

The

TEXAS RAINBOW NEWSFLYER



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L. Dragon, Editor

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This space was reserved for article no one sent to editor. There is a wealth of iris knowledge out there, please share it. Send me an article. L. D.

CLEAN UP TIME

At this time many of us still have T.B. irises in bloom . But the time is near for that back-breaking work of cleaning up the iris beds . It seems that all things worthwhile take a little more effort on our part and that includes our favorite flower . I try to pick off the spent blooms as I take a leisurely walk through my iris garden . This helps tidy up the plants and also helps prevent rot from setting in the stalks . As soon as the iris plant has finished blooming an effort should be made to remove all old bloomstalks from the plant . I use a sharp knife to cut the bloomstalks as close to the rhizome as possible . Cutting on a slant helps to prevent water from "standing" on top of the cut and thus avoids the possibility of soft rot attaching the rhizome . It is also a good idea to test the rhizome for "soft rot" . The rotting is caused by a bacteria , known as *Erwinia carotovora* , which gain entrance through wounds in the rhizomes or the leaf bases . I simply press the rhizome after I have finished cutting the bloomstalks . It should be firm to the touch . Sometimes I get a "small shock" as I feel the rhizome give to my touch or when some "smelly goop" squirts out . Never the less this is a necessary test if you want to keep healthy irises growing in your garden . If and when you find an iris that is affected by "soft rot" , you should carefully dig the soil away from the rhizome . Use an old teaspoon or something similar to scrap the foul smelling soft rot from the affected iris rhizome . You need to scrap until you see firm tissue . Then dust with cleanser containing bleach . The cleanser helps absorb excess moisture and the bleach acts as a disinfectant . This may save the rhizome . If it fails and the rhizome continues to go down hill , then you might want to dig and re-plant in a new location or even "pot it". Also one should carefully remove the dried leaves - but please for the sake of the plants - do not tear green healthy leaves from the rhizomes . You can trim leaves below damaged areas if you like , but do not fan the leaves just for the sake of appearances . Try to leave as much iris leaves as possible as the leaves help manufacture food for future increases . The only time the leaves should be fanned (or cut short - straight across - or even at a slant) is when they are dug and transplanted . At this time the roots may even be cut very short , as they will dry up anyway and the rhizome will send out new roots as it is getting established in its new soil or location . The reason for cutting the leaves at this time is to keep the plant from being top heavy and toppling over after it is planted in very loose soil . At least that is the way I see it . I have an on going battle with weeds and "wild flowers " that invade my iris garden area . In the past I have used Treflan (which is a seed inhibitor) and it worked nicely to keep down the number of weeds . It is good for about 6 months and I seem to forget to re-apply it . But one should try to pull the invading weeds as they provide a host for many different insects that will eventually decide to taste the iris leaves . After you have cleaned up the iris beds and the irises as well you might want to use an insecticide (if you feel it is necessary) as a protection against unwanted attacks from insects . However I do not like to use too many poisons - so I feel that if I have a clean garden the insects will have to go elsewhere for their meals .

THANKS TO BEA

I would like to say thanks to **Beatrice McMahon** (and I am sure all NBIS members agree) for a job well done . Beatrice compiled information from all past 24 shows , this I know must have been very time consuming . This information was noted on a large poster that was displayed at our Twentieth Anniversary Show .

1989 IRIS SHOWS

We had two nice iris shows, even though they were small. If we had been able to predict the weather we could have had each show a week or two later, as that is when most of us had peed bloom. But who was to know that ole Mother Nature had a nasty trick up her sleeve. We all experienced the worst possible weather for irises. Late winter temperatures, cloudy days, driving rain and hail storms. Oh well there's always next year, it just has to be better. I hope every one had their camera handy and took lots of pictures of their beautiful iris blooms.

NEW BRAUNFELS IRIS SOCIETY TWENTY - FIFTH IRIS SHOW

New Braunfels Iris Society held their 25th Iris Show Saturday, April 15, 1989 at the First United Methodist Church parish meeting hall. A number of our members worked hard to make this an extra special show. Many brought their favorite iris memorabilia and displayed them on tables set up in the large room. Florence Flesher created an Educational Exhibit that was both interesting and appealing to the eyes. Tom and Dottie Holmes hung many iris painting that were furnished by local area artists. We were fortunate to have the use of colorful table covers, thanks to the First United Methodist Church, that added a festive touch to our show.

AND NOW ON TO THE WINNERS

SWEEPSTAKES went to **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

RUNNER - UP - SORRY but I didn't get that information.

