

# TAIS Newsletter

Our 54th year

Tucson Area Iris Society—established 1965

An Affiliate of the American Iris Society



## President's Message

Thank you, thank you again for everybody's contribution to our show! I heard multiple times about our improvement from last year. Susan Schaefer took the awards sweep this year so we will definitely have to hear from her on our culture panel at our next meeting. Please reply to the newsletter e-mail address by May 5th to be on the culture panel. [taisnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:taisnewsletter@yahoo.com)

For my own iris culture experiment, my shade cloth is finally installed. I'm hoping for less roasted rhizomes and less watering. It will take a year or two for the results. The only thing I know for sure is that it is immediately cooler to work in 40% shade.

- Kevin Kartchner

'Fabulous One' (a bitone)  
(Nicodemus 2005)

Hummingbird Iris Garden,  
Prescott

Photo by Sue Clark, 2017

*"In colors ranging from almost iridescent pink to deep wine red, bearded iris are making a comeback in the garden, ruffled heads held high...These days...as old fashioned flowers come back into fashion, bearded iris are experiencing a renaissance. Their frilly beauty and color range are big parts of their allure."*

- in *Better Homes & Gardens*, recent issue, April 2019

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## Upcoming Events

**Prescott Area Iris Society's Spring Iris Exhibit and Potted Iris Sale: May 4, 10 AM-3 PM, Mortimer's Nursery, Prescott.** For more information, contact Dennis at 623-980-6627.

**TAIS May 11 meeting: "Let's Talk Irises"** - discussion about growing irises in the desert. Come share your knowledge with others! Or come and learn things from others. 1 PM, Murphy-Wilmot Library, 530 N Wilmot Rd. This will be our last meeting until August.

**September 21:** our Rhizome Sale at Harlow's Gardens nursery on Pima. Consider trading your extra rhizomes for Iris Bucks, which you can use to buy more rhizomes!

### Birthday Wishes to:

**Kevin Kartchner**

**Deborah Schneider**

**Margie Valenzuela**

**Fred Thorpe**



from PAIS newsletter

# Report on our Show



We ♥ Irises

Fifty eight stems of iris blossoms grown by nine of our members attracted over 130 visitors on April 13. Guests marveled at the variety and fragrance as they decided upon their three favorites.

Members who helped with retrieval of items from storage at Tucson Botanical Gardens (TBG) and setting up the room at the Murphy-Wilmot Library included Bonnie, Dave, Kevin, Kathy, Nancy Hook, and Sue. Additional set-up support on Saturday morning was provided by Shirley and her niece Heidi.

Workers during the show itself were Diane, Kevin, Lucille, Madeleine, Martin, Nancy Hook, Shirley, with Susan and Sue staying all day. Dave, Sue, and Tony took photos. Diane brought delicious croissant sandwiches, chips, grapes, and water for us and Shirley brought two bundt cakes from Baggins. This was her last day with our club, since she is moving back to

Michigan in early May. We will miss her!

Lucille, Susan, and Sue counted the votes while the show was disassembled by Bonnie, Dave, Kevin, Nancy McLean, Kathy and her husband, and one of the guests.

Behind the scenes people included Melania and Tony, who dropped posters off and advertised in various spots. And Martin and Sam passed out fliers for the show in the iris beds at TBG on Thursday.

These members showed their irises: Kevin, Susan, Diane, Madeleine, Sue, Tony and Melania, Gary, and Kathy.

We held a quick Board meeting with seven present. Sue motioned that she, Susan, and Kevin each order \$300-worth of rhizomes for the sale (to include postage) from a grower of their choice. Tony seconded. Kristee has already been given permission to order \$500-worth of new and recent

introductions from Iris4U to be used as Club Iris for the August Auction and perhaps for the Sale. Sue mentioned that when she ordered from the Shady Spot last April, she requested large rhizomes, 5-10 of each variety, no historic, and early- to midseason bloomers. She received 158 rhizomes in 25 varieties for this amount. Martin requested that we ask for some fragrant and reblooming varieties.

I talked with an iris-loving couple visiting from Boise. They left a day earlier than originally planned for their vacation just so they could attend our show! Lorelei is an iris judge and Steve showed me photos of their iris garden from early April into June, as well as some pictures of their show. They exhibited their irises in lengths of clear PVC pipe, which fitted into wooden bases that had a slot for the name card. One of their members created these special display vases for the club. I asked about their Sale, and they said that they sold all member-grown rhizomes, and sold them one day at a farmer's market and on another day at the State Fair. They reported that their iris society, the Pollen Daubers, has recently closed because they were down to five members.

