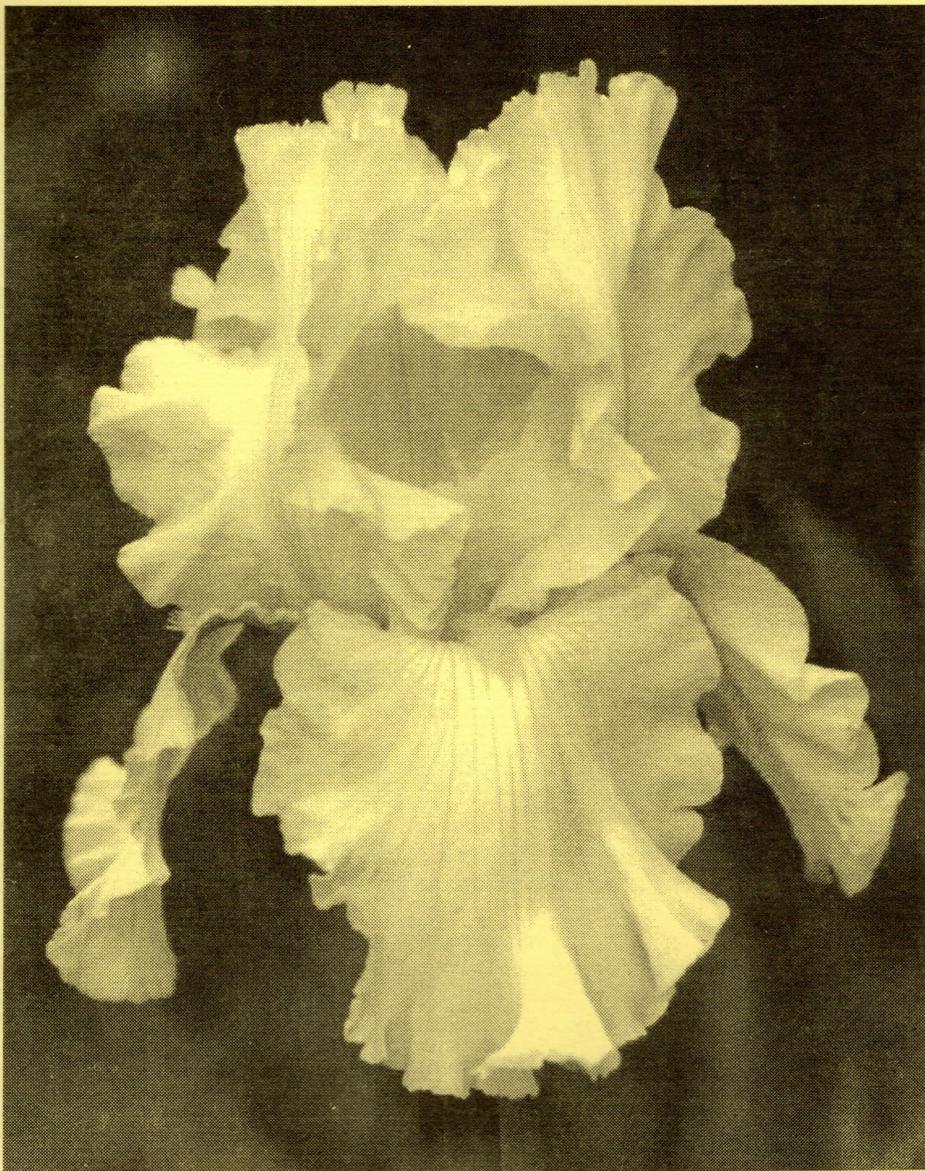


Newscast A. I. S.

REGION FOUR

Volume 40, Number 2

Fall 1998



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Newscast

Region 4 of the American Iris Society

VOL. 40, NO. 2

Fall 1998

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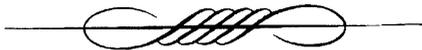
Communications regarding **American Iris Society membership, dues and change of address** should be addressed to **Marilyn Harlow**.

Region 4 is comprised of the states of **Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina**, and the **District of Columbia**.

NEWSCAST is free to AIS members in Region 4. Subscription rate for those not in Region 4 is \$5.00 per year. Checks made out to Region 4, American Iris Society should be sent to the treasurer.

Permission is granted to reprint any material appearing in NEWSCAST provided that proper credit is given.

All copy due in Editor's office by **Feb. 1** for the Spring issue and **July 1** for the Fall issue.



Our Purpose

The Purposes of the American Iris Society, and Region 4, shall be to develop the science of horticulture and any activities related to the study, propagation and culture of the genus *Iris*; to stimulate and foster interest in horticultural pursuits, conservation and protection of these plants; to cooperate with other organizations, public and private, in the scientific and horticultural education of all those interested in learning any phase of the genus *Iris*, by any and all means which may be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. These shall include but are not limited to:

- (a) encouragement and support of scientific research, including those pertaining to the solution of diseases related to but not necessarily exclusive to the genus *Iris*, and investigation and conservation of the genus in the wild;
- (b) collection, compilation and publication of data concerning the history, classification, breeding and culture of Irises; and
- (c) education of the public through exhibitions, public display gardens, published standards for judging and local, area, regional and national meetings open to the public.

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Photo by Dennis Stoneburner

All others - Mike Lowe.
All Graphics - Dennis Stoneburner



RVP'S MESSAGE

My term as your RVP is soon coming to an end. The past three years have been challenging ones as Region 4 has moved forward and, in many instances, broken new ground.

We were the first region to complete the incorporation process, thanks to Bill Kuykendall. The HIPS email Robin, under the direction of Libby Cross, was the first of the electronic birds to take to the air (waves). The first husband and wife team of AIS Directors came from Region 4. We also have the first Regional webpage, compliments of Bill Smoot and Mike Lowe. (Information on how to access this page will appear at the end of this message.)

Several of the causes about which we voiced our feelings and concerns have been resolved to our satisfaction: the new policy which limits the terms of AIS Directors; the return to a January and July join date for new AIS members; more efficient operation of the Exhibitions committee.

We have 13 regional iris societies, all affiliated. We have a growing number of youth members and an active Youth program under the able leadership of Dennis Pearson. Although we are rank third (among 24) in AIS members, our regional membership has stabilized and is once more increasing as Region 4 continues to win top awards in AIS membership contests. My thanks to Caryll Randall for taking on the regional membership job so soon after Rich's death.

We have accepted the challenge of hosting the National Convention in 2003 and the Fall Board Meeting will be held in High Point, hosted by the Eastern North Carolina Iris Society in 2001.

A standardized Judges Training program has been put into effect and new judges join our ranks each year. AIS recognized two of our own for outstanding service by appointing Rosalie Figge and Fred Stephenson as Emeritus Judges. The new AIS Judges Handbook is now available thanks to the efforts of Roy Epperson who edited and has published this long awaited manual.

Lloyd Zurbrigg and the late Charlie Nearpass were recipients of the coveted Hybridizer's Medal. Major Iris awards have been won by Carol Warner (Morgan Wood Medal for Shaker's Prayer) and Katherine Steele (Williamson White Medal for Petite Monet).

Region 4 is well represented at the national level. Clarence Mahan will be the next President of AIS; Roy Epperson and Mike Lowe are Directors; Roy, Mike and Libby Cross chair standing Committees. We also boast two AIS Section Presidents: Dick Sparling is CEO of the Dwarf Iris Society and Rosalie Figge heads the Reblooming Iris Society. I was selected by my fellow RVPs to serve on the Term Limits Committee, to chair the 1997 RVP Board Meeting and to serve a one year term as the RVP Director in 1998. Mike Lowe is webmaster for the Historic Iris Preservation Society and the World Iris Society.

I am confident that Region 4 will continue to lead the way under the able hand of Sara Marley, and I know that she will have your support as she begins her job as RVP. Since Dennis Stoneburner is turning over the reins of Newscast, one of the biggest tasks facing Sara is the selection of a new Editor. Region 4 has a long and proud tradition of publishing an outstanding bulletin, and it is my fervent hope that someone will soon step forward to take on this important job.

I feel very fortunate to have been your RVP during these exciting and rewarding years, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve in this capacity. I am deeply aware that none of these accomplishments would have been possible without the hard work and support of all of you who given of your time and talents for Region 4—I couldn't possibly name and thank all of you but please know that I much appreciate your efforts.

I look forward to seeing you in Charlotte in October.

To access the Region 4 Web Page:

<http://www.worldiris.com/Region-4/default.htm>

or, simpler: go to either the HIPS or World Iris 'links' page and click on Region-4

IN MEMORIAM

Jane McKnew-Bacon

Executive Board Meeting Region 4, AIS Towson, MD May 23rd, 1998

The Executive Board of AIS, Region 4 met on May 23, 1998 in Towson, MD. The meeting was called to order by RVP Anne Lowe at 3:55pm.

In the absence of the Secretary, Sara Marley (C&P Iris Society), was elected as Sec-Pro-Term.

1. Dick Sparling m/m, seconded by Roy Epperson that the agenda be adopted, but not to follow the order as presented. Carried.

2. Minutes as printed in NEWSCAST, Vol. 40, #1, Spring 1998 were approved with these corrections. (a) Roy Epperson will be the back-up for Dennis Stoneburner, when the Culture Issue (discussed at previous meetings) is begun; (b) 1999 Fall Meeting will be hosted by ENC and will feature reblooming irises in Lloyd Zurbrigg's garden; the Fall 2000 Mtg. open.

