

AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

REGION

4

NEWS
CAST



VOLUME 21

JANUARY, 1979

No. 1

**NEWSCAST
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AIS JUDGES—1979

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S *Mr. Willian D. Kelley 653 Wash. St., E., Lewisburg, WV. 24901

WASHINGTON, D.C.

(no entries)

*Present or Former Regional Vice President

R V P ' s MESSAGE

As Region 4 faced 1978, I indicated in my message to you that there were several areas of interest and concern that we needed to explore and develop together for the betterment of Region 4 and the American Iris Society. I would like to take this opportunity as we begin 1979 to review these areas and see what progress, if any, we have made.

“First, attention must be directed to the matter of membership.” The latest official Membership Strength Report that I have received (dated September 30, 1978) indicates the following for Region 4:

Single Annual	133		137 (11/1/77) Total Single
Family Annual	32		47 (11/1/77) Total Family
Single Triennial	26		
Family Triennial	11		
Single Life	1		
Family Life	0		
Youth	5		2 (11/1/77)
Affiliates	1		
TOTAL	252		233 (11/1/77)
Rank	10		9 (11/1/77)
Total AIS Membership	5695		4895 (11/1/77)

Since this listing we have received notification of 7 additional new members; we have also received notice that 23 members of Region 4 have been dropped for failure to pay AIS dues. I do not know whether these deletions are reflected in the figures above or not. Of prime concern is the fact that the total membership of AIS has grown at about double the percentage rate as the membership of Region 4 ! We must continue to attract new members through shows, articles, talks to garden clubs, and similar activities. BUT we must not overlook the urgent need to retain those members who have already joined the AIS. We will grow *only* through retention of the present membership and attracting new members to the membership!

“Second, efforts are being made to strengthen the Judge’s Training activities in the region.” For 1978, nine (9) Apprentice Judges were appointed ; seven of these advanced to Garden Judges for 1979 (one resigned, one deceased.) For 1979 an additional

seven (7) Apprentice Judges were appointed. For 1978 100% of Region 4 Garden Judges cast Official Ballots. Only one other Region had this record! The overall Official Ballot return for Region 4 was 82%. As of November 1978, we have 17 Quota Judges (35 allowed) and 23 non-Quota Judges for a total of 40 Judges. Mrs. C. C. Rockwell, Jr., National Chairman of Judges and Judges Training, "Thank you very much for an excellent list of recommendations. Your region is in good shape."

The Fall Meeting of the membership at Radford, Virginia in October, gave ample support to the action of the Executive Board in voting to have a Fall meeting in addition to the regular Spring meeting. The first Fall meeting was held in Charlottesville in 1977 and was the proving ground for the very successful 1978 fall meeting. There was good attendance by Board members and the general membership. Much of the success of these meetings is due to the excellent planning and work of our Assistant RVP, Claire Barr. The burden of hotel arrangements, etc., rests with her. The generous hospitality of Juanita and Lloyd Zurbrigg in their home and gardens made everyone feel welcome to such an extent that plans are being made for the 1979 Fall meeting to again be held in Radford. As part of this 1978 meeting, Judges Training was offered on the point system of exhibition judging and on Saturday evening there was an auction of the contents of the Region 4 Library. The proceeds of this auction were \$164.80.

It is difficult to realize this will be the thirtieth spring that I have grown iris. Yet, I look forward with undiminished pleasure to the renewal of the beauty of the "flower of the rainbow." I especially am looking forward to this spring because the Spring meeting of Region 4 will be held on May 11 and 12, 1979 in Eastern North Carolina with headquarters at the Holiday Inn at Smithfield, North Carolina. The tour gardens will be those of Mrs. Milton Ogburn, a grower and hybridizer; Mrs. Loleta Powell, well-known for her iris and daylily introductions and her exquisite plantings of perennials and conifers, she has an outstanding collection of hostas; and Mrs. Noble Jernigan, who has extensive plantings of iris, hosta, daylilies, and many other perennials. Glenn Grigg, Chairman, gave a preview of this meeting at the Fall Board meeting. Full details will be mailed individually to the membership.

As in all years, 1978 held progress and promise for Region 4. We were well represented at the National level. Maynard Harp and Bill Barr served on study committees; Ann Dasch

continues to bring distinction to Region 4 with her expertise in public relations, organization, and publications; and of course to have Dr. Nearpass' LORD BALTIMORE on the Fall 1978 AIS BULLETIN cover (he serves as National Slides Chairman) gives pleasure to all in the Region. May 1979 see even more progress for our programs. Working together, this hope can become a reality.

Roy

EDITOR'S PAGE

Our deadline for January NEWSCAST (November 15) came and went. The membership chairman's report was in and also a notice and letter from Glenn Grigg in regard to the spring meeting in North Carolina—and that was it!

Over seven weeks passed before another scrap of material came. Then, after some urgent calls, there was finally enough for a small issue. It has been put together in three days. Today is Saturday, January 13 and time for it to be coming from the press. Instead, it's going to press on Monday and we will be lucky to get it mailed to you by February 15, the deadline for the April NEWSCAST.

This situation prompts me to wonder if our efforts might not be better concentrated on two issues per annum. Unless something happens to change my mind before the annual meeting the question will be brought to the Board at that time along with several other recommendations to reduce the cost of NEWS-CAST and change the format.

