

The Newsletter of

The Santa Rosa Iris Society

43RD YEAR NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 2017

Officers 2017:

President

Jeff Davis

Vice President

Anna Cadd

Treasurer

Kitty Loberg

Secretary

Diana Ford

Past President

Rudy Ciuca

Historian

Anna Cadd

Membership Secretary

Betty Ford

Librarian

Juanita Breckwoldt

Newsletter Editor

Alleah Haley

Directors thru 12/17:

Anna Marie Hermansen

Kitty Loberg

Directors thru 12/18:

Kathy McCallum

Delores McKey

Jean Sharp

Standing Committees:

Attendance

Marlene Horn

Display Garden Chairmen

Jim Begley

Jean Sharp

Door Prize Coordinator

Rudy Ciuca

Hospitality

Diana and Don Ford

LBAGC Representatives

Jeff Davis

Anna Cadd

Alleah Haley (Alternate)

Logistics Coordinator

Jim Begley

Photography

Marlene Horn

2017 Show Chairman

Kitty Loberg

2017 Assistant Show Chairman

Jeff Davis

2017 Potted Iris Sale Chairman

Alleah Haley

2017 Summer Rhizome Sale Chm.

Need volunteer

2017 Heirloom Expo Sales Chm.

Need volunteer

Saturday, November 4, 12 – 5 PM – Come Dressed as a Iris Name Costume Party and Potluck Dinner

*Where? Luther Burbank Art & Garden
Center, 2050 Yulupa Ave., Santa Rosa
Time? Doors open at 11; we'll eat at 1
PM and finish before dark.*

All members and their guests are encouraged to attend. Set up and decorating starts at 11 AM. We'll eat about 1:00 PM. Bring a dish to serve 8-10, with serving spoon, for the buffet. Society master chef Rudy Ciuca will prepare ham and turkey breast. Bring your own table service and napkin. Coffee, tea, rolls, and butter will be provided. After we eat, we'll have the costume contest, organized, for the 18th year in a row, by Betty Ford. For inspiration, see coverage of last year's party elsewhere in this Newsletter. If all this seems too intimidating, come as you are! You'll still have a good time. And the food emphasizes why we jokingly call ourselves "the Santa Rosa Iris and Eating Society."



Our October meeting was cancelled because of the fires. This get-together will provide some much-needed iris fellowship, fun, and great food. So put on your thinking cap and exercise your individuality and creativity. Some costumes can be very labor intensive while others are easy. It's up to you!

**Board Members: Don't forget the Board Meeting Monday
November 13, 6:00 PM at the Center.**

Gardening Tips for November

Anna Cadd

1. It is time to plant beardless irises, as all the bearded we got this year are already planted and growing in the garden (ha, ha!). The beardless group of irises include spurias Louisianas Siberians, Japanese, Pacific Coast natives, *Iris* species, and crosses between different *Iris* species (Species-X including "pseudatas") – many different irises without beards on the falls. Some of them won't readily grow in northern California gardens, as they may have different requirements; but we try. They need to be planted a little deeper than bearded varieties and usually need a little more water. They will grow in 2-3 gallon pots sunk in soil in kiddie pools, or in the garden on a drip system with more watering. They come to us "diapered" in wet paper towels and

sealed in Ziploc® bags so the roots can't dry out. They will reward us in spring with exotic looking flowers that are a joy for gardeners, visitors and a wide variety of animals.

2. It is time to think about planting a winter garden – we can garden all year round in California! Plants from the cabbage family, carrots, parsnips, lettuces, radishes, onions and garlic love cold weather and it is nice to go outside and pick some fresh veggies. Garden space that is fallow (temporarily resting) can be planted with cover crops like oats, legumes, alfalfa, and especially wild mustard. They all prevent “bad” weeds from sprouting, are a hideout for beneficial insects, and add nitrogen when tilled into the soil when still young.
3. Tools cost more and more every year. They need to be cleaned and stored before rain and some may need a spray of oil to prevent rust. Remember: “Rust Never Sleeps!” Storing them in a dry area will extend their life. It's easier to find them when stored properly than when looking all over the garden!
4. Winter is coming and it is time to think about helping our garden friends survive. There will be lot of migrating birds, and they need to eat a lot to have energy to migrate. Our own hummingbirds will need some sugary water. If there is stray cat around, give him a handful of dry cat food. He may be looking to find his way home after the fires, and hunger has many faces.
5. There were many questions about Quarryhill Botanical Garden on Hwy 12 around Kenwood. I am happy to update that it survived okay when the wildfire ripped through the upper Sonoma Valley, leaving massive damage in its wake. Quarryhill is a 25-acre wild woodland garden, with 25,000 wild-origin plants from Asia, thriving in a natural setting. The collection of Siberian iris species, grown from seeds from Asia is a delight in late May. Maybe we are ready for an SRIS field trip in May?

