



The Newsletter of

The Santa Rosa Iris Society

48th YEAR NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2022

Officers 2022:

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Anna Cadd

Vice President

Diana Ford

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Anna Marie Hermansen

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Jeff Davis

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Anna Cadd

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Anna Cadd

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Linnea Polo

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Kathy McCallum

Directors thru 12/23:

Betty Ford

Jeff Davis

Standing Committees:

Attendance

Diana Ford

Display Garden Chairmen

Jeff Davis

Door Prize Coordinator

Anna Marie Hermansen

Hospitality

Diana and Don Ford

LBAGC Representatives

Jeff Davis

Anna Cadd

Alternate - Need Volunteer

Photography

Need Volunteer

2022 Show Chairman

Jeff Davis

2022 Assistant Show Chairman

Need Volunteer

2022 Potted Iris Sale Chairman

Need Volunteer

2022 Summer Rhizome Sales Chm.

Need Volunteer



October 10th - LBA&GC - noon - Bonsai presentation by Janet Gossett from Vintage Jade

She is not a scientific person, but is "hands on" in doing bonsai from succulents and, mostly, Jade plants. It is really very simple, and besides, you can have nice hobby with a possibility of giving them as birthday and Christmas gifts. Join us for this unusual and fascinating presentation!

October President's Message Anna Cadd

How time flies! Not so long ago, I was happy that I had my garden under control, weeded, no leaves in the beds, all flower stalks cut off, what needed to be dug was dug out, some beds were replanted, some plants were watered, and life was good! Not anymore. There are still irises that need replanting, Spurias that need instant attention, leaves everywhere, olives falling from the tree in a purple oily mess, and weeds that started to grow after only one day of a mere 1" of rain! Life is still good, but fall makes me lazy and with shorter days, not much is accomplished. But this is okay as we are lucky that we don't have 127 degree temperatures every day and the monsoon rains didn't take our homes towards the ocean.

Our Club had a very successful plant sale, and now only the display garden needs attention: cleaning the debris around old plantings and of course soon, the perpetual weeding. But life is still good. We have our Club, we are friends working together, we have our meetings, the pandemic is hopefully over and we have something to look forward to since next spring is only 5 months away and our irises will make us happy. Smelling them in late afternoon and taking photos will give us joy. Not everybody has this blessing in life and how lucky we are in our lives again.

Gardening tips for October - today about SEEDS! Anna Cadd

1. My pomegranate tree is loaded with orange-red balls, but after the last rain they started to split! Not quite ready yet, but I already used them for decorating salads or just crushing the tiny seeds between my teeth. If ancient Greek methodology/mythology is to be believed, the humble pomegranate is indirectly responsible for winter! The Goddess Persephone, tricked by Hades into eating six pomegranate seeds, was condemned to spend six months of every year at his side in the underworld. But her mother, Demeter, was the Goddess of the Harvest, so, while she mourned her absent daughter, the fields were cold and infertile. If I were Persephone, Hades would get his share of grief and would think twice before keeping me underground for six months!



2. Talk about collecting seeds, I hope you obtained some nice heritage seeds from different sources. Even some hardware stores have started to sell them. These seeds can start your collection of unusual plants, some of which are almost extinct. I am not sure if you have heard about the so called Doomsday Vault. The remote Norwegian island of Spitsbergen was chosen as a location for the seed vault, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, due to its remote location near the North Pole, 810 miles away. This region has low tectonic activity and an arctic environment that is ideal for seed preservation. The Doomsday Vault, as it was called when it opened in 2008, is already housing more than two million seeds representing every variety of the Earth's crops from more than 140 countries. On March 10, 2010 the seed count at the vault passed half a million (500,000) samples. As of July 2012, the number of distinct samples had increased to 750,000. The vault was built to protect the world's food supply against nuclear war, climate change, terrorism, rising sea levels, earthquakes and the ensuing collapse of power supplies. The purpose of the vault is to allow the world to reconstruct agriculture on the planet in the case of a catastrophe. The seeds are duplicate samples, or "spare" copies, of seeds held in gene banks worldwide. The vault looks like something out of a science fiction movie, a giant granite wedge protruding from the ice. Do they have there seeds of iris species and hybrids? I really don't know, but I hope so. Check out https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Svalbard_Global_Seed_Vault