May good things happen for you in the new year! One nice thing will happen in North Carolina May 11 and 12. Hope to see you.

Rena

MORE FROM THE SAGE OF LEWISBURG

Again, former RVP, Bill Kelley digs into his store of wisdom.

"Nobody can be as persuasive as the one who's not hampered by facts or the truth."

"Anything scarce is valuable—praise is a good example."

MINUTES — FALL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

REGION 4 AIS

The Executive Board of Region 4, AIS met at 2 p.m. at the Tyler Hotel-Motel, Radford, Virginia, on October 7, with RVP Roy Epperson, presiding. This fall meeting was open to all the members who were there and desired to attend. Thirteen board members were present.

RVP Roy Epperson advised us the purpose of a fall meeting was to make it possible for members to attend when free from the pressure of attending to their gardens, etc. at spring blooming time. It was to be an open meeting for all members. He also thanked Dr. and Mrs. Lloyd Zurbrigg for showing their garden (rebloomers) and for the nice refreshments.

Ass't. RVP Claire Barr also thanked the Zurbriggs and also Roy and Frances Brown for the fine judging course which preceded the meeting. It offered fun, knowledge and a good chance for everyone to participate.

It was brought to the attention of the board that expenses for the meeting had been overpaid. The question was whether we should give money back to members or to the general treasury.

Bill Barr made motion that excess money be refunded to members. This was seconded by Sam Owens. The motion did not carry and the excess money will go to the Treasury.

The past RVP was not in attendance.

Treasurer, Sam Owens' report attached. September interest not received as yet and not included in present balance of \$1,639.28.

Historian Polly Price will discontinue library tonight. Books will be sold. She will keep a scrapbook and members are asked to please send material for said scrapbook.

Reports of Committee Chairmen.

Editor of Newscast, Rena Crumpler, ill and in hospital.

We are asked to send her pictures from meeting.

Bylaws booklet is ready to be sent out. Should be sent out with January issue of Newscast which will be a memorial to Dr. Anne Lee. Consensus of board is that this is way bylaws should be distributed.

Budget Chairman — Al Rice — advised Mr. Owens report fine.

Judges' Training—Eloise Nenon—not present.

The RVP advised we had 4 judges' training experiences in 1978. In three years will have another refresher or conduct learning session at show or garden. As of August 1, 1978, we had 40 judges.

Membership—Helen Rucker—not present. Report attached. RVP advises we have 250 members and are 10th out of 24 regions. (Newscast July)

Median Iris chairmanship vacant since Rena Kizzier resigned.

Jean Hoffmeister appointed Median Iris Chairperson.

Reblooming Iris—Lloyd Zurbrigg—report attached.

Exhibitions—Frances Brown—report attached.

Photography—Dr. D. C. Nearpass—not present.

Publicity and Public Relations—Rena Crumpler—ill—not present.

Auction and Awards Chairman—Roy Epperson—advised correct amount of auction conducted at annual Spring meeting was \$195.00.

*Blue Ridge Chapter—Ouida Persinger—not present. (see report BR chapter which follows.)

*Marydel Chapter—Paul Hoffmeister—report follows.

*Western N. C.—B. J. Brown—report follows.

*Eastern N.C.—Susan Grigg gave report for North Carolina. Page 31 Newscast September reported Iris show will be held at Holly Hill Mall, May 20. Auction was set for June 24 at the Eppersons in High Point.

Eastern and Western North Carolina chapters together will host the spring 1979 regional meeting in North Carolina.

*Chesapeake and Potomac—Joseph Petersen, Jr.—not present
—report follows.

*Francis Scott Key—Bill Barr—report follows.

OLD BUSINESS

Our RVP (and others) believe we need a set of fair guidelines for each officer of the board and each committee chairman. He will chair a committee to prepare an organizational manual for each committee chairman and office.

The RVP advised that 18% of the 42 members of Region 4 who returned the favorite iris poll showed votes for 275 separate varieties—245 as listed and 30 write-ins. Those with 10 votes or more were Dykes Medal winners: Shipshape, Pink Taffeta, Bride's Halo, Debby Rairdon and Stepping Out.

We were advised the youth committee needs a chairperson and the Associate Editor of Newscast needs filling.

The nominating committee was elected at this interim meeting and the members are as follows:

Virginia	Blanche Rice
Maryland	Rosalie Figge, Chairperson
North Carolina	Alice Bouldin
West Virginia	Sam Owens

Discussed place for spring regional meetings. Hope to bring recommendations from C & P to 1979 meeting.

Hope to have Louisiana and Japanese Iris for judging this coming spring.

Glenn Grigg advised the 1979 spring meeting will be held Friday and Saturday, May 11 and 12 at the Holiday Inn, Smithfield, North Carolina on Interstate 70A and 95 half way through state. The tour gardens (Saturday) will be

1. Mrs. Milton Ogburn — hybridizer
2. Mrs. Noble Jernigan — located 25 miles south near Dunn — Commercial
3. Mrs. Loleta Powell — afternoon at Princeton, N. C. which is near her garden.

