



Cedar Valley Iris & Daylily Society



March 1, ~~1994~~ 1995

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a difference a day can make! Last Saturday it was sunny, balmy for February, with the temperatures in the mid-fifties; all conditions were indicating that Phil the groundhog was right in predicting an early spring on the way this year when he did not cast a shadow. However, today it's gray, the temperature is 10°, and a layer of ice coats the countryside. At this point in a long winter, with record-breaking January snowfall and more ice storms than I care to remember, I for one, am ready for Spring! As a matter of fact, just a moment ago peering out the patio into the woods, I saw the first redheaded woodpecker of the season. Surely Spring is on the way! After living a number of years in the Midwest, you have to be optimistic about the approach of gardening season. It's a time of year when those tempting new 1995 catalogues are tugging at your wallet, promising new daylilies, iris and hosta that you can't live without. It would take a lottery windfall to satisfy all those urges. This is also the time of year when pristine gardens are created in the mind -- no weeds, no insects, no animals, all plants having survived the winter in perfect shape with generous increase. So much for fantasy -- but it does keep you from climbing the walls.

As always at this time of year, we are very eager to see the first bloom on some of the new daylilies and Siberian irises we planted last fall. This spring we're especially looking forward to seeing the new species irises and species hybrids that we planted. Since we are continually searching for types of iris that may be more suited to this climate than the tall bearded, we bought about two dozen examples of *I. delavayi*, *I. fulva*, *I. prismatica*, *I. pseudacorus*, *I. setosa*, *I. sibtosia*, and *I. versicolor* from a West Coast specialist in species irises. We asked her to help us select varieties that might do well in Iowa. We realize that some of them will no doubt die after an Iowa winter, but we are excited to see the ones that do survive -- this will be a new experience for us, since we know very little about species irises and inter-species hybrids. Hopefully we'll learn enough in a year or two to be able to write a useful article for the newsletter on growing species iris in Iowa.

To whet your appetite for the coming season, I want to urge all of you to come to the meeting on March 25 at Fred McDowell's home in Iowa City. Those of you who were at banquet last Fall had a glimpse of the new and future introductions coming from Jeff and Elizabeth Salter of Rollingwood Gardens. We are delighted that the Salters have agreed to send us a set of their slides showing their best hybridizing efforts so far and what the future holds. We also asked them to include any information they have on which varieties are growing well in the North.

This has been a sad winter for us when it comes to our gardening friends. Fred Spahn, a Dubuque iris hybridizer, Kempton Settle from Marshalltown, and Don Peterson from Columbus, NE, have all gone on to work in gardens in another existence. Fred Spahn's iris garden was an inspiration to us many years ago; Kempton helped build our gazebo and sparked our interest in growing hosta; Don was a dear friend who inspired us to build our brick display beds and encouraged us in all our gardening pursuits. Lynn and I will miss them very much.

We thank all those members who contributed articles for the newsletter. I think this is a really fine issue, with some excellent articles. Gerald Hobbs and Fred McDowell wrote these articles specifically for CVIDS. We appreciate the insights and knowledge that you are sharing with us, and hope more of you will do the same in the future. Even short contributions are very welcome!

Barry Stoll

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 25: CVIDS spring meeting. Fred McDowell's house (1118 E. Court St., Iowa City), 1:00 PM (directions below). Business meeting, plans for 1995 activities. The program will feature slides from Jeff and Elizabeth Salter, two of the country's most exciting daylily hybridizers, showing some of their recent and future introductions. Beverages will be provided; treats to share would be appreciated.

March 24-26: AIS International Symposium: Gardening with Iris Species: Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, MO. A rare opportunity to learn more about species iris from 12 experts in the field. Registration \$150. For further information, contact Lynn or Barry Stoll.

April 1: AIS Region 9-sponsored Judges' Training on Siberian Irises by Robert Hollingworth, Mahomet, IL, 10 AM-Noon. Dr. Hollingworth will give a two-hour presentation on judging Siberian irises in the garden. Open to all interested individuals; need not be an AIS member or judge. Lynn and Barry Stoll will attend; could take 2 other club members. If interested, please call Lynn or Barry.

AIS Region 21 Convention: Lincoln, NE, May 20-21. Everyone is welcome; you don't have to be an AIS member to attend.