**Our winners?** 'Sweet Child of Mine.' 'A Grape Fit,' 'Boundary Waters.' and one labeled as 'Witch's Cape,' all of which belong to Susan! Congratulations! - SC

Over 130 people  
attended our show  
on April 13!



We're on the web!  
[Tucsoniris.org](http://Tucsoniris.org)

# Show Day - "Iris Eyes are Smiling"



Photos by  
Dave Smith



SC



SC



SC



'A Grape Fit' (2nd place), 'About Town,' 'Adoree,' 'And Away We Go'



'Autumn Breeze,' 'Azure Whir,' shown as 'Barbara Jean Lauer,' 'Boundary Waters' (3rd place)



shown as 'Braggin' Rights,' 'Buckwheat,' shown as 'Christmas Red,' 'Coral Point'



'Diamond Broker,' 'Easy Being Green,' 'Finish Line,' 'Good Morning Beautiful'



shown as 'Huer Huero,' 'Joy Returns,' 'Lace Artistry,' 'Lest We Forget'



'Lullaby of Spring,' 'Mariposa Autumn,' 'Mesmerizer'



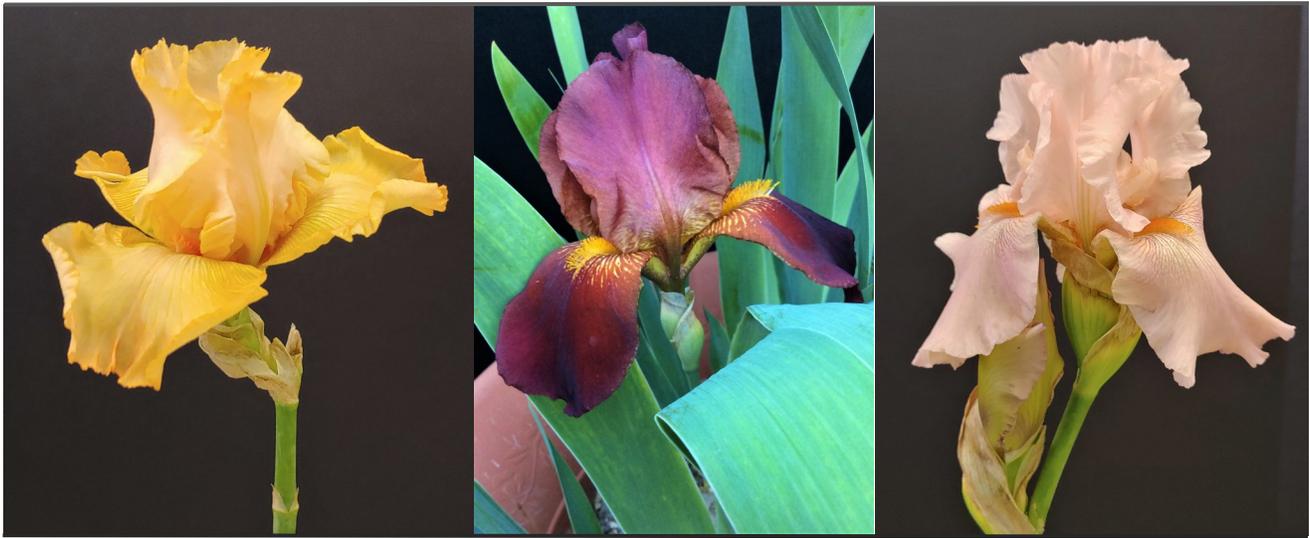
'Michigan Pride,' 'Monday Morning Blues,' 'Mosey Along,' 'Mystic Image'



'Neptune's Cloak,' 'Night Moves,' NOID (may be 'Crimson King,' 1893), NOID



NOID, NOID, 'Notta Lemon,' 'One Wild Child'



'Orange Popsicle,' 'Orelia' in the garden, 'Pink Matters'



'Raspberry Swirl,' 'Revere,' 'Royal Kingdom,' 'Safari Sunset'



'Schoonchee,' 'Secret Delight,' 'Select Circle'



shown as 'Snow Lion,' 'Spicy Serving,' 'Spring Starter'



'Storm Rider,' 'Sweet Child of Mine' (1st place), shown as 'Witch's Cape' (4th place)



'Valley of Dreams,' 'Well Endowed,' close-up of iris shown as 'Barbara Jean Lauer'

NOTES:

1. The six irises labeled "shown as" were mislabeled when purchased or picked, so they were not correctly named in the show. The one shown as 'Barbara Jean Lauer' is likely 'Blinded by the Light' (Lauer 2016). Do you recognize any of the others?

