



TAIS Newsletter

Our 53rd year

Tucson Area Iris Society—established 1965

An Affiliate of the American Iris Society



Victoria Falls

Marcusen Sculpture Garden,
Prescott

Photo by Sue Clark, 2017

President's Message

Welcome 2018, it's going to be a good year for TAIS. We'll start off January with lots of iris photos from AIS' digital programs. I'm really looking forward to hearing from two-time Dykes medal winner Rick Tasco, who is visiting us in February. See you soon. Away we go!

- Kevin Kartchner

"The shortest day has passed, and whatever nastiness of weather we may look forward to in January and February, at least we notice that the days are getting longer. Minute by minute they lengthen out. It takes some weeks before we become aware of the change. It is imperceptible even as the growth of a child, as you watch it day by day, until the moment comes when with a start of delighted surprise we realize that we can stay out of doors in a twilight lasting for another quarter of a precious hour."

- Vita Sackville-West

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Upcoming Events

**Next meeting: January 13th. 1 PM. Murphy-Wilmot library.
AIS videos: Cottage and Storybook gardens.**

February 10. Rick Tasco of Superstition Gardens speaking about hybridizing irises at 1 PM. Murphy-Wilmot Library, large room, opens at noon. Please invite all of your iris-loving friends!

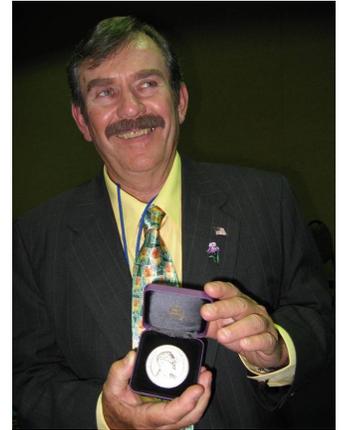
January Birthday Wishes to:

Maxine Fifer Kathy Windischman
Bonnie Else Karen Guss



Introducing Rick Tasco, speaker at our February 10th meeting!

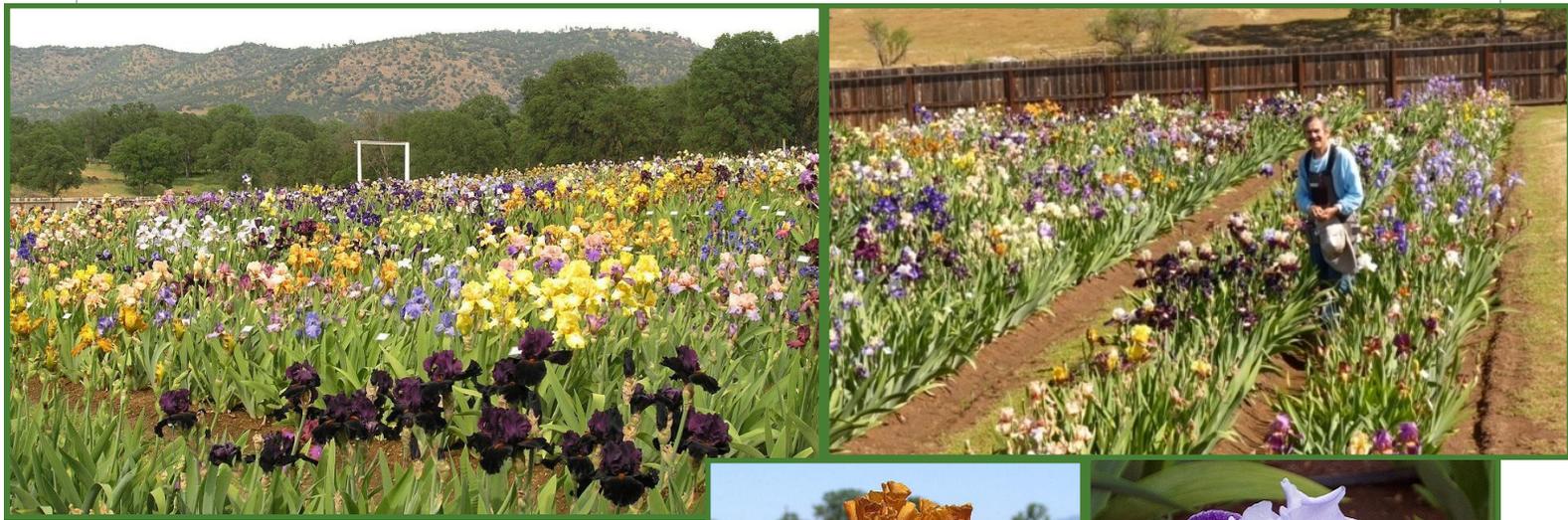
Rick Tasco is the co-owner of Superstition Iris Gardens, a mail order iris nursery. Superstition Iris Gardens is open to the public between mid-April and early May of each year. The 1-acre display-type garden with approximately 800 varieties of iris is located in the lower foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Cathey's Valley, Mariposa County, California, near Yosemite National Park. In 2018, Superstition Iris Gardens will celebrate its 32nd anniversary. Superstition Iris Gardens started in Apache Junction, Arizona in 1987, at the base of the famous Superstition Mountains, thus the name. Superstition Iris Gardens was one of the official tour gardens for the 2004 American Iris Society National Convention.