Roy Epperson m/m, seconded by Libby Dufresne, that all written reports be published as submitted in the next issue of NEWSCAST. Carried.

3. Reports of Officers:

RVP: Anne Lowe:

As always, there is good news and not-so-good news to report.

The good news is that the Blue Ridge group is once again an active iris society; enthusiasm is high and we look forward to their plans for the future.

All 13 regional societies are again affiliated, but not without a lot of prodding. The foremost problem was that a number of chapter officers did not hold current memberships in AIS. I urge all chapter presidents to check on this prior to next January when the affiliation process begins again.

I commend Libby Dufresne on the great job she has done in securing sites for regional conventions well into the next century.

Our youth program is active and I congratulate Laura Gibson who is a finalist for the Clark Cosgrove Award.

I have enjoyed reading your show reports and I am most pleased that Best Specimen in Show has been won not once but twice by one of our Youth members. It is also interesting that Best in Show has been won several times by irises other than tall bearded—perhaps a growing trend across the country.

Heading the bad news is, of course, the loss of Rich Randall. However, Caryll has agreed to take on the membership job and is in the process of sorting out Rich's records. Approximately 125 members (most of which were single annuals) did not renew and Region 4 membership has fallen to 638 which ranks us third in AIS behind Regions 14 and 18. We are approaching the prime recruiting season—"nuff said!

The August issue of *Newsblast* will be the last for editor Dennis Stoneburner. He has served us well during the past three years and we thank him for giving us a classy bulletin. If anyone wishes to take on the editor's job (it can be rewarding and fun) please contact me. It is important that we fill this job ASAP.

One on the national scene: the AIS Storefront is operating efficiently and in timely fashion. Perhaps our protest regarding exhibition problems did some good as the Exhibitions Chairman has restructured his operation so as to make for more efficient service. Three people are now sharing the duties. They urge you to closely observe the 60 day rule when submitting show schedules.

Nothing has come of our protest regarding the current membership once-a-year policy. Marilyn Harlow continues to state that there are no problems reported from any area other than Region 4. It has been suggested (from outside Region 4) that if we must have just once a year, then let it be July rather than January. The pink AIS *Invitation to Join* is available to all affiliates. You may want to order some to use in recruiting during sales and shows. A donation for postage is suggested.

Once again I thank you all for your support in making this region run smoothly and for providing us with interesting and fun opportunities to share our interests related to our favorite flower.

Asst. RVP: Libby Dufresne: There have been some changes in the schedule for future Regional Meetings. It should now read as follows:

Fall 1998 - Charlotte	Spring 1999 - C&P
Fall 1999 - Eastern NC	Spring 2000 - Tidewater
Fall 2000 - Open	Spring 2001 - Open
Fall 2001 - Fredericksburg	Spring 2002 - PCSIS or C&P
Fall 2002 - Open	Spring 2003 - National

I have located an "Operations Manual" for conventions in Region 4, but don't know just when it was prepared. I recommend that a committee update this document and that guidelines for balloting for Regional awards be included. These should be made available to all

Chapters hosting a Regional meeting.

Immediate Past RVP: Roy Epperson took note of the fact that Region 4 has, in Lloyd Zurbrigg, one of the longest standing members in AIS.

Secretary: no report

Treasurer: Owings Rebert— See Page 12

Parliamentarian: Rosalie Figge reported on recent Parliamentarian meeting

Editor: Dennis Stoneburner: The spring issue was mailed a little late, but still arrived (to most of you) in a timely manner. The Post Office still causes a bit of a delay in North Carolina. I had 700 copies printed, and mailed 692. I'm still using left over Spring 97 issues for new members, which I just received 30.

Just a reminder, the Fall issue will be my last. Calling anyone who wants to spread their editor-wings!

4. Standing Committee Reports:

Auctions: Clarence Mahan asked that we continue to support regional auctions which are our principal source of revenue and he reminded us that we will need seed money for the 2003 national convention.

Beardless & Species: Carol Warner reported that the growing season for the past year has been VERY trying in all aspects. Drought, torrential rains, insufficient lasting cold temps during the winter resulted in plants not going through a complete dormancy. Lots of losses and poor increase reported.

Budget: Jack Loving reported that an audit was done on May 23, 1998 with Carol Warner and accounts were found to be in order.

Historian: Margaret Stone; no report

Judges Training: Roy Epperson stated that there will be 4 hours of training in Charlotte.; 2 hours on Iris Basics presented by Mike and Anne Lowe and 2 hours on Beardless given by Roy Epperson and Carol Warner. He also stated that 1 1/2 hours credit will be given for the JT given the previous evening by Sterling Innerst.

Median Irises: Dick Sparling reported that overall bloom was excellent this spring.

Membership: Caryll Randall:

In January 1998 membership total was 696. As of May 1998 we had 126 unpaid members, 71 were first year members. Also during this time, we added 39 new members. Current membership is 619.

I am making it a priority to get out the welcome letter to new members, then I will start work on the contests. If you know of new

members who have not yet received their welcome letter or NEWSCAST please reassure them that it is on the way, or will be shortly.

Hope everyone is patient, I will get it all up to date soon. Please keep in mind that at this point I am only trying to fill in and at least keep everything up to date. I honestly don't know that I will have the time to do justice to this position.

I will be thinking of you all at the Regional meeting and will miss seeing you.

Photography: Dennis Stoneburner: Only received 3 request for slides. No new ones to add.

Reblooming Irises: Lloyd Zurbrigg—no report

Robins: Libby Cross:

Our Median robin, "The Short Ones," is still flying well on a national level., directed by Bennett Jones. I have not heard whether or not any of the members have left it for the new Dwarf Robin.

I'm happy to report that "The Wild Ones", for beardless and species iris, has been found and is once more going its rounds with regularity. Its temporary dislocation occurred when we lost Francis and B.J. Brown.

I have had no feedback on my earlier request that members of the region express their thoughts on the subject of continuing to promote regional robins, since e-mail seemd to have undermined robin activity in many areas.

Youth: Dennis Pearson:

There are 13 youths registered with the youth program, add two and retiring two members.. Three were three Youth Publications last year, one in 1998 and a Photography Contest along with an Award Honor Roll. Matthew Pearson won the Photography Contest presented at the Fall Regional and judged by Dennis Stoneburner. Clarence Mahan provided a reblooming Iris collection as a prize. A youth's photograph was displayed on the front cover of the Spring 98 edition of Newscast A.I.S. The Photography Contest and Honor Roll will continue for 98 to be awarded at the Charlotte Fall Regional.. Hopefully, the participating Society will supply me with the names of the youths who participate in their show for our Special Up-Coming Publication which will focus mainly on the important of entering and participating in local and regional Iris Shows.

The Lone Star Lake naturalizing project was revisited and we discovered several areas where nice clumps were forming.

however, there were no evidence of bloom this year.

Goal for 1998

Photography Contest

Rebus Contest

Featured Members

Special Publication - Iris Shows

5. Reports of Region 4 Affiliates:

Alleghany Highlands: no report

Blue Ridge: See page 37

Carolina Mountains: See page 38

Central Virginia: no report

Charlotte: Carrie Winter discussed upcoming Fall Meeting October 9-10, 1998. Also see page 42

C&P: Ginny Spoon: see page 40; discussed 1999 Spring Meeting details - page 41

Eastern North Carolina: Glenn Grigg: See page 38

Eastern Shore: no report

Francis Scott Key: Mary Brown previewed Barry Blythe's upcoming program

Fredericksburg Area: See page 39

Portsmouth, Chesapeake & Suffolk: no report

Tidewater: oral, Bill Smoot

Virginia Peninsula: see page 38

6. Reports of Special Committees:

Nominating Committee: Clarence Mahan Chairman, presented the following slate:

RVP: Sara Marley, Virginia

Asst. RVP: Glenn Grigg, North Carolina

Secretary: Carrie Winter, North Carolina

Treasurer: Owings Rebert, Maryland

Bill Smoot m/m, seconded by Dick Sparling, that nominations be closed and the Secretary cast one ballot for the slate of officers as presented. Carried.

7. Unfinished business:

•Acceptance/modification of Memorial Fund Committee Recommendations: group decided that suitable memorials would be decided by the Board on a case-by-case basis. Funds are already included as a line item in the budget. Committee Report filed with Secretary.

• Abolish or keep regional Robin Program: after brief discussion, it was decided that the Program should continue as it is. Carried

• Rescind Ways & Means Committee designation and restore Budget title: Epperson m/m, seconded by all, that Budget Committee title be restored. Carried.

• RVP asked for continuation of annual contribution to support the Clark Cosgrove Youth Award given by AIS. Laura Gibson and Matthew Pearson, Region 4 Youth Members were introduced. Laura Gibson tied for 1st runner-up in the Clark-Cosgrove contest this year.

Dick Sparling m/m, seconded by Bill Smoot, to give \$100.00. Carried

• Update on AIS Convention 2003: Clarence Mahan indicated that while it is a bit early to make concrete plans, he urged everyone to select a job and volunteer as soon as possible

8. New Business:

• RVP reported that Caryll Randall has taken on the Membership chairmanship

• Memorial contributions for Rich Randall & Jane McKnew-Bacon were discussed.