AIS National Convention: York, PA, May 23-27.

June 23-26: AHS National Convention: Knoxville/Chatanooga, TN. Details can be found in the most recent issue of *The Daylily Journal*. Plan now to attend; most daylilies on display which thrive in Tennessee will also grow successfully in Iowa (not always true for conventions in the Deep South!).

July 14-15: AHS Region 1 Convention: Minneapolis, MN. An opportunity to tour some fine Northern gardens. As with the AIS regional convention listed above, all daylily lovers are welcome; you don't have to be an AHS member. Our club might consider carpooling or renting a van to attend.

Aug. 26: CVIDS Annual Plant Sale: Riverside Gardens, Monticello, IA. Plan now to set aside some plants to contribute to our only public fund-raising activity, and join us for a pleasant potluck picnic in the gazebo in this beautiful setting!

Note: If you have dates and other information about other 1995 plant society meetings, sales, etc., please send the information to the Editor so that it can be included in the Calendar of Events in the next Newsletter.

OTHER UPCOMING CVIDS EVENTS

These will be planned and scheduled at the March 25 meeting. We hope to tour as many gardens as possible during the bloom seasons for iris and daylilies. We also hope to plan some slide shows and some picnics or potlucks. **What would you like the club to do this year?** Come to our meeting, or pass along your suggestions to any of the current officers.

Directions to the McDowell house: Interstate 80 to Exit 246 (Highway 1-Iowa City-Solon-Lake MacBride). Follow Highway 1 into Iowa City. Go about 3 miles on Highway 1 (it is Dodge St. in Iowa City) to the fourth traffic light, at East Burlington St. Turn left on to Burlington St., go three blocks to Summit St. (a traffic light at this intersection), go one block to East Court St. (a dead end on Summit St.), turn left onto East Court St. Go a block and a half to #1118, a large white frame house on the left as you go East.

MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 12, 1994 BUSINESS MEETING

Barry Stoll opened the meeting at the Highlander Mirror Room after a delicious dinner was enjoyed by the members and guests. Lynn Stoll gave the Treasurer's Report; we had about \$3000.00 in the bank account, including some late funds from "after-the-sale" sales in Monticello. Barry thanked the Monticello members for their hard work. Then he asked Joy to comment on the booklet *Traveling in Iowa*, which is distributed state-wide; it lists dates for Monticello garden events for 1995 and will include our plant sale date at the end of August. Barry suggested that the group should consider giving a donation to the Monticello Garden Visitors Center. The group voted to do so, with the amount left to the discretion of the officers.

Barry announced that Lynn would do the newsletter again. Lynn asked for someone to send out meeting notices independently of the newsletter to give her more leeway on publishing dates. After some discussion, Gerald and Elenora Hobbs agreed to do the job. Barry made an appeal to the group for someone to take on the responsibility for coordinating the publicity. No one was willing to volunteer at this time. Linda Licht commented that there was an opportunity to spread the word to interested gardeners at the Farmers Markets. She had fielded many questions by interested shoppers. She asked for posters giving information about the club to use at the Farmer's Market.

The main order of business was the election of officers. Lacking a report from the nominating committee, the group nominated from the floor. The following officers were elected.

President -- Barry Stoll
 Vice-President -- Gerald Hobbs
 Secretary -- Joy Adams
 Treasurer -- Lynn Stoll

Following the business meeting, the group enjoyed a slide show by Fred McDowell, Gerald Hobbs, and Lynn Stoll. Fred showed slides of some of the best new daylilies in his garden, and Gerald and Lynn showed slides from the 1994 National AHS Convention in Orlando. These featured new and future introductions from some of the country's finest hybridizers, including Pat and Grace Stamile and Jeff and Elizabeth Salter. It was exciting for members to have a glimpse into the future and see daylilies that will be coming on the market in the next five or ten years.

Respectfully submitted,
 Marilyn Little, Secretary

REMINDER: DUES ARE DUE!

If you can't attend the March 25 meeting, please send your 1995 dues (\$5.00 individual, \$7.00 family) to the current treasurer (Lynn Stoll, 999 310th St., Atalissa, IA 52720) to ensure that you continue to receive the newsletter and other notices of club activities. Make checks payable to Cedar Valley Iris and Daylily Society (CVIDS).

