

Cedar Valley Iris and Daylily Society

Volume 5, Number 2

February 2012

President Zora Comments:

Each year I look forward to seeing what wonderful plants are going to be offered in the club plant distribution. And we all look forward to seeing our names on the list of eligible members. Seventy members participated in enough events last year to qualify for a plant in 2012. Club plants are a reward for being an active member, and that record number of eligible members tells us that we have an excited and engaged membership. Thank you, everyone.

The last qualifier for a club plant is that 2012 dues must be paid by April 1. Dues can be brought to the next meeting or sent to Debbie Hansen (see address below). After the February meeting, we will post the names of those who have fulfilled all the requirements for 2012 club plants. Check the website. The list will also be in the March Newsletter.

The new rules for club plant eligibility kick in this year for plants to be distributed in 2013. You have more opportunities to participate in than ever before, especi-

ally with the regional meeting this year. The only real change is that dues must be paid by April 1 rather than April 30.

Last year the Board promised to find a way to keep everyone apprised of their eligibility status in a more timely fashion. At the end of the minutes for each club meeting, the list of attendees will be noted. We will also publish the attendees from any event that counts toward qualification. So, if you were there and don't see your name, let us know. I will have a spreadsheet of the activities recorded and feel free to ask at any time to see it.

Minutes from Jan. 14 Meeting

Donna Denly, Secretary

The meeting opened with a program presented by Lynn Stoll on the history of AHS Region 1. The program was very informative and interesting and will be presented at the regional meeting.

The business meeting was opened at 1:25 by President Zora Ronan. The minutes from the November 12 meeting were approved as published in the January newsletter.

Treasurer's report: Deb Hansen presented a written report. The beginning balance in December was \$16,338.13. Expenses were \$2,223.10, leaving an ending balance on December 31, 2011 of \$14,115.03.

UPDATES:

Club Plants: Keith Riewerts reported on the club plants that are being ordered for the May 26 distribution. He is working with several hybridizers and if anyone has a special request, please be in contact with Keith soon.

Manual/handbook: Jonathan Poulton gave an update on the CVIDS handbook that the committee is working on. The manual will provide an overview of club goals and an operations manual. Jonathan encouraged everyone to send him information for the website.

The member picture manual is available for anyone who does not have one. Keith Riewerts will be taking pictures of new members to keep the manual current.

Inside This Issue

- 1 President Zora Comments
Minutes from January 14 Meeting
- 2 Calendar of Events
Directions to Marion Public Library
Minutes from January 14 Meeting (continued)
Missing in Action
- 3 Let's Get Acquainted: Meet President Zora Ronan
Kirkwood Winter Gardening Fair
New Members
February 11 Meeting Agenda
- 4 Siberian Irises: Jewels of the Springtime Garden
By Lynn Stoll

2012 Dues

It's time to pay your 2012 club dues! Due by April 1st for club plant eligibility in 2013. Bring payment to the February 11 meeting or mail to Deb Hansen, Treasurer, 1363 Eighth Street, Marion, IA 52302. \$6 individual, \$8 family.

Lynn Stoll, Newsletter Editor

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**** REGULAR CVIDS MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT 1:00 PM ON THE SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH.**

FEBRUARY 11

CVIDS MEETING

1:00 PM, Marion Public Library
Jay McWherter: Hosta Virus X

FEBRUARY 18

WINTER GARDENING FAIR

8:30 AM-3:25 PM
Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids
Tuition \$49 (includes lunch)
For Information: Call 1-800-332-8833 or
www.kirkwood.edu/ce search: [Winter](#) Garden Fair

MARCH 10

CVIDS MEETING

1:00 PM, Washington Public Library
Daylilies 101

MARCH 16-17

POLLEN DABBERS, MARSHALLTOWN IA

(Marshalltown Community College)

APRIL 14

CVIDS MEETING

1:00 PM, Eldridge Public Library
Slideshow of 2012 club plants and promotion
of Margo Reed (Regional Meeting speaker)

MAY 20 (SUNDAY)

Iris Garden Tour (new event)