Rick is a member and an Active Master Judge of the American Iris Society. He is a member of the Fresno Iris Society, and the Sun Country Iris Society in Phoenix (of which he is a past President) and many other National sections of the American Iris Society, including the Tall Bearded Iris Society, the Median Iris Society, the Reblooming Iris Society, the Aril Iris Society International, Species Iris Group of North America (SIGNA), and the Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS).

Superstition Iris Gardens has been an official display garden in the past for the Historic Iris Preservation Society, the Median Iris Society and the Aril Society International.

Rick has been growing iris for over 45 years and has grown iris in three very different climates: the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington DC, Arizona's Sonoran Desert, and currently in Central California's Sierra Nevada foothills. **(continued on p. 3).**

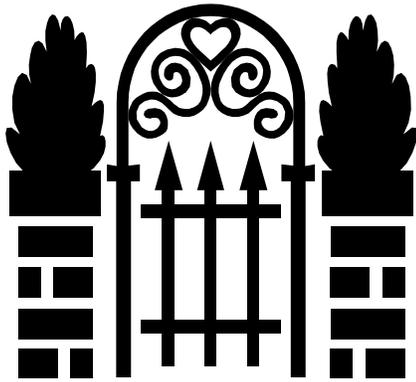


Above & above right: Superstition Iris Gardens

Close-ups: Golden Panther and Splashacata



2018 Meetings



We ♥ Irises

January 13 - 1 PM. AIS videos on Cottage Gardens and Storybook Gardens. Murphy-Wilmot Library small room.

February 10 - 1 PM. Rick Tasco of Superstition Gardens will speak about hybridization of irises. Murphy-Wilmot Library large room. Doors open at noon.

March - sale prep

April - Iris Show

June & July - no meetings

August - Region 15 Auction and Ice Cream Social, Tucson Botanical Gardens

September - Rhizome Sale

October - Election of officers

November - potluck

December - no meeting



Some of Pam Court's "Iris and Herringbone" glassware - see p. 5



Absolute Treasure, Tasco 2006



Invite your friends to hear Rick Tasco on February 10th!



We're on the web!
Tucsoniris.org

Rick Tasco, continued from p. 2

Rick has hybridized, registered, and introduced 123 iris with the American Iris Society since 1993, and has garnered quite a few AIS awards and medals. His introductions have won Favorite Guest Iris at three American Iris Society National Conventions during the last 15 years: *Golden Panther* in 2002 at Memphis and in 2004 at Fresno, and *Splashacata* in 2003 in Virginia.