OUTLOOK FOR 1995

by Gerald Hobbs

Our club seems to be doing very well, and the active members are getting some very good cultivars to grow for the auctions. With the increase returned to the club, it benefits all, with the club getting its money back, the grower getting to enjoy the bloom for two or three years and getting to keep the original plant, and each auction buyer getting a nice new cultivar at his or her price.

We had a couple of unexpected names for our two new daylily introductions this year. We had given a slide show and talk on daylilies in Hannibal to the National Council of State Garden Clubs and talked some on hybridizing. Later a member, June Kummer, asked me to name a daylily for their president, Eleanor Yates. So we sent some slides of some seedlings for June to select one. She chose a 5" gold tet with red eye, of which we had quite an impressive clump. June planted some in the President's Garden at National Headquarters in St. Louis, and in her own garden, and sent some to Eleanor Yates in North Carolina.

The other incident involved a 39-year-old, Jack Gray, who had come to our garden a few times. Jack was enchanted by the daylilies, and had brought back his mother and some of his friends. I received a letter from his friend John Brown that Jack had been killed by an auto; the friend was soliciting funds to complete a strolling garden in Rock Island that they had been planning nine months before Jack's death. They had had a landscape designer from Maine plot a vacant 80' x 150' parcel near downtown Rock Island, and they were going to move some of Jack's trees, shrubs, daylilies, peonies, and iris from his farm in Lockridge to that site. We sent a donation plus some newer daylilies, and offered to name one of our seedlings in Jack's memory. Again, slides were sent and John picked a large red with a huge gold throat. John had the slides of the clump and an individual flower enlarged to 8" x 10" and placed beside a dedication stone (16" x 30") noting that it is the "Jack Gray Memorial Garden," with his birth and death dates and AGAPE in large letters at the base. They had a dedication Sept. 24, 1994, with Jack's and John's families and friends (about 30 of us) and a reception following. If you care to visit this garden this summer, it is at 1218-2nd Ave., Rock Island.

We are already looking forward to this Spring. We are planning on another tier in our hosta bed, and adding a 50' bed of more ornamental grasses. There also should be about 2,300 new daylily seedlings bloom for the first time this year.

1995 OFFICERS

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ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

by Gerald Hobbs

Few plants can match these ornamentals for movement, texture, form, and winter landscaping. The graceful allure of motion in the summer breezes certainly attracts one's attention. The fine-textured wispieness of the delicate seed heads and slender luminescent leaves can make a peaceful statement as a clump at the corner of a building or in the background of a border. The linear effect of the parallel leaves can make a nice composition next to broad-leafed plants or solid forms. They work well beside reflecting pools, or at foundations, or ground-cover or as screens, or summer and winter bouquets.

They are unmatched in the winter landscape as a focal point with their wheat-tan color moving in the wind. Maiden grass is one of the best for this purpose, because of the tenacity of the seed heads and stiffness of the stems. After being covered by ice or snow (oh, what beauty!), when it melts they spring right back upright. Their effect lasts the entire winter. They provide a landscape purpose no other plant could serve as well.

The grasses compare to daylilies and hosta for ruggedness and ease of care. They also grow in gradually increasing clumps and have few disease or insect problems. About the only care they need is in early spring, say about the first part of March, one should cut the clumps back to two to four inches tall. They are so tough and fibrous that one needs a bow saw, machete, or similar heavy cutting tool. Some use a torch to burn the dead grass, but this should be done before any new growth has started. Burning seems to invigorate the clump. A little 5-10-5 fertilizer in April will also stimulate the clump. (Use sparingly, or you'll get weak stems.)

The *Miscanthus sinensis* varieties are among the best, and about all are hardy in Zone 5. Most grow to about 6' tall. Maiden Grass is one of the most often planted and best for winter beauty. Morning Light is more graceful and has a pronounced longitudinal cream stripe, giving it a more luminescent quality. *M. s. Zebrinus* (Zebra Grass) and *M. s. Strictus* (Porcupine Grass) both have horizontal 3/8" yellow stripes 4-6 inches apart. Zebra has a graceful arching leaf, while Porcupine's leaf is vertically erect. *M. s. purpurascens* (Flame Grass) has a reddish foliage in the winter. *M. s. variegatus* has a much wider leaf with several cream-colored vertical stripes. *M. s. Silberfeder* (Silver Feather) has a beautiful silver inflorescence, whereas most of the above have a russet-colored seed head. The above are only a few of about forty different *Miscanthus sinensis* varieties.