Roy Epperson m/m, seconded by JaNiece Mull, to send \$100.00 to the AIS (unrestricted) in memory of Rich and that \$100 be given toward the publishing of the Culture Issue in memory of Jane. Carried

• The RVP suggested that the Regional Membership Contest be put on hold for a year until the chairman can get the details of the process ironed out. The group felt that the Regional Membership contest should begin again on 1 October, 1998. JaNiece Mull rn/rn, Roy seconded that this be done. Carried

• Roy Epperson m/m, seconded by Jack Loving that \$500.00 be given to Anne toward travel expenses to the Denver National AIS Convention, where she will represent Region4 as RVP and AIS Director.

• The need for Revision of the Convention Handbook currently used within the region was presented by Libby Dufresne. The following committee was appointed to study the issue and present a preliminary report at the fall meeting in Charlotte: Libby Dufresne, (Chairman), Carrie Winter, Bill Smoot and Carol Warner (Advisor).

• Invitation from Charlotte Iris Society for the 1998 Fall Meeting was issued by Carrie Winter.

9. Announcements:

•The 1997 Loomis Test Garden video is available for viewing—contact RVP

• Shirley Pope is conducting a meeting of AIS Affiliates in Denver. This is a first and the RVP urged as many representatives as possible from Region 4 attend this meeting.

• A reminder that Ken Roberts is the Eastern Co-ordinator of the AIS Display Board

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.



SYMPOSIUM DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH! VOTE FOR AS FEW AS 1 OR AS

MANY AS 25 IRISES AND SEND YOUR BALLOT TO: ANNE LOWE, 12219 ZILLES ROAD,

BLACKSTONE, VA 23824-9394. Last year 83 votes were cast in Region 4. Let's make a better showing in 1998.



IN CASE YOU FORGOT!!!!

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BLACKSTONE, VA 23824-9394. Last year 83 votes were cast in Region 4. Let's make a better showing in 1998.

Treasurer's Report - Region IV - AIS

For Period February 1, 1998 - July 1, 1998

February 1, 1998 Balance \$12,086.20

Receipts

Donations:

Va. Peninsula Iris Society	\$200.00
Spring Auction	\$1,599.00
Newscast Subscriptions - Out of Region	\$5.00
Interest on account (5 months)	\$95.98

Total Receipts	\$1,899.98
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Complete Totals	\$13,986.18
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Expenditures

Dunn-Rite Printing - Spring Newscast	\$1,184.90
Automated Mailing Service - Newscast Mailing	\$210.00
Dennis Stoneburner - Newscast to New Members	\$62.40
Libby Dufresne, Jefferson Cup - copying	\$42.35
Anne Lowe - RVP postage-travel	\$598.36
AIS Foundation - Youth Program	\$100.00
AIS Foundation - Randall Memorial Unrestricted Fund	\$100.00
Transferred into CD, June 25th #14316866 - 16 month 5.60% Designated "2003" National Convention	\$2,000.00
CD#14316903 - 16 month 5.60%	\$600.00
\$500 ENC donation for special Newscast issue	
\$100 Reg. 4 Memorial for Jane McKnew-Bacon	

Total Expenses	\$4,898.01
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July 1, 1998 Balance	\$9,088.17
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Respectfully submitted,



J. Owings Rebert, Treasurer
Region IV, AIS

Jane McKnew

Jane McKnew died on April 25, 1998 after a short illness. She had been a member of FSK for many years, although not many of our members knew her well. She is better known nationally and internationally through her irises than she is locally. She was an outstanding hybridizer and surprised everyone with her eye-catching show entries in the seedling classes. One of her registered irises (IO) has been lost, but the other was introduced by Dr. John Wiler of Rialto Gardens in California. She named it after FSK's Roaslie Figge and it is available through many commercial catalogues. Jane's irises were her hobby, but she also had a 20-plus year career as a social worker. A very intelligent person with several degrees in her chosen field, she dealt with people in all walks of life and was highly respected by her clients, even though she was involved in such difficult areas as child protection. At times Jane seemed exuberant and impetuous, but those who knew her well realized that this was a defense used by those who are shy. A very kindhearted and sensitive person, she was extremely loyal toward her friends, and those of us who were her friends will have fond memories of her. Her life was much too short, she was only in her mid 50s and the world has lost a talented hybridizer. She is survived by her husband, Ronald Bacon. The following poem on the card given at her funeral expresses Jane's attitude very well:

Do Not Stand By My Grave And Weep

I am not there, I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow;

I am the diamond glint on snow.

I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning hush,

I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds encircling flight.

I am the soft star that shines at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry,

I am not there; I did not die.

Anonymous

(reprinted from the FSK Newsletter)

New ‘Member-friendly’ Ruling

In an effort to stem the loss of members, the AIS Board approved a new, member-friendly motion at the convention in Denver in early June. All RVP's and membership chairs received a copy of the wording of the motion. In case you missed it, a general interpretation is as follows: While we still have a calendar year membership year, any NEW member joining during the months of April through September will have a join date of July 1 and an ending date of December 31, 1999, assuming an annual membership payment. In other words the NEW member is getting 18 months for \$18.00. A NEW member joining with a triennial membership would also get the additional six months of membership. By having a July join date, this means the January and April, 1998 Bulletins will NOT be sent. July, 1998 will be the first bulletin received. This offer is for NEW members only, not for members who have let their memberships lapse and later rejoin. This should help many clubs who felt their best chance to get new members was at shows or summer sales. Old Ruling Rescinded Several years ago, the Board decided that the AIS Membership office would no longer send out second notices. It was both costly and time consuming with few to poor results. Again, in view of the current membership loss, it was decided at the Denver convention that the Membership office would once again start sending out second notices. This will begin in July with the current delinquents who failed to pay dues by June 30th. We are now nearing the end of the mid-year ending memberships. A little more than 500 dues notices were sent out in mid-May. By the end of June there were still 218 members who had not paid. (28 are in Region 4) These delinquents will get second notices but they will not receive the July, 1998 Bulletin unless they request it. Delinquent judges will be suspended on August 15th should they fail to pay dues by that time. Delinquents will be dropped in 90 days.



Reminder: The AIS Display Board for the Eastern US can be reserved by contacting Ken Roberts, 341 Schwartz Rd., Gettysburg, PA 15017. Great promotion for AIS!

Who is Lois Rose

Sharon Lipsec

TO those of you who have attended meetings she is the fount of information on the FAIS who has the gift to put people at ease with her open, cheerful manner. An employee of the Library of Congress she commutes from her 50 acre horse farm in Partlow, Spotsylvania County to Washington DC. A very busy lady, she exhibits an untiring energy that I could in no way match!

A life Member, Lois joined what was then the Fredericksburg-Richmond Iris Society a few months after its inception. She squirrels away items of interest available for research. Ask a question on our history, on presenting stalks for the show table, tips on growing, or people and matters pertaining to the iris conventions at all levels, and she will begin rattling off the details from personal experience.

Lois is one of our valuable people. She is approachable, never appearing too busy. Her garden is open to visitors to include hosting our annual picnic. What a wonderful country spot to enjoy! Locating her driveway entrance while speeding around a blind curve you plunge into a narrow wooded lane. Across a dam by a large scenic pond with Canada Geese you ascend a gentle open slope with pasture on three sides to the ranch style brick home set under towering hardwoods. From her back patio one looks down at the iris beds and out to the pastures. How many of us have enjoyed her relaxing hospitality while chatting with other members on a favorite subject?

Into bearded and beardless, Lois is a member of the American Iris Society, Historic iris Preservation Society, Society for Japanese Irises, and the Reblooming Iris Society. She does dabble in Siberians, Louisianas, and a few Arilbreds. Looking for a special one? Maybe she has it. I was hard pressed to find the LA - HARLAND K. RILEY, it being dropped from most of the catalogs, and wanted extras of the LA - CLYDE REDMOND. Who had them? Of course. The historic 1939 Siberian SUER SKY was one Anner Whitehead wanted. Again, Lois to the rescue.

Come to FAIS meetings and/or events and meet Lois among others. With more outgoing (personality wise, she isn't leaving) members of her caliber attending, iris society functions will be a very pleasurable experience.

(reprinted from the FAIS Newsletter)

REGION 4's THIRTY-EIGHTH SPRING MEETING

E. Roy Epperson

Any irisarian in Region 4 knows that when the FSK Iris Society agrees to host a regional meeting, it will be well done and very enjoyable. Such was our meeting in Towson on May 22 and 23. The weather was good, the iris were spectacular, and the fellowship and food very fulfilling.

The Friday afternoon garden tour took us to Carol Warner's Draycott Garden and Bruce Hornstein's Sans Souci. Two siberian clumps stood out as absolutely spectacular! SHALL WE DANCE (Hollingworth) was performing exactly as one hopes and expects. SILVER ILLUSION (Johnson '87) was actually in bloom! This is only the second time that I have seen it in bloom. I purchased it twice and managed to keep it through one winter each time. Many TBs were in bloom. Perhaps my favorite of all TBs this bloom season was LITTLE JOHN (Spoon '96). Good form, very pleasing color combination, and the most floriferous TB in the garden. To walk into Bruce's garden is to be immediately awash in iris and companion plants. All plantings - regular, commercial, guest, pool garden, were - were demonstrating good bloom and obvious cultural care. There were many versicolor seedlings to be admired and evaluated; each and every siberian cultivar was in bloom; the guest bed was in good bloom. As I said, awash in iris! It was good to see the older siberian JAYBIRD (Hager) as this is one of the best blues that I grow. UZUSHIO (Sidura) was interesting as it is a siberian that displays 6 standards and 6 falls. This did not seem to be a consistent bloom trait, however.