3. Do you know that the seeds of Aril and Arilbred irises have a large fleshy appendage (often as big as a seed) called an "aril", which is sweet in taste and is provided to attract ants, which carry the seeds away? In irises, it is generally a creamy white color. But there are many plants with aril appendages (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aril>). Do you remember pomegranate seeds? The seed can be seen inside the aril translucent flesh!
4. Our birds are not in a big hurry to get a handout from humans yet, except in Jeff's garden. There is a great amount of fruit for them to eat. Our blue jays can clean out big fig trees in three days! There are also many grapes, seeds from grasses, Pyracantha berries and soon they will have olives, which they like to eat a little fermented. Different types of sunflower seeds, cracked corn, and millet are the most common and proven seeds for feeding birds in a time of need. But you can also try popped popcorn (without salt or butter), hulled sunflower seeds, peanut hearts, soaked raisins, pieces of fruit (orioles like oranges), fruit seeds (melons, apples), grapes, or mealworms. I am sure that Phyllis Wilburn could tell us more about what to feed or not to feed our feathered friends! She is an iris enthusiast and an avid bird watcher!

2022 SRIS Dates

- Monday, October 10: Noon - Bonsai presentation
- November: Holiday party - Come Dressed as an Iris Name
- Monday, December 12: Executive meeting

Former member that renewed at our sale -
Mindy Marshall



Diana Ford

Plants for Bug Control from Anna Cadd














































<div> FOOD gardening NETWORK <small>Growing Good Food at Home</small> </div> <div>PLANTS FOR BUG CONTROL</div>									
									
Basil	Chives	Coriander/Cilantro	Fennel	Dill	Garlic	Radish	Rosemary	Thyme	Tomato
REPELS									
									
House Flies	Carrot Flies	Aphids	Slugs	Spider Mites	Root Maggots	Cucumber Beetles	Cabbage Loopers	Corn Earworms	Asparagus Beetles
									
Mosquitos	Japanese Beetles	Potato Beetles	Aphids	Cabbage Loopers	Mexican Bean Beetles	Cabbage Maggots	Carrot Flies	White Flies	
									
Asparagus Beetles	Aphids	Spider Mites	Snails	Squash Bug	Cabbage Loopers		Mexican Bean Beetles	Cabbage Loopers	
									
Tomato Hornworms				Aphids	Peach Tree Borer		Mosquitos	Cabbage Maggots	
									
							Slugs		
									
							Snails		
									
							Cockroaches		

chart courtesy of "Food Gardening Network" - Growing Good Food at Home

******Additional AIS 2021 Award Winners******

*Note from editor -

I overlooked naming 2 other winners (for a total of 3) of **THE JOHN C. WISTER MEDAL** -
Good Morning Sunshine (Thomas Johnson)
Tijuana Taxi (Douglas Kanarowski)
Coal Seams (Schreiner)

AIS 29th webinar by Lynn Williams



"Exotic Arils, Autumn Bloomers, and the Age of Space: The Iris Legacy of Lloyd Austin." **Presented by** Jean Richter

Jean started the program talking about the dawn of the space age irises and the work that Lloyd Austin did. In 1925, he became the first director of the Institute of Forest Genetics in Placerville. By 1944, he specialized in arils and arilbred iris. He was interested in the uncommon iris and was one of the first to offer aril irises for sale. He explained that Oncocyclous, which are native to the Middle East, were called "Iris of Palestine," and Regelia, which were native to the Near East and were called "Iris of Turkistan." He worked on breeding the two aril types and is responsible for many of the arilbred irises that were the foundation for what is available today. Austin was interested in iris oddities.