Pampas grass is not hardy in our region. However, *Erianthus ravennae* (Ravenna grass) is a good substitute and is often mistaken for pampas grass because of its silver blooms and its 9-12' height. Big and little blue-stem are native prairie grasses that turn orange in fall and look good in winter. **Blue Fescue** makes a nice fuzzy border plant or groundcover, since it only gets about a foot tall or less. It works well as a companion plant to daylilies. The **Carexes** or sedge also do well for this and will take some shade, whereas most grasses love full sun. The variegated sedges are outstanding, but rabbits love to eat them. They won't bother the other grasses.

Japanese Blood Grass is a nice red color, growing about 1-2' tall. It's a little tender in Zone 5, but will survive with a little protection after it's well established. The **fountain grasses** (pennisetums) have quite a range of sizes and colors. The seed heads are shaped like long wooly worms, and make nice globe-shaped masses. This is particularly impressive after a rain or heavy dew upon the fuzzy heads. The **feather-reed grass** "Karl Foerster" blooms early at about 4-5' and maintains its form all summer. A variegated form of this called Overdam is shorter and even more attractive. *Phalaris* (**Ribbon Grass** or **Gardener's Garters**) makes a good ground cover but is aggressive and shouldn't be planted near other

flowers. It can be restricted by mowing or planted in raised tubs. It has longitudinal stripes of green and white; some varieties have pink. **Blue Lyme Grass** is another perennial grass that has a wide metallic blue leaf for contrasting color. It is also an aggressive spreader, with an invasive rhizomatous habit, and needs to be contained as described for *Phalaris*.

Many of the annual ornamental grasses are intriguing, such as the seeds of wild oats. A lot of these must be started early to get full appreciation by summer.

The selection of perennial ornamental grasses is increasing at a fast clip. All offer exciting innovations to add new opportunities to your garden.

DARK AND HANDSOME: A NOTE ON SOME NEWER "BLACK" DAYLILIES

by Frederick P. W. McDowell

One of the most striking advances in recent daylily hybridizing, both diploid and tetraploid, has been the appearance of the deep maroon, almost black, daylily. A few older, mostly diploid daylilies had approached this color -- **HEAD ISLAND** of Maxwell, **AMERICAN REVOLUTION** of Wild, **DOMINIC** of Williams, and **MIDNIGHT MAGIC** of Kinnebrew, for example. All were worthy cultivars, but not arresting. A revolution in color depth came with **NIGHT WINGS** (diploid, June Williams), still probably the blackest daylily on the market and one that stops garden visitors, as they exclaim, "What's that? I don't believe it!" A well-grown clump of this Hem hardly seems real, the black sheen of the stiff flower segments appearing almost artificial. This Hem, if nothing else, set a new standard for its color class. Other intense maroon daylilies also appeared five or six years ago, though neither of these two has quite the definitive quality for this color class as does **NIGHT WINGS**. I refer to **OBSIDIAN** of Pat Stamile and **TUXEDO** of Kate Carpenter, tetraploids that were nevertheless improvements upon most others in this range and still worth growing. I am not thinking in my remarks about "black" daylilies that have a brownish infusion, daylilies that are actually burnt umber in coloration, represented commandingly in my garden by **NIGHT TOWN** (Moldovan) and by **AZTEC FURNACE** (Stamile). Nor am I thinking of dark daylilies approaching black from the violet side, like **VINTAGE BORDEAUX** and **VINO DE NOTTE**, evergreen cultivars of David Kirchoff that have done well for me.