It was decided to again hold the fall meeting in Radford in 1979. We owe a vote of thanks to the Zurbriggs for this. The notice of this meeting will be mailed to entire membership.

The problem of inactive chapters was again moved from the agenda to the spring agenda. Need to know more about number of members in vicinity of these chapters.

Meeting adjourned on time.

Celeste Cox, Sec'y

*Chapter reports printed under "News of the Chapters."

POPULARITY POLL 1978

Region 4

There were 35 ballots received, with 43 members of Region 4 voting.

Votes	Variety
21	SHIPSHAPE
19	PINK TAFFETA
18	BRIDES'S HALO, DEBBY RAIRDON, STEP-PING OUT
17	ICE SCULPTURE
15	CUP RACE
14	BABBLING BROOK, KILT LILT
13	LEMON MIST, LORD BALTIMORE, VANITY, WINTER OLYMPICS
12	STUDY IN BLACK
11	CAMELOT ROSE, LAUNCHING PAD, LIME FIZZ, MYSTIQUE, SKYWATCH, WEDDING VOW
10	BAYBERRY CANDLE, CHRISTMAS TIME, DOVER BEACH, DREAM LOVER, DUSKY DANCER, LATIN LOVER, LOUDOUN LASSIE, PRAISE THE LORD, SON OF STAR

Votes were cast for 245 varieties on the Ballot and 30 write-in varieties. Of those varieties receiving at least 10 votes, 10 are Dykes Medalists and 3 are Region 4 introductions. The only write-in variety to receive more than one vote was SPINNING WHEEL.

TREASURER'S REPORT
REGION 4 — AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

From May 9, 1978 to October 4, 1978

Balance from last Treasurer's Report \$1,465.86

RECEIVED

5/29/78	Iris Auction at Roanoke	195.00
8/20/78	Western N.C. Chapter 1978 Contribution	40.00
8/20/78	Blue Ridge Chapter 1978 Contribution	400.00

TOTAL RECEIVED: \$ 635.00

DISBURSED:

5/29/78	Mrs. J. E. Rucker — Membership Expenses	5.58
6/ 5/78	Williams Flowers—for Elmira Purdy	22.68
10/ 2/78	Walters Printing Co. September Newscast	405.60
10/ 2/78	Mrs. Kay Cooper Postage September Newscast	27.72

TOTAL DISBURSED: \$ 461.58

Balance in checking Account 370.94

Balance in saving Account 1,199.93

Interest on savings Account 68.41

TOTAL BALANCE \$1,639.28

Reserved for Memorial Fund \$85.00

SAM OWENS
Treasurer

REBLOOMING IRIS

Your chairman is happy to report his first continuous season of iris bloom. None of these iris was far below the accepted standards for tall bearded iris, and some of them were very close indeed, if not on a par. The outstanding varieties in giving this fine season of summer bloom: JEAN GUYMER, ENGLISH COTTAGE and SIGN OF LEO. Another giving summer bloom for the second season in a row was AHEAD OF TIMES; this iris is not very good in respect to form, but it has rather vivid coloring.

It has been pointed out to me several times this summer that the definition of a reblooming iris as issued last year, was at variance with that given by Dr. Raymond Smith in "The World of Irises". That issued by the Society is the official one: "A reblooming iris is one that has an additional period or periods of bloom apart from the regular spring season." Dr. Smith's definition is that of a botanist and, points out the difference between a "true rebloomer" and one that merely produces off-season bloom. It would be a hornet's nest of trouble to try to separate these two types in respect to comments and awards, and for the present at least, they will have to be considered under a single category. There is the additional problem of length of seasons, and what might not remount in Vermont might very well do so in Texas.

The first division that the Reblooming Iris Society makes is between those that are winter-blooming remontants, performing in costal California, and the cold-winter type, which must perforce give the second crop of bloom in the summer or fall. The practice of advertising the number (average) of freeze-free days in the introducers garden will help buyers to estimate the likelihood of success with a new introduction in their own garden and climate.

The Reblooming Iris Society is also moving toward the establishment of Test Gardens in parts of the nation with widely diverging climates. We are aware of the difficulties involved, but trust that the information garnered from them will greatly surpass the difficulties and effort involved.

Your chairman welcomes the Board and visitors of Region 4 of the American Iris Society to Radford, and hopes that the

number of bloomstalks will be deemed sufficient to add interest and joy to the proceedings.

LLOYD A. ZURBRIGG Chairman
Reblooming Iris

REGION 4 — A. I. S.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT — NOVEMBER 1978

MARYLAND—FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

Mrs. Jeannette Allender, 8454 Loch Raven Blvd.,
Towson, Md. 21204 — New Member

Mr. Robert B. Dasch, 4831 Deer Park Road,
Owings Mills, Md. 21117—Youth Reinstated

Miss Valerie A. Dasch, 4831 Deer Park Road,
Owings Mills, Md. 21117—Youth Reinstated

Mrs. Nancy Gross, Whiteford, Md. 21260—
Transferred to Region 3

Mrs. Constance Williams, 6486 Barchink Place,
Columbia, Md. 21045 — New Member

MARY-DELEWARE

Mr. Henry Purdy, Easton, Md. —Single Membership

C & P

Ms. Mary K. Asdell, Rt. 5, Box 355,
Frederick, Md. 21701—New Member

Mrs. Clare N. Spence, Rt. 2, Box 330A,
Strasburg, Va. 22657—New Member

NORTH CAROLINA — E.N.C.