Prior to his own Rainbow Hybridizing Gardens in 1946 and sales from his catalogue, he became associated with Carl Salbach's iris enterprise in Berkeley. That relationship proved critical in the development of the first space age iris. Lloyd visited the garden of Sydney Bancroft Mitchell, who was a librarian, teacher, and gardener at UC Berkeley. He allowed Austin to use seedlings in his hybridizing experiments. With seedlings from Mitchell, Austin came up with the first wave of his horned introductions. His first, Unicorn in 1954, was offered in his catalogue for the price of \$100! He also concentrated on popularizing and hybridizing reblooming irises and large flowered irises. All of his catalogs were very colorful, had lots of photos for the time, and very descriptive of the different types of irises he offered.



All in all, a very interesting program. For anyone who has never checked out one of the AIS Webinar programs, I strongly suggest that you do. They are always fascinating and have great photos.

Just for a laugh!



A male frog goes to a psychic. The psychic tells him, "You are going to meet a beautiful young girl who will want to know everything about you." The frog becomes excited, "This is great! Will I meet her at a party?" "No," says the psychic, "in her biology class."

Letters from a Friend Anna Cadd and Richard Berenter

Our lives are so chaotic and busy. With the invention of cell phones, we seldom write any letters; communications are quick and sometimes only about our everyday struggles with emojis accenting our statements. When I came to this country 35 years ago, I wrote long letters to my family and friends, describing what happened and what I saw here. They also replied with long letters, sometimes written with shaky hands and hard to decipher. I still have a box of these letters in my garage. They are part of my life...



We have two members in Santa Rosa Iris Society and their names are Richard Berenter and his wife Anne Danberg. Most of us don't know them personally, but they are delightful people, full of wit and compassion. Richard has a "Ukrainian" garden, established when this terrible war started, with irises in the color of the Ukrainian flag – blue and yellow. And I am always looking forward to long e-mails – "Richard's letters" to me. It can be about hybridizing, about PCNs, about political situation...

Not a long ago I mentioned that "Nola Iris Garden" was still accepting orders, but they have mostly older varieties. Richard replied to me, and he is absolutely right in his letter. We seldom think about "ancient" or "historic" irises in pursuit of big, modern, ruffled and different colors plants, paying big bucks for them. I would like to share with you part of Richard's letter (with his permission):

"As for Nola and Gary selling older hybrids; funny I was thinking about that last night and to that point I am really grateful, and thrilled for Nola and Gary as there are typically plenty of resources for new introductions, but it's equally important to have iris farms/ retailers that will grow and maintain historic iris and provide them for sale. These are the cornerstone of making sure the world doesn't lose many of the beautiful hybrids forever and leave future generations only able to see photos of what once was 'the wow moment' for our lives every spring.

And we both know how well photos capture the full essence of an iris bloom! Not even close. To be able to experience a hybrid in your own garden and see how the color changes as the earth revolves about the sun, and the less obvious influence of the olfactory senses being stimulated by unique and sometimes awesomely sweet scents wafting from the leaves stomata..... - You can't relate to that in a photo.

So I think you will agree that many of us collectors/ growers are in a constant state of planning and trying to achieve a balancing act between growing some of the newest 'really amazing, and sometimes hard to fathom' hybrids alongside some of year's past gems that evoke nostalgia and remind us of past moments that we cherish and will always hold close to our heart.

For instance: One of Cayeux' s family hybrids introduced around 1901-2 from Paris will always be one of my dearest Iris that I will sacrifice nearly all other plants before losing it because it was first introduced around the time my grandfather was born. The grandfather, who passed along a gene that wreaked havoc on the development of connective tissue and led to his syndrome and ultimately was passed forward to me, leaving me an indelible connection to him in a personal manner that no other of the six grandchildren could understand or appreciate during our short time stationed here. Where did I ultimately plant this iris in my yard? Right about dead center in my best growing patch, as this had to be the focal point of everything I accomplish in the garden.