Following and excellent Italian buffet, Sterling Innerst presented a judges' training program on Exhibition Judging of TB Irises. This was a very informative and interesting presentation and was liberally spiked with quintessential Sterling.

Rosalie Figge's garden started our day on Saturday. This backyard garden is hidden and from the street you have no indication of the treasures that await any gardener/horticulturist invited into the garden. Here I was impressed with the hosta plantings, the kalmia latifolia, and the stately foxglove. There was excellent bearded bloom in this garden.

THE IRIS HAVEN of Owings and Doris Rebert is a never-ending joy to visit. There are hundreds of cultivars growing and blooming here. I do not recall having visited this garden when there was even a single clump that was not in bloom AND I have yet to see a weed in any of the beds. This is a garden where almost any question about color or form of bearded iris can be answered, not in writing or photograph, but by actually seeing the attribute in a blooming stalk. Owings has selected several siberian seedlings for registration and propagation. I especially liked MICHELLE RENEE STEVENS (R '96), a mid-violet with upright standards and a white signal.

It is very clear to those who were on this tour that Joan Roberts is not only a horticulturist, but also an excellent cook! She personally prepared ALL of the food for our lunch : BBQ pork, roast beef, breast of turkey, salads, desserts, etc. And we had the pleasure of eating this wonderful food under the cooling shade trees of Friendship Gardens. This commercial garden was relocated to this site in the spring of 1997. One can only be amazed at the progress that Joan and Ken have made on these 22 acres in Amish farm country. The display beds were somewhat past peak bloom, but there was quite enough bloom in the commercial beds to satisfy any iris lover. I was impressed with CHARLIE'S CLOUD (Roberts '98) and LADY CLAIRE (Roberts R'97). LADY CLAIRE was voted the Alice Bouldin Award for the best seedling seen growing and blooming in the Region 4 tour gardens.

Our closing banquet was followed by a slide presentation by Barry Blyth of Australia. I have admired his hybridizing efforts for many years as I enjoy the exotic and often brash color combinations that appear in his seedling patch and may then be introduced. Barry's garden is Tempo Two and his introductions come to us through Keith Keppel's garden. It was wonderful to have Barry and Lesley with us at meals, in the gardens, and at the show, to talk with and compare notes and comments about iris attributes.

A feature of this meeting was an excellently staged exhibition that was in the same room as our evening banquets. This provided a congenial venue for gathering before and after the meals. And, of course, there was a good auction held following Barry's talk. We need to remember that these auctions are the prime source of income to support the publication of NEWSCAST and the programs of Region 4.

As I was preparing to return to the BWI airport and home on Sunday morning, the parting comments of most people were: Had a wonderful time! Loved the gardens! Didn't we have fun? Nuff said!



The Roberts Garden

Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg

What a picture; a hillside of iris, swaying gently in the breeze. The display beds next the house were exciting. My favorite was POEM OF ECSTASY by Hager, a two-tone pink and mauve of great charm. Schreiners BLUE SUEDE SHOES was showing off rather well; one does hope it will remount in Region 4 as well as in Region 13. LADY CLAIRE, a registered pink seedling of Joan Roberts went on to win the Bouldin award for best seedling by a Region 4 hybridizer. SHEER ECSTASY of Schreiners was a bold bit of reddish color. Alas, mine died during last winter. ROGUE, by Ghio, is another reddish one, but its growth did not seem as good. AMERICAN CLASSIC may well become a classic plicata, with its violet on white, a 1996 introduction of excellent habits, form and branching. Brought out the same year was INTERESTING EXPRESSION, a very novel iris, Sterling Innerst being the hybridizer, and likewise a plicata. Three cheers for a wonderful lunch with plenty of choice, and for tables set in the shade to enjoy eating to the maximum. It will be exciting to watch the progress of this new garden in the years ahead.



Friendship Gardens

Last spring, Joan and Ken moved their commercial garden from two acres in Maryland to 22 acres in the Amish farm country, in Gettysburg, just three miles across the Mason Dixon Line. When Joan saw this property, it was love at first sight. It's amazing how, in such a short time, she has fulfilled so much of her vision for what this property could become, with unusual plants and thousands of irises. Here is both a personal and commercial garden that reflects Joan's love for plants and her devotion to irises.

As you cross the bridge going up to the house you will see a pond and a stream, and you will catch glimpses of Louisiana and Japanese irises along the stream banks, along with plantings of Hosta and ferns and other delights.

The Roberts' home is perfect for a garden tour because it has a wraparound porch which shelters the space below, providing a welcoming two-story outdoor reception area across the front of the house. Bird watchers - keep an eye! out for Bluebirds, California Wrens, Gold Finches, Woodpeckers, and other birds you don't usually see. In a little nook, roses have been planted, and against a wall is a climbing hydrangea.

The slope in back of the house is studded with thousands of irises, and the guest bed is clearly marked.

Anyone who has moved into a new house will remember his or her first year. In their first year here Joan and Ken have explored the delights and perils of their new property. For instance, in last summer's drought, the stream was barely wet, but this spring the stream overflowed and actually washed away some the Japanese Irises, transplanting them along the banks.

With this move, Friendship Gardens has expanded and taken root in a new and larger space, but its name still symbolizes the warm welcome we will receive.



The Rebert Garden

Bill & JaNiece Mull

Doris and Owings Rebert have an exciting garden. It is located on approximately one acre of land which has been in Doris's family for years. They have turned the land into an enchanting colorful rainbow of colors anytime you visit it in the summer. The iris were in full bloom when we visited at the spring convention. It made a perfect setting for our garden judging. Mixed among the iris the Rebert's have annuals, perennials, flowering shrubs which add to the beauty of their garden. You will find colorful peonies adding their color to the iris. Tucked around the garden you will find not only things like hostas but also bird baths, garden sayings, two charming brightly colored small buildings, on and on. From the original farm house garden there was a very large flat stone which had been moved to the

Rebert's garden which would be wonderful to rest on or have a well earned lemonade break. The problem would be getting back to work and not just enjoying the view. We spent two hours here which included the judges training and still missed many of the garden's interesting points.

When you arrive at the Rebert's you will find yourself looking at tall evergreen tree with a field of iris peaking from behind the tree. As you walk up the drive way there is a stone bank with annuals at eye level greeting you. Up old fashion stone steps which has old time vines and plants inviting you to the come and see more. A beautiful tree gives you shade and the feeling you have entered into the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow which on either side you will find the magic colors of the iris. The more you walk the more exciting things you find. You will find both new and classic iris as well as many rebloomers located in their garden. If you are looking for Dykes Metal winners you will find them here also. In short enjoyment of the beautiful garden must be a daily joy for not only the Rebert's but anyone who is fortunate enough to visit this garden. As we were leaving the garden seem to be calling out to everyone "come back and visit anytime" and we will.

Next to the outstanding view of the garden we had wonderful food which only helped to make our visit to this garden a memorable one. Thank Doris & Owings for sharing your little bit of Heaven with us.



Rosalie's Secret Garden

Clarence Mahan

Most people who visit Rosalie Figge's garden in Towson, Maryland for the first time probably have the same initial reaction. Houses are quite close together on Maryland Avenue and the front grounds are, shall we say, limited. Rosalie's front garden is not only small, but also occupied by an old Norway spruce which has grown so large as to almost conceal the house. The borders of the small lawn are filled with a lush assortment of beautiful shrubs, perennials, dwarf trees and other assorted flora, both common and exotic. One border was for many years dominated by a huge planting of the wonderful pink tall bearded iris VANITY, widely known throughout

Region 4 as Rosalie's favorite iris. Still, the front garden is very "limited." And so, the new visitor immediately thinks to himself: "A tour of this garden will be over quickly."

The first impression that this is a small garden is soon discarded. The visitor proceeds through a garden gate and walks along a plant-lined path to the back of the house. Suddenly, a virtual garden of Eden comes into view. This is Rosalie's Secret Garden, made possible by the fact that our beloved Mrs. Figge owns the land behind several of her neighbor's lots on Maryland Avenue. It is a delight, a joy, an oasis of much pleasure for plant lovers.

Once I visited Rosalie's garden when the bloom season for plants was very late; consequently there were only dwarf and intermediate irises in flower. The lilacs and lilies of the valley, which are planted in abundance, were, however, in full bloom. The mixed fragrance of these two "old-fashioned" flowers filled the air. This was when I first realized just how great the sensual pleasures of a garden can be.

Over the years Rosalie's garden has been on many tours, but I do not remember it any more lovely than this year. There is so much to see and appreciate that a brief tour stop is simply not adequate to take it all in. Rosalie has been adding many exciting new plants. This year the mountain laurels, *kalmia latifolia*, in shades of pink and pink with red centers, were spectacular. Many of the coral bells in my own garden were gifts from Rosalie, so I know her fondness for this lovely perennial. One named 'Montrose Ruby' in her garden was growing well and has clear, vibrant red flowers—I marked it down to obtain at the earliest opportunity.

Some of the interesting and attractive plants to be seen in Rosalie's garden are *Styrax obassia*, *Styrax japonica*, the "Paperback Maple" (*Acer griseum*), the "Fullmoon maple" (*acer japonicum*), the "Coral Bark Japanese Maple" (*Acer palmatum*), "Serviceberry" (*Amelanchier laevis*) which blooms so early in the spring, "Katsura tree" (*Cercidiphyllum japonica*), "Chinese Fringetree" (*Chionathus retusus*), *Cornus kousa*, the seldom seen Franklinia tree, a spectacular "Pink-a-boo" deutzia, and scores of other trees and shrubs. It is altogether quite splendid.