Mrs. Barbara Trogdon, 405 Willoughby Blvd.,
Greensboro, N.C. 27408—Transferred from Region 19

Miss Melanie Epperson, 1115 Delk Drive,
High Point, N.C. 27262—Youth Reinstated

W.N.C.

Mrs. Flossie Nelson, 109 South Carolina Avenue,
Hendersonville, N.C. 28739—New Member

Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Brown, 11026 Steele Creek Road,
Charlotte, N.C. 28210—Change of Address

VIRGINIA—BLUE RIDGE

Mr. Jimmy W. Martin, 1107 East Roanoke Street,
Blacksburg, Va. 24060—New Member

Mr. and Mrs. James C. Helton, 1640 Overhill Road,
Bristol, Va. 24201—Moved to Region 7

NORFOLK

Mrs. Robert L. Munn—Single Membership

HELEN RUCKER
Membership Chairman,
Region 4, A.I.S.

EXHIBITIONS — REGION 4

You will note in the September 1978 Newscast the exhibitions held in the Region: in Charlotte, N.C. on May 6, 1978; in Easton, Maryland on May 14, 1978; and in Burlington, N.C. on May 20, 1978.

We feel that there are more areas where Exhibitions should be held. This is one way that we can keep the interest in irises before the public, and among our own membership.

FRANCES D. BROWN
Exhibitions Chairman

JUDGES' SCHOOL AT FALL MEETING, RADFORD

Celeste Cox

RVP Roy Epperson did a good job of teaching us about point scoring. Point scoring is considered a hard part of learning to judge. Sometimes it can provoke big arguments which, of course, should never take place among level headed judges. Two diplomats can come to a better decision than a couple of hot heads.

Lloyd Zurbrigg had rebloomers for the judging course. It was a bit late in the season but he had some nice ones. (A yellow dwarf of his was exceptionally good and received a lot of admiration). We had a disagreement about which was the best. We found out that the one most thought the best was actually made up of two separate stalks. This was a bit hard to tell by just looking. It could in no way be best. It would have been eliminated in a show. These are things that can happen. Mostly, it is a case of not knowing.

Would recommend that members attend the judging sessions even though they are not interested in judging as it helps them in preparing their exhibits for shows. Dirt and spray residue should be cleaned off and spent blooms should be properly removed. No points are taken off for this removal but points are taken off for broken or damaged buds, or damage to open flowers.

Frances Brown told us to be sure to read and follow the schedule. It is the law of the show. The flower should bear the correct name. You should make name tags for each as planted and chart the beds. This will be a big help if something breaks a tag or some child takes it. Never enter an unnamed iris in a show, and do not expect the show committee to name it for you. It is hard for anyone to be able to identify all varieties.

SPACE CITY IRIS TIME, HUNTSVILLE '79

Huntsville, Alabama

**The Annual Convention of the
AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY**

May 1—5, 1979

CONVENTION HEADQUARTERS

Sheraton Motor Inn

4408 University Drive

Huntsville, AL 35804

Phone (205) 837-3250

HOTEL RATES

Single	\$22.00
Double (2 people, 1 bed)	28.00
Double (2 people, 2 beds)	30.00
Double (3 people, 2 beds)	33.00
Double (4 people, 2 beds)	36.00

Please make reservations directly with the hotel. State that you are attending the AIS Convention. All rooms, blocked for the convention which are not reserved by April 16, 1979, will be released to the general public on that date. Therefore, be sure to make your hotel reservations early.

REGISTRATION FEE

Received before April	\$75.00
Received from April 1 to April 20	80.00
Received after April 20	85.00

Make check payable to "1979 AIS Convention."

Mail registrations to

Mrs. Ruth Wilder
2219 Matthews Street, SE
Huntsville, AL 35801
Phone (205) 533-4809

There will be no partial registrations. If it is necessary to cancel a registration, a full refund is assured if notice is received by April 20, 1979.

Transportation from the airport to the hotel will be furnished to the greatest extent possible. If such transportation is desired, send name, date, and time of arrival, flight number to

Mrs. Evelyn Lucas
1412 East Olive Drive, SE
Huntsville, AL 35801
Phone (205) 534-4144

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, MAY 1

Registration, 11:30 a.m.—8:00 p.m. Meetings are scheduled for Board of Directors, Median Iris Society Board of Directors and Council of Representatives, RVP's, JT Chairmen, and Robin Reception.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

Registration, 7:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. Joint meetings of Directors, RVP's, and Sectional Reps; all sectional meetings; 7:00 p.m., no host social hour; 8:00 p.m., welcome dinner.

THURSDAY, MAY 3

Garden tours to Guntersville, AL to Kearney's and to South Huntsville gardens of McGahee, Saxton, Kennedy, and Hall. Evening, Judges' training.

FRIDAY, MAY 4

Garden tours to Tennessee gardens of Williams in Eagleville and Christopher in Murfreesboro, Madison County gardens of Burch and McNeal. Evening, open.