Rick has won 11 AIS Medals including 2 **Dykes Medals**: 2005 for *Splashacata* and 2009 for *Golden Panther*. He has won 5 **John C. Wister Medals**: *Splashacata* in 2004, *Golden Panther* in 2006, *Absolute Treasure* in 2013, *Black Magic Woman* in 2014, and *Temporal Anomaly* in 2015. Rick has also won 4 **C.G. White Medals**: *Chocolate Mint* in 2004, *Noble Warrior* in 2012, *Aztec Prince* in 2015, and *Sand Dancer* in 2017. Rick was awarded the **Hybridizer's Medal** in 2011 by the American Iris Society Board of Directors.



Superstition Iris Gardens, from www.facebook.com/ook.com/

Rick Tasco's visit to TAIS in 2003





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

Date	Debits/Checks	Deposits	Balance	Details
		\$330.00		Region 15 Auction
	Pending/Uncashed Total	\$330.00		
28-Dec		\$11.64		Angela - refreshments
29-Dec	Bank Balance		\$6,817.74	
	Pending Uncashed Checks		\$330.00	
29-Dec	TAIS Balance		\$6,487.74	
	Cash on hand		\$1.00	
29-Dec	Balance + Cash on hand		\$6,476.46	



“Iris and Herringbone” Glassware by the Jeannette Glass Company

In October, Pam showed us many pieces of her collection of glassware in the “Iris and Herringbone” pattern. This line was produced by Jeannette Glass between 1928 and 1932. It was widely available in two colors - Crystal (clear) and Marigold (amber carnival glass (iridescent) color). A few items were made in translucent pink, green, blue, or lavender glass, and are priced quite high if they can be located. One article stated that the carnival glass versions were made after WWII only. Forty objects completed the line, ranging from dinnerware and vases to a light fixture. Jeannette Glass, located in Jeannette, Pennsylvania near Pittsburgh, began as Jeannette Bottle Works in the late 1880's, and originally sold handmade bottles. In 1898, it was renamed Jeannette Glass Company, and its wares evolved from utility glass to prism glass. The prism glass portion of the company was sold off in the mid-1920's and the plant retooled to make pressed glass.

Jeannette Glass was one of seven major companies manufacturing Depression glass, and they made 14 collectible patterns between 1928 and 1938. Two of their lines remain popular to this day - “Adam” and “Iris and Herringbone”. The latter pattern was rereleased in the 1950's in the iridescent color only. In 1946, some pieces in crystal appeared with the flowers highlighted in red (which often wore off). Items may be marked or a J in a triangle or square or alone, and some items are unmarked. The company's name was changed to Jeannette Corporation in 1970, and they closed in 1983. An on-line search revealed current prices. A single coaster is listed at \$140 and a demitasse cup and saucer for \$190. A 6" high footed water tumbler, made from 1928-1932 and in 1950, is on the lower end of the price scale at five for \$30 on eBay. If you happen to come across any Iris and Herringbone in perfect condition and costing up to a few dollars at a garage sale, thrift shop, or the like, Pam requests that you buy it for her and she will reimburse you. - SC

Sources: <http://glassmenagerie.com/>, www.carnivalheaven.com/, www.carnivalheaven.com/, www.thespruce.com/. These two articles show photos of reproduction Iris and Herringbone and how to distinguish it from the originals: www.realorrepro.com/, www.depressionelegantsglass.com/.

TAIS iris grower's interview #11

Pam Court lives in the northwest part of Tucson. She has been actively growing irises for about four years after attending our rhizome sale and then joining TAIS. Pam used to live in Amarillo and grew her first irises there over 30 years ago. She brought some of these non-hybrids with her when she moved to Tucson. Pam relayed a story about digging up many irises from her in-laws' house after they had passed and their house was going to go on the market. She gave half of the rhizomes to her daughter in Amarillo, with instructions *not to plant them too deeply*. Her daughter just sat them on the soil's surface along her fence, and they all bloomed then following Spring! How's that for not too deep!