The name of this iris is Ma Mie (for my grandfather, but my cousin who speaks fluent French tells me it means grandmother. Sometimes life creates unusually funny and unbelievable intersections of fate)."

continued next page



'Ma Mie' (Ferdinand Cayeux, 1906). Midseason bloom. Color Class W8.
Cayeux et Le Clerc 1906.
Note: Registered as IB 'Ma Mie'

I did some research and answered Richard: "By the way, Ma Mie is listed in Cayeux catalog as improved Mme Chereau. I grow Mme Chereau, this is my favorite iris. I don't have Ma Mie. Very similar to them is Iris Swertii from around year 1600. I still probably have this one also. One day, when you will have more garden area, I may share them with you. Just pull out these carrots from the garden!"

A long time ago I started to learn French. I think that "Ma Mie" means "My Dear". What a beautiful saying! - "My Dear Grandfather." I will cherish these "letter moments" shared with Richard.



Eight Ways to Protect Birds in Your Yard and Garden Anna Cadd

1. Reduce or eliminate use of pesticides and herbicides in your yard. A 2019 article in "Science" shows a 53% decrease in the numbers of grassland songbirds in America, due to loss of habitat and an increase in pesticide use in their breeding and wintering areas. America's most-used pesticides are Neonicotinoids, applied especially to corn and soybeans. Pesticides in our own yards have similar effects.
2. Create and/or protect water sources in your yard. Birds need water for drinking and bathing. Birdbaths, fountains, or ponds - keep them clean to reduce chances of disease and mosquitos.
3. Identify the non-native invasive plants in your region and work to remove them. Avoid planting any new invasive plants. They do not provide the food and habitat that our garden visitors need most.
4. Make your windows visible to birds to prevent collisions. According to an article in "Birds & Blooms" Extra magazine, window strikes are one the highest causes of bird deaths (cats are the other). Since windows reflect the scenery of the outdoors, birds think that they can fly through them. A few large decals pasted on the outside of windows are not enough. Try the highly effective "Bird Tape" from the American Bird Conservancy. Other strategies are screens and lowered blinds.
5. Let your yard be a bit messy. A dead tree is an excellent roosting place and a brush pile serves as shelter in a storm. Bougainvillea and other shrubs also provide cover for birds.
6. Close blinds at night and turn off lights which are not in use. Some birds use constellations as guides while migrating and can be thrown off by bright lights.
7. Plant native plants. Their fruit, nectar, and seeds provide food for birds, and these plants provide cover for bugs and spiders (who are also important garden friends).
8. Attract hummingbirds with sugar-water feeders and tubular flowers. Keep feeders clean, fresh, and full. Place them out of sight of each other to reduce territoriality issues. Avoid using red dye in hummingbird food.

Sources:

*8 Actions YOU can take to protect birds where YOU live: National Audubon Society flier
Neonic Nation article at the Cornell Lab.com, Birds & Blooms Extra! Magazine, July 2022, p. 47*

SRIS Fall Public Iris Sale Jeff Davis and Anna Marie Hermansen



It is Friday September 2, and the day before our Fall Iris Sale to the public. For a week, the weather reporters have been warning of an extreme heat wave heading to California. Will it affect our sale the next day? We had scrapped the idea of an outdoor sale and decided to hold it indoors, which took a lot of pressure off in case the heat arrived. Before the sale, when the temperatures hit 95 degrees, many members helped others to dig and/or label. Cheryl helped Linnea mark the rhizomes. Diana Ford, Don Ford, Anna Cadd and Jeff Davis dug, trimmed and labeled some 50 bags of irises at Jim Begley's for the sale. It was great to see Jim, and we all wish him well. The next day in Hopland, Cheryl Bryan, Linnea Polo and Anna helped Diana label her irises.

I wondered how we would be able to trim and clean up all the iris the morning of the sale? It was always such a rush and mess trying to get everything in order before the sale opened for the public. So, I called up to see if we would be able to bring the iris to the garden center on the day before our sale. Thankfully, the center was not rented Friday, and we could have the room for the entire day. Yay! Anna and Jeff picked up Jim's iris, and Diana, Nancy Fortner and Anna Marie also brought their iris to the center. For 5 hours, they trimmed, labeled, bagged and set up for the sale. This was a game changer. There would be no way to have accomplished this much the morning of the sale. It was also wonderful to see Nancy and her generous spirit.