The irises were growing very well, and there were lots of old and new cultivars to see. The first iris which caught my eye was the charming dwarf Siberian iris BABY SISTER (McEwen 86) which is violet with a prominent signal. Next, I strolled over to look at Rosalie's nearly complete collection of all the American, French and

British Dykes Medal winners. One seldom gets an opportunity to see all these award-winning irises in one garden, so it was a real pleasure to see many of my old favorites.

Suddenly, at the far end of the American Dykes bed I saw a beautifully ruffled clean white iris. Since a truly white iris has not won the Dykes Medal for many years, I became very curious. The iris was AMERICA'S CUP (McWhirter 89). A sign in front of the iris read "Should be a Dykes." A political statement smack dab in the middle of the iris garden! It brought many smiles to the faces of the garden visitors. And based on its performance at the time of our visit, one must conclude that there is some merit to Rosalie's viewpoint.

My favorite tall bearded iris on display was CHANGE YOUR WAYS (Ernst 95). The standards are a brown blend with mauve streaks and the falls are violet with brown rims. The yellow hafts give a glow to the flower which draws one's eye to it. It had other fine attributes, and I made a note to acquire it for my garden.

Two other irises I thought attractive were DREAMSICLE (Schreiners 95), a deep pink with tangerine beards and hafts, and GOOD LOOKING (Schreiners 95), a really sensational dusky lavender with beards of the same color. And then there was the space age iris BUGLEBOY BLUES (Sutton 96). This very blue iris has many fine attributes—good bud count, branching, foliage—but its most distinctive feature is its prominent blue "spoons."

Although BUGLEBOY BLUES was the most beautiful blue iris I saw, it was not the most beautiful blue in the garden. The most beautiful blue was the color of little Justin Kleiber's eyes. Little Justin is Rosalie's great grandson, and he and his mother Beth, a life member of AIS, were at the garden to help her with her hostess chores.

Another tall bearded iris that received favorable attention from those on the tour included the bright near-red DYNAMITE (Schreiners 97). One of the parents of this iris is WAR CHIEF (Schreiners 92) which I consider the best red iris I have ever grown. If DYNAMITE performs as well as its parent, it may well become a garden classic. Many people also liked Terry Aitken's SEIZE THE SIZZLE (97), a light red violet with a white area around the beard. The beard must be the "sizzle" for it is bright red. Visitors also commented favorably on the English iris AMERICAN PATRIOT (Bartlett 97), with white standards, blue violet falls edged white, and a red beard; BLUE NOTE BLUES (Ernst 97), a ruffled medium blue

**REGION 4, AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY
1998 FALL MEETING REGISTRATION FORM**

Name (1) _____ Chapter _____

Name (2) _____ Chapter _____

Address _____
STREET NO/APT STREET CITY ZIP

REGISTRATION

Registration is \$60. per person. This includes meeting costs and dinner on Friday and Saturday.

Registration _____ @ \$60. Total _____

number of persons

Send your check made out to CIS to Elaine Smith
7901 Covey Chase
Charlotte, NC 28210

After October 1, Registration will be \$65. There will be no refunds after October 1.

HOTEL

CHARLOTTE HILTON AT UNIVERSITY PLACE 704-547-7444
8629 Jim Keynes Drive Charlotte, N.C. 28262

The Rate is \$75. (Single or Double) plus Tax

Please call the hotel directly and mention Region 4, American Iris Society

The hotel will hold the block of rooms until September 11.

SATURDAY DINNER CHOICE OF ENTREE

Prime Rib of Beef _____

Chicken in Pastry _____

IF NO CHOICE IS INDICATED, BEEF WILL BE SELECTED FOR YOU

JUDGES TRAINING

Basics of Form and Color _____

Development of Form and Color _____

with pale yellow beard: ICE CREAM TREAT (Ernst 97), with peach standards, near white falls edged and veined peach, and a tangerine beard; and COLOR ME BLUE (Schreiners 97), a heavily ruffled light blue with white beard.

Among the many attractive garden features at Rosalie's, one that many younger people might not have recognized is an old washing machine spinner. Even some older visitors might not have recognized it for this large white tub with many holes in it is now a flower planter, and teams with such plants as verbena and pelargonium. One woman's junk is another woman's useful garden ornament.

There was so much to see in Rosalie's garden, and so little time. There were great refreshments to be had, and our gracious hostess, as always, made us all feel welcome and right at home. Thank you, Rosalie, for a great time. And thank you, too, for being such a good sport!



Hornstein Garden near Species Bed

Sans Souci: an Oxymoron?

Mike & Anne Lowe

If *Sans Souci* means “without care”, then Bruce Hornstein’s garden is truly misnamed! An extreme amount of care was evident everywhere in the well groomed and carefully designed iris beds and grounds that surround this interesting home in the heart of Maryland horse country. I was here during the Japanese Iris Convention a few years ago and I expected to see lots of beardless irises, but I must confess that I was unprepared for the lavish display of bearded irises available for our viewing. The colorful display that greeted us as we exited the bus really slowed traffic as we all stopped to exclaim, read labels and photograph the mixture of old and new, median and tall bearded irises that were at peak bloom. The large variety of MTBs was of special interest to many of us.

As we progressed up the driveway, the anticipated beds of beardless irises appeared. They were combined with bearded irises for a lovely overall effect. Siberians LEE’S BLUE (Bauer/Coble ’93) and SHALL WE DANCE (Hollingworth ’92) were set off by the vigorous silver foliage of SILVER BAND (Bauer Coble ’89). Also sharing this bed were the earliest of Japanese irises—light pink SPRINGTIME PRAYER and the bright magenta SPRINGTIME MELODY, both introduced by Lorena Reid in 1994. The varying purple shades of species cross FADED JEANS (Bishop ’94), and MTBs FROSTED VELVET (Fisher ’89) and MARGINAL WAY (Sobek ’91) were enriched by the vivid gold of Jean Witt’s SPANISH COINS—stunning!

In the beds curving around the brow of the hill, BETWEEN THE LINES (Schafer-Sacks ’91), an exuberant versicolor, and the beautiful dark blue purple laevigata SNOW DRIFT again reflected the diversity of iris types within this garden. Here, too, were HOLDEN CLOUGH, an apogon hybrid of unknown parentage, and its dark red purple offspring, HOLDEN’S CHILD. I was especially taken with the rich purple TRIM THE VELVET, a flat form Siberian from Schafer Sacks (1995), and who could resist the pale orchid SPRINKLES (Bauer Coble ’94)? Several of us examined a true double Siberian with 6 standards and 6 falls, rosebud in appearance, named UZUSHIO, an unintroduced cultivar from Sidara in Japan. Older but still lovely was Bea Warburton’s WHITE TRIANGLES.

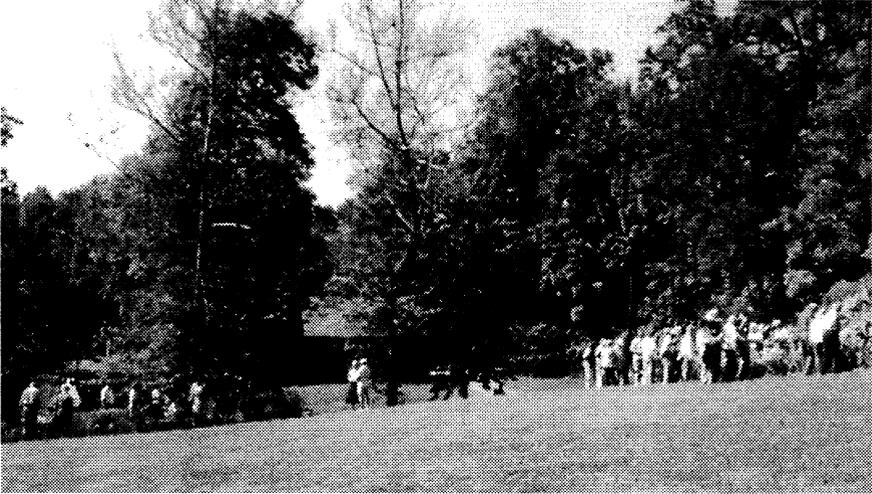
Among the bearded guests, CANARY DELIGHT, a rimmed yellow amoena TB and LLOYD'S CHOICE, a rosy violet bitone with 3 open blooms, both 1997 introductions from Joan Roberts, were notable. A pale violet MTB named THERAPY (T. Varner '93) struck a familiar note and I really liked TB RAKU BLAZE (Aitken '96). The 1980 Tamberg Siberian KOBALTBLAU provided a stunning background for Sara Tiffany's diminutive Siberians SNOW PRINCE and LITTLE BLUE SPARKLER.

Time grew short and I was growing weary so I never did get to the farthest Guest Bed which was surrounded by photographers during the entire visit. I elected to stay on the verandah of the lovely house and sip a cool libation as I reviewed my garden notes. The pond with its plantings of pseudacorus, Louisianas and species would have to wait until another time.

Thank you Bruce for making possible so much beauty and for sharing it with us. An hour was too short a time to give your lovely garden the attention it deserved, but for me, it truly was time spent "without care".



Hornstein Garden - Siberian Bed



Hornstein Garden



Hornstein Garden - Guest Bed

DRAYCOTT GARDENS

Lois Rose

Over the years I have visited many wonderful, unique, and gorgeous iris gardens in Region 4, but since I saw it the first time, Draycott has remained my favorite. To me, it is the perfect example of irises of all types integrated into a total landscape plan that includes a fascinating collection of trees, shrubs, and other perennials, all wonderfully grown, artistically arranged, and immaculately manicured.

