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November 2012 — vol 21 #11

Nelda Moore, Editor

A Monthly Newsletter of the Iris Society of Austin

IRIS AUSTIN

next ISA meeting >>>

Iris Society of Austin Meeting
Tuesday November 13, 2012
6:45 pm (*gates close at 7:00*)

Late? call 477-8672 ext 13

Zilker Garden Center
2220 Barton Springs Rd
Austin TX 78746

- Special Thanksgiving Potluck Supper
(*Club will provide ham and turkey.*
Members bring an appropriate side dish.)
- Business Meeting
- Entertainment will be a special game called "RIZOM". Each member should bring a small white elephant type gift to be given as a game prize

next AAGC meeting >>>

Austin Area Garden Council Meeting
Tuesday November 13, 2012
10:00 am
Zilker Garden Center
Nelda Moore – ISA representative

upcoming events >>>

Dec 2012 – No ISA Meeting

- Jan 8, 2013 – ISA Meeting
- Feb 12, 2013 – ISA Meeting
- Mar 12, 2013 – ISA Meeting
- Mar 30, 2013 – Annual Iris Show
- Apr 15-20, 2013 – AIS Nat'l Conv



2013 AIS Convention

a short drive to Addison, TX

The American Iris Society National Convention will be hosted by the Iris Society of Dallas, and held April 15-20, 2013 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 14315 Midway Rd, Addison, TX 75001. The hotel can be reached at 972-980-8877, and be sure to request the "IS3" room rates.

Full adult registration for the convention includes Welcome and Awards Banquets, bus transportation to tour ten different gardens, Judges Training, an AIS flower show and a Convention Book. Registration fees are \$299 by February 1, \$349 by March 1, and \$399 by April 1. Full Youth registration (18 and under) is \$150 by February 1, \$200 by March 1, and \$250 by April 1. Banquets only are \$50 each until April when the meals are \$60 each.

On April 17 the Welcome Banquet will offer choices of chicken Florentine, smoked brisket, or a vegetarian plate. On April 20 the choices for the Awards Banquet will be pesto chicken, sirloin steak, or vegetarian. Special requests will be

accepted for special dietary needs.

For those who wish to register at the same hotel for the Society for Louisiana Iris National Convention that runs April 21-23, you can get the same special rate as that of the AIS Convention, however a separate convention registration is required. Make plans now to attend both conventions to get the best prices!

Send registration forms and payment for both conventions to Dell Perry, 800 Purcell Drive, Plano, TX 75025 or call 972-816-3418. Visit the Iris Society of Dallas website at www.irises-dallas.org for more information on both conventions and to print registration forms.

Other attractions near the convention include:

- Farmers Branch Historical Park
- Dallas Arboretum
- Museum of Biblical Arts
- Dallas Zoo
- Texas Rangers Ballpark
- Dallas Cowboys Football Stadium
- Six Flags Over Texas

Much Going On At Zilker

ISA HOSTS NEXT MEETING

On Tuesday, November 13, at 9:30am the Iris Society of Austin and Town Lake Garden Club will serve as hosts for the Austin Area Garden Council in the auditorium, 2220 Barton Springs Road.

ADOPT-A-GARDEN ALERT

For clubs that have adopted a garden to weed, plant, and nurture it is time to report to Liz McVeety concerning any extra care needed such as soil or fertilizer before winter.

AAGC OPEN HOUSE

The recent AAGC Open House was a successful event that enabled the public to visit the gardens and the club displays of plants, photographs, and publicity materials in the auditorium on September 28. Next year the event will be held Saturday, September 21, 2013. Mrs. Alsup asked for any suggestions for any changes that need to be made since

she also represents Outreach for AAGC.

ZILKER IMPROVEMENTS

TBG Partners and Evan Taniguchi have been developing a master plan for Zilker Botanical Gardens free of charge. They have suggested that a greenhouse could be near the exit door on the south side overlooking the green lawn and the Violet Crown Fountain. This would showcase orchids, violets, and any tender plants. They also would like a small building for classrooms and creative designs in the Oak Grove or the Escarpment Trail.