SATURDAY, MAY 5

Garden tours to central Huntsville gardens of Wilder, Van Valkenburgh, Lucas, Branumn, and Easley. 6:00 p.m., no host social hours; 7:00 p.m., awards banquet.

THE MAGIC BOX

Donald Saxton

Note: The article below taken from the Empire State Newsletter, Spring, 1977 tells how one irisarian does it. Don Saxton, an engineer by profession, is a good friend from Huntsville, Alabama. Convention goers will be treated to a visit to Don's and Margaret's garden this iris season.

Ed.

I have been accused of carrying a "magic box" to iris shows. I don't think the results it produces are really magic or mystic in any way. It's just an engineer's way of organizing for a normally hectic situation. I didn't seem to be able to schedule my time well enough on the morning of the iris show to cut the suitable stalks, prepare them for entry, and transport them to the show. I usually arrive during the last minute rush of entries with but a little time to do the final grooming of specimens that is so essential for success in the competition for blue ribbons. I've made use of suggestions to cut specimen stalks and prepare entry tags the night before a show. Somehow the search for one more suitable entry and loading the car for the touch-and-go drive to the show site always expand to fill the maximum allowable time, no matter how early I start (Parkinson's Law in action). My only hope was to organize for those last few hectic minutes, such that everything I need is immediately available and contingency is provided for as many emergencies as possible.

That's where the "magic box" comes in. The "magic box" is really only a used cigar box with all kinds of useful equipment. A cigar box is about the right size and can be easily carried (often tucked under one arm to keep a hand free to carry a specimen). If you're clumsy you can fasten the lid with a pin or nail to keep the contents from spilling.

The equipment in the "magic box" falls into three categories: (1) those materials related to entry of specimens in the show; (2) equipment for cleaning specimens; and (3) material and tools for repairing entry specimens. The latter two categories taken together are referred to as "grooming."

In the first category, relating to entry in the show, are the

following materials: **blank entry tags, rubber bands, string, return address labels, pencil with eraser, ball point pen or Flair pen.** Sometimes a new entry tag becomes necessary upon arriving at the show because of spilled water, tearing in transit, or discovery of an error. Return address labels save time in filling out the new tag. I prefer the Flair pen for filling out the entry tag—the bold lettering is easier for the judges to read and may impress them a little. The rubber bands or string are used to attach the entry tag to the specimen container. The string is especially useful for the large containers of the collection classes. Depending on the type of container used, **adhesive tape** might come in handy. I always carry the **Show Schedule and Color Classification** along too for consultation as necessary. These lie flat on top of the box or just under the lid.

In the second category, relating to equipment for cleaning specimens, add the following: **Kleenex tissues, camel hair brush, tweezers, tooth pick** and a **fine wire.** Upon arriving at the show with your entry specimens you will sometimes find water spots, foreign material, or insects on the specimens. Kleenex tissue is useful to wipe the foliage or stalk and dab water drops from the flowers. If you handle each stalk by places where the foliage overlaps the stalk you will leave no fingerprints in the “bloom” on the stalk. Should you forget or slip and badly fingerprint the stalk, you may want to wipe all the “bloom” off with the tissue. A camel hair brush is good for removing foreign material from the blooms and will not damage the petals. The more stubborn flotsam may require the use of tweezers, toothpick, or wire. A fine wire can be bent easily to reach those hard-to-get-at spots; however, beware the end which easily punches holes or tears the petals. Most small insects can be removed with the same equipment, used in combination with gentle blowing once the critter is dislodged.

In the last category, related to grooming, is the following additional equipment: **jack knife, fingernail scissors, mucilage or glue, fingernail polish, and Scotch tape.** Sometimes the last minute grooming requires major surgery. A jack knife comes in handy to cut off the bottom of a stalk so that the proper proportion is achieved (branching should encompass the upper two-thirds of the stalk). Or a branch that has been broken may be removed. Baby fingernail scissors (straight blades) are best for trimming those unsightly brown tips from the foliage or sometimes tailoring a leaf for better proportion or balance. Practice is advocated, such that your result will simulate the shape of a

normal leaf. Where spent blooms have been removed there will often be a problem smoothing out the spathe to hide the stump. Sometimes a little spittle on the fingers rubbed over the spathes is enough to shape them. On occasion a more drastic remedy is required and that's where mucilage or glue is put to work. Sometimes a torn petal can be repaired with colorless fingernail polish although the operation is tedious and seldom worth the effort with sharp-eyed judges. Similarly, I have Scotch taped broken petals (on the underside with a rib of tape or a splint for support).

So you see, there is really no magic at all in the "magic box", but a lot of useful things which are handy for my annual panic. I'm sure there are other useful things that other irisarians can conceive of to include in such a "magic box" and if I hear about them I will try to find room to cram them in for next year's hectic scramble!

CULTURE OF IRISES
A COMMONSENSE APPROACH FOR THE
AVERAGE HOME GARDENER

Rena Crumpler

PART V (a)

ORGANIC MATTER—HUMUS—IT'S THE GREATEST!
Definition: The term "organic" is used in a narrow sense to mean any material which comes from animal or vegetable sources and "humus" refers to the end product after the organic matter has decayed and been broken down by soil microorganisms.