2. NOID = No ID (aka "unknown")

3. Details of winners: 'Sweet Child of Mine' (Lauer 2015), 'A Grape Fit' ('Schreiner 2015), Boundary Waters' (Schreiner 2017)

Photos by Sue Clark

## Treasurer's Report for April - submitted by Martin Juarez, Treasurer

TAIS Treasurer's Report					
Beginning Balance					\$5,687.74
	Pd	MOP	Deposits	Expenses	
9-Apr	X	#1825		\$500.00	West-Iris4U bulbs
10-Apr	X	Debit		\$42.36	Juarez/UPS Store copies
16-Apr	X	#1795		\$72.50	Kutz-Desert Leaf Mar/Apr ads
16-Apr	X	#1796		\$21.25	Kutz-copies
16-Apr	X	#1797		\$51.58	Kutz-VanLiere dinner
27-Apr		#1826		\$21.00	Juarez-TBG thank you gift
Sub-Totals			\$0.00	\$708.69	
Ending Balance					\$4,979.05
(Need receipts)					4/27/19 12:23



## Bitones, Reverse Bitones, Darktops, and Neglectas

This month, our featured color pattern is **bitone**. *Bi-* is Latin for “two,” and **tones** are variations of a color. Bitones are irises which have lighter standards and darker falls of the same color. In a **reverse bitone**, the standards are darker than the falls. This version is sometimes called a **darktop**. A **neglecta** is a bitone in shades of blue or purple. If selfs give one’s eyes a place to rest, bitones keep the eyes moving around the garden, creating a sense of rhythm. According to Kelly Norris, “Bitone irises add drama, while offering an olive branch to those otherwise turned off by color-busy bicolors.” (Stay tuned for those busy bicolors next month).

Some of our members vouch for the following bitones. Kristee recommends the gently-scented and vigorous-growing ‘[Global Crossing](#)’ (Van Liere 2011), as well as ‘[October Sky](#)’ (Lauer 2000), with its prominent spicy fragrance. Kathy grows ‘[Approach Shot](#)’ (de la Motte 2003), a violet-blue space-ager, as well as a reverse bitone, ‘[Higher Calling](#)’ (Ghio 2016), a late to very late bloomer in soft pink and softer pink. Melania grows two bitones: ‘[Storm Rider](#)’ ([Tasco](#) 2013) in purple and blackish-purple and the horned space-ager ‘[Mighty Warrior](#)’ (Van Liere 2008), a magnificent early-bloomer in red-violet and maroon. ‘Storm Rider’ has won an Honorable Mention and an Award of Merit. Tony and Melania brought a stem of this iris to our recent show. See it on p. 8 and a view of it in their garden at right.

My friend Jane and I have taken an iris-filled field trip to Prescott in early May for the last two years. We have seen several bitones in the Hummingbird Iris Garden there, including ‘[Fabulous One](#)’ (Nicodemus 2005), which is featured on the first page.

[Schreiner's website](#) has an entire list of bitones. Their offerings include the following: ‘[Amas](#),’ originally collected in Turkey in the 1800’s, it was one of first tetraploids widely offered for purchase. ‘Amas’ was used extensively for breeding, as you might guess, since it has all of those additional chromosomes! Their award-winning ‘[Best Bet](#)’ (Schreiner 1988) is vigorous, floriferous, and reblooms with large 6 X 6” blue flowers. (See photo at right). ‘[About Town](#)’ (Blyth 1997) is ruffled and laced and it throws open its lovely ruffled blooms in early midseason. (See photo on p.4). Its child, ‘[Louisa's Song](#)’ (Blyth 1999), blooms in early- through midseason and has a light, sweet scent. These two irises enchant with a light rim around their dark falls, and ‘About Town’ has been reported to rebloom.

If you are craving something brand new, check out these from [Mid-America Gardens](#). ‘[Hello Romance](#)’ (Blyth 2019) has soft salmon pink standards and darker salmon pink falls with a white rim. Tangerine beards set the colors off perfectly, especially since they end in white. ‘[Billowing Robes](#)’ is a standout purple neglecta, due to a fetching combination of ruffles, lace, tangerine beards, and a lavender edge on the falls. Next month, we’ll look at bicolors! - SC

From top: ‘[October Sky](#),’ photo by Kristee West, ‘[Storm Rider](#)’ and ‘[Mighty Warrior](#),’ photos by Tony Kutz, and ‘[Best Bet](#),’ photo from [Garden.org](#).

