

TAIS Newsletter

Our 53rd year

Tucson Area Iris Society—established 1965

An Affiliate of the American Iris Society



'Midnight Haze'

(G. Sutton 2011)

Marcusen Sculpture Garden,
Prescott

Photo by Sue Clark, 2018

President's Message

Thank you, thank you to everyone who helped at our rhizome sale. You are amazing. Kristee's sale organization efforts paid off handsomely. We had a lot of satisfied customers and a full house for Kristee's culture presentation, as well as contributed to our budget, added some new members, and distributed a number of new introductions for our club iris program.

Now that my iris are starting to grow, and a stalk of 'Double Time' is in bloom, I'm starting to think about next spring's flowers.

I'll be showing everybody's iris photos from last spring at our October meeting. Come and vote for your favorites.

- Kevin Kartchner

"Listen! The wind is rising, and the air is wild with leaves. We have had our Summer evenings, now for October Eves!" - Humbert Wolf

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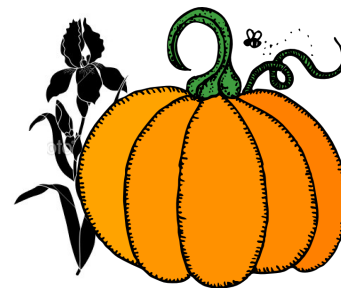
Upcoming Events

Next meeting: October 13, 1 PM. 1st Annual TAIS Photo Contest. Murphy-Wilmot Branch Library, small room, 530 N Wilmot Road. See details on the poster on page 8.

November 10 meeting: doors open at noon - Meeting, Installation of Officers, Awards, Pot Luck - 1 PM. Murphy-Wilmot Branch Library, small room, 530 N Wilmot Road.

Birthday Wishes to:

Tony Kutz Pam McConnaughey
Melania Kutz Lucille Skerston
Sally Vega



Recap of the Rhizome Sale



Our annual Rhizome Sale was a great success! Kristee did a fine job of spearheading the sale and was ably assisted by Bonnie, Susan, Cathy, Sue, Martin, Melania, Tony, Sam, Kevin, Diane, Angela, Madeleine, and Pam.

Last year we ran out early, so this time we ordered rhizomes from The Shady Spot, Fleur-de-Lis Iris Garden, Napa Country Irises, and Lauer's Flowers. And we had plenty, with nine tables stuffed full including an entire table of rebloomers! Members who donated their extra rhizomes included Madeleine, Melania and Tony, Bonnie, and Cathy. Kristee brought some excess rhizomes from her former club's sale in Mesilla Valley for us to sell.

The highly anticipated Members-only Discount Hour did not disappoint. Club members who volunteered at the sale received two rhizomes to grow as Club Irises, with officers receiving

an additional rhizome. These were all recent introductions, including several from 2018. A highlight was Shirley Trio's 'Opposites,' (2013) which is up for a Wister Medal this coming year! Everyone left with new and exciting things for their garden.

Harlow's featured bearded irises as the Plant of the Week in their email blast, and kindly mentioned our sale, resulting in lots of extra publicity. No doubt our lovely banner drew people in, as well.

Next year, our publicity should stipulate that we accept cash or checks only, as some individuals quite reasonably expected to pay with a credit card.

Eighteen recent introductions were set aside to be potted as door prizes for the next six meetings - a big incentive to attend!

- Sue Clark, incoming secretary

Submit up to 15 photos for our October contest!



We're on the web!
Tucsoniris.org

Black Irises



From top: 'Old Black Magic,' 'Starring,' 'Midnight Oil,' and 'Dracula's Kiss' (all from Schreiner's website)

TAIS Rhizome Sale



Photos by Tony Kutz



TAIS Rhizome Sale



Top 2 Photos by Tony Kutz



Middle 3 Photos by Cathy Scire



Bottom 2 Photos by Sue Clark



Treasurer's Report for September - submitted by Kristee West, Treasurer

Date	Debits/Checks	Deposits	Balance	Details
	#1783	\$243.00		Region 15 Auction Proceeds
	#1784	\$18.00		Angela Powers Aug Meeting snacks
	#1786	\$122.45		MVIS iris and postage
	#1787	\$88.20		Fleur de Lis postage
		\$471.65		Pending Uncashed Expenses Total
28-Sep	#1785	\$20.45		Bonnie Else display boxes - purchased for Sale
24-Sep		\$23.26		Action Print and Copy - Debit Card
21-Sep		46.68		Busy Bee Printers - Debit Card
			\$1,282.00	Sale check deposits
			\$1,656.00	Sale cash deposits
28-Sep			\$7,281.29	Bank Balance
			\$471.65	Pending Uncashed Checks
28-Sep	CASH ON HAND	\$0.00		
28-Sep			\$6,809.64	TAIS Balance