Soil has been called the "keystone" of gardening. By the same token organic matter may be called the "keystone" of soil. It contributes in a multitude of ways during most of its long and mysterious process of deterioration. It can be combined with the soil at any time during this process and long before humus

has been completely formed. Whether placed in a layer on top of the ground or used in a compost heap, from the time a plant or animal dies, soil microorganisms constantly attack the decaying matter, oxydizing, breaking down tissues and slowly releasing nutrients into the soil. At the same time, a complicated chain reaction is taking place which aids in breaking down soluble minerals.

Most materials used to make compost as well as materials such as animal manure, mushroom manure and sludge, which often are applied to the top of the soil have some nutrient value and their effects are slow but constant. Bacterial microorganisms, at the height of their activity, use nitrogen at such a high rate that the nitrogen supply may be depleted temporarily. Therefore when adding organic matter to the soil it is advisable to supply extra nitrogen. It is also well to add a balanced chemical fertilizer from time to time to supplement the action of the organic material.

ORGANIC MATTER AS A SOIL CONDITIONER: Organic matter is the supreme soil conditioner, soil balance wheel and builder of good soil structure and texture. Nothing can compare with it for effectiveness and once in the soil its effects last over a tremendously long period. If we replace at intervals what our plants take from the soil, it will keep the soil productive indefinitely.

1. It loosens the soil and creates better distribution of pore spaces by spreading apart the fine soil particles.
2. It makes the soil easier to cultivate and keeps it from packing, baking and cracking.
3. It allows air and water to circulate freely and is the feeding ground for microorganisms, without which the soil nutrients could not be broken down to provide sufficient plant food.
4. It can be a rich source of plant food.
5. It is the first step in improving soil structure regardless of whether your soil is predominantly heavy clay, silt or sand, and is the greatest factor in creating a harmonious condition in which plants can thrive.

ORGANIC MATTER AS A BUFFER: I cannot stress too much the importance of high organic content in the soil where you grow irises. It acts as a buffer and renders the elements available at much greater variance in PH than soil with low

organic content. I have made some reasonably well-controlled tests in my own garden over a 3 year period which bear this out. I have had TB irises growing with no obvious difference in health and vigor at PH 5.0 and 7.0, Siberians thriving at this same wide variance in PH. A professional analysis at both PH levels indicates very high availability of phosphorus, potash, calcium and magnesium. The organic content tests from 4.6 to 5.0 which is extremely high since it is considered high at 3.0. In other words, high organic content is the great "cover up" for our mistakes.

MECHANICAL SOIL CONDITIONERS: When organic means of soil conditioning are not available, there are other ways to improve the structure and texture of soil, although I know of none that do not come with certain built-in drawbacks. The oldest, most widely used is sand. Coarse sand can be added to heavy clay soils and have a desirable effect, but I have learned from several sources that it takes at least a 2-4 inch layer spread over the area and then tilled. Fine sand or too little sand combined with heavy clay soil may result in "instant concrete". Perlite and Vermiculite are good chemically inert conditioners. They have two main objections:

1. They are expensive for other than house plants, greenhouses or a small garden area.
2. They have no nutritive value.

Cinders and clinkers, which used to be very cheap and available in abundance are no longer easy to obtain in most areas. They will improve the soil structure but should weather for a year or more because of sulphur impurities which must drain out of them before they are usable. Also, working in a soil which contains them is objectionable to some. I am not well acquainted with most of the chemicals that are highly touted as soil conditioners. The few with which I have experimented are either expensive or, in one way or another have failed to perform as advertised.

You will see that none of these mechanical conditioners have nutritive value, so when they are used, chemical fertilizers must be added in much larger quantities than are necessary with most of the organic materials. Besides, they have a very short life in the soil as compared to organic matter.

Note: PART V (b) ORGANIC MATTER—COMPOST next time.

REGION 4 ANNUAL SPRING MEETING 1979

HOST CHAPTERS: Eastern & Western North Carolina

LOCATION HEADQUARTERS: Holiday Inn, Smithfield, NC

DATES: May 11 & 12, 1979

JUDGES TRAINING:

TOUR GARDENS: Mrs. Milton Ogburn
Mrs. Noble Jernigan
Mrs. Loleta Powell

GENERAL CHAIRMAN: Glenn Grigg, Jr.

Excerpt from a letter from Glenn follows:

“Attached is a brief outline for the NEWSCAST about next springs’ annual meeting. Only three gardens are planned for the tour on Saturday, but Mrs. Powells’ garden should provide enough variety to make for an interesting day. We will not be holding a flower show this year and I plan to keep the affair simple in keeping with the recommendations of the Board last fall.

I will get more details to you before the deadline for the April edition of NEWSCAST so that a separate mailing will not be required.”

NEWS OF THE CHAPTERS

BLUE RIDGE CHAPTER

FALL, 1978

The Blue Ridge Chapter had a successful 1978 despite many difficulties. The annual Spring Meeting was our first effort. The weather did not co-operate but everything else went smoothly. Even with the small attendance we came out financially within pennies of the cost. We hope that you will visit our gardens during the 1979 season to see what was in bud during the '78 meeting.