Or go now – admission is free until the end of the year to help our community heal through “a peaceful, pastoral experience” (regular admission is \$12). Open daily 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., call 707-996-3166, or quarryhill.org.



Don't worry about people stealing your ideas. If your ideas are any good, you'll have to ram them down people's throats. – Howard Aiken

From the President's Desk

It has been quite a month. I want to thank everyone who helped the club with the LBAGC garden, digging, planting and distributing the beardless irises. It will be beautiful next spring. I am so impressed by the dedication our members have even in these difficult times and the support for those who were affected and those who have lost their homes. It has really hit me how fragile each of our own little worlds are and how things can change in a moment. So, Kitty, Steve, Ross, Barbara, Delores and Jean – we are all grateful for your support and wish you well. Hope to see everyone at the Potluck/Costume Party on November 4.

Jeff Davis

This Month

Saturday November 4, 12-5 PM – Holiday Potluck/Come Dressed as an Iris Costume Party, LBAGC.

2017 Board Meetings

 - Board Members and Officers, please mark your calendars:

Monday, November 13, 6:00 PM

Monday, December 11, 6:00 PM

2017 Plant Sale Dates

Willowside School, 5299 Hall Rd., Santa Rosa (corner of Willowside and Hall Rds.)

Saturday, November 11 – 9 AM – 2 PM. Low water & drought tolerant perennials, natives: \$4/ 1 gallon pot. Japanese maples 3-5' tall: \$25 - \$45/tree. No veggies. Call 707-569-4724 with questions.

Nominating Committee Report

Anna Marie Hermansen, Chairman

The nominating committee, consisting of Jim Begley, Betty Ford, and Anna Marie Hermansen, present the following slate of officers and directors for 2018 for vote at the October meeting:

Officers for 2018:

President: Jeff Davis

Vice-President: Anna Cadd

Treasurer: Kitty Loberg

Secretary: Diana Ford

Directors thru 12/2019:

Betty Ford

Anna Marie Hermansen

Director thru 12/ 2018:

Alleah Haley, to complete the term of resigning Director Jean Sharp

Other nominations will be accepted from the floor that night before the election is held.

Happy Birthday November Babies

Anna Cadd 11/2

Barb Baruth 11/10

Jan Wax 11/12

Loretta Figueroa 11/15

Phil Edinger 11/18

Juanita Breckwoldt 11/20

Jonnie Russell 11/20

Mary Pagonas 11/21

Display Garden Update – October 4, 2017

Jean Sharp, Display Garden Chairman

Many thanks to those who participated in the work party on Sunday October 1st to dig, divide, diaper and label beardless irises. Anna Marie Hermansen, Alleah Haley, Cheryl Bryan, Gennaro (my wonderful worker), Jeff Davis, Kitty Loberg, Linnea Polo, and I gathered at 8 a.m. and worked tirelessly until after 5 p.m. More compost was applied to the empty bed which was raked and readied for Diana and Don Ford to rototill on Monday the 2nd. New beardless irises and replants will be planted on Tuesday October 3rd.

Nearly all clumps were four years old so the increase will be available for club members to purchase at the meeting on October 9th. These divisions need to be planted as soon as possible and more permanent labels made. Species, species-hybrids, Louisianas, Siberian and Japanese will be available.

Again, I am most grateful for all the help on Sunday. Good job. Thank you again.

Display Garden Update – November 1, 2017

The article above was written before everything changed. The rest of the plan went as follows:

October 5: Diana Ford and I dug, divided and diapered six more clumps in second bed and planted a few varieties prepared earlier.

October 8: Cheryl Bryan, Linnea Polo, our worker Gennaro and I finished digging second row, getting iris ready for sale for the meeting. Gennaro hand spaded, raked and added compost to the bed.

Finally, with the help of Diana Ford on the 19th and Anna Marie Hermansen on the 21st, the remaining beardless were planted. Each hole was dug and amended with cottonseed meal, acid soil mix and compost. Both beds will eventually be mulched with pine straw to prevent weeds and slowly acidify the soil.

Two rebloomers brightened the garden as well. 'Gossett's Gamble' and 'Echo Location' bloomed and 'Zurich' put up a stalk.

