

# TAIS Newsletter

Our 56th year

Tucson Area Iris Society - established 1965

An Affiliate of the American Iris Society



**'Calizona Gold'**  
(Valenzuela 2012)

Marcusen Sculpture Garden,  
Prescott, Arizona

Photo by Sue Clark, 2021

## President's Message

Tucson wisdom says don't plant iris until things cool off below 100°. Due to our house sale, I had to transplant a few hundred named iris and a similar number of seedlings in the middle of summer. Then a 4" rain turned our back yard into a 2' deep river and submerged the new iris beds. What's next? I'll let you know how the big experiment turns out next spring.

I enjoyed seeing so many of us at the auction. I was out-bid a few times so I'll try harder next year. Meanwhile, invite your family, friends, neighbors, and anyone else to our September rhizome sale. Our first in two years. We've ordered extra rhizomes for the big occasion. See you there.

- Kevin Kartchner

*"Golden in the garden, Golden in the glen, Golden, golden, golden. September's here again! Golden in the tree tops, Golden in the sky – Golden, golden, golden. September's going by!" – Annette Wynne, "September"*

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## Upcoming Events

**AI5 Annual Popularity Poll: Choose your favorite irises [here](#), & email your choices by number [here](#) by September 15.**

**September 18: TAIS Rhizome Sale, 9 AM to noon, Harlow Gardens nursery. We will set up at 2:30 the afternoon before. Final setup 8-9 AM on September 18th. Members-only discount hour 8-9 AM on September 18th. Presentation at 11 AM: Growing irises in containers. Volunteer opportunities are available: please contact [joycelvan60@gmail.com](mailto:joycelvan60@gmail.com)**

**October 9 Zoom meeting: 1 PM. Winning entries of our Photo Contest, which will be online again. See p. 5**

**November 13: Potluck & Installation of new officers. Anyone willing to host?**

**No meeting in December**

### Birthday Wishes to:

**Mike Elliot**

**Lenore Mackey**

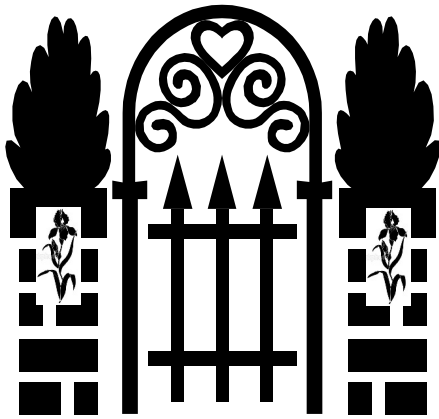
**Carolyn Hatounian**

**Jane Parks**



*Iris pumila*

# August Meeting Minutes



We ♥ Irises

14 August - Nineteen members participated in our annual auction held at the Tucson Botanical Gardens. The rhizomes were ordered from Mid-America Gardens in Oregon this year. We were happy to be together again while remembering to be as physically distanced as possible. Twenty two rhizomes went home with 11 happy gardeners.

Each Board Member received a rhizome of a 2021 introduction as a gift for their service to the Club.

All irises given out at the auction and as Thank you gifts are considered to be **Club Irises**. As I understand it, this was something that Kristee instituted for TAIS since she had enjoyed it at her former club, the Mesilla Valley Iris Society. Sometimes it was referred to as **Test Irises**. It's a program to get recent introductions to our members, who raise them with the intent of donating all increases to our rhizome sale in the next few years. The member may keep one increase per variety. So, new and newer introductions for our members and Tucson-grown recently-introduced irises for our customers! The auction also provides the

potential of adding to our treasury, which it did this year.

**Meeting:** Kevin showed a photo of one of this year's Dykes Medal winners, 'Daring Deception' by Thomas Johnson of Mid-America Gardens, the same place our Auction rhizomes came from.

The group voted to continue touring one another's gardens during bloom time. Terry mentioned that the Rose Society opens their tours to the public as a fund-raiser, and that the Rose Society provides liability insurance.

Martin will continue as treasurer. He cannot attend meetings due to his new work schedule. Jim had offered to be the treasurer, which is greatly appreciated.