There are a half dozen daylilies that I have acquired within the last five years that are now established clumps in my garden (or were, prior to last season's demand and some since reordered) that have been eminently satisfactory in the garden and that I should like to call to your attention. They were simply the most popular daylilies in my garden, possibly because of their novelty. I would not want to oversell them, since I regard pink and yellow Hems as my all-time favorites. But all half dozen cultivars were -- and are -- dazzling. **SERENA DARK HORSE** (Marshall) is a relatively tall and an entirely stately Hem covered with glistening dark blooms, blossoming over a long period. It simply dominated all other Hems in the flower bed of which it was a part. Above all else, its flowers have a quality of smoothness that betokens quality. **TOTAL ECLIPSE** (Durio) was fabulous in clump strength this year, rich but maybe not quite do dark as **SERENA DARK HORSE**. **TOTAL ECLIPSE** is a most vigorous daylily for an evergreen in this climate, and would do best with afternoon shade. It is, however, relatively sunfast and puts on a great show. I acquired another sterling Durio dark by accident in a regional auction, **BAMBOO BLACKIE**. This is not as tall as the other Hems just mentioned but just as vibrant. The compact 22-inch scapes and the lush foliage are also pluses for this Hem. Hybridizers originate great daylilies in California also -- I refer now to **DERRICK CANE** of Bob Brooks. It's too bad perhaps that such an alluring daylily did not get a more evocative name. **DERRICK CANE** is, however, a prize plant, not only beautiful

but vigorous, having produced three scapes of iridescent blooms the first season after a fall planting. It is of medium height, and a flower to love and cherish. I mention now perhaps the most wonderful Hem of all described in this article (I know I have been spreading superlatives around) -- SHADES OF DARKNESS by John Benz. The Benz daylilies are too expensive to secure wide distribution until a number of years after introduction, but this one I got the year of introduction, and it has repaid me with dividends in satisfaction and appreciation ever since. SHADES OF DARKNESS is a plant of medium height, and like DERRICK CANE a Hem of surpassing vigor, one and a half fans planted in the fall appearing next spring as three fans with later a scape for each fan. It has since become a prize clump. The flower is a saturated maroon, with a slight reddish cast, but more black than red. The flowers are six inches across, with wide flower segments and rounded rather than recurved blooms. It is still fairly expensive, but an absolute must to add to your collection if you like them dark. Two tetraploids of Steve Moldovan ought also to be mentioned here, CAVIAR and SALIERI. CAVIAR is a vigorous grower and covered with its dark flowers which are somewhat loose in structure; this cultivar is also greatly impressive as a clump. SALIERI is a "black" with a reddish infusion, and to my mind the blooms are not so notably saturated with black hues as the others I have mentioned. The flower form is excellent, however, fully rounded, and like CAVIAR, SALIERI is an outstanding performer.

All of the daylilies described in the preceding paragraph are tetraploid, but to demonstrate that arresting blacks are not confined to tets, let me cite SILOAM SAMBO of Pauline Henry. I am not gung-ho on small flowers, though I have several Siloams and some other small ones, but I fell in love with SILOAM SAMBO when I first saw it in the garden of a Missouri friend, Olin Frazier. Last season it was greatly popular and everyone wanted it, but I had to keep it on display. SILOAM SAMBO is a bold small flower, perfect in form, and the plant habit is impeccable. A black jewel if one can use the expression, and one of Mrs. Henry's finest, I would say.

I do not pretend to have exhausted all of the worthy dark cultivars now available. I have never seen, for example, Virginia Peck's SMOKING GUN, one of her last introductions. I have also seen color photographs of dark ones in the *Journal* and in catalogues that I would like to try out. But I thought it might be of some assistance to gardeners in Region One to have passed the word along to them as to some black cultivars that have done well for me.

WANTED: COMPANIONS!

(Well, this is *sort of* about dating!) What's your favorite companion plant for daylilies or iris? What do you use in your garden to provide the true blues and cool whites missing from the daylily spectrum? What reds do you choose to fill in the iris palette? Do you have favorite annuals that provide season-long color? What do you grow to provide color in June, when the iris are finished and the daylilies haven't started yet? What's the most unusual companion plant in your garden? What plants do you grow especially for their shape or plant habit? What have you tried that *hasn't* worked?

Please share your knowledge and experience with other CVIDS members. A single paragraph from each member on any one of these questions could be combined into a treasure-trove of information and would be especially helpful for newer gardeners. Longer articles would also be welcome, of course. Please take a few minutes to tell us about *your* favorites. Send the information to the editor and it will be published in a future newsletter, either as individual articles or as a longer multi-authored piece.