Beardless iris increase were sold to members at bargain prices at an impromptu sale on October 23 at the Center [Kitty Loberg, Diana Ford, and Jean Sharp had stored them and some had to be rescued from the flames on October 8/9 – Ed.] and the society donated the rest of the increase to AIS Region 14 for their fundraising at the fall regional October 28.

Thank you to everyone for your efforts.
Jean Sharp, Display Garden Chair

*February through October of each year meetings of the Santa Rosa Iris Society are held on the second Monday of each month at the Luther Burbank Art and Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Ave., Santa Rosa, California. The Program starts at 7:00 p.m. and the business meeting follows after the break. Come early and visit. The doors open about 6:00 p.m. for set up and coffee making. The deadline for all submissions for the **December 2017** issue of this Newsletter is **November 20, 2017**. E-mail copy to: alleah.haley@gmail.com.*



Keeping In Touch/Changes to Roster

Several members lost their homes in the October firestorms and have new addresses/contact information:

Ross and Barbara BeVier

PO Box 9266
Santa Rosa, CA 95405
email: rhbbeb@aol.com

Kitty Loberg

PO Box 732
Kelseyville, CA 95451
Her email remains iris.loberg@comcast.net

Delores McKey

Temporary address: 4951 Sheleen Ct.
Santa Rosa, Ca 95409
New email: deloresmckey@att.net

Jean Sharp

PO Box 7485
Santa Rosa, CA 95407
Her email remains: irisloverjgs@icloud.com

Alice Kemper did not lose her home. She voluntarily evacuated to the Santa Rosa Vets Building shelter where she joined 19 other medical evacuees. On October 13 she and 12 others on oxygen were evacuated by ambulance to Kaiser Permanente Post-Acute Care in San Leandro. She emailed on October 25:

"Sorry to hear about our members who lost everything in the fire. I hope they found temporary shelter. I hope they all have friends or family to take them in.

My cousin and his wife and volunteers evacuated me because they were worried I might not be able to get out of the house in an emergency. As part of the evacuation they turned off my gas and had PG&E shut off the electricity. PG&E said my wiring was bad and had to be replaced before they would turn my electricity back on. A pain, but I'm so lucky to still have my home. As long as I'm in an assisted living facility I'm taking advantage of the situation and getting physical therapy to improve my strength and mobility."

As of October 26, 2017 and likely for the next several weeks Alice's contact info is:
Pine Ridge Care Center Room 25A
45 Professional Center Parkway
San Rafael, CA 94903
new email: alicevk@@sonic.net

The following are more routine roster changes:

Lynn Williams' new phone number:
707-xxxx

Ann Elizabeth Shippey – corrected address:
2643 Spring Oaks Dr.
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

On October 28 **Barb Baruth** emailed re her son Alex:

"Hi everyone,

It's been a year since Alex received a bone marrow transplant and he has been doing well. He has not had graft vs host disease and has not shown signs of rejecting the transplant, in part due to the strong anti-rejection immunosuppressant drug he's been taking. He recently had a bone marrow biopsy and met with Dr. Eapen yesterday to discuss the results, which were good. His blood cells are 100% donor (excellent), and his red blood and white blood cell counts are normal, with his platelets moving towards normal range (platelet production is the last to recover). Although he hasn't felt well for the last month due to a virus, which hit him hard because of the immunosuppressant, he is now starting to cut back on that drug – a big step!

We are very happy with his progress; he is beginning to lead a much more normal life.

Thanks to you all for being so caring and concerned about Alex – it's helped us tremendously during this long ordeal.

Love, Barb"

1900 E. Newton Ave.
Shorewood, WI 53211

In Memoriam

On October 18 Anna Cadd emailed: "With great sadness I would like to inform you that Anna Gradek, past member of SRIS, passed away last Friday in her home on Willowside [Rd.] in Santa Rosa. Anna was sick for some time and was having difficulty to get to the meetings late afternoon. Her son, Stephen, sometimes accompanied her. She went to sleep on Thursday night [October 12, 2017] and never awakened.

Fire Victims Charities

On October 24 American Iris Society Region 14 RVP Phyllis Wilburn sent this email to the executive board and club presidents of AIS Region 14:

Hi All: Several of you have asked me if there is anything that we can do to help the recent fire victims. At my last count, 5 members of Santa Rosa Iris Society lost homes in the recent fires. They are: Ross and Barbara Bevier, Kitty Loberg, Delores McKey and Jean Sharp.

If we think about losing all our personal items like our toothbrush and clothing in one fell swoop, we can all empathize with the expense and shock that they have experienced. A little help might make a real difference in recovery from this tragic event.