Diane Tweedy's iris garden will be featured during next year's Master Gardeners' tour thanks to her friend and neighbor, Chris. Bonnie motioned and Martin seconded that our group accept Chris' offer to set up a table at the tour. Diane's son Bob coaches a swim team in Houston, and they made a memorial contribution to us. Kevin read their card aloud and

proposed that next year, we order an iris for each of our members in honor of Diane. Kathy motioned, Linda seconded.

Kevin reviewed the Sale schedule. Joyce passed around a sign-up sheet for volunteers. Susan will speak on "Growing Irises in Containers" at 11 AM. She and Joyce are writing new planting instructions for this process. Extra rhizomes have been ordered this year due to the boom in gardening during the pandemic. Kevin, Dave, and Cathy loaded up the tables and containers from storage today, since we were right there. Kevin will store them until the Sale.

Martin suggested a gift for Kristee in honor of her years of service. Terry mentioned that the Rose Society offers medals for service. Perhaps AIS does as well.

The libraries are still unavailable for meetings, so our photo contest may be virtual again. We hope to meet for a potluck in November. Martin suggested that a park might work for the latter. Following the meeting, Bonnie checked with TBG, but they do not have any openings for us to use a room there for either event.

Martin brought door prizes which were won by Maureen, Pat, Kathy, Terry, Dave, and Ron.

- Sue Clark, secretary

**TAIS Rhizome  
sale: Harlow's -  
Sept. 18**



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

**TAIS logo shirts** - Remember that you can take a shirt to Renegade Classics Cycle Wear at 4745 E. Speedway and have the TAIS logo embroidered on it in the colors of your choice. The cost for the embroidery is \$13. Maybe you would then like to wear this shirt to our upcoming Sale! - SC

### Some favorites at the Auction - photos from Mid-America website



MID-AMERICAGARDEN.COM



MID-AMERICAGARDEN.COM



'Private Party' (Johnson '20) 'Night Whispers' (Johnson '20) 'Diamond Heart' (Johnson '21)



'Plic Symphony' (Black '21) 'Piece by Piece' (Johnson '21) 'Think Diamonds' (Blyth '21)



MID-AMERICAGARDEN.COM



MID-AMERICAGARDEN.COM



MID-AMERICAGARDEN.COM

'Feeling Romantic' (Johnson '20) 'Come to Life' (Johnson '20) 'Connption Fit' (Johnson '20)

**Congratulations to Terry for making the highest bid, and to Kevin, Susan, and Martin for each winning three rhizomes!**

### Treasurer's Report for August - submitted by Martin Juarez



Beginning Balance					\$4,938.64
Date	Paid	MOP	Deposits / Credits	Expenses / Debits	Purpose / Reference
08/04/21	X	Auto	\$72 00		Wrong Check Order
08/04/21	X	Auto		\$20 00	Re-Order Checks
08/12/21	X		\$10 00		DUES - Gawrychowski #1065
08/14/21	X	#1860		\$408 00	Clark Mid-America Iris' newsletters, copies
08/19/21	X		\$70 00		Aug 14 <sup>th</sup> Auction **
08/19/21	X		\$386 00		Aug 14 <sup>th</sup> Auction ***
08/19/21	X		\$450 00		Tweedy Memoriam #1410793
Totals			\$988 00	\$428 00	\$560 00
Ending Balance					\$5,498.64
08/27/21 07:28 AM					
** Cash (\$20 Bonnie, \$20 Cathy, \$10 Kathleen, \$20 Ron)					
*** Checks (Schaeffer \$60/#3667, Juarez \$60/#1442, Swartz \$56/#1178, Karchner \$52/#5996, Briggs \$50/#1195, Olsen \$46/#7370, Glaser \$39/#6245, Knill \$23/#4906)					
Auction Total \$456 00 (\$440 Iris', \$10 Cacti, \$6 Donations)					



### Median Irises, Part I: Standard Dwarfs and Intermediates

The Medians became their own class of irises in the 1950's. The majority of them are crosses between *Iris pumila* and various tall bearded (TB) irises. *I. pumila* is a natural hybrid native to Eurasia from Austria to Russia and south to Turkey. See photo at upper right. *Pumila* lends its hardiness, tidiness, and its smaller stature to the median irises. Medians are perfect for borders, fronts of beds, and rock gardens. They are vigorous and can tolerate partial shade and deeper plantings. They hold up well in high winds and heavy rains. Their leaves are self-cleaning, meaning that they wither away on their own, so they look good in summer. Rot and scorch are not issues, but the medians don't tend to thrive in areas with mild winters.