REPEAT BLOOM IN SIBERIAN IRISES

by Lynn Stoll

I've been interested in reblooming bearded iris for quite a few years, but until three years ago, I never realized that some Siberian irises can also repeat. This all changed one day late in June when I was weeding the daylily bed, and straightened up to find myself staring at several big, beautiful blue flowers of SPRINGS BROOK. When I looked carefully at my big clump, I saw that there were a lot of spent bloomstalks, some just recently finished, half a dozen in bloom -- and still more emerging from the clump, promising several weeks of bloom yet to come. I vaguely recalled having heard of Siberians which were advertised as rebloomers, but had never seen one do so. I had just assumed, as with so many of the reblooming TBs, "Yeah, but not in Iowa!". I thought this extraordinary performance from SPRINGS BROOK might just be an aberration caused by the weird spring. (Weird springs are about all we seem to have anymore!) But the following year, SPRINGS BROOK repeated this performance, accompanied by CORONATION ANTHEM, REPRISE, and a few scattered blooms on ODE TO LOVE. (This was in 1993, which was not only a weird spring but a "500-year flood" in Iowa.) I thought the rebloom might be a result of all the extra water. But in 1994, which was as close to "normal" as Iowa ever gets, I again observed scattered rebloom on CORONATION ANTHEM and, for the first time, on ISABELLE. (Our clumps of SPRINGS BROOK and REPRISE had grown to over 2' in diameter and had been divided the previous fall. In response to this, they barely bloomed at all in 1994, let alone rebloomed.)

So I decided I wanted to learn more about this subject of repeat bloom in Siberian irises. The first important point on this subject is that remontancy in Siberian irises is a very different phenomenon from rebloom in bearded irises. The more familiar bearded irises bloom in the spring, then take a few months off, and repeat again in late summer or fall. Reblooming TBs in this area most often bloom in September and early October, until they are killed by the first freeze. In my garden, most years I have a lot of emerging bloomstalks killed by frost, but very few that actually succeed in opening. In contrast, Siberian irises will simply continue to put up new stalks in the spring, after the first flush of bloom is over; usually there is no noticeable break in this cycle. In 1993, my huge clump of SPRINGS BROOK continued to send up a steady supply of bloomstalks from the main bloom season in late May until July 26. While the later bloom never matched the main flowering in May, there were always 4-8 flowers in bloom at any one time -- enough to make an impact in the garden. Because of the difference in the timing of the later blooms, the term "repeat bloom," rather than "rebloom," is preferred to describe remontancy in Siberians.

What else is known about repeat bloom in Siberians? Unfortunately, not very much. A symposium on this subject was published in a recent issue of *The Siberian Iris*, the bulletin of the Society for Siberian Irises. This symposium consisted of short articles by eight experts in different parts of the United States and England. However, there did not seem to be a real consensus on any aspect of the topic, from growing conditions favoring repeat bloom to varieties that consistently repeat. One writer proposed the hypothesis that what appears to be repeat bloom is actually delayed bloom, caused by some stems being set back by late freezes and cold spells. While this is a certainly a possibility for bloom that occurs only a couple weeks after the main bloom, it's hard to understand how it could delay bloom into July. Also, with the bearded irises, I've often observed that these late freezes more often cause misshapen blooms and four-fold instead of three-fold symmetry, rather than delayed bloom. Could Siberian irises be affected so differently? No one knows. Summer weather conditions (both temperature and rainfall) are known to affect the quality of the following season's bloom, and may also affect repeat bloom. However, no one has not been able to identify any consistent pattern with regard to repeat. Other writers said that they thought there was a correlation with amount of water and good repeat bloom, and that sufficient fertilizer and well established clumps also played an important role.

My own observations in my garden suggest only that a lot of water probably encourages repeat bloom, and that even among varieties that are genetically inclined to repeat, the phenomenon is likely to occur only in large clumps that have been undisturbed for a few years. It's also important to point out that, in general, we do not pamper any of our perennials. With only two people trying to take care of two acres of flower beds, the best we can manage is to give everything

a handful or two of fertilizer once in early spring, keep everything mulched, water during periods of drought, and try our best to keep the weeds from getting completely out of control. In one sense, this "tough love gardening" allows us to select the really hardy garden performers which we can recommend to customers with absolute confidence. But I suspect that a little pampering would increase the amount of repeat bloom we observe in our Siberians. Many people who are successful with reblooming TBs lavish extra attention (and extra fertilizer) on their favorite rebloomers, and this would probably also hold true for Siberians. We really don't have time to do that on a large scale. But I do plan to try an experiment this year with a few potential repeating varieties where I have two or more sizeable clumps in different parts of the garden. One will get the usual "tough love" treatment, while the others will get as much extra attention as I can find time to give them.