Our auction was held in July at the Roanoke Garden Center. Our excellent auctioneer, none other than RVP Roy Epperson wheedled a goodly amount from a rather small group of bidders. We contributed \$400.00 to the region, purchased \$200.00 worth of new irises for the '79 auction and have a modest amount left in the treasury for emergencies.

The husband of our Chapter Chairman, Ouida Persinger became ill in the early fall and died near Thanksgiving. Our sympathy goes out to her.

This unfortunate circumstance cancelled our October meeting so, at this writing we have not yet elected the 1979 officers. However, the R V P has made a temporary appointment of Mildred (Millie) Trent as Chapter Chairman. She will call the members together in early spring so that the officers may be voted upon.

In November, Clytie McCoy had a marvelous trip with her son but shortly thereafter became ill and was hospitalized for several weeks. She still is not out of the woods but all of us are pulling for her. Will her many friends throughout the region pull too and let her know it? She has recently moved to her new home so her address is changed to: 2559 Winifred Drive, S.W., Roanoke, Va. 24018.

RENA C. and KAY COOPER

C and P CHAPTER

Since the National Arboretum did not have any irises, last fall the Chapter donated irises and supervised the planting of an iris garden established at the Arboretum. This spring, visitors to the Arboretum enjoyed the sight of the colorful blooms waving in the breezes. The future plan for the iris garden is to have only irises which have been hybridized by members of the Chapter growing in it.

The Chapter held an Iris Exhibit on June 3 and 4, 1978 at the National Arboretum. There were more than fifty irises on exhibition, even though it was late in the season. Many spectators enjoyed the blooms and asked questions about irises, especially, "Where can we buy iris plants?" Names and addresses of members of the Chapter who sell irises were given to the questioners.

JOSEPH S. PETERSEN, JR.

Chapter Chairman

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY CHAPTER

Since the last Regional meeting there have not been too many group activities. However, it was not because we didn't try. Several of the FSK group went out to the National Convention and as a result some of the show gardens had to suffer. We couldn't be two places at once.

Our usual Memorial Day picnic at Maywood had to be postponed. However, on May 28, Ann Dasch held a Judges' Training Session which was most thorough and interesting. Eleven people took the course for credit.

Our bloom season was a disaster. I know that was true for the writer. We had about 20% bloom. I don't think it was all Mother Nature. We hope that is the end of our problems.

We have three new members to report and we are looking forward to having them with us.

Our Ann Dasch is the new editor of the AIS Bulletin. We

are thrilled to have this publication in our chapter and in our region.

Individual members visited individual gardens. Many excess irises were purchased from individuals with the proceeds added to the FSK treasury.

Bill and Claire Barr put on a slide program for the benefit of the Winchester, Virginia garden club. I think we created a lot of interest.

Ann Dasch was a judge at the Marydel flower show, Claire Barr was a judge at the flower show in York, Pa. Bill finished up his apprentice judges' training.

W. E. BARR, Chapter Chairman

MARYDEL CHAPTER

Report to Region 4, October 6, 1978

Chapter officers for the new year are:

President	Paul L. Hoffmeister
1st Vice President	Dick Kleen
2nd Vice President	Willa Owen
Secretary	Jean M. Hoffmeister
Treasurer	Margaret Dabson
Membership Chairman	Martha Cope
Publicity Chairman	James Cope
Sunshine Chairman	Hattie Curry

Scheduled meetings will follow the plan used in recent years: a general meeting at 2:00 the first Sunday of October, December, February, April, and June. The December meeting is a Christmas party with iris games, no less, to be held in a private dining room in the Greensboro, Maryland Hotel. The June meeting is a picnic at Dick Kleen's waterfront home. The other meetings are at the homes of various members. They twice feature iris slides, and once an educational program to be presented by Dick Kleen on iris history.

Our ninth annual iris show is planned for Sunday, either

June 13, or June 20, 1979. We hope we have solved the optimum date problem by reserving the Easton firehouse hall for both dates. We plan to select what appears to be the best one about a month in advance in the hope of really hitting peak bloom.

Our show in '78 and our auction on July 29 both benefitted greatly from the masterly publicity work of our chairman, James Cope. We can imagine the mileage he'll get out of the uncertainty and the final selection of our '79 show date.

The '79 auction is set for July 28, again on the church lawn in Easton. The Copes' house and garden, directly across the street from the sale site, was graciously offered as iris preparation and members R and R area this year. A great success which the Copes offer again this year.

Membership always a continuing problem since none of us get younger is being aggressively worked on this year by Mrs. Martha Cope with personal contacts letters and publicity, and here she has the help of husband James. In addition, members are being encouraged to bring interested guests to our meetings. Some of these we have known only as exhibitors at our shows. A.I.S. dues payment and continuity of interest will have to be the proof of the pudding, but the Copes have us all working on the problem constructively.

The chapter is continuing its financial support for care and weeding, of three small but well located iris gardens at a prominent road intersection in Easton. The two smaller beds were replanted by three of our members immediately after our July auction.

Our October meeting approved sending \$150 profits from the auction' to Region 4. We are all looking forward to an active year for both our chapter and the Region.

PAUL L. HOFFMEISTER, Chairman

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

One of the highlights of the year in our Chapter is the Auction at the home of ELIZABETH FARRAR in Spruce Pine. This year was no exception. We were not able to attend, but I

understand it was high on food and fellowship, if not so great on money from the Auction.