ZILKER GARDEN FESTIVAL

The Grow Green Program, which is under the Watershed Protection Department of Austin headed by Jessica Wilson, will provide \$10,000 to the festival for the road closure fees associated with permits and traffic protection by the police.

Grow Green publishes a popular free booklet about native plants and trees for Central Texas, and hosts festivals several times a year to educate citizens about caring for the environment and water conservation. Donna Friedenreich, president of AAGC Board of Directors, will meet about road closures October 10. Donna has selected Cathy Wood to be chairman of Vendors.

TICKET PRICES CHANGED

The club representatives voted to decrease the price of admission to the Zilker Garden Festival because vendors felt their sales were down in recent years due to the high cost for entrance for large families. Tickets for adults were reduced to \$7. Children ages 5 to 12 will enter for \$3. Club tickets will be \$3 each, and each club will be expected to pay for every ticket in the packet. Tickets for the public can be purchased online through Pay Pal.

fall rebloom >>>

Remember to report any fall rebloom in your garden to the AIS Region 17 liaison to the Reblooming Iris Society, Jim Landers. Jim shares information about all rebloomers in Texas with the RIS and they compile reports of rebloom across the entire country.

Often fall rebloom in Central Texas produces flowers on shorter stalks and usually fewer blooms per stalk. Fall blooms don't always last as long as spring blooms, and especially when the weather is cold, fall blooms can lack substance.



above: Hand Painted (TB Re) – Monty Byers, 1990
A specimen like the one above bloomed for Ellen Singleton in November



right: Clarence (TB Re) – Lloyd Zurbrigg, 1990
Jaime Hadley reports that this year is his best fall rebloom ever, with Clarence, City Lights, Autumn Circus, and Harvest of Memories all blooming

Siberian Irises in TX?

Daphne Richards from KLRU's Central Texas Gardener, said on the "Down to Earth" segment of the May 21, 2011, show that she grows *Iris sibirica* 'Ruffled Velvet' in her yard in central Texas. She says she has them planted in a location that is perpetually wet and gets almost no sun, yet for her they grow and even bloom.

There is a Section of the American Iris Society called the Society for Siberian Irises, and the AIS has given the Morgan-Wood Medal (previously the Morgan Award) to top Siberian Irises since 1952. Most commercial sources for Siberian irises are in northern states, but the Society's website does list one display garden in Texas, that of Diana Winship, in Richardson.

The Society for Siberian Irises website gives the following information for Siberian Iris culture; just keep in mind they may be talking mostly to growers in northern states.



Ruffled Velvet (SIB) – Currier McEwen, 1973

Morgan Award 1980

SOIL: Siberians perform well in most garden soils, but do best if you

provide a rich soil containing liberal amounts of organic material, with a mildly acidic pH of 6.0 - 7.0. If your soil tends to be over 7.5 pH, working in sulfur, or acidic organic material such as pine needles or Canadian peat will help increase acidity.

FERTILIZER: Requirements vary depending on your garden soil, but most successful growers use a balanced fertilizer, such as 10-10-10, or a 14-14-14. Fertilize in early spring, and again after bloom season, to encourage growth for next year. Many use foliar feedings monthly with a soluble fertilizer such as Miracid.

SUN & MOISTURE: In northern states, Siberians do best in full sun, or at minimum six hours of sunshine. In hot southern areas, protection from the mid-day sun is often a requirement. They enjoy lots of moisture in spring, and will do best if given a minimum of one inch per week during the balance of the growing season, so plant them with other perennials, such as daylilies which also need constant moisture to keep doing their best. They tolerate, but do not appreciate, summer drought.

Jaime Hadley has had *Iris sibirica* 'Caesar's Brother' in his back yard for a couple of years, but they do not thrive, never getting more than a couple of leaves a few inches tall. After hearing Daphne's thoughts, he is considering trying them in a boggy spot next to the Louisiana Iris.