Helen Franklin, Region 14 treasurer, has agreed to accept monetary donations from clubs and individuals. She will close the fund on Nov. 30, 2017 and will distribute the money to the fire victims equally. Please speak to your clubs and see if they would like to donate.

Send checks payable to Region 14 AIS and earmarked fire victims to: Helen Franklin, 5621 Oakhill Ct., Santa Maria, CA 93455.

Phyllis Wilburn, AIS Region 14 RVP

One local charity set up to aid all North Bay fire victims is the Redwood Credit Union (RCU) Community Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Go to www.redwoodcu.org/NorthBayFireRelief; visit any RCU branch (see www.redwoodcu.org/locations);, mail to RCU Community Fund, PO Box 6104, Santa Rosa, CA 94507. Make checks payable to RCU Community Fund and include 2017 North Bay Fire Relief in the memo line and note which county, or all, that you wish to support. All donations are tax-deductible.

Purissima!

Phil Edinger

I was surprised and *delighted* to find Kitty's homage to Purissima in the October newsletter! I've grown it since I was a kid, and each year I look forward to its bloom. It has a certain poise and dignity that is timeless. I think of it as one of my "desert island irises"--you know: if you were forced to choose X number of irises to take with you to a desert isle, what would they be? I, too, have seen what Kitty mentioned: Purissima growing "in the wild" with no care and no water save for rainfall--and still looking good. It's amazing how frequently you'll find it way back in ancestries of modern cultivars of all colors and patterns. As to that astonishing photo of Purissima in Pilkington's garden (the gardener shown was 5' 11" tall), it was the result of a cultural "trick" used by several of the prominent English growers of the era. Because the Mediterranean species heritage was so strong, they realized that the English climate (cool, rainy) wouldn't give the preferred heat and rhizome ripening, so they would protect, by cold-frame type structures, the plants from late August to late March. That enhanced late summer heat, guaranteed dryness, and sheltered rhizomes from winter freezes. If you were to aim for 6-foot stems of Purissima, my bet would be on the Northwest--minus the work and expense of the English protection structures.



Iris Purissima in the President's Garden.

For decades I've grown both parents of Snow Flurry and thought "what if...." Finally, I acted on the question and made the Purissima X Thais cross, which so far has yielded three husky seedlings (two more than Clara Rees had). Stay tuned!

Phil



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Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower. Albert Camus  
The Iris Learning Corner – The Story of ‘Belise’  
Anna Cadd

Spuria irises are tall plants that like to stay in established clumps. They can also have very exotic color mixes and add drama to the garden. The foliage usually dies down in the fall. They start to bloom about two weeks after the tall bearded. They can extend the time you have Iris in bloom or fill in the gap before the rebloomers start their fall bloom. They are very good as cut flowers and can be cut before the flower opens.

So here’s the story of *Iris spuria* ‘Belise’ (Simonet, 1967): There were two spuria species - one from Europe and North Africa, and other from the Caucasus region - first described by the Russian botanist Fomin as a separate species; but later, in 1981, Brian Matthew added it to *Iris spuria* as one of its many subspecies.



*Iris spuria* subsp. *maritima*



*Iris spuria* subsp. *carthaliniae*

Both are beardless, rhizomatous, the former with deep blue-violet flowers, the latter with lightly fragrant sky blue, light blue, or white flowers with darker veining.

The French Hybridizer, Marc Simonet (1889-1965), was a Doctor of Science, Officer of Agricultural Merit, Knight of the Legion of Honor, a Member of Botanical Society of France. He was , head of the research department at the National Caisse des Sciences and for a long time chief of the Genetic and Pathological Laboratory and head of the Center of Research of Antibes, a region in the south of France. He made many interesting crosses between different iris sections and took over the iris collection of the French horticulturist and iris breeder Louis Auguste Ferdinand Denis (1858-1935).

Maurice Broussard said: "Mr. Simonet has carried out more than 30 years of work on the cytology of irises, and by studying the caryotype of more than a hundred irises he confirmed the great heterogeneity of the genus. His hybridizing work and compatibility of the various botanical species have had a decisive influence on future work of iris breeding".

Marc Simonet crossed *Iris spuria* subsp. *maritima* and *Iris spuria* subsp. *carthaliniae* together and in 1964 registered a specimen named 'Belise'. It was introduced by Ben Hager of Melrose Gardens in 1967.

