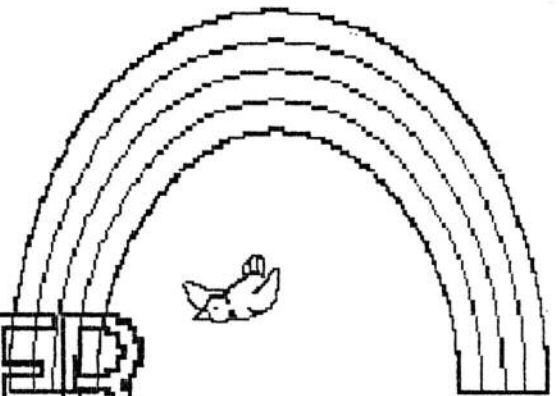


# TEXAS RAINBOW NEWSFLYER



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1989

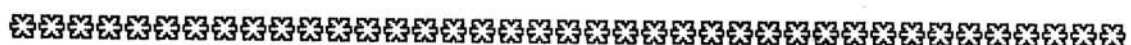
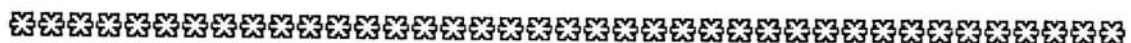
L DRAGON, EDITOR

## ISA OFFICERS

## NBIS OFFICERS

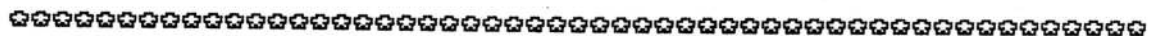
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## MEETINGS

IRIS SOCIETY OF AUSTIN WILL MEET AT THE AUSTIN AREA GARDEN  
 CENTER (ZILKER PARK) AT 7:30pm ON JANUARY 10 , 1989 .



THE NEW BRAUNFELS IRIS SOCIETY WILL MEET AT THE FIRST FEDERAL  
 SAVINGS AND LOAN OFFICE IN NEW BRAUNFELS AT 7:30 pm ON JANUARY  
 17 , 1989 .

*DON'T FORGET TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR  
 SO YOU WILL NOT MISS THE NEXT IRIS  
 MEETING .*

# IRIS SHOWS

Plans are underway for the ISA and NBIS Shows . My thanks goes to Jim Landers (ISA member from Temple ) , I received word that Jim has already drawn up a "good" draft of the show schedule . I have been asked and have consented to be show chairperson for NBIS . I have been working on the schedule and will have it ready to mail to AIS for their approval in January .

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## ***EVERY PERSON IN AN ORGANIZATION IS KEY TO ITS WORKING EFFICIENTLY .***

### **Am I Really Needed ?**

Even though my typewriter is an old model , it works well except for one of the keys . I wish many times that it worked perfectly . True there are 42 keys that function , but one key not working makes the difference .

Sometimes , it seems to me that our organization is somewhat like my typewriter - not all the people are working properly . You might say , "well , I'm only one person . It won't make much difference ." But you see , an organization , to be efficient , needs the active participation of every person . The next time you think your efforts aren't needed , remember my typewriter , and say to yourself . " I am a key person and they need me very much ."

This little essay was printed in my favorite newspaper( Austin American-Statesman)

**Dec 11,1988 Ann Landers column** . Ann wrote an intro - stating that this essay drives home the point , in a forceful manner , that each of us is an important part of a bigger picture . She also suggests that one should keep this handy and reread it when you get to feeling insignificant . You do count . And if you doubt it , read this a second time .

I would like to add my thoughts to this - I feel that we have some very good workers in both Societies and this is not to be taken as a "dig" towards anyone . But I felt this little gem was too good not to share with those of you who may not have read it . This bit of philosophy could be applied to just about every life situation : home , work , love , friendship and etc.

## TELL ME , JUST WHAT DO I DO NOW ?

That seems to be the most asked question by new gardeners and or gardeners new to growing Irises . In this case Tall bearded irises . I will try to pass on some hints - things that have worked for me as well as some that seem to be working for other iris growers .

Winter watering is critical if moisture has been low during the season . I do try to water about every 2 weeks or so - if there has not been any rain . Of course I water my rebloomers more often than I do the oncens . I have been rewarded with fall bloom from most of my rebloomers . Some are still sending up bloom stalks .

If you have not been "cleaning up" your beds as the need arises ( I try to - but they do seem to get ahead of me) now is the time to make a special effort to get your iris beds cleaned of dead iris leaves and any other debris that may have collected around those rhizomes - you do not want a haven for insect eggs , disease , etc.

If your irises do not start to green-up (send up new growth) by the end of January , you just might have irises suffering from Botrytis or perhaps better known as "winter rot" , this rot does not have an odor - but the tell-tell signs are a sooty looking mold on the surface of the top of the rhizome . I have seen it on my irises and since I try to use poisons as little as possible - I usually dig and discard the affected rhizome(s) , unless it happens to be an expensive rhizome . Then I will dig it and soak it in a bleach solution ( approx . 8 parts water to one part bleach ) . I use a soft vegetable brush to remove the sooty layer - let it dry and then re-plant the rhizome(s) in another location or pot the rhizome(s) .

In mid- February you may want to start a fertilizer program . DO NOT use a fertilizer with a high nitrogen count . I scatter a little Superphosphate around my iris rhizomes ( I have too many to work it around each rhizome or clump) . This I water in . Since this is a slow release fertilizer , about a month later I use a very weak solution of Rapid-gro as a foliar feed . If I see signs of aphids , I may add Malathion to the Rapid-gro mixture to control the aphids . If I do not see any - then I forget the poison and just cross my fingers and hope the little boogers find something better to their liking . The very best defense against pests and diseases is to grow strong , healthy plants in a clean bed . An iris ( and any other plant for that matter ) is like a human being in that respect - if it is weak and poorly nourished , it is almost certain to become the victim of disease .

Whatever method you use , remember that irises will do well with neglect , but will respond much better with some TLC on your part . Come bloom time you will be proud of the reward that you receive .