Pam's husband created raised beds for her and then filled them with a pick-up truck full of soil mix that he bought at a farmer's market. Pam reports that this soil is fabulous for both irises and vegetables, and that it contains chicken manure. Her beds are situated so that the irises receive shade in the afternoons. Pam has had success with Miracle-Gro All Purpose plant food. She doses her irises with the solution from March through bloom time.

The irises receive water via a drip line which runs every morning for about 10 minutes. She prefers the adjustable flow emitters. Pam supplements with additional water by hand in the hot season. Pests have not been an issue. She digs her iris clumps in the Fall to separate them if they need it.

Her favorites? Hybridized tall bearded. White irises are her special favorites, and she wishes to add some more pink varieties.

The irises that Pam brought with her from Amarillo are all old enough now to be considered heirloom varieties. She mentioned that most of them have quit blooming and she wonders if they might be too old now. She hopes that they

do not have to be discarded. Does she still buy irises? "Oh, yes!" she replied with a laugh.

Amaryllises are the only plant that Pam combines with her irises. Lately, something has been lying on the irises and breaking the leaves. Although she has not yet seen the culprit, she calls it "Little Foot" and suspects a rabbit. - SC

Her best advice? Buy a bunch and cross your fingers!

Tip: Judy Schneider at the Shady Spot Iris Garden in Texas suggests that Pam divide her heirloom irises, as they might not bloom well if they have not been divided recently. Judy recommends digging them up next Fall, throwing out all the old mama rhizomes, refreshing the soil with some composted material, and replanting the young rhizomes spaced 12-18" apart and not too deep. That and plenty of sun should kick them into gear again, as they do not get too old, per say. - SC

Editor's Message - In the spirit of sharing, learning, and building community, I have begun interviewing members of our group about their iris gardens. These interviews will be featured in the newsletter in the coming months. Please contact me at taisnewsletter@yahoo.com if you wish to be interviewed. I will e-mail you a list of questions. You can call me on the phone, I will take notes, and then write an article. It takes about 15 minutes. **This is the last interview that I have in my stockpile, so I am hoping that someone will volunteer!** - SC



Pam with some of her Iris glassware

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

What to do in the Iris Garden for January:

From January through April, iris plants put up 90% of their growth, so they will need more water during this active growth period.
- from Darol of Sun Country Iris Society

Keep area free of leaves, weeds and pests.

If you want to order rhizomes now, heshadyspotiris.com is open for business. They carry both heirloom and modern varieties. Send an email if you don't see what you want.



Tip Exchange

If you have Bermuda grass in your iris beds, here is Gary's recommendation: Dig out all of your irises and pot them. Spray the offending grass with Round Up (the 42% kind). This works best if the grass is long and green, as it can have roots up to 6' long and we want the poison to reach those roots. Let grass die for about a month and then pull it out. The waiting interval depends on the temperature - in summer, it will take about 3 weeks, and in cooler temperatures, about 6-8 weeks. Then replant the irises. Voila! Thank you, Gary! - SC

Iris Haiku:

Fleur-de-lis flowers

Reaching up toward Heaven

With beauty and grace.

- Sue Clark



"January is the quietest month in the garden...But just because it looks quiet doesn't mean that nothing is happening. The soil, open to the sky, absorbs the pure rainfall while microorganisms convert filled-under fodder into usable nutrients for the next crop of plants. The feasting earthworms tunnel along, aerating the soil and preparing it to welcome the seeds and bare roots to come."