BEST SPECIMEN was **NAVAJO JEWEL** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**

RUNNER - UP was **MIKAL** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

BEST VIOLET was **TOP EXECUTIVE** grown by **KENNETH TRIESCH**.

BEST PALE (RED) was **LADY FRIEND** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**

BEST YELLOW was **SPRING ROMANCE** grown by **MARY ELLEN HEESCHE**.

BEST BLUE was **COMING ATTRACTION** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

BEST BI-COLOR was **CHINESE TREASURE** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

BEST PLOCATA was **TOUCH UP** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

BEST COLLECTION was awarded to **AUTUMN ECHO** grown by **GRACE** and **MARVIN SCHAEFER**.

BEST LOUISIANA was **MIKAL** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

BEST MEDIAN was **CHERRY DROPS** grown by **BERNIECE** and **CLYDE IKINS**.

BEST SEEDLING (A PALE LAVENDER - BLUE T. B.) was grown by **LORRAINE** and **RAY DRAGON**.

EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT designed by **FLORENCE FLESHER** received a blue ribbon.

IRIS SOCIETY OF AUSTIN FIRST IRIS SHOW

We held our first accredited iris show Sunday April 16, 1989 at the Austin Area garden Center. We all worked hard setting up and arranging tables. We had several display tables that had iris literature as well as iris memorabilia. Our awards table looked especially lovely with the added touch of a banner of Royal Blue with the name of our society in white letters. An appliqued pink iris was very eye catching. Several people were involved in the creation of this banner. But a special thanks goes to the lady who put it all together. Thanks **BEVERLY**. We had a lovely **ARTISTIC DESIGN** thanks to **PAT FREEMAN'S** diligent efforts.

AND THE WINNERS ARE

SWEEPSTAKES went to **LORRAINE** and **RAY DRAGON**.

RUNNER - UP went to **JIM LANDERS**.

BEST SPECIMEN was **WHITE RAIMENT** grown by **LORRAINE** and **RAY DRAGON**

RUNNER - UP was **DAZZLING GOLD** grown by **LORRAINE** and **RAY DRAGON**

BEST VIOLET was **TOURNAMENT QUEEN** grown by **JIM LANDERS**.

BEST YELLOW was **WELL ENDOWED** grown by **JIM LANDERS**.

BEST Bi - COLOR was **SKY HOOKS** grown by **JIM LANDERS**.

BEST BI - TONE was **SNOW CLOUD** grown by **HARVEY WILSON**.

BEST PLICATA was **SHOWCASE** grown by **PAT** and **DON FREEMAN**

BEST COLLECTION was **BELVI QUEEN** grown by **LORRAINE** and **RAY DRAGON**

EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT designed by **LORRAINE** and **RAY DRAGON** received a blue ribbon.

ARTISTIC DESIGN DIVISION

SWEEPSTAKES was awarded to **PAT FREEMAN**.

BEST DESIGN was awarded to **PAT FREEMAN**.

MASTER JUDGES

Both iris societies were indeed fortunate to have 2 Master Judges come to judge our shows. Our thanks go to **JOHNNIE** and **OTIS SKINNER** for 2 well done judging jobs. I know there are many ISA members who gleaned useful iris information from both Johnnie and Otis.

A NOTE FROM THE PAST

SNOW FLURRY, hybridized and introduced in 1939, by **CLARA REES** has a pronounced ruffling and passes this trait to its offsprings. Many modern day irises have **SNOW FLURRY** genes.

IRIS SOCIETY MEETINGS

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THE IRIS SOCIETY OF AUSTIN will meet on MAY 9, 1989 at 7:30 pm in the Green Room at the AUSTIN AREA GARDEN CENTER in ZILKER PARK . We will install our officers for the 1989/1990 season.

We will have a covered dish supper . So plan to come out at 6:00 pm and bring your favorite covered dish food if you want to "eat out".

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THE NEW BRAUNFELS IRIS SOCIETY will not have a May meeting , but plans are in the making for a " field trip " to visit the SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL CENTER . This should be an interesting trip . My son and I went there last Spring and the plants and flowers were just out of this world .

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PLANS ON IN THE MAKING FOR A 25th ANNIVERSARY BANQUET IN JULY .  
More about this next issue .

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Tall bearded irises can tolerate dry soil and seem to be unaffected by drought in summer during their semi-dormant stage .

However the ones that bloom more than once a year (rebloomers) must be fed and watered more often than those that bloom only one time . Otherwise they will perform as " oncers " . I would suggest feeding them a low nitrogen fertilizer after they quit spring blooming and of course water it in well .