Robert Schreiner imported seeds of *I. pumila* from Austria and the hybridizing began. Paul Cook and Geddes Douglas were important early breeders of medians. In fact, the highest award for standard dwarf bearded irises is the Cook-Douglas Medal. Through the years, the medians have been divided into four groups. We'll look at two of the four this month.

The **Standard Dwarf Beardeds** (SDB) range in height from 8-16" and begin blooming about three weeks before TB. They form floriferous compact clumps, with leaves that remain attractive throughout much of the year. Flowers are most often viewed from above due to the smaller stature of the plant, and style arms are important visually. Some notable hybrids are 'Cotton Blossom' (B. Jones 1970), which sports ruffles and falls which are wider and horizontal; and 'Chubby Cheeks' (Black 1985), a plicata sporting a very rounded and ruffled form. See photos.

**Intermediate Beardeds** (IB) were created by [William John Caparne](#) and the Sass brothers. In both cases, dwarf irises were crossed with TB. IB range in height from 16-27.5" and bloom between the SDB and TB, often overlapping their intervals. *Iris aphylla* appears in the ancestry of many IB, which serves to add branching to the forms. IB are perfect for smaller gardens. They are vigorous and disease resistant. Their flowers typically have flared falls and a perky look. Stems display elegant branching and a minimum of four buds. Some IB hybrids include '[Eleanor Roosevelt](#)' (Sass 1933) (a rebloomer which grows in Tucson), '[Blueberry Filly](#)' (Kasperak 1998), '[Lemon Pop](#)' (Lauer 1989), and '[Backlit Beauty](#)' (Tasco 2010). The highest award for IB is the Hans & Jacob Sass Medal. Next month: MTB & BB. - SC

From top: *Iris pumila* growing in Austria (by Stefan.lefnaer, accessed on Wikimedia), 'Cotton Blossom,' 'Chubby Cheeks,' 'Lemon Pop,' and 'Backlit Beauty' (latter four from the AIS Iris Wiki)



## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual TAIS Photo Contest

Our contest will be online again this year. Webmaster Tim has graciously agreed to handle submissions. Start searching for your best iris photos now!

### Categories

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



### GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

- Current TAIS members may submit up to 15 pictures in groups of 1-3 to [submissions@tucsoniris.org](mailto:submissions@tucsoniris.org). **Note:** emailing more than three photos at a time may result in the message not going through.
  - Please include three pieces of information for each picture: your name, the category, and the name of the variety pictured. If you do not know the name, label it as a NOID, meaning no ID (no identification).
  - The photos must be in **final form**.
  - All photos must be your own, although they are *not restricted to your own garden*. Help make this a fun and successful event by participating!
  - Please be sure that each photo fits the category you select for it.
  - Winning entries from previous years are ineligible.
  - Submissions will be accepted **between September 18 and 27**.
- Entries will be displayed anonymously on the website. They will be numbered and include the name of the variety.

### VOTING

- TAIS members may vote for **three photos *per category*** by submitting to [taisnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:taisnewsletter@yahoo.com). See all photos at [www.tucsoniris.org](http://www.tucsoniris.org). Please consider the *quality* of the photos (focus, composition, etc.), rather than the beauty of the iris(es) featured.
- Votes will be accepted from **September 28 to October 1**.

Winning photos in each category will be featured during our Zoom meeting of October 9 at 1 PM.