This year when we approached on foot, following the driveway up the hill, the garden slowly unfolded ahead of us. First we saw a vigorous clump of historic iris on the right, and to the left near the top of the driveway a prelude of things to come—a bed of beautifully arranged peonies, pansies, daylilies, hosta, roses, ornamental grass, and, of course, irises—the siberian ROANOKE'S CHOICE, the TB MARY FRANCES, and *I. tectorum*.

Then, as we approached the house and the hill leveled off a bit, the main part of the garden spread out to the left. As I left the driveway and started across the lawn, my overview took in the island beds, a beautifully landscaped and camouflaged above-ground pool, dogwood and mountain laurel in full bloom, and the beds along the bottom and far side of the yard, all set off by the dark green backdrop of the woods.

The crowd headed for the guest beds at the back of the house, so I opted to look at the lower garden first. In the first two island beds I found SILVERADO, PINK BUBBLES (BB), LORELEY, and BELLE OF AMHERST mixed in with a fascinating variety of other plant material. If I were a more well-rounded gardener, I could have identified more of these plants—I did recognize sedum, coral bells, and daylilies—but I was content to admire the artistry of the mixture of color and texture that would provide interest throughout the gardening season.

I loved the variety of bird houses, statuary, and driftwood in the beds along the bottom and far perimeter of the yard. Here again the irises were integrated with allium, hosta, peonies, mountain laurel, and lots of other plants and trees I couldn't identify. Near the Japanese arch I found a group of siberians blooming their hearts out:

LEE'S BLUE, MESA PEARL, and EARLY GIANT, the latter being

aptly named! Then, to rival any of these, just up the hill I encountered the siberian SHALL WE DANCE (Hollingworth '92), the hands down winner of the bloom and vigor award, and deservedly, on Saturday evening, the B. Y. Morrison award.

Yikes—time was running short and I hadn't made it to the guest beds yet! The crowd had thinned out, so I hustled on over. For several years now I've been drawn to the really different—some say strange—irises, and right off OMINOUS STRANGER (Innerst '93) caught my eye, with its buff standards and buff falls stitched and bordered with gray. Also looking unique was JOHN KEARNEY (Innerst '94) with pure yellow standards and a blend of yellow and red in the falls, starting with pure yellow around the beard, but deepening to deep red at the tip of the falls and along the midrib. Striking. BOOGIE WOOGIE (Nichols '93), APRICOT TOPPING and COCOA PUFF (both Black '97), and HORNS & BLUES (Hedgecock '96) also drew my attention. Well, all the guests did, but you have to single out some to mention!

Carol's grouping of the "Schreiner blues" made for an interesting comparative study. I couldn't pick a favorite, but YAQUINA BLUE certainly won the height contest. BUMBLEBEE DEELITE (Norrick '85) was a blooming little fool. If MTBs grew like that for me, I'd grow more of them.

Among the siberians wonderful old ANNIVERSARY was tall and beautiful, where some of the other siberians were struggling. ILLINI RUBY (Varner '90) was a gorgeous violet. Hollingworth's seedling 85-G2-43 was in iridescent blend of purple and violet. I hope he introduces it.

Darn it, time was up and I hadn't made it to the goldfish ponds, the commercial plantings, or the hosta garden in the woods. I never, never have enough time in this garden. Next time I hope I can stay much longer.



SYMPOSIUM DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH! VOTE FOR AS FEW AS 1 OR AS

**MANY AS 25 IRISES AND SEND YOUR BALLOT TO:
ANNE LOWE, 12219 ZILLES ROAD,**

BLACKSTONE, VA 23824-9394. Last year 83 votes were cast in Region 4. Let's make a better showing in 1998.



Hornstein Garden - Pond of Louisianas

REGION 4 FALL MEETING
Hosted by The Charlotte Iris Society
October 9 & 10

The Charlotte Iris Society (CIS) is delighted to host the Region 4 AIS Meeting. We complete the celebration of our own Golden Anniversary .

The meeting will be held at the Charlotte Hilton at University Place where numerous restaurants and shops are accessible by walking.

At the opening dinner on Friday, Dr. Larry Mellichamp, coauthor with Peter Loewer of the book *The Winter Garden*, will present an illustrated lecture on "THE WINTER GARDEN AND IRIS". Dr. Mellichamp is Associate Professor of Biology at the University Of North Carolina at Charlotte and the Director of the Botanical Gardens. The gardens consist of the Van Landingham Garden, one of the largest collections of hybrid Rhododendron in the southeast plus more that 900 species of indigenous trees, shrubs and wildflowers and ferns and the Susie Harwood Garden which presents hardy ornamentals and landscape plants. Finally the McMillan greenhouse complex contains an orchid collection and other plants from the world's diverse climates plus a collection of carnivorous plants native to the southeast. An autographed copy of *The Winter Garden* will be raffled at the meeting. If anyone has free time before, during or after the meeting, you are invited to visit the Gardens which are quite near the Hilton. Directions will be available at registration.

The meeting on Saturday will include a show for Rebloomers so keep your iris watered (which will be a chore if you are as dry as our area) and hope that we have enough available for a show. In addition the Board meeting and 2 sessions of Judges Training (2 hours each) will be scheduled.

Of course, the meeting ends with a banquet and a wonderful auction. Bring plants and a long shopping list so the auction is successful.

If you plan to come early (Thursday or Friday prior to 5:00) we have arranged to have a number of private gardens open for you to visit. We have also identified some garden centers that you might enjoy. Please call Carrie Winter at 704-542-3812 or drop a note to: 5801 Masters Court, Charlotte, NC 28226 to indicate your interests.

We have worked hard to make this a memorable meeting. The hotel is excellent; the food service is outstanding; the program is quality; the goody bags are full. But one more component is necessary for a special meeting - YOU! Without your presence there is no meeting, so make your plans now to join us in Charlotte October 9 & 10. See you then!



SCHEDULE FOR REGION 4 AIS FALL MEETING OCTOBER 9-10, 1998

Friday October 9

12 Noon to 6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m.

6:30 p.m.

7:30 p.m.

Fellowship 'til

Registration

Informal Get together

Welcome Buffet

Dr. Larry Mellichamp

"The Winter Garden and Iris"

Saturday October 10

7:30-9:00 a.m.

9:30-10:30 a.m.

9:30-11:30 a.m.

Lunch on Your Own

1:00-3:00 p.m.

3:30-5:30 p.m.

6:30 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

8:30 p.m.

Show entries Received

Judging of the Show

Region 4 Board Meeting

Judges Training

"Judging Basics for Beardless Iris"

Roy Epperson and Carol Warner

Judges Training

"Development of Form and Color
in Bearded Iris"

Anne Lowe and Mike Lowe

Informal Get Together

Banquet

Wonderful Auction

DIRECTIONS TO CHARLOTTE HILTON UNIVERSITY PLACE.

FROM I-77 TAKE EXIT 18 ONTO HARRIS BOULEVARD FOR 7 MILES. TURN LEFT ONTO J.M. KEYNES DRIVE.

FROM I-85 TAKE EXIT 45 A ON TO EAST W.T. HARRIS BLVD. FOR APPROXIMATELY .4 MILE. TURN LEFT AT J.M. KEYNES DR.

Adventures of an Aspiring Iris Hybridizer

Jim Schroetter

I became fascinated with Irises at a very young age. In fact, I remember spending some of my very limited allowance money for film and developing - just to take pictures of irises growing in my neighbor's yard! Just this past weekend, my Mom produced a photo of me standing in front of and touching what appear to be iris fans when I was but 3 years old! So my interest in irises goes clear back to my childhood. As an aspiring iris hybridizer, however, I'll begin by revealing that I am a novice. I do not have a botanical or other scientific education, nor do I possess any specialized horticultural skills or innate abilities. But, yes you 'll find out in this article, all YOU really need to participate in this hobby is a strong interest in Irises, and a great deal of patience.

I first learned that you can create new, distinct iris varieties through a process called "hybridization" while attending an FAIS annual iris show. Ruth Walker, our club founder, demonstrated how to take pollen from one iris - the pollen parent—and pollinate another iris - the pod parent.- by placing the pollen on each stigmatic lip of the chosen flower. She went on to explain the formation of a seed pod after a successful hybridization attempt - a pod that can yield dozens of iris seeds. When these seeds are planted, cared for and given ample time, they will produce two types of iris 'seedlings. ' The majority of these seedlings turned out to be unexceptional, run-of-the-mill Irises that do not merit introduction. They may be lacking in form, substance, or proper proportion, have poor color, branching or growing habits, produce few buds, lack distinctiveness, and so on. These can be used in crosses with other irises to help eliminate the deficiencies found, or may simply be destined for your compost heap. However, since every seed within a pod is unique, there will emerge a few irises that are different from all the others - a few that have the winning combination of colors, substance, form and heartiness to charm and inspire. These are the keepers!

After growing and watching them for a few years, worthy rhizomes you've produced can be given names and registered with the American Iris Society. Finally, they are "introduced". Introduction is the offering of these rhizomes for sale to the public. A variety is not eligible for listing on the awards ballot until after it has been recorded as

introduced by the AIS Registrar-Recorder. Each iris must follow this process if it is to have a chance of becoming an award-winner. The highest award - the Dykes medal - is perhaps the greatest achievement that an aspiring iris hybridizer can dream of. Creating a Dykes medal winning iris means that your skill as a hybridizer is undeniable; you are among the finest!