## TAIS OFFICERS, ETC. FOR 2019

Kevin Kartchner – President

Bonnie Else - Vice President

Sue Clark – Secretary

Martin Juarez – Treasurer, Asst. Secretary

Susan Schaefer - Membership Chairperson

Melania Kutz - Programs & Publicity

Madeleine Glaser - Asst. Program  
Chairperson & 2nd Signatory on Account

Angela Powers - Hospitality & Door Prizes

Diane Tweedy - Birthday Cards & Hospitality

Tony Kutz - Photographer

Sue Clark - Newsletter Editor & Publisher

## What to do in the Iris Garden for May:

Trim any remaining flower stalks at their base. Using scissors for trimming helps to protect the rhizome from injury.

Fertilize with **Super Bloom** or **Ferti-Lome Blooming and Rooting** for six weeks following last flower. **According to Sunset's Western Garden Book, irises form increases and buds for next year's flowers during this six-week postbloom interval.**

Keep rebloomers watered and fed through the summer for the best chance of bloom in the fall.



## Tip Exchange

Planting onions and garlic near your irises can help ward off aphids. - from Kristee

Move potted irises into places with afternoon shade as soon as it gets hot (above 90-95°). Relocate them back into the sun in early November. - SC

I bought a jar of minced garlic at the grocery store and am spooning out small bits of the garlic on places where I have had issues with feral cats in my garden. It seems to be keeping them away! - SC

## Iris Limerick:

There once was man named Dave  
And irises he began to crave  
His favorites were blue  
Such a lovely, lovely hue,  
For that iris-loving man named Dave.

- Sue Clark



from HIPS website

'Souv. de Mme. Gaudichau'

## Did You Know?

The **golden proportion**, represented by the Greek letter Phi [ $\phi$  or  $\varphi$ ], is the mathematical ratio 1:1.618 seen in natural forms. It's found in the proportions of the human body, in the ratio between the forearm and the hand; it's in the pattern of a sunflower's seed head, the arrangement of petals on a rose, and in the spiral shape of a nautilus shell. Our unspoken familiarity with this ratio instills a sense of harmony in outdoor spaces that contain it. For example, a rectangular space with the short and long sides in the proportion of Phi—say, 12 by 19.4 feet—just feels right. "Terraces and landings built in the shape of a golden rectangle and bordered with plant beds in the Phi proportion are immediately appealing," according to Jan Johnsen. (Summary - multiply the width by 1.618 to get the length!) Source: [How to Design Your Dream Garden: Expert Tips for Creating a Garden that Feels Good](http://www.gardendesign.com), www.gardendesign.com.

**"Iris are the ultimate pass-along plant."**

- Bob Van Liere

## A Little Bit of Botany and Iris History

We remain in France this month, for a look into a nursery called Millet et Fils (Millet and Son), which introduced over 150 irises between 1895 and 1930. The Millet nursery, founded in the 1840's by Alexandre Millet, specialized in violets and strawberries. The violets were sold to the flower sellers of Paris, and the strawberries brought in a sizable income during the winter months when they were a welcome treat. Alexandre's son Armand became a partner in the business after his marriage in 1867. Their plants and land were ravaged three years later during the Franco-Prussian War, so they had to start over. Armand joined the *Société National d'Horticulture de France* and began exhibiting his wares. Millet's catalog was so well done that it was considered a reference on violet cultivars. He exhibited 200 kinds of fruit-laden strawberry plants in pots at the Great International Exhibition in Paris in 1889. Armand's first iris was introduced in 1895 - 'Lionnel Millet' was named for his son, who joined the business around this time.

One of their best-known irises was named for Armand's daughter Armandine: 'Souvenir de Madame Gaudichau' (1914), considered one of the finest irises in the first half of the 20th century. (See photo above). This superbly-formed plant bears its large violet flowers and blue beards elegantly, and suggests that "19th century tall bearded irises were derived from three iris - *Iris pallida*, *Iris variegata*, and *Iris aphylla* [the latter was included because of the blue beards] - not just two as previously thought." Another Millet et Fils cultivar is still winning blue ribbons. 'Romeo' (1912) is often sold under the name 'Peacock's Eye,' as the two varieties became confused in the nursery trade long ago.

Millet et Fils had to convert its land to growing food crops during World War I, but was able to survive both that and Armand's death in 1920 to continue introducing noteworthy irises. Their 'Souvenir de Loetitia Michaud' is in the pedigree of many blue irises, including Dykes Medal-winners 'Helen McGregor' and 'Eleanor's Pride.' World War II's ravages destroyed many of the Millet's irises, but some live on to carry the name of another fine family of nurserymen into the present day. - SC

Source: [Classic Irises and the Men and Women Who Created Them](http://www.classicirises.com) by Clarence E. Mahan