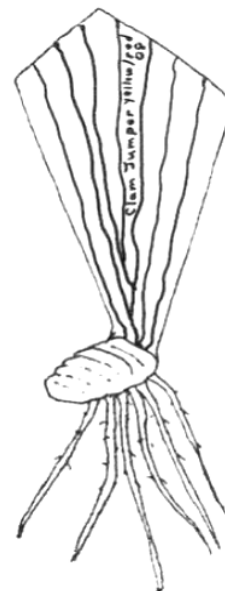
## Rhizome Preparation - Pre-sale



- **If you are contributing rhizomes for our Sale (1 rhizome = 2 Iris Bucks), please refer to the preparation instructions in the box below, which are included here with kind permission from Judy Book of one of our sister clubs, the Prescott Area Iris Society. Note: our club will *not* be holding a marking party and you are *not required* to write the year of introduction on the leaves.**
- **If your Club Irises have increases whose rhizomes are at least the size of a large walnut in the shell, please bring those to the Sale (keep one for yourself). This is a minimum size for all of our rhizomes. Anything smaller will be combined with other smaller ones and sold in a bag at a substantially-reduced price.**
- **If you will submit a list of which varieties you intend to bring, we can look up and print out photos of them in advance. Photos help customers choose what to purchase. Please submit the list to [taisnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:taisnewsletter@yahoo.com) at least 2 weeks beforehand if possible. Or better yet, submit their photos!**
- **Please deliver your prepared contributions to a club member at Harlow Gardens on Friday, September 17 between 2:30 and 4:00 PM. If this is not possible, arrange to deliver them to a club member in advance. Be sure that the rhizomes are dry or they will rot.**

### Steps for Preparing Rhizomes for the Sales

1. Dig and divide the clump as close to the event as possible or within 7-10 days of the marking party so rhizomes will still look fresh for the sale. Rhizomes should be healthy, showing no signs of disease or insect damage. It is important that the rhizomes be large enough to have the potential of blooming next year. Store the iris in a cool dry area with good circulation.
2. Trim leaves to about 6-8-inches long and into a fan shape (inverted V. See illustration.) Cut roots to 4 inches.
3. On the middle leaf print the required information with a black permanent marker (Sharpie). (See instructions below.)  
Avoid printing on the outside leaf since it is the first to turn brown and fall off.
4. After marking, wash all residual dirt from the rhizomes, roots and leaves. Swishing up and down in a 5-gal bucket of water is recommended. It is important to have clean plants.
5. Optional: Some people soak the rhizomes for 10 to 15 minutes in a bleach solution of 1/2-cup bleach to 1-gal water. If you do this, wear rubber gloves to protect your skin. Afterwards, it is necessary to rinse the irises well in clear water.
6. Let the rhizomes dry completely outside in the shade. Do not bring damp rhizomes to the marking party.
7. When the rhizomes are dry, store in a single layer in a cool, dry place. If the rhizomes are placed in a paper bag or box, the fans should be placed down and the roots up (up-side down) to avoid trapping moisture between the leaves. Never store in plastic bags as it holds moisture and can rot the rhizome.



### \*Marking Rhizomes

Marking pens will be provided. To help both the buyers and the sale workers, please mark the **middle leaf** of the iris as follows:

Rub off the white, waxy coating on the leaf with a paper towel or soft cloth before writing on the leaf.

For all iris, write the name and year the iris was introduced. For other than tall bearded, also write the type: MDB, SDB, IB, BB, MTB, etc. Also indicate space age (SA), reblooming (RE)

To locate the year of introduction, use the AIS Iris Encyclopedia: <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view>. All members should learn how to use this valuable tool.

### Storing and Transporting Iris

Put rhizomes of a single variety in a separate box or paper grocery bag , one bag for each variety. (no plastic bags).

Write the name of the iris and the year of introduction on the box or bag.

**TAIS OFFICERS, ETC. FOR 2021**

**Kevin Kartchner - President**

**Bonnie Else - Vice President**

**Sue Clark – Secretary, Signatory on Account**

**Martin Juarez – Treasurer, Asst. Secretary**

**Bonnie & Kathy - Programs & Publicity**

**Joyce & Mary Ann - Hospitality/Door Prizes**

**Joyce Knill - Birthday cards**

**Susan Schaefer - Membership Chairperson**

**Dave Smith - Photographer**

**Sue Clark - Newsletter Editor & Publisher**

**What to do in the Iris Garden for September:**

Plant rhizomes starting late this month through October. Aim for at least six weeks before frost. Sterilize new rhizomes for about 10 minutes in a solution of 2 1/4 c water and 1/4 c bleach. There are two strategies for dried roots - keep them to stabilize the rhizome or remove them to allow the rhizome to contact the soil. **For planting in the garden:** Choose a spot that will receive afternoon shade *during the summer*. Good drainage is essential, as is good air circulation! Remember that block walls radiate lots of heat, which can be harmful. Dig a hole with enough depth so that the top of the rhizome will be buried about 2" to prevent rot caused by sun damage. Alternatively, some people prefer to leave the surface of the rhizome exposed. Leave a mound of soil in the center of the hole and fan any remaining roots over it. Press soil over rhizome to remove any air pockets. Drip lines appear to be the best way to water irises in the desert. Emitters with adjustable flow will give you the most control. I use Raindrip Adjustable Full Circle Stream Bubblers. - SC