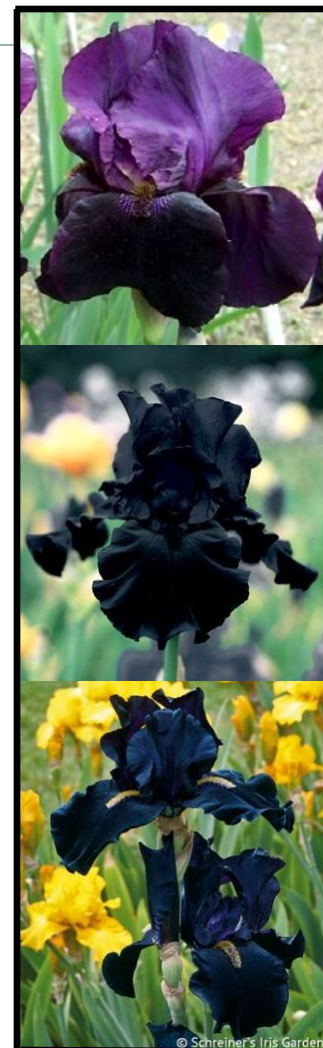
Black Irises - A Dramatic Touch for the Garden

"Black flowers are seductive, luring gardeners in with a color it seems we're just not supposed to have. Black irises rev it up a notch with large, ruffled flowers and silken petals that drip with color; their novelty and rarity entice the senses and the check-book...What plant can really bring so much drama to the herbaceous border in May as a black bearded iris?" writes Kelly Norris in [A Guide to Bearded Irises](#). Most black irises are crosses between dark purples and blues. *Iris aphylla* is credited with supplying the proteins that "bind and trap" anthocyanin pigments, thus intensifying the dark color.

It was the Sass brothers of Lincoln, Nebraska, who began the black iris saga in the 1920's. Their creation, 'The Black Douglas' (1934), startled the iris world with its deep dark purple falls. The iris world went crazy four years later when Paul Cook introduced 'Sable' (1938), a lustrous blue-violet beauty which was called "the black iris" for years. Cook won the Dykes Medal in 1955 with 'Sable Night' (1952). According to a [post](#) by Mike Unser on 1 Oct 2012 on the World of Irises blog, 'The Black Douglas' and 'Sable' were important in further breeding of blacks, as was 'Black Forest' (Schreiner 1945), a "shorter, smaller-flowered bloom with a plush finish." Unser also mentions the charming 'Dark Vader' SDB (Miller 1987), whose black is punctuated by light blue beards.

[Schreiner's](#) website offers 29 black irises. Their "Old Black Magic" (1996) is an excellent grower, according to Mike Unser. The 1990's were a high point in black introductions, with Dykes-winner 'Hello Darkness' (Schreiner 1992), 'Midnight Oil' (Keppel 1998), and 'Anvil of Darkness' (Innerst 1998) leading the pack. Roger Duncan of Superstition Gardens introduced the late-blooming and ruffled 'All Night Long' in 2005. Blacks recommended by Kelly Norris in his book include Dykes-winner 'Before the Storm' (Innerst 1989) (fragrant, good grower) and 'Starring' (Ghio 2000), a black and white stunner with tangerine beards. Dawn Muniford lists her Top 12 black irises in her World of Irises blog [post](#) of 22 Dec 2014. Dawn's top three are from Schreiner's: 'Here Comes the Night' (2009), 'Swazi Princess' (1978), and 'Coal Seams' (2013). The previously-mentioned 'Midnight Oil,' 'Before the Storm,' 'All Night Long,' and 'Starring' also made her Top 12. Linda Rossman of Hummingbird Iris gardens recommends 'Spades' (Painter 2007). [Iris4U](#) carries this beauty. Linda also grows 'Dracula's Kiss' (Schreiner 2009), very fetching with its bright orange beards. Blacks tend toward interesting names: 'Men in Black,' 'Witch's Wand,' 'Ghost Train,' 'Midnight Kitty,' and 'Raven Girl.'

I ordered 'Before the Storm' and 'Here Comes the Night,' with its striking buttermilk-colored beards from [The Shady Spot](#) this year, and welcome this type of drama! - SC



From top: 'Sable Night' (from AIS Wiki), 'Hello Darkness,' and 'Here Comes the Night' (both from Schreiner's website)

Iris at The Marcusen Sculpture Garden Update by Dennis Luebkin, PAIS Gardens Chairperson

The Richard Marcusen Sculpture Garden at Yavapai College in Prescott, Arizona is a place of Tranquility, Peace and Beauty. The AAA High Roads Magazine once wrote in a 2013 article entitled "Petal and Metal; "soft shades of blue, purple, and yellow blooms dot the landscape. This serene setting, provides a sensory experience perfect for a casual stroll and quiet contemplation, It includes a diverse collection of contemporary sculpture, native plants, robust irises and scattered benches." It is a must-see place of hidden treasures in Prescott, Arizona.

