



Lest We Forget

RAMBLING RHIZOMES
June 2010

Newsletter of the Tucson Area Iris Society

tucsoniris.org



Teenybopper

- TAIS CALENDAR
- June 26 Meeting - Sam Hughes Place
Review Highlights of Trek
- Aug 28-29 - Dig guest gardens.
- Sept 11 Potluck and auction
- September Sale - at Harlow's Nursery
Sept 18th & 19th
- October 16 meeting choose officers for 2011.

June 26th

11:30 Lunch

Sam Hughes Place

446 N. Campbell

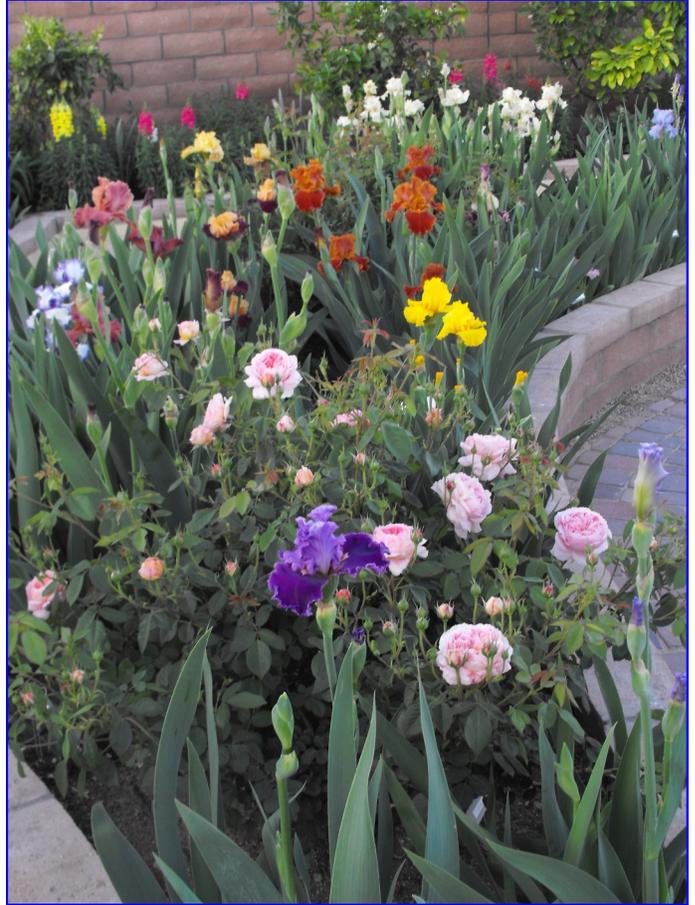
Presentation:

Kathy Chilton will present pictures and highlights from Trek 2010

Sam Hughes Place is located on the SE corner of N. Campbell and 6th St. Their luncheon menu consists of salads, overstuffed sandwiches, soup, soup and half sandwich or salad, all of which are \$10 to \$12. They also have more complete meals in the \$10 to \$15 range.

Program follows lunch: Kathy will present a slide show of our 2010 Trek. We'll also discuss the dig of guest irises and the September sale at Harlow's Nursery. There will be some great door prizes including some 2009 irises provided by Gordon, so you don't want to miss out.





President's Message

I hope all of you who are not escaping our summer heat will be able to come to our meeting on Saturday, June 26 at Sam Hughes Championship Dining on Campbell, just east of the UofA. Lunch will be available starting at 11:30. After lunch, we will have a program recapping the Spring Trek, featuring the beautiful irises that will be available at the Region Auction in August. We will also plan the digging parties for the guest irises. The TAIS Board will meet after the program to finalize our Fall Sale schedule.

It's been a very eventful Spring for our club. The "Low Tech Trek" was very successful. We had about 70 people registered who enjoyed beautiful gardens with lots of well-grown irises blooming for them. The carpools seemed to work fine & no one was lost - at least for very long! The dinner and meetings were well attended and enjoyed by all. I was very proud of the show that Tucson provided and gratified by reports I got from attendees afterward. All in all, it was a resounding success. On the heels of that success, came a great and unexpected loss for our club. Ginny Hester died in a car accident, driving her prize "Anniversary Car," a '56 Chevy Bel Air back from a car show. Ginny was one of those people who bring sunshine wherever they go. She was always ready to help with her big smile and even bigger heart. We spent several enjoyable sessions potting club irises out at the ranch, and I always enjoyed her sense of humor and positive attitude. Thanks to Maxine and Gordon for helping put together a photo of Ginny and her show-winning iris and a bouquet of irises for her services. Her family requested that her love and enjoyment of irises be represented at her services, since it brought her happiness. She is missed.

How I Do It - Handling New Iris Orders by Kathy Chilton

When all the iris catalogs start arriving in late winter and early spring, it's easy to get excited about ordering newer irises for the garden. Because I am a judge for the American Iris Society, I have a great excuse for ordering - I am SUPPOSED to grow as many newer irises as I can so I can evaluate them for AIS awards. Such a tough job, but someone has to do it!!