My first year as a hybridizer was in 1995. To say the least, I get off to a rocky start. I managed to successfully cross numerous irises and ultimately had several green pods growing. Unfortunately, I did not know that you must wait to harvest the pods until they start to split open - usually during the summertime and well after bloom season has ended. I harvested the pods before they had sufficient time to ripen and my lack of patience produced - you guessed it - a lack of seeds. Zero. Ouch!

1996 was the first year I can even remotely claim the title of 'hybridizer-', thanks to increasing my level of patience and waiting until the seeds ripened. Among the crosses that yielded seeds, and currently arguing in my hybrid iris bed are (pod parent listed first): HEARTHSTONE X CORAL SUNSET, KNOT'S LANDING X BLENHEIM ROYAL, KNOT'S LANDING X SYNCOPATION, WINESAP X BATIK and TIDEMARK X CORAL SUNSET.

So far this year, the first bloom stalk has not emerged from any of the seedlings. Should any decide to bloom at this point in the year, I may have produced a rebloomer! This is certainly as WINESAP is a known rebloomer. Also, there are non-rebloomers known to pass the reblooming trait on to their offspring. While even the most knowledgeable hybridizers can only theorize about why Irises rebloom, they do know that many losses have this desirable trait within the makeup of their genetic code. One of my goals is to team more about which irises to cross to actually produce rebloomers, and to eventually introduce many reliable rebloomers for our area, zone 7.

Seeds from 1996 have produced tiny iris plants during 1997 and 1998. In fact I've learned that seeds possess a growth inhibitor that can cause them to delay sprouting for many years. (This is one of nature's ways of ensuring survival of the species! So again, a hybridizer needs to have a great deal of patience.

The crosses made during 1997 produced hundreds of seeds so I feel that my efforts were successful. However, the 18 pods that survived and ripened represented a total of nearly 50 crosses. In fact, the total

successful seed pods for '96 end '97 required over 100 crosses. Besides my premature harvesting, other pitfalls include flowers falling off, being accidentally plucked after the bloom wilts, being knocked off by animals, rotting due to excessive rainfall, or sometimes simply withering away for no apparent reason. Some crosses are doomed from the start, like when you find that your cross involved one ins that is sterile and could not reproduce. Besides patience, let's add perseverance to the list, since only a portion of your efforts will ever produce viable ins seeds.

Among the '97 seeds planted this year, there were 13 bearded irises, including: AFTERNOON DELIGHT X FRAPPE, CORAL SUNSET X CHAMPAGNE ELEGANCE, SUKY X BLENHEIM ROYAL, STREET WALKER X LONDON LORD, BUENOS AIRES X SYNCOPATION, SYNCOPATION X BUENOS AIRES, CARBIBEAN DREAM X CHRISTA, NEUTRON DANCE X SUMMER FIESTA and LILAC SHOWERS X HINDUMAGIC.

This Is also the first year I've successfully crossed Japanese irises. Seeds planted include: CENTER OF ATTENTION X CRYSTAL HALO, MIST O' MORN X CRYSTAL HALO, CRYSTAL HALO X MIST O' MORN, HUE AND CRY X STRUT AND FLOURISH, AND STRUT AND FLOURISH X MIST O' MORN.

1998 efforts have produced just 6 seed pods from overate attempted crosses. Just last week, the LACE JABOT X FANCYFELLOW pod fell from it's stalk - probably due to heavy rainfall. It may have produced seeds but I won't know until next month, when I can open it. A few days ago, I found the bottom of the stalk holding PATTERNS X PROUD TRADITION rotting. So I have (again) used a trick that will (possibly) allow the pod to be nourished until it fully ripens; I have cut off the bad part of the stalk and inserted the good part into a hole cut into a potato. Pods that are hanging in there include three that I have high hopes for: VANITY X LOOP THE LOOP, SILVERADO X FANCYFELLOW and SNOWMOON X BRIDE'S HALO. Among the mix are two Dykes medal winners VANITY and SILVERADO - and VANITY is one of those known to pass the reblooming trait. There are a few Japanese irises in boom at this writing, so I have not yet finished my hybridizing attempts for this year...

Someday I'll have iris introductions to talk about and to show you - but certainly not until next century. You see, a hybridizer must observe the seedlings for several years to determine if they are keepers. So have patience. Only time will tell what the efforts have produced. But I'll keep you posted!

(Reprint from the FAIS Newsletter.)



FSK - SPRING SHOW

The spring show fumed out to be more successful than we had expected. Leaving it up for two days and using it as the divider between the dining area and the show space made a wonderful backdrop for our dinners. An unexpected bonus.

The show itself had 18 exhibitors, who brought 185 entries representing 170 cultivars. The range was extensive: TBs, BBs, MTBs, SIBs, LAs, and JIs. A wide selection of types to show visitors. Cheshire Cat, a TO submitted by Ginny & Don Spoon, C&P, won Best Specimen of the Show. The Most Worthy Seedling was brought by John White and was a Versicolor seedling JW-95-02. The Silver Medal for most blue ribbons went to Clarence Mahan, C&P, with 13 and the Bronze went to Carol Warner, FSK, with 12.

FSK - BEARDLESS SHOW

This year's beardless show was held in the brand new Visitors Center at Brookside Gardens in Kensington, Maryland. The irises were displayed on low tables in front of floor-to-ceiling glass windows through which one had a view of a wooded area. It was a lovely backdrop for the flowers.

The Best Specimen of the Show was Rosewater, a Japanese grown and entered by Carol Warner. The first runner up was Absolom entered by Ginny Spoon. The second runner up was also entered by Ginny but, unfortunately, at this time I don't have its name. The third runner up was Maine Chance entered by Sterling Innerst. Sterling's seedling 4648-1, entered by Carol Warner won Best Seedling.

The Silver Medal went to Carol Warner and the Bronze was awarded to Ginny Spoon.

(Reprint from the FSK Newsletter)

AIS NATIONAL NEWS

This year's AIS National Convention was held in Denver, Colorado the 2nd through the 6th of June. A meeting of affiliate chapter presidents was held for the first time. As FSK president I was selected to be on the panel to explain the methods FSK has used to attract new members, in particular our participation in the Maryland Home and Garden Show. Many issues were discussed, including recruiting new members and keeping them, as well as issues relating to AIS affiliate interactions. Unfortunately an hour was not nearly long enough to cover all the topics in depth. The consensus was that this was an excellent forum for communication and should become an annual event.

One of the most important pieces of information that came out of the National meeting was the changes in the Membership policy. The policy, as quoted from Anne Lowe's RVP letter, now reads as follows: "New members, not including reinstated members, joining AIS from April 1 through September 30, will have an additional six months membership for the current payment. In addition, members joining in this period will have July 1 join dates and year end expire dates. Example: A new member who joins with a Single Annual payment on June 15 1998 will have a join date of July 1, 1998. The expire date for this membership will be December 31, 1999. This member will not receive the January and April 1998 Bulletins. The membership begins with July, 1998 and that is the first issue which will be received. Please note that this only applies to new members not to tardy renewals.

This new policy should be much easier to explain to prospective members and will, hopefully, help increase membership both locally and nationally.

So much for the business end of the conference. There were also three days of garden tours that had to be experienced to be believed. It rained, it snowed, it hailed, the sun shone, the temperature included record-setting lows and through it all we visited garden after lovely garden. It was a wonderful experience and reminded me how much I enjoy going to Nationals. We should all try to attend whenever it is possible. This allows me to plug the two that will be in our area before we know it. They are the 2001 and 2003 Nationals. So start saving your pennies now!

(Reprint from the FSK Newsletter)

Blue Ridge Iris Society



At a called meeting in January, the group elected the following officers and plans made to change the by-laws emphasizing the recruiting of non AIS members; Libby Cross, President: Charlotte Kabler, V. President: Barbara Crawford, Secretary: Millie Trent, Treasurer and Fred Stephenson, Corresponding Secretary. Additional meetings were held with little increase in attendance by former members or new recruits.

Three garden visits were scheduled. One was to the Libby Cross garden, the Daisy Hylton garden and Dan River Gardens. Attendance was small at the first two gardens. Six members attended the Dan River Gardens.

Dan River Gardens are owned by Betty and Jerry Thomas and Betty's son Tom. They have a home page on the Internet(<http://members.aol.com/jerty/drg.htm>). Their sales are almost exclusive via the Internet. The gardens are located near the village of Meadows of Dan, Virginia just off the Blue Ridge Parkway.

After a lunch at Mabry Mill the Thomas couple led the group to their Display garden of approx. 36 acres. Here there were 50+ beds close to the house. Many irises were in bloom and they were in the process of restoring labels. From here we were guided to their 400 acre farm which is located about 5 miles away on a beautiful Piedmont plateau presenting a lovely view in all directions. This is their "production area". They are in the process of relocating the irises in 40-50 new larger beds. Betty claims they grow 250,000 irises plus dahlias, cannas and glade. Of course we didn't take the time to verify her count, but it is fabulous.

Mr. Thomas is working to develop a disease resistant American Chestnut. He has numerous small trees and should harvest some nuts this Fall.

We were very fortunate to be able to view this enormous planting and meeting with the growers. They are at this location for only a short period during iris season being the owners of a thriving business in Arizona. This is their retirement project leaving son Tom the responsibility of the iris during the rest of the year.