Part of the mission of the Prescott Area Iris Society (PAIS) is to "stimulate an interest in irises throughout the Prescott area ... and by holding public exhibits. What better way to achieve this than to create public iris gardens for the community to enjoy of which we now have three, the Sculpture Garden at Yavapai College, Sharlot Hall Museum Historic Iris Garden and the Fire Fighters Memorial Garden at Embry-Riddle University.

In 2016 the Sculpture Garden was honored with the distinction of becoming an American Iris Society National Display Garden and designated a Historic Iris Display Garden by The Historic Iris Preservation Society. PAIS and Yavapai College where honored to receive these designations for the garden.

The Sculpture Garden iris plantings began in 2006 with the creation of the William R. Dykes Medal Iris Garden and the beginning of the Francelle Edwards Honor Garden to honor one of Arizona's Hybridizers. It was then expanded in 2014 to include the Children's Storybook Garden and the Black Iris Garden along with additional plantings of irises donated by the Verde Valley Iris Society before they closed their doors. We thank them for their generous donation.

Currently we are in the midst of an additional expansion which has been on-going since 2016 when Yavapai College asked if we could expand the iris plantings to other areas of the Sculpture Garden. In 2016 the PAIS Board gave authorization to begin this expansion with the hopes of creating Honor Gardens dedicated to the hybridization work of Arizona Hybridizers and others.

A meeting was held with the Yavapai College Foundation, PAIS and the Colleges Landscape Architect to determine the location of new areas for planting along with providing a new irrigation system to water the irises. The irrigation work by the college was completed in early 2017 and PAIS began planting the begins of the new Arizona Hybridizers Collections that summer.

These new and expanded Honor Garden areas are dedicated to the hybridization work of Tall Bearded Irises, Spurias and Arilbreds of Francelle Edwards, Margie Valenzuela, Don Shepard, Larry Johnsen, Floyd

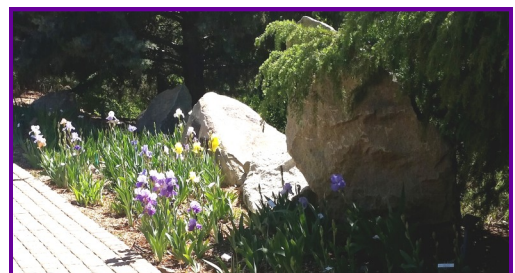
Wickenkamp, and Dr. B. Charles Jenkins. Additional Garden areas are dedicated to the historic work of Agnes Whiting a mid-20th century hybridizer, and a Western Themed Garden.

PAIS has been searching and collecting the cultivars of these hybridizers for the past two years. The search has lead down many paths trying to locate them from Hybridizers family and friends to other collectors, and commercial growers. We have found that numerous varieties cannot be found and may have become extinct.

We now have a full collection of Francelle Edwards tall bearded irises. A big thank you to Francelle for her assistance. We have two thirds of Margie Valenzuela's tall bearded irises. Her irises have been provided by Nola's Iris Gardens in California. Don Shepard's tall bearded irises, Spurias, and Arilbred irises have been a challenge to locate. We have only been able to locate approximately 20 of his over 90 introductions. These may be the only ones left after an exhaustive two-year search. I would like to thank Mary Soens Platner of Sun Country Iris Society in Phoenix for her tireless support and help in locating Don Shepard's irises.

The search for the Spuria irises of Floyd Wickenkamp, Larry Johnsen and Charles Jenkins has been a special adventure of meeting family and friends of the hybridizers. I thank Vern Hammett, cousin of Floyd Wickenkamp for his support and contributions to the Wickenkamp garden collection; Darol Jurn, Hilary Jenkins, Mary Platner, Sharon Petterson, Jim Hedgecock, Will Plotner, Del Perry, Cindy Stahl, Nancy Ostermeier and other individuals who have contributed numerous irises to the garden project. We thank Cathy Egerer and the Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS) for their participation in supporting and providing historic irises for our historic collections.

Many of us working in the Sculpture Garden have experienced the joy of the thank you's and appreciative comments from the community, staff and students that enjoy the Gardens. The college and community appreciate what we do. Come join us in the spring the last week in April through the third week in May for the Gardens peak bloom.