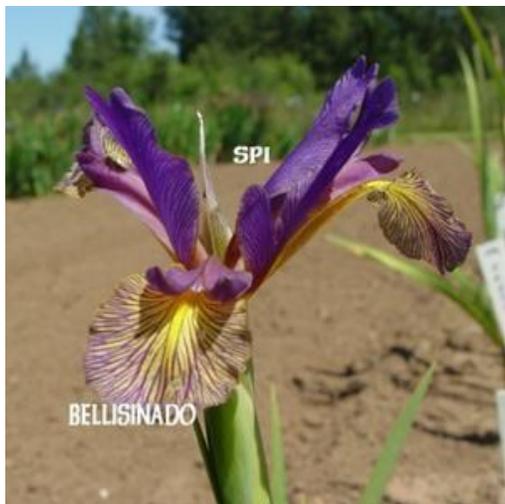
'Belise' (Marc Simonet, R. 1964). SPU. Height 36" (91 cm), Midseason bloom. V1B. Blue-lavender self. *I. maritima* X *I. carthaliniae*. Melrose Gardens, 1967. This variety received an AIS Honorable Mention 1968. Unfortunately Mr. Simonet didn't live to see the iris introduced or awarded.



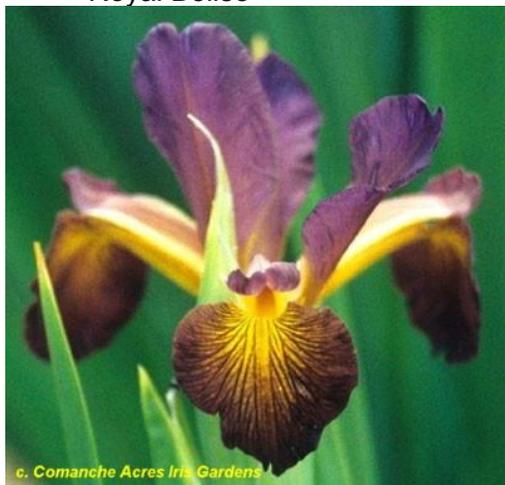
'Belise' is a dwarf spuria, up to 3 ft.in height, with erect sword-shaped leaves and erect stems bearing 5-6 flowers with violet standards and violet-veined white falls. This variety has the leaves evergreen all year round, but I found that in late fall they turn slightly brown and untidy, so I cut them back and with

the first rain in California the leaves start to grow nice and green again. Probably I don't water the clump enough in summer! 'Belise' is very popular and can be found in many gardens.

'Belise' has two children: 'Bellisnado' (Corlew, 1989; 'Belise' x unknown) and 'Royal Belise' (E. McCown, 1978; 'Belise' x unknown) and one grandchild: 'Rhett's Surprise' (Ch. Jenkins by Comanche Gardens, 2011; 'Bronzing' x 'Bellisnado').



'Royal Belise'



'Rhett's Surprise'

This article was first published in Spuria News (Fall 2017), edited here for style.

Bibliography:

<http://wiki.irises.org/Spu/SpuBelise>

[https://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/46592/Iris-Belise-\(Spuria\)/Details](https://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/46592/Iris-Belise-(Spuria)/Details)

<http://www.chapmaniris.com/id35.htm>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iris\\_spuria\\_subsp.\\_maritima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iris_spuria_subsp._maritima)

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=292893>

<http://www.rebloomingiris.com/spuria.htm>

[http://r.b5z.net/i/u/10117356/i/Iris\\_Carthalinae.crp-400px.jpg](http://r.b5z.net/i/u/10117356/i/Iris_Carthalinae.crp-400px.jpg)



## Erratum

The October 2017 issue of this Newsletter gave the wrong location of Schreiners' Iris Gardens. They are in Salem, Oregon.

## Fall Regional Meeting, Oct. 27-28, 2017

Anna Cadd

This year's AIS Region 14 fall meeting was hosted by Leo T. Clark Iris Society and held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Chico, California. If you haven't attended this type of convention, you've missed a lot of fun! It is not like the regular spring gathering, as there are no convention gardens with irises to see. The Fall Regional is designated to discuss and solve Region business and meet with friends, sometimes not seen in years. There is also an opportunity to attend judges' training, and participate in an iris plant auction, a silent auction, and a raffle of gift baskets donated by many clubs in Region 14. We eat great food and just get away from all the problems at home for two days.

