay, and Comanche Acres.

AAGC Council Report:

The Zilker income generated from the ZGF will go to fund several projects including paving the lot at the back, adding a trail to the Bonsai garden, and renovations to Bev Shed.

Austin Iris Club business:

- ▶ Be sure to give Marney Able your volunteer hours for the ZGF and any work done in the gardens.
- ▶ In June, Marney will pay the AAGC Dues of \$10 per member on behalf of all the active ISA members.
- ▶ There will be an ISA Work Day at Zilker on June 4th, 2016.

- ▶ We will try to have a September meeting on the 6th before the sale that is scheduled for Sept 10th. There are no scheduled meetings for the months of June, July, and August.
- ▶ Nelda Moore handed out the Awards from AIS for the 2016 show.
- ▶ We recognized the contributions of members for this year's achievements for our Sale, Show, and architecture planning and preparation of the new garden bed at Zilker. Thank you, Ellen Singleton, Tracey Rogers, Bill Tamminga, D. Boyle, Donna Little, and Don and Pat Freeman.
- ▶ Hospitality sign-up sheet was passed around to prepare for the next year's meetings and pot-luck setup.

Important Dates:

2016 Region 17 Meeting, Waco, TX –
August 19-21, 2016.

ISA September Meeting – September 6th, 2016.

ISA Rhizome Sale at Norris Conference Center –
September 10, 2016

The meeting program was presented by Ken Fuchs:
The 2016 Belton Iris Show – “De Ja Vu”

The meeting was adjourned.

Dara E. Smith, Secretary

Submitted for Approval on: September 6, 2016.

About 13 years ago my wife Sue and I sold our home in a nearby village and built a home on the nursery property. Living at the end of the road means no cable TV, not fast internet service, electrical service that fails during heavy winds and a long drive for groceries. Nevertheless, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

Living on a commercial nursery where we grow thousands of Louisiana irises, 450 varieties of daylilies, many fruit trees and lots of wild flowers makes for a bit of heaven right here on earth. During April I can sit on my front porch and view hundreds of irises and many fruit trees in bloom.

Caddo Lake is a remarkable result of nature. The

bald cypress trees and Spanish moss are not only hauntingly lovely but they are also amazing because of their ability to live in the water and produce cypress knees.

This area of the property is near the “rock pond.” These large sand stone rocks are often dug up at various locations around the property, especially when trying to dig a bed for irises. I tried to dig the large rock in the middle of the pond but could not move it with the backhoe. So, I just dug out a pond around it.

You can learn more about Louisiana irises at the Society for Louisiana Irises web site:

<http://www.louisianas.org/> .

Living at the End of the Road and Growing Louisiana Irises:
Photos by Ron Killingsworth



Caddo Lake, a water fowl refuge and natural lake in NW LA.



Caddo Lake in NW Louisiana and NE Texas



Large clump of tetraploid Louisiana irises with Caddo Lake in the background



Rock Pond

Our fairy house built by Donna Little in May as part of the Fairy Trail at Zilker
Pictures by D. Boyle