**Dykes Medal Iris Garden at the Marcusen Sculpture Garden,
photo by Sue Clark, May 2018**

TAIS OFFICERS, ETC. FOR 2018

Kevin Kartchner – President

Vice President—open

Janet Gardner – Secretary

Kristee West – Treasurer

Carol Peterson—Membership Chairperson

Melania Kutz—Program Chairperson

Madeleine Glaser - Asst. Program Chairperson

Angela Powers - Hospitality

Tony Kutz - Photographer

Sue Clark – Newsletter Editor & Publisher

What to do in the Iris Garden for October:

Plant iris rhizomes this month, best done when temps are below 90 or 100°. This will give them time to establish roots before it gets cold.

Be sure that the plants get enough water, since they will be growing and increasing until next bloom time. Do not water from overhead if it is above 85° though, or the rhizomes will rot.

Keep area free of leaves, weeds and pests.



Tip Exchange

Cathy Scire has had good success this summer by watering her potted irises for two minutes a day. Her adjustable emitters are scheduled to come on at 2 PM, and she has set them so that the flow is slight. The pots receive sun until about 11:30 AM and then are shaded by the house.



Some iris authorities believe that allowing rhizomes to dry thoroughly (for at least a few days) before replanting allows more buds to set for the coming bloom season! - reported by William Shear, in The Gardener's Iris Book, 1998

Iris Limerick:

There once was an iris sublime
Who couldn't wait for Halloween-time!
"I'll trick and I'll treat
With good things to eat,
And dress as a tiny little mime!"

- Sue Clark



'Main Street' (Lauer, 2006)
from Schreiner's website

Did You Know?

Greg Starr, who will speak at our January 12 meeting, has written two books - Cool Plants for Hot Gardens and Agaves: Living Sculptures for Landscapes and Containers. Check them out!

"Bittersweet October, the mellow, messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause between the opposing miseries of Summer and Winter." - Carol Bishop Hippias

A Little Bit of Botany and Iris History

This month we travel to Germany, a place we have not yet visited in our tour through the history of irises. In 1884, German plantsman Max Goos was furthering his education about the culture of fruit trees in a nursery in Chester, England when he met fellow countryman August Koenemann, who was studying English nursery practices. The following year, Koenemann returned to Germany to help a friend with a newly-opened nursery along the Rhine River. When the friend could not raise the necessary capital, Koenemann talked Max Goos into purchasing the nursery, which became Goos & Koenemann in 1887 and was known as G&K. They soon began an extensive breeding program, especially of peonies and irises. Goos bred many dwarf bearded, his personal favorite. These were widely distributed throughout Europe and America, as Koenemann was a marketing genius. One of the dwarfs, 'Cyanea' (1899), still thrives in many gardens, its white beards shining on purple petals.

Another famous and widely-grown G&K iris is 'Loreley' (1909), named for the legend of Loreley, the blond siren whose enticing song lured sailors of the Rhine to their deaths. Gruesomeness aside, 'Loreley' captivates with pale yellow standards bordered with darker yellow and red-violet falls strongly reticulated with white and edged in pale yellow. The blooms seem to glow, thanks to orange beards and golden styles. Throw in exceptional vigor and the occasional rebloom, and it is obvious why 'Loreley' is still grown and treasured.

G&K cultivar 'Iris Koenig' ('Iris King' in English) (1907) was also popular, likely due to its standout coloring - gold standards with velvety maroon falls edged in gold, and orange beards surrounded by yellow and white reticulations or lines. As one of the most widely-grown irises in the first two decades of the 20th century, it generated considerable revenue for nurseries [and probably rhizome sales!].

There is some drama associated with G&K's claim to have originated a "new race of irises" in 1908 - intermediates. Perhaps they developed these independently of Caparne, who hybridized them in 1880. The award-winning blue 'Walhalla' (1908) is their most famous intermediate iris. - SC

Source: Classic Irises and the Men and Women Who Created Them by Clarence E. Mahan

1st Annual

TAIS *Photo Contest*

October 13th Meeting, 1 PM, Murphy-Wilmot Library

Categories

- 1. Single iris flower or stalk of irises**
- 2. Macro (close-up) view of an iris**
- 3. Miscellaneous iris photos: garden, Photoshopped image, etc.**

Photographs will be shown via a PowerPoint presentation. Please submit up to 15 pictures to Kevin via email (irisgrowinaz@gmail.com), CD, or memory stick. He is willing to scan a few if you have prints. *Deadline for submission Oct 6.*

All photos must be your own, although they are not restricted to your own garden. Help make this a fun & successful event by participating!

TAIS Iris Bucks will be awarded to the winner of each category!