Sure enough, Leo. T. Clark Iris Society members put on a great Convention. The hotel was very nice and we were welcomed by a reblooming iris show with 18 beautiful entries of irises. The winner was TB 'Rosalie Figge', with a beautiful, tall stalk and two open flowers entered by Riley Probst and Shirley Trio Probst. Friday evening was set up, buying raffle tickets, hugging friends and dinner on our own. I forgot to mention that 68 people participated, with SRIS represented by Steve Albert, Rudy Ciuca, Jeff Davis, Loretta Figueroa, Diana Ford, Alleah Haley, Joe Lawrence, Kitty Loberg, Lynn Williams, and Anna Cadd. The evening event, attended by almost everyone, was a presentation given by guest speaker Chad Harris from Mt. Pleasant Iris Farm in Washougal, Washington, talking about *Iris ensata* (Japanese irises), other beardless irises and crosses between different species including his "pseudatas", crosses between *I. pseudacorus* and Japanese irises. You can never get enough, listening to Chad! Many attendees finished the evening with beer in the karaoke bar with Riley Probst singing like an "opera tenor"!

Saturday was the serious stuff: The Region 14 budget meeting, different officers reporting on the matters of Region 14, then standing committee chairs presenting reports of their work.

We just barely finished before a delicious lunch. At lunch on every chair we found bags or boxes with exquisite gifts for everyone from former the former president of LTC Iris Society, Cloudia Owen! After lunch we come back to buy beardless irises donated by clubs, bid on beautiful iris artifacts at the silent auction and take 1.5 hours judges' training Japanese irises given by Chad Harris. We learned so much!

Then was time to pack-away all the goodies, pay for our purchases and drive the five hours home. It was a wonderful convention, well attended, and full of fun. Only one question remains: Where I will plant all these beardless irises?

By the way, at the silent auction I bought a beautiful iris design Royal Doulton china set for four that was donated by 99-year-old Virginia Keyser from Monterey Bay Iris Society, famous for attending 52 of the last AIS Conventions! I wanted to have something, which belonged and was used by Virginia. I was proud to serve breakfast to friends on this china set last Monday!

From the Editor – **Many thanks** for contributions to this issue: **Anna Cadd, Jeff Davis, Phil Edinger, Betty Ford, Kitty Loberg, Delores McKey, and Jean Sharp.** *Alleah*

## Youth Minister Saves Grandmother (Delores McKey) from Wildfire

[covcovenantcompanion.com/2017/10/10/youth-minister-saves-grandmother-from-wildfire/](http://covcovenantcompanion.com/2017/10/10/youth-minister-saves-grandmother-from-wildfire/)

By Stan Friedman Oct 10, 2017



Mason Williams's grandmother stands by what was once her garage.

SANTA ROSA, CA (October 10, 2017) – Mason Williams, associate pastor of student ministries at Redwood Covenant Church, had to break through a door to rescue his sleeping 83-year-old grandmother from her house shortly before it was destroyed early Monday morning by the deadly Tubbs Fire that has devastated the area.



Redwood Covenant Church Youth Minister Mason Williams

Williams had arrived at the San Francisco airport late Sunday night after visiting his sister in San Diego. He saw the fire and drove to his parents' house to wake them up and warn them so they could be aware of possible danger.

Williams went to his girlfriend's apartment, where they were watching updates about the multiple fires in the area when he noticed that the Tubbs Fire was headed in the direction of his grandmother's house. Williams lives in a small separate structure just behind the house.

The fire still was on the other side of Highway 101 and it seemed unlikely that it would jump a six-lane highway, Williams said.

But Dan Ferguson, connections pastor, texted Williams to warn him that the fire had jumped the highway. Williams realized he needed to get home right away to check on his grandmother.

“It was one of the most apocalyptic sights I’ve ever seen,” he said. “I was driving one way and everyone else was driving in the opposite direction to get away.”

Williams’s grandmother was asleep without her hearing aids so she did not hear the fire. When Williams arrived, flames on the backyard fence reached six to eight feet high.

“It was an inferno,” he said.

The front door was locked, and Williams tried to get in through a side door, but it was also locked. He tried to kick it in, but couldn’t.



Nothing was left of Mason Williams’s residence. His TV stand is on the right.

“I grabbed a hammer and knocked a hole in the door so I could reach my hand in and unlock it,” Williams said.

When he reached his grandmother’s room, that door also was locked. Williams knocked for roughly 30 seconds before she woke up. Rushing out the front door, they saw “a scene I’ll never forget,” Williams said. The fire was smaller but, “The wind was horrendous, and ash and embers were swirling everywhere.”

Her house was destroyed as was the 400-square-foot residence where Williams lives.

## **Squash and Pumpkin Time**

Anna Cadd

Got squash? If so, you have a chance to see the most important floral specialists in agriculture, native solitary bees of two genera, *Peponapis* and *Xenoglossa*, the so-called "squash bees". The squash families of plants including pumpkins have specific pollinators that migrated with the plants from their origins in Central and South America. Without these specific native bees, which are ground laying bees, squash wouldn't be pollinated. The male bee hangs out on squash blossoms because the female is so busy collecting nectar for herself and pollen to store with the egg she lays in burrows in the ground. He knows she will be around sometime. No energy expenditure by the male!