Carolina Mountains Iris Society



Due to the extremely early bloom season, CMIS was unable to mount a JI Show this year. The members were fortunate to be able to present an "Iris Display" instead. With 15 stalks and 15 single blooms - beautiful, but not our usual 85-125 entries.



Virginia Peninsula Iris Society



We've had a busy five months with programs given by Jim and Nelda Pressly on preparing soil for gardens, proper fertilizing and treatment of pests etc.

Mike and Anne Lowe were our speakers for April giving us many useful tips on grooming and choosing irises for shows.

We had two garden tours in May which were well attended and enjoyed by all.

In April at Christopher Newport University we took part in the gardening symposium. We shared a booth with Bill Smoot and beautiful flowers were in abundance.

Our show was held on May 16 at Williamsburg Outlet Mall.



Eastern North Carolina Iris Society

Since the Fall Board Meeting of Region 4, the ENCIS meet on February 21, 1998 in Hillsborough, North Carolina with 18 in attendance. This was a substantial increase in attendance over past years with several attending their first Society meeting. A slide collection from AIS was presented at the luncheon meeting.

The next scheduled meeting will be the annual auction and covered dish lunch to be held on July 11th at the home of Dr. Roy Epperson in High Point, North Carolina at noon.

Fredericksburg Area Iris Society



In April Clarence Mahan gave a Judges' Training lecture program on Species Iris which was well attended. As usual his sparkling wit carried us through the myriad number of types and forms presented.

Our May 2 local garden tour featured a good number of Arilbreds blooming, providing a unique opportunity to see the very striking forms and patterns.

At our annual May show the unusually warm spring permitted more Louisianas to reach the table than normal, which delighted show visitors unfamiliar with them. Show results were: Queen of Show "TB Majestic Interlude" -Schroetters, Runners Up: TB"Modern Classic"- Shipman, TB"Silverado" Lovings, LA"Red Echo"- Lipiec and Historic "Sweet Lavender" - Rose.

A number of us journeyed to the Regional Convention in Maryland thoroughly enjoying Barry Blyth's lecture. When the temperatures dropped from the 90s to beautiful 78 degree days, blooms on the garden tours were crisp and colors incredible! No one could have asked for more

In our effort to hopefully promote the genus iris, we continue to offer a scholarship award to a Horticulture student at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute.



SYMPOSIUM DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH! VOTE FOR AS FEW AS 1 OR AS

**MANY AS 25 IRISES AND SEND YOUR BALLOT TO:
ANNE LOWE, 12219 ZILLES ROAD,**

BLACKSTONE, VA 23824-9394. Last year 83 votes were cast in Region 4. Let's make a better showing in 1998.

Chesapeake & Potomac Iris Society



Our C&P Iris Society has been working hard in 1998 to increase our membership. We have voted to give away 25 free youth memberships. We have already gotten 3 new youth members and several more ready to sign up. Many of our members are hosting garden tours and giving slide talks where we are giving out membership applications. We are also having four flower shows this year, two already have come to pass. At these shows there are many opportunities to talk about our club and recruit new members. We have made a poster which publicizes our club and its activities.

Next year we are holding the Regional and we have secured the hotel in Winchester and gotten three gardens to tour. We will be having a 'pot lunch' in Sara Marley's garden which will be catered by Sara's church group.

Our program chairman has included judge's training courses throughout the year in order to recruit and train more judges for our region. We have gotten great responses to this training and have many club members involved. We expect to have a great year this year as well as a good future.



The Chesapeake & Potomac Iris Society presented their annual Iris Show on May 16, 1998, at Merrifield Nursery. It was another successful event for the show chairman, Ginny Spoon. 10 exhibitors entered 148 stalks, of which there were 106 different varieties and 27 seedlings. A new junior member, Brittany was an assistant clerk. Queen of Show - Clarence Mahan with 'PHIL EDINGER' a psuedocorus.

Best Seedling - Don Spoon #95-189A, a Border Bearded.

Silver Medal - Clarence Mahan

Bronze Medal - Virginia Walczak

Best Design - Clara Herbert
Best in Section:
TB - Lion's Share, Mahan
BB - Whoop Em Up, G. Spoon
MTB - Consummation, Mahan
Beardless - Pink Sparkle, Walczak
Species - Phil Edinger, Mahan
Historic - Amigo, Marley



**Regional Meeting
Spring 1999
C&P Iris Society**

Location - Travel Lodge, Winchester VA.
Don & Ginny Spoon Chairmen

Schedule (tentative)

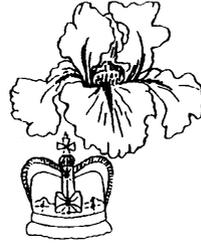
Friday May 21st

9:30-12 Noon	Registration & Check in
10-12 Noon	Show entries received
Lunch on your own	
12:30-2:30	Show Judging
3:30-5:00	Board Meeting
6 PM	Dinner
7-9 PM	Hybridizer's Panel: Innerst, Mahan, Spoon

Saturday May 22nd

8 AM	Leaving for Castillo Garden
9-10:30	Leaving for Marley Garden - Pot Luck Lunch
1:30	Leaving for Spoon Garden
2:30-4:30	Judge's Training - Garden: Sterling Innerst
4:30	Leaving for Motel
6 PM	Dinner
7 PM	Awards and Auction

Charlotte Iris Society



Our 1997-98 year continued with Pointers for Showing Iris and our annual plant exchange. We also had a presentation on our 50 years in Charlotte. Interesting scrapbooks about CIS were shared.

The show which was held May 2 was a good one despite some weather damage from the late freeze. Red Dazzler, a Louisiana Iris grown by Katharine Steele, won Queen of the Show.

Presently our primary problem seems to be locating space for our sale(s) and the show. Cotswold Mad, our home for a number of years, is being redesigned to eliminate the Mall area. We anticipate having the summer rhizome sale at The Greenery of the Regional Farmers Market located in Charlotte.

Proceeds from the sale will be used to support our projects which invade the establishment of an endowed scholarship in Horticulture at Central Piedmont Community College.

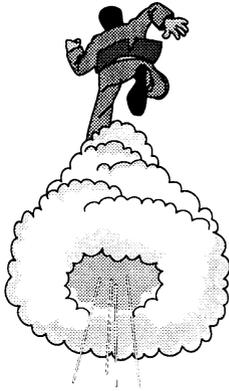


SYMPOSIUM DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH! VOTE FOR AS FEW AS 1 OR AS MANY AS 25 IRISES AND SEND YOUR BALLOT TO: ANNE LOWE, 12219 ZILLES ROAD, BLACKSTONE, VA 23824-9394. Last year 83 votes were cast in Region 4. Let's make a better showing in 1998.

The Last Word.....



Four years and 8 issues ago I started editing NEWSCAST! It doesn't seem possible, no it can't be! Alas it's true. My time of being editor has come to an end, and the new editor is waiting in the wings to step in. (Would you please step in, we're waiting for you!) So far no one has agreed to edit one of AIS finest publications. It has been a rewarding and educational endeavor to be sure, one that I would recommend to anyone who wants to give it a go. So, before you finish reading this article, contact Anne Lowe, Sara Marley, or myself and avoid the winter rush!



Before I rush much further, I must thank several people for their help, ideas, and encouragement: Mike and Anne Lowe, and Clarence Mahan - former editors who have been a great source of input and encouragement. Caryll Randall and Owings Rebert - (along with RVP's Anne Lowe and Roy Epperson) provided a core of Regional officers anyone would enjoy working with. They were always there when needed. Lastly, Jack & Rosalie Loving, Lois Rose, Carol Warner, Joan & Ken Roberts, and Rosalie Figge, continually providing ideas and a determination to press on. A Special Thank You goes to my lovely wife Karen, who provided editing skills, encouragement and plenty of iced tea, desserts and other "goodies". There are lots of other people too numerous to mention - but not overlooked in thought!

So, where do we go from here? What is the future of Newscast? Local Societies? Region 4? Hopefully a long and fruitful future awaits us, **BUT that's up to you**. The last couple issues were smaller than normal, with lots of reprints from local society newsletters. (I'm thrilled to see these societies do such a good job, maybe others could join in as well.) If NEWSCAST falls on hard times, local newsletters could print important Regional information like the Minutes from Board meetings including Treasurer reports. Many are now doing

mini-garden write-ups and printing Regional Meeting information. I know this is like amputating a limb, and it's painful to say it, but we have to face the fact that times are changing, and people are not involved like days gone by. We are facing another National Convention, and I must say honestly, that we have not recovered from the last one. The 20/80 factor has become the 15/85 or 10/90 factor. Anyway you slice it, the numbers are smaller on the side that matters. **SO, where do we go from here? - it's up to you!** We can not continue as we have done in the past. We need strong societies not given over to petty acts and jealousies. The idea is to promote the IRIS, anyway we positively can. We need a strong Board, prepared to take us into the next millennium, full steam ahead, ready to face new challenges! **Where do we go from here? - again, you decide.**

When I started as editor, I had several goals, which I feel have been accomplished. One was to provide a cost effective publication that informs and educates. Another was to provide a positive forum for information about society happenings and articles about people within Region 4. Lastly, not to let NEWSCAST become a publication that airs petty 'gripes'. I hope this will continue in the future.

Well, I hear the whistle on the time clock letting me know my time is up! My home and e-mail address are the same, with no change in the phone number. I have now joined the 90's by installing an answering machine to catch all calls, since I'm out a lot more now than ever. Please keep in touch Region 4! I'll never forget you!

Well, the Last Word is.....Bye!



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American Iris Society
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