

# Tucson Area Iris Society



March 2016  
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President– Kristee West  
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**TUCSONIRIS.ORG**

## *President's Message:*

I was pleased to have 21 people at our February meeting and hope that you enjoyed Jean Richter's presentation about Novelty Iris as much as I did. I was sorry that we didn't record it, because several people indicated that they had trouble hearing. We will have to check with the libraries to determine whether they have sound equipment that we can use.

Our March 12th meeting will be a morning meeting starting with bagels, donuts and coffee at 9am and Ron Coleman, speaking about our sister flower, the Orchid, at 10 am. Please come prepared to sign up for March 19th work day to assist us in moving our storage unit from the hot unit at E24 to the south side, cooler unit H2. There aren't many heavy items, but I hope that Bob Foltz will be there with his truck. There is a dolly in the unit and I will also bring mine. The storage unit is at 4500 E. Speedway Blvd, just west of Swan Blvd.

If you would like to take home a box of bottles for the April Exhibit, you would find it much easier to transport your flowers to the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library Exhibit on April 9th. Remember, each member who brings at least 3 irises to the Exhibit will receive a Club Iris to grow and evaluate for 2 years at the Auction in August, as your reward for participation. If you are unable to participate at the Exhibit, please look for other opportunities to volunteer.

These irises will be purchased from Mid-America Gardens and will be recent introductions from Paul Black and Thomas Johnson. Their website is on-line already, if you want to see what they might be choosing to send us.

While I was to write this on February 25th, I walked to the east window and saw new stalks growing on 2 of my first year irises. They are both re-bloomers, so I am not sure whether this is last year's bloom coming late, or this year's spring bloom coming early. My yard has several micro-climates and I am growing my irises in raised beds, pots and self-watering pots, so it might be either one.

I started my pre-bloom season fertilizing on Valentine's Day. Hope you did too!

*Kristee*



## Beverly Sills

Hybridizer: Ben Hager

1979

Coral Pink standards and falls.

Dykes Medal winner 1985

Early/ mid season. Heavy bloomer.

Constantly voted in the top 100 favorite iris over the years. In 2014, voters placed this iris at #18

**Beverly Sills** has long since celebrated its 30 years in our gardens and has become a historical iris.

### What's in a name?

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Right!

A note from your editor.

Kristee and I have been having a friendly, on-going debate over the plural use of the word "iris." She often uses the plural "irises" and I use the plural "iris". According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, both forms are correct. So, no matter on which side of the fence you choose to sit, it is the same beautiful flower. Potato, potahto, tomato, tomahto, let's call the who thing off. Geez, I'm glad we got that resolved!

### Things to mark on your calendar this month:

**March 12th** General Meeting with Business session to follow.

9:00 am. Set-up and Socialize with morning snacks provided.

10:00 am to 11:30 am speaker. **Ron Coleman, author of Wild Orchids of AZ and New Mexico.**

Dusenberry-River Library 5605 E River Road (520) 594-5345



#### March 19th.

Move from storage unit E-25 to H-2 where our items will be a bit more protected from the intense summer heat. This will take about 45 minutes.

**Any volunteers? 7:30 am. March 19th. [Call Roger 300-6367]**

**March** – A tentative event. TAIS **Member's Open Gardens** TBA by flyer.



## Birthdays to Celebrate

Kristee West	March 7th
Celia Keener	March 14
Steven Ginter	March 14
Paul Bessey	March 23

**Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm holding up until your back gets used to it.**

Author unknown

### **Some advance thoughts on our September rhizome sale.**

This sale is our only real chance to raise money for TAIS. How we do it and what we do has a lot of impact on our success.

A beautiful photo of the iris can help arouse interest in our buyers. Not knowing what the iris will look like in bloom can stop a sale cold.

### **What do you members think of this idea?**

- Provide us an E-mail list of your proposed donated rhizomes in July.
- Provide a great 4 x 6 high resolution photo and we save it to disc.
- We'll print quality copies of the iris and laminate them for protection.
- At the sale, photos will be exhibited with the iris. Voila! Sold!

This will only work if we pre-plan our efforts early in the summer and we communicate with each other. May we have your thoughts? This quite do-able at very little cost to us.

Also, what do you think of having a **marking party** to clean and label the rhizomes? I've always found it to be a fun social event, a chance to visit with other members, and the members donating the iris don't get stuck with cleaning and trimming all of them. We could probably even afford to provide lunch.

## What is a Dykes Medal Winner?



2016 Dykes Medal winner. TB **GYPSY LORD**  
**Keith Keppel—Oregon. Introduced 2006**  
**This is his 6th Dykes Medal Winner**

## The American Dykes Memorial Medal

This is one of the highest awards judged by the American Iris Society Judges. It is awarded by the British Iris Society in honor of William Rickatson Dykes to the best iris developed by an American hybridizer. The candidates are chosen from the AIS Medal winners that have been bred by American (US & Canadian) Hybridizers. The Medal winners are the best irises in their class. So, this is the best of the best. The British Iris Society also presents Dykes Medals to Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and previously France.

Iris are eligible as a Dykes Medal candidate for three years following the winning of a classification medal and all the classifications are eligible.

## We are Region 15.

The American Iris Society has divided America into districts, or regions. Arizona falls into region 15 along with Southern California.

The very first regional meeting was held April 22, 1939 and the region has been going strong ever since. Currently, there are 10 affiliates. Of course, education and sharing a love of iris is the goal of everyone involved. Spring and Fall Treks insure that there are plenty of great opportunities to start your training as a judge, or just participate in the garden tours.

**SAN FERNANDO SPRING TREK— SWEET SIXTEEN IN 2016**  
April 15th and 16th in Burbank.

For more information relating to Region 15 activities, please visit.

**[region15ais.org](http://region15ais.org)**



### Top 10 favorites from the AIS list of 100

2014	2013	Name	Hybridizer	Introduced
1	1	Dusky Challenger	Schreiner	1986
2	5	Jesse's Song	Williamson	1983
3	2	Queen's Circle	F. Kerr	2000
4	8	Gypsy Lord	K. Keppel	2006
5	3	Florentine Silk	K. Keppel	2005
6	7	That's All Folks	B. Mayott	2005
7	10	Daughter of the Stars	D. Spoon	2001
8	9	Thorn Bird	M. Byers	1989
9	4	Conjuration	M. Byers	1989
10	27	Stairway to Heaven	L. Lauer	1983





Photo courtesy of Tony Kutz

## Novelty Iris Presentation

Dussenberg-River Library

Our guest speaker, Jean Richter, from Northern California, presented an interesting visual presentation of that group of iris considered to be novelties. Included were “flatties” and other varieties. The work of Lloyd Austin was highlighted as he was the first to hybridize the iris we have come to know as the space age iris. In 1950, his first “space age” was offered at the unheard of price of \$100.

There were 21 guests in attendance for our meeting. Our Hospitality Host (Angela Powers) brought a birthday cake to celebrate those members born in January, February and March. We will continue that tradition each quarter in the future. Thanks also to Diane Tweedy for the water, Shirley Andrews for the delicious brownies and Melania for the snack tray.



**Spring arrives early in Yuma.** The photo of the buds was taken 1/27 in Yuma where it was planted and by 2/1 it was already in bloom. This iris was planted just after our 2015 September sale. Recipe? I soaked the rhizome in stimulator solution at the time of planting, tossed in some low nitrogen fertilizer and just added water..... and four months later!

Roger Osgood, editor

## Hawaiian Sunrise– Michael Sutton 2015

Rebloomer– Mid to late season (Iris being grown for TAIS)



Photos:  
Courtesy of  
Steven  
Ginter