It was a beautiful morning Saturday, and the big heat was, thankfully, several days away. Anna decided to get to the center early, about 6:30am, to do some weeding in our garden. Much to her surprise when she arrived, there were 2 men in the parking lot waiting for the sale to open. But another unexpected event greeted her. All the sheds, where various clubs have their items stored, were broken into again. So instead of weeding as she had planned, Anna was busy contacting the manager of the center as well as contacting and speaking with the police.

Since we finished early with our set up on Saturday, we actually opened the doors before 10:00am to a number of enthusiastic people. Sales were excellent in the first couple of hours. Each individual bagged iris variety with its picture assisted the public to make their choices easier. We even had QR codes on some of the 300+ labels made. Thanks to all the people who donated iris from their gardens: Diana, Jim, Jeff, Linnea, Anna, Betty, Kitty, Marlene, Nancy, Denise, and Anna Marie.

A huge thanks to Anna Marie for all the organizing of each person's donated iris that they brought. This helped our sale go smoothly. Also thanks to to all who helped at the sale: Diana, Anna, Betty, Linnea, Cheryl, Kitty, Steve, Nancy, Denise, Clara and Lillianne. All of our success at this event could not have happened without our members participating.

And Wow! The total for this one day sale of over \$4,000.00 was outstanding. All that stress of getting it all together was well worth the work until next year when we get to do it all over again.



Keeping in Touch from Alleah Haley

The most recent World of Irises Blog post is both educational and visually stunning. "A Unique Iris Planting in New Orleans, Louisiana" by Patrick O'Connor covers the four species of Louisiana irises native to the area and includes a link to a beautiful video about the work of the Greater New Orleans Iris Society in preserving and distributing these irises and some of their hybrids. I think the site was on the tour for the 2018 AIS National Convention held in New Orleans.



You can easily access the blog post by going to the American Iris Society website: www.irises.org. The AIS homepage will come up with several buttons at the top. Click on RESOURCES. A drop-down menu will appear. Click on the 2nd item: World of Irises Blog. The most recent article, published on September 26, 2022, is Mr. O'Connor's blog post. If you click on Video Link a video on the GNOIS work will play.

SRIS member Heather Haley is an administrator for the World of Irises Blog. This "blog" gives a short article on some aspect of "irising" each week, usually on Monday. Heather's mother Alleah copy edits most posts for grammar and accuracy. Heather and Alleah also write for the blog. Their most recent blog post "Growing Irises Out East: A Visit to Draycott Gardens," published September 20, 2022, covers their spring, 2022 visit to Siberian iris hybridizer Carol Warner's commercial garden in northern Maryland that was on the tour for last spring's AIS Region 4 meeting.

So you can see I'm still involved in writing and editing about irises, albeit from North Carolina. Miss you all. Alleah

Dragonflies from Anna Cadd



Dragonflies love to eat mosquitoes! So do their cousins, the damselflies. 325 million years ago, ancient dragonfly relatives had 30-inch wingspans. Dragonfly larvae, called nymphs, live in water for up to five years. Adults of various dragonfly species live from five days to ten weeks. They can be attracted to the garden by a pond, and I have seen them at our fountain. Their 360° vision comes in handy for catching those mosquitoes!

Source: Dragonflies in Old Farmer's Almanac email on 7/10/22 and Dragonfly article on Wikipedia.
[Dragonfly and Damselfly: Facts, Meaning, and Habitat | How to Attract Dragonflies | The Old Farmer's Almanac](#)

Thanks to the following people for contributions to the newsletter ...
Lynn Williams, Jeff Davis, Richard Berenter, Alleah Haley, and Anna Cadd

November Newsletter Deadline - October 20th