One of the results of our Charlotte Show was the addition of Madeline Jones to the AIS membership. Mr. and Mrs. Hughes who joined last year are showing their interest by participation to a large degree in our Charlotte show. They had some very interesting exhibits in the show this past Spring. Another prospect who has joined the Charlotte Iris Society, is the Horticulturist at Central Piedmont Community College, and he has indicated an interest in joining AIS. He was a great help in setting up our show last Spring in the Charlottetown Mall, near the college.

Another event of interest in the Charlotte area, planned by Mrs. Richard Steele, was a mini-tour of gardens in Charlotte and the Farrar Garden in Mt. Holly. We feel that this is another way to help create interest, especially immediately following our show when we can invite exhibitors who are not members of the local club or A I S.

B. J. BROWN, Chairman

This article appeared originally in the publication of the Iris Society of Minnesota. Mr. Gable is one of it's members. He has grown irises and advertised regularly in the AIS National Bulletin for many years. We are taking the liberty of reprinting it here.

ED.

HERBICIDES AND PESTICIDES

G. B. Gable

This article relates to my experience with Treflan, Dacthal, Benlate, Zineb, insecticides and fertilizers used to control weeds, insects, fungi and bacterial diseases in the culture of irises. During 1973 I used Dachtal very cautiously on less than one-third of the iris garden. I had good weed control where it was used.

In 1974 I used Treflan on most of the garden, which included

daylilies, peonies and other perennials. Good weed control was had and it even carried over into 1975. A late spring in 1975 cut our time to get things done by two weeks so I didn't get Treflan on. To my surprise there were very few weeds. There was no damage to the tall bearded, dwarf or Siberian irises that were already growing. The first leaves on the Siberian irises turned brown but there was no damage that I could detect. Daylilies, peonies, and mums survived in good shape. The bulb lilies stopped growing for a while and a lump developed on the stalk, but they later grew to perhaps normal height and bloomed. Painted daisies were growing at the end of iris rows and were normal. Veronica was damaged and stunted and didn't want to grow. I don't remember using it at all on the Oriental poppies. I was lucky that I used it only on the phlox near the dwarf iris. It killed most of the phlox and those that survived were badly stunted. Phlox planted in the same soil even last year lived but did not thrive.

During 1974 I purchased about the usual number of irises, new to my garden, and planted the most expensive in vacant spots in the garden. The less expensive ones were potted and the pots buried to the top rim of the pot until orders had been filled and space became available to the replanting. Those irises transplanted from the pots grew nicely but those rhizomes planted directly into the soil lived but didn't want to grow, and fertilizer didn't help either. They didn't thrive and they didn't get over one foot high all last year. Was it the Treflan in the soil coming in contact with the roots that caused the stunting? I don't know.

I paid an exorbitant price for two pounds of Benlate and used part of it for the control of leaf spot on iris in one-half of the garden, and Zineb on the other half. I don't believe the control was any better when Benlate was used. I wish now I had compared the two areas for rhizome diseases. Here in the Twin City area Zineb was not available during 1974 and 1975. *Zineb is the best fungicide I have ever used for control of leaf spot. It is available again this year but the price has doubled.

I spray the iris at least four times each year and use Zineb in the solution for leaf spot each time. In spring when the tem- gives good control for iris borers. The second spraying should

* Zineb is readily available in this area. I have used it regularly for more than ten years and find it does indeed give better control than any other fungicide I have ever used. I also find it no more expensive than any other fungicide.

ED

perature gets up to 70 or 75 degrees the eggs that the iris border moth laid in the fall begin to hatch. This is the time to make the first spraying. I use Dupont spreader-sticker and I have learned that substitutes just don't do the job. If spreader-sticker is not used in the solution you might as well not spray at all. Sevin be done when the bloom buds begin to show. After the bloom stalks have been cut about July 1, and again about August 1, we spray for the third and fourth times using Cygon or Malathion instead of Sevin for the control of aphids and mites. Red spider mites cause the leaves to curl, turn brown or yellow and die.

Here is a tip on how to treat those iris borers that the spray missed or if you failed to spray. Go to a hair dresser and beg an empty hair color plastic squeeze bottle that has a sharp spout 1½ inches long. Fill the bottle with Sevin solution, run the sharp point between the leaves, move it up and down, forcing the solution into the area where the borer will be eating. Make XXX marks on the leaves with a ball point pen so you will know that you have treated that fan and move on to the next. This works for me.

Cygon is a wonderful insecticide that will kill almost anything that lives. The test for iris borers proved it to be the best. I have used it a lot and it always did a good job, but after using it I found several dead sparrows along with a robin and a squirrel that it had killed.

In the spring after I remove the cover and trim away the dead leaves I spread bone meal between and close to the rhizomes, and 5-20-20 between the rows and within four inches of the rhizomes, Next I cultivate it into the soil. I'll never put bone meal over the beds of dwarf irises again. Last year there was a lot of rot in the dwarf clumps that I thought was caused by too much bone meal.

Another thought about the use of Treflan. A garden hose could be left running and it would not flood an area more than three feet in diameter, but after using Treflan water would stand in puddles in the paths of the garden.

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G. B. Gable