Many people from hotter climates ask the growers to ship as late as possible - September being the best option. Some of the growers in colder areas only ship in July and August, because they must get them all dug and start replanting in the summer so things can get established before it freezes. If you want to get your new rhizomes in September, it is usually best to order from growers in California or Texas. You have a better chance of getting freshly dug rhizomes instead of dried out ones. The more dried out rhizomes will usually grow just fine, but it might take them a little longer to get going. One problem I've found with getting rhizomes in September is that sometimes it just doesn't cool off until October - sometimes mid or late October. I hate to take the chance of planting them out in the ground in full sun & having a late heat wave make them rot instead of grow. And, the longer I wait the more dried out they become.

I usually ask for my irises to be shipped in July & am often asked by the growers, "Are you SURE you want them that early?" The reason I do is because I like to give them a head start. I also feel that I may get better, fresher rhizomes to start with. I pot all my new acquisitions and hold them until fall planting. I plan ahead - asking for shipping the same week from everyone. Then, I buy a good quality potting soil and add a little Osmocote fertilizer. I save one gallon containers all year long so I have a good quantity ready to go.

When the boxes start arriving by mail and UPS, it's like Christmas in the middle of summer! It always so exciting to open them up and see what the rhizomes look like and how many extras have been included

- and it's also very important to bring the boxes inside where it's cool and to open them up immediately so the rhizomes can cool off and air out. I use the packing lists to enter the names into my iris list in the computer, along with the descriptions, so I have a good record to refer to when they bloom. Then, I use a permanent marker - black for light colored containers & silver for black containers - and write the name of each new rhizome on a container. I also use a labelmaker to make a permanent marker for each rhizome and place both the marker and the rhizome in the labeled container.

I keep the rhizomes inside the cool house until early the next morning, when I pot them up in a shady place, into their labeled containers, with their markers. I place them in rows under a big, high-branched mesquite tree near the house, where I have a lawn sprinkler set up to water them. I water them all in by hand to start, then use a hose-bib, battery-operated irrigation timer attached to the hose and sprinkler to keep them watered until I'm ready to put them in the ground. I set the timer to water them once a day in the very early morning, while it is still relatively cool. It's not a good idea ever to water irises when the ground is very hot - it's better to wait until late evening or early morning.

If we get a period of heavy monsoon rains, I turn off the sprinkler until the irises dry out a little before I start regular watering again. I have had good luck with the rhizomes rooting and taking off with good growth in the containers. Keeping them in a shady location is critical - they will definitely rot in the hot sun. Then, I can dig and amend my established beds with no rush to get them ready. I can plant as soon as the temps stay below 100 degrees. Since the irises are already rooted and growing, they don't struggle to get established and take right off. Hopefully, they get a head start towards growing vigorously and producing nice clumps and show stalks by next April!



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TAIS bank balance as of 5/30/10 is \$5,096.97. With a donation from Region 15 of \$1,000, after current trek expenses were paid, we are \$60.27 in the black!

NEW MEMBERS

GLENDa McCULLEY, 7528 E. Harbor Dr., Tucson, AZ 85715, 505-4191, cactuswren53@live.com. Glenda recently moved to Tucson from Springfield, IL, one of many states she has resided in. She has twin daughters and a son, living in Illinois and Omaha. Having left her iris behind, she is most anxious to establish a garden here and to become active in our club.

SHARI SCOTT, 9700 W. Ajo Way, Tucson, AZ 85735, 400-8920, shari@toddsrestaurant.com. Shari became a member during the Tucson Botanical Garden sale. She manages a dog rescue operation, boarding as many as 23 dogs sometimes. Her family owns Todd's Restaurant at Ryan Airfield (883-7770), featuring Todd's own prickly pear-chipotle BBQ ribs, chicken & sloppy BBQ sandwiches. Sounds like the club should go on a road trip that way!

NICK MIRON, 6105 E. San Carlos Drive, Pearce, AZ 85625, 520/730-3869, sonofamutt@hotmail.com, and daughter OSA SANCHEZ, 7036 E. Hwy 181, Pearce, AZ 85625, 520/507-2590, osa9@msn.com. "I have been to some of your bulb sales. I read the "Star" regularly and believe I first heard of your organization there. I came to Arizona in '73 and fell in love with the land and the people. My father instilled in all of us a love of gardening and the love of beautiful things comes from where I cannot say . . . but if an Iris doesn't touch your heart and humble you, then perhaps you are more apt to work at a collection agency. My interests and hobbies are varied. I am a poet, vintner, builder, friend, father, and a hiker when I get a chance. When life slows down a bit I intend to return to painting. My daughter, Osa is a registered nurse as of this year with three children to care for with the generous help of her husband, Daniel. She has a generous heart and has caught the green thumb bug somewhere along the line. My Dad would smile . . ."

WE LOOK FORWARD TO GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH GLENDa, SHARI, NICK AND OSA AT OUR NEXT MEETING!





Winners Cheryl Deaton and Margie Valenzuela w/ Kathy



Deaton Seedling Winner



Black Magic Woman



Squires Winner



Margie's Birthday Magic



Ginny won Best Intermediate in Show for the TAIS 2009 show.



Seedling Grown by Gordon Jensen Named Ginny's Smile in tribute to Ginny Hester.



Cheryl's Renegade Lady

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Come Go With Me

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