- Rosalie Muller Wright, Editor of *Sunset Magazine*, 1/99

A Little Bit of Botany and Iris History

This month we focus on an Englishman who furthered the story of irises, as well as many other types of flowering plants. Amos Perry was born in 1871 in Tottenham, north London. His great-grandfather worked in the famous Vietch nurseries in Exeter. His grandfather was in charge of roses for Thomas Ware in his Hale Farms Nursery (featured in the Oct 2017 newsletter). Amos' father, Amos Perry, Sr., also worked at Hale Farms, and became a partner. Amos Jr. began working there as a teen. As an apprentice gardener, he tended the twenty acres of irises which provided cut flowers for the nearby Covent Garden Market. Amos, who was eventually in charge of Hale Farms' bulb department, was convinced by two bulb growers to go into business for himself at age 18. So in 1889, Amos Perry, Jr. opened a nursery on five acres at Winchmore Hill. His father joined his business a few years later. The nursery flourished, expanded in 1898 to 25 acres in Holtwhite Hill in Enfield, and was called Perry's Hardy Plant Farm. Their specialties were aquatic plants, day lilies, oriental poppies, and delphiniums. Perry's Diary, which Amos published in 1946 at age 75, collected his accomplishments in the plant world into one source. I had never considered war's effects on garden plants, but Perry described having to destroy many of his plants in order to grow food crops during WWI. He had to basically start over in his hybridizing efforts. Amos' tall bearded iris cultivars were regarded as some of the best in the world through the 1920's. He had to convert 3/4's of the nursery's land to potatoes during WWII, so plowed under or burned 25,000 iris rhizomes! How heart-breaking! The seven bombs that landed on his nursery in 1941 destroyed much of the remaining stock. Amos Perry's most famous iris is called *Black Prince*, and he won Dykes medals for *Margot Holmes* and *G.P. Baker*.- SC

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

The Magic of Iris

Region 15 Spring Trek 2018

Hosted by Sun Country Iris Society
Phoenix, AZ

April 20 & 21, 2018

Featured banquet speaker Steve Schreiner
In-garden Judges Training by Kathy Chilton

Trek Headquarters

Four Points Phoenix North (by Sheraton)

2532 W Peoria Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85029

Hotel Reservations: 866-716-8133

NOTE: Discount rate of \$109 per night for convention guests
(To guarantee convention room rate, reserve room by March 20, 2018, use code
"Sun Country Iris," there are a limited number rooms available at this rate)
fourpointsphoenixnorth.com

Trek registration check in at the Hotel lobby starts 2 pm on April 20, 2018
(check Sun Country Iris Society website for schedule of events: suncountryiris.org)

Boxed lunch @ Arizona Heritage Center at Papago Park

Arizona Historical Society

1300 North College Ave., Tempe, AZ 85281

(admission included)

Judges Training Friday evening

In-Garden Judges Training

Registration Deadline: March 20, 2018

Please print – Registrant 1

Please Print – Registrant 2

Name (to appear on badge): _____

Name (to appear on badge): _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Ph: _____

Ph: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Attending In-Garden Judges Training: Registrant 1: _____ Registrant 2: _____

Saturday dinner choice:

Saturday dinner choice:

New York Strip _____

New York Strip _____

Chicken Gruyere _____

Chicken Gruyere _____

Grilled Salmon stuffed with crabmeat _____

Grilled Salmon stuffed with crabmeat _____

Please notify in advance of any dietary restrictions – vegetarian available on request

	# persons	Fee	Total
Full registration (on or before March 20, includes tour, lunch & banquet) _____	X	\$100	= \$ _____
Full registration (after March 20, includes tour lunch and Banquet) _____	X	\$120	= \$ _____
Garden tour only (includes lunch) _____	X	\$ 50	= \$ _____
Banquet only _____	X	\$ 50	= \$ _____

Total amount enclosed: _____

Send registration and check payable to "Sun Country Iris Society," mail to:

Bob Buchwald
 5866 E. Ironwood Dr.
 Scottsdale, AZ 85266

For inquiries or questions, email: Suncountryiris@yahoo.com

The Tucson Area Iris Society Presents

Rick Tasco of Superstition Iris Gardens: “Iris Hybridizing – My Way”

Saturday February 10 at 1 PM
Murphy Wilmot Library, large room
530 N Wilmot in Tucson
Room opens at noon



Rick has hybridized, registered, and introduced 123 iris with the American Iris Society and has won numerous medals for his efforts.



Please join us!

**Invite all of your
iris-loving friends!**