Iris Society of Austin Meeting
Tuesday October 9, 2012

ISA President Marney Abel called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the September meeting were approved with 2 corrections: was rhizomes before planting in mixture of 1part bleach to 10 parts water (not 4) and the product discussed was BioZone (not BioZone).

Tracey Rogers read the report from the Rhizome Sale and reported an additional \$432 in income from rhizome sales since the sale.

Nelda Moore reported on the AAGC meeting and asked for volunteers to help the ISA host the next meeting on Nov 13.

Nelda toured the back iris beds on the day of the AAGC open house, and since then both she and Don have volunteered time weeding and cleaning those beds. Nelda also reported having turned in around 158 volunteer hours on behalf of the ISA for work related to the Region 17 convention. Marney, Jim & Don have all been speakers for other groups and need to turn in those volunteer hours.

Stephanie Sheridan will coordinate Hospitality for the November ISA meeting.

Don Freeman's horticulture tips... For crown rot you can mix the antibacterial soap with water and soak or rub it on full strength, scrape away

continued on next page

Plant Now

Plant bearded and Louisiana irises that you purchased this fall as soon as possible in well-drained soil amended with bone meal or super phosphate. Do not plant them too deeply before watering them well and then letting the raised bed dry before watering deeply again.

For those that are about twelve inches apart but seem to be very thick and covered with dead leaves

and other debris, clean them by gently pulling the dried foliage that is resting on the rhizomes. Water them well after placing a handful of fertilizer around the rhizomes. By leaving the mass of vegetation over the rhizome, the irises can rot when the rains come.

Louisiana irises can be cleaned, weeded, and fed with acid soil or azalea fertilizer.

Did You Know?

Did you know that the Knowlton Medal is restricted to border bearded irises (BB)? Harold W Knowlton (1888-1968) joined the American Iris Society Board of Directors in 1949. For twelve years this Harvard lawyer served as a leader, planner, and organizer. As seventh president (1953-1955) he saw rapid growth and many changes in the society. He reorganized the AIS awards system to provide the emerging specialty groups freedom to function within the AIS family. He instituted the first Handbook for Judges and the handbook for new members entitled "What Every Iris Grower Should Know." In 1959 he also compiled the Check List. AIS awarded Knowlton the Distinguished Service Medal in 1955 and the Gold Medal of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1963 for his iris display in the Boston Show. Is it any wonder why this medal is called the Knowlton Medal!

Did you know that Lynda Miller's 'Bangles' (MTB) is the only iris to win both the President's Cup (1997) and the Franklin Cook Cup (1995)?

Did you know that Rudolph Hanselmayer was the most important distributor of iris species in the mid-twentieth century? Around 1952 he had the largest collection of bearded species in Europe. He collected the first good clear yellow pumila at the risk of being shot in a military zone.

Did you know that sometimes it takes 19 years for an iris to bloom.

Did you know "orris root" is a term used for the roots of *Iris germanica*, *Iris florentina*, and *Iris pallida*. Once important in western herbal medicine, it is now used mainly as a fixative and base note in perfumery, as well as an ingredient in many brands of gin. It is also the most widely-used fixative for potpourri.

soft spots first and clean hands and tool often. Coffee grounds and diatomaceous earth both repel pillbugs, and black pepper seems to keep cats out of the garden.

The Hensleys invited members to visit their garden on Sunday, 10/14.

Ken Fuchs presented a program on the 2012 AIS Convention, CaliZona Gold.

The November meeting will include a holiday potluck, and a rousing game of Rizom!

submitted by Jaime Hadley

november guest >>>

Sheila Senghas is excited to welcome to our November meeting her friend, Mona French, Iris Judge and Hybridizer from Oklahoma City.



above: Bountiful Harvest (TB Re) – Ben Hager, 1991
bloomed in November for Ellen Singleton



above: Total Recall (TB Re) – Ben Hager, 1992
bloomed in October for Tracey Rogers