Look at your squash's flowers during the first few hours after sunrise. Male squash bees will be darting between flowers, searching for mates. By noon, they will be fast asleep in the withered flowers. Females forage at the flowers of squashes, pumpkins and gourds, their sole pollen hosts. Female squash bees carry their pollen dry in a brush of hairs on their hind legs. Squash bees are non-social but sometimes gregarious ground-nesters. Every female digs her own nest. The nest is a simple vertical tunnel terminated by a loose grouping of individual chambers a foot or two deep in the soil. Think of a pea in a thimble and you can envision the individual pollen ball (with a sausage-shaped bee egg) resting in the nest chamber.

The bee resembles a regular honeybee. Ref.:<https://bugguide.net/node/view/969153> ; [https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/pollinator-of-the-month/squash\\_bees.shtml](https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/pollinator-of-the-month/squash_bees.shtml)

## 2016 COME AS AN IRIS NAME POTLUCK PARTY

Betty Ford

This year's "iris name" party was different from all the past parties. The suggestion was made and then voted on by the members to choose an iris from the 2015 Tall Bearded Symposium winner list of the top 100 iris to portray at the annual come dressed as an iris party. Prior to the party there were some grumblings about not finding anything on the list that they wanted to portray, but everyone complied. Looking over the list, I wondered "how in the world would you portray most of the iris on the list?" As it turned out, folks did amazingly well, which proves what imaginative members we have.

As always our meeting room was transformed into a "party room" with gold tablecloths on the tables, lovely fall arrangements and table decorations by Anna Cadd, delicious turkey and ham roasted by our chief cook, Rudy Ciuca, and favorite side dishes provided by members. Thank you to all who made this such a festive event.

Thanks also to the members who provided the evening's entertainment by coming as an iris name. I'm always amazed to see what our imaginative members come up with. A new twist came into play this year, as we got to "cheat" by checking the Symposium winner list while trying to figure out WHO came as WHICH iris. Folks were so clever that some were tough to guess even with the "cheat sheet".

Barbara Foley, one of our new members this year, didn't come as an iris; but she took a top award by guessing the most iris names, in fact, every iris name at the party (16). If my memory serves me correctly, this has never been done before. Good work and congrats, Barbara! Just goes to show that you don't have to dress as an iris to have a good time and even win a prize. Rudy Ciuca and Anna Marie Hermansen tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> place by each guessing 13 iris names.

After dining on our scrumptious meal, it was time for everyone to disclose their iris name. Another new member who joined last spring, Mary True, dressed so subtly, I didn't even know that she was an iris. She was simply but elegantly dressed in black for **BLACK IS BLACK** (*Hager 1979*).

Our president, Rudy Ciuca, was one of the winners of the Master Perplexer Award by stumping most of us once again with his portrayal of **BEVERLY SILLS** (*Hager 1979*, Dykes Medal 1985). He merely blew bubbles as he went around the room. Who knew that the famous opera singer, Beverly Sills' nickname was "Bubbles"? We should have figured this out as Rudy used this iris before at our 2011 party. My guess is that Rudy could do this again in a few years and, once again, I probably wouldn't remember which iris he is. Joe Lawrence simply wore a placard on a string around his neck with the initials M. F. K. F. for **MARY FRANCES** (*Gaulter 1973*, Dykes Medal 1979). Joe's sign referred to Mary Frances Kay Fisher (1908-1992), the celebrated American food writer who lived for the final 20 years of her life in Glen Ellen.

Loretta Figueroa attached a label to the back of her blouse with the markings XXL, XXXL, XXXXL. You've heard of plus sizes, right? Well, all the X's stand for **EVERYTHING PLUS** (*Niswonger 1984*, Dykes Medal 1991).

Linnea Polo wore a tiara decorated with pink jewels and some fuzzy stuff. She also had signs on the front and back of her that read " $x^2 + y^2 = r^2$ ", which is the formula for a circle. Her iris was Fred Kerr's 2007 Dykes Medal winner **QUEEN'S CIRCLE**.

Kitty Loberg, one of the winners of the Master Perplexer Award, had snack bags filled with cookies and a question mark in each bag attached to her shirt. What goes nicely with cookies? Milk, of course — **GOT MILK** (*Aitken 2002*). Kitty did double duty by wearing a crown on her head as part of Steve Albert's iris name. Steve also wore a crown. The two of them became **CROWNED HEADS** (*Keppel 1997*, Dykes Medal 2004).