What varieties of Siberian irises are most likely to repeat? Of the 33 different Siberians mentioned as repeaters by the eight writers in the TSI symposium, only five are cited by more than one or two individuals. These five are Warburton's REPRISE (reported by six of eight contributors), Scheffy's MY LOVE (5/8), McEwen's LAVENDER BOUNTY (4/8) and LAVENDER LIGHT (3/8), and Warburton's SPRINGS BROOK (3/8). All of these except LAVENDER LIGHT have also appeared fairly consistently in the "Reblooming Symposium Report" in *The Reblooming Iris Recorder*, the official publication of the AIS Reblooming Iris Society. In addition, the last four Reblooming Symposium Reports suggest fairly reliable rebloom for McEwen's EARLY BLUEBIRD, and occasional rebloom for McGarvey's PINK HAZE and McEwen's CHARTREUSE BOUNTY, SHIRLEY'S CHOICE, EXUBERANT ENCORE, ON AND ON, and SOFT BLUE. All of these are diploids, except for SHIRLEY'S CHOICE and EXUBERANT ENCORE. Hollingworth's magnificent OVER IN GLORYLAND has been reported to rebloom in Oregon; that observation, and the rebloom we've had from CORONATION ANTHEM in our own garden, give a tantalizing hint of what might be possible with tetraploids! In my own garden, with the exception of Hollingworth's CORONATION ANTHEM, the only reliable rebloom I have observed has been in Siberians from the Warburton-Schafer/Sacks lines. REPRISE and SPRINGS BROOK have been the most consistent, with some scattered repeat from CORONATION ANTHEM each of the last three years. Others that have rebloomed once have been ODE TO LOVE and ISABELLE. Although I grow a number of the McEwen Siberians reported to repeat in other areas of the country, none has ever repeated in my garden. PLEASURES OF MAY, a 1995 Schafer/Sacks introduction, is said to bloom continuously from early May to August in Massachusetts; needless to say, I'm eager to try this one in Iowa!

If one looks up the parentage of this handful of most reliable repeaters, one finds some common parents that suggest potential strategies for would-be hybridizers of repeating Siberian irises. Warburton's GEORGE HENRY is the pollen parent of both REPRISE and SPRINGS BROOK; since GEORGE HENRY has never rebloomed for me and is scarcely mentioned in the TSI symposium or the Reblooming Symposium Reports, it seems that its offspring not only carry the reblooming trait but have somehow enhanced it. That enhancement may have come from the pod parents. The pod parent of SPRINGS BROOK is [ATOLL x RUFFLED VELVET], while the pod parent of REPRISE is SILVER ROSE -- which is also [ATOLL x RUFFLED VELVET]!. A third introduction from this [ATOLL x RUFFLED VELVET] cross is PERCHERON. MAD MAGENTA, another Warburton Siberian which is mentioned occasionally in both the TSI symposium and the Reblooming Symposium Reports, is from [PERCHERON x SILVER ROSE] -- or [[ATOLL x RUFFLED VELVET] x [ATOLL x RUFFLED VELVET]]. If we turn briefly to the McEwen repeaters, we find that LAVENDER LIGHT is the pollen parent of the more consistent repeater LAVENDER BOUNTY. Finally, both the Warburton-Schafer/Sacks and McEwen lines of most consistent repeaters are combined in Schafer/Sacks's new PLEASURES OF MAY (LAVENDER LIGHT x MAD MAGENTA). This new introduction may well open the door for hybridizers wanting to create new Siberians that are truly consistent repeaters.

All of this may seem to be somewhat of a tease: some Siberian irises can repeat occasionally, under some conditions (but nobody is sure which Siberians, or what conditions). All of you who grow Siberians can help us learn more about this mystery by taking a few minutes to jot down a few notes about which Siberians repeat in your garden and when, and anything you can think of that might be relevant, such as clump size, amount of rainfall, your cultural practices, etc. If you send this information to me, I'll try to see that it gets assembled into a coherent summary. Hopefully, once we understand this process of repeat bloom a little better, we can all benefit by enjoying these beauties over a much longer period than is now possible.