**Tip Exchange**

*"Step over ants, put worms back in the grass, rescue baby caterpillars, release spiders back into your garden, open windows for bees to fly home. They are all little souls that deserve a life, too." - Maria Iram*



**Iris Limerick:**

**It's just about time to plant!  
It's almost like a chant.  
Our sale is near  
So give a cheer.  
It's practically time to plant!  
- Sue Clark**



by Van Tubergen, not registered. AIS Wiki

'Ancilla,' a Regeliocyclus

**Did You Know?**

Chrysanthemums star in the fall! Ones that are shaped like daisies will help attract bees and other pollinators. Provide the mums with rich well-draining soil, sun, and good air circulation. Mulch to help keep their shallow roots moist. Pinch off top 1" of each stem 2-3 times by June to encourage branching. Mums symbolize "life and rebirth in Asia, sympathy in Europe, and respect and honor in America." - Garden Design website

*"Whatever July and August do not boil, September cannot fry." - Proverb*

**A Little Bit of Botany and Iris History**

During the nineteenth century, irises were touted as a garden flower and became more available to the public via catalogues and nurseries. The Van Tubergen nursery in Haarlem, Holland offered the first Regeliocyclus hybrids in 1894. They followed Sir Michael Foster's naming convention for these crosses between Regelia and Oncocyclus irises. Regeliocyclus hybrids were not as demanding in their growing conditions as either of the parent species, permitting more people to grow them. See photo, above. The Van Tubergen nursery was one of the most famous nurseries in the world, and their plant collection was so remarkable that it was referred to as "The Museum." Started by Cornelius Van Tubergen, it was later managed by his two nephews. One of them, John Hoog, was honored for introducing so many fine plants into cultivation and received the Veitch Memorial Medal in 1924. Dykes named an iris for Hoog, *Iris hoogiana*, gathered in Turkistan in 1913 by Paul Graeber, one of Van Tubergen's plant collectors.

The Regelia irises used to create the Regeliocyclus hybrids are a section of aril irises. These originated in the mountainous regions of Iran and Afghanistan and the Altai Mountains of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, and Mongolia. In The Book of the Iris (1904), Dr. Robert Lynch named them after German horticulturalist and botanist Eduard August von Regel. The director of the Russian Imperial Botanical Garden in St. Petersburg, Regel collected, grew, and named over 3000 plants, and was well-known for distributing them to institutions and plant specialists. He named *I. albertii* after his son. Regel also published the journal *Gartenflora*.

One last group of irises became well known as the century closed - the California irises. Carl Purdy of Ukiah, California successfully grew several native California irises in his nursery, which John Wister described as one of the pioneer iris nurseries. Purdy likely sent seeds to Max Leichtlin in Germany, who grew these temperamental irises successfully. Purdy's catalog, *Hardy Perennials for California Gardens*, specialized in native plants from that state. Carl Purdy later became a charter member of AIS. - SC

Sources: "Prologue to 1920," by Bob Pries in The Early Years - Supplement 1 of 4 to IRISES, AIS Bulletin, 2020; Wikipedia articles on "[Iris subg. Iris](#)" and "[Iris hoogiana](#);" and AIS wiki bit on [Regelia](#).

# Tucson Area Iris Society's

## *Annual Rhizome Sale* ❁

❁ Pending health guidelines. All is subject to change.

**September 18, 2021 - 9 AM to noon. Members only 8-9 AM**

**11 AM – “Growing Irises in Containers” presentation**

**Harlow's Gardens Nursery  
5620 E. Pima Street in Tucson**

**A wide selection of tall bearded iris rhizomes will be offered. Cash or checks only.**

***Our knowledgeable members will be on hand with advice.***





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