Anna Marie Hermansen won the title of Everyone's Favorite. She wore a big red heart attached to her chest with the letters BOO across it. She had two adorable little ghosts, one attached to her front and one to her back. Black netting covered all of this along with some ghostly white stuff. Great interpretation for **HAUNTED HEART** (*Keppel 2010*).

Cheryl Bryan dressed up as a cowgirl complete with black hat and neck scarf. When she divulged her name, she crunched some crispy paper in her hands creating a rustling effect. After that, how could you not guess that it was Keppel's 1987 **RUSTLER**?

Jean Sharp wore her traveling hat and carried a big stick over her shoulder. A bandana stuffed with her worldly goods was tied to the end of the stick complete with a big feather. She posed with an outstretched arm with thumb in the air. You had to love this rendition of **GOING MY WAY** (*Gibson 1972*).

Alleah Haley pinned to her shirt a photo of a building with many steps to climb (the "Spanish Steps" in Rome), along with a big 'EXIT' sign in red letters. On her back was another large photo with an enormous amount of steps (a Mayan pyramid at Chichen Itza in Mexico) and an additional sign that said "NOT IN". So with the clues STEPS, EXIT and NOT IN, it had to be Schreiners' 1964 introduction and 1968 Dykes Medal winner, **STEPPING OUT**, which has enjoyed immense popularity for over 50 years.

Anna Cadd's friend from Carson City, Nevada, Daniel Cooper, was dressed to the nines in the colors of his chosen iris. Black slacks and vest, medium purple shirt, and to make this all come together he added a shocking bright orange tie to match the beard on his iris. A very sharp portrayal of **SHARP DRESSED MAN** (*T. Johnson 2010*). Daniel was voted the Best Impersonation of an iris. Anna Cadd surprised everyone when she donned her costume, a head-to-toe cow suit. Yes, that's right. Anna was dressed up like a cow complete with udder, carried a milk bottle, and periodically she would milk the teats. Yep, you guessed it, she was **GOT MILK** (*Aitken 2002*).

Diana Ford, dressed in black, carried a little black wand with a small black star on top of it. Perfect for **BLACK MAGIC WOMAN** (*Tasco 2008*). Don Ford carried a beautiful blue antique bottle and wore a jacket with an applique of a rocket on it. Those were the only clues needed to know his iris was **BOTTLE ROCKET** (*Michael Sutton 2010*).

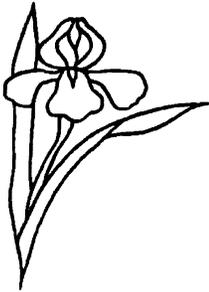
Hopefully, I have not left anyone out. I counted 15 "irises" at our party. Thanks to everyone who gave us the opportunity to revisit a few of the top 100 tall bearded irises, affording us a chance to put on our thinking caps, have a good laugh, and most of all to enjoy the fellowship of our society.

Oh wait, I forgot an iris. Make that 16, as I also came as an iris name. I was so easy to guess that everyone who played the guessing game, except one, guessed my iris name. I dug an old outfit out of the closet that I wore back in 2005. Back then I had spent countless hours sewing all the leftover lace, which I had accumulated during my sewing years, onto a skirt and a blouse. I had added a label to the blouse's neckline specifying that the fabric content was 100% cotton. My iris was **LACED COTTON** (*Schreiners 1980*).

To wrap up, the general consensus was that all who attended thought that using the top 100 TB iris symposium list was a grand idea. It proved to be more fun with the added clue of having a list to check while trying to figure out the names of the irises in attendance. And thank you, Alleah and Anna Marie, for donating some of the prizes.

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Name and Address Correction requested



The Newsletter of

# *The Santa Rosa Iris Society*

43<sup>d</sup> YEAR NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 2017

**President:**

**Vice President:**

**Newsletter**

**Editor:**

Jeff Davis

Anna Cadd

Alleah Haley

## **Meetings & Membership**

The Santa Rosa Iris Society meets the second Monday of each month February through October at 7:00 p.m. at the Luther Burbank Art and Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Avenue, Santa Rosa, California. In November instead of having a regular meeting, we have our annual holiday potluck dinner and dress up as an iris name costume party.

Membership dues are \$15.00 per year. Send payment to: Santa Rosa Iris Society c/o Betty Ford, 1383 E. Napa St., Sonoma, CA 95476. Membership offers regular meetings, iris door prizes, special programs, use of our library, a monthly newsletter, annual iris show and rhizome sale, and fellowship with other iris lovers.

**December Newsletter Deadline – November 20<sup>th</sup>**