MAY 26

CVIDS PLANT DISTRIBUTION

West Liberty Fairgrounds

JUNE 7-9

SIBERIAN AND SPECIES IRIS NATIONAL CONVENTION

Lansing/Kalamazoo, MI

JULY 11-14

AMERICAN HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY NATIONAL CONVENTION

Columbus, OH

JULY 20-22

AMERICAN HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY REGION ONE MEETING: "DAZZLING DAYLILIES"

Cedar Rapids, IA
Guest Speaker: Margo Reed

AUGUST 25

FALL PLANT SALE 9-12, LUNCH 12-1, AUCTION 1-2

Riverside Gardens, Monticello

OCTOBER 13

CVIDS MEETING: HYBRIDIZERS' ROUNDUP

Riverside Gardens, Monticello

NOVEMBER 10: Banquet (location TBA)

DIRECTIONS TO MARION PUBLIC

LIBRARY (1095 6th Ave., Marion, IA; 319-377-3412)

From West or South: I-380 North to exit 24A; turn right onto SR-100 East/Collins Road NE for 2.4 miles. Turn left onto US-151 Business/1st Avenue SE/Marion Blvd. for 1.3 miles. Turn right onto 9th St. Turn left onto 6th Avenue.

From East or Northeast: Highway 30 east to Highway 13 North. Turn left (west) onto 10th Avenue for 2.3 miles. Turn left (west) onto 10th Ave. for 2.3 miles. Turn left onto 14th St., then turn right onto 6th Ave.

MINUTES FROM JAN. 14 MEETING (CONT.)

Regional Meeting: Keith Riewerts is also chairing the bucket raffle at the regional meeting and would like to know what items members will be donating.

Lynn Stoll reported she is working on ordering plants for the regional auction.

Sylvia Seymour reported there were already five registrations for the regional meeting. It was very encouraging that a show of hands indicated a large number of members are planning on attending.

Hybridizer Paul Owen is planning on attending and will be a celebrity auctioneer. He has graciously agreed to bring, in addition to the registration plants, another \$1,000 worth of new introductions for the auction.

Deb Hansen & Nancy Rash are co-chairs of the Boutique for the regional and are looking for items from members. Please let them know your plans so they can get everything organized before the last minute.

MISSING IN ACTION

Does anyone know the whereabouts of these club items? If you have them, please bring them to the February meeting or contact Zora Ronan by phone or e-mail. Thank you!

- 1) The large yellow and black CVIDS banner - last used at May 2011 Spring Sale.
- 2) Dark green aprons with CVIDS name and embroidery. There were about 12 aprons at one time.
- 3) Easel and CVIDS poster - last seen at the 2011 Winter Gardening Fair.

LET'S GET ACQUAINTED!

Meet President Zora Ronan

While I have been a life-long gardener, daylilies came late into my life. Deb Browne, a former member of CVIDS, dragged me to a regional meeting in Nebraska. It opened up an entire new world to me. Wow, what colors. What shapes. What prices. And what a great bunch of people to meet. I was hooked on daylilies and on the daylily society.

When Bob Moore and Bob Papenhausen set up their CVIDS booth at the Winter Gardening Fair, it got better. Finally, a daylily club close to home. So, in 2005 I joined CVIDS and have enjoyed every minute of it.

Iowa is not home. My family, husband Paul, three children and I, relocated here from Austin, Texas back when Texas was still a Democratic state. Who can remember that far back? Well, prior to George W. Bush. We had moved around quite a bit; my husband's jobs, first in the Air Force and then in the avionics industry, took us all around the east coast and the south. We have been in Cedar Rapids over 23 years and will probably call this the final resting place.

Paul and I spend our time now traveling for pleasure rather than for work, visiting the grandchildren, volunteering and enjoying our garden. We are blessed with good health and good friends and a relatively carefree life.



FEBRUARY 11 AGENDA

- Welcome and roll call
- Approve minutes of the January 12 meeting as published in the February Newsletter.
- Treasurer's report – Debbie Hansen
- Updates:
 - Club Plants – Keith Riewerts
 - Manual/Handbook – Jonathan Poulton
 - Regional Meeting – Jackie Westhoff
- Old business
- New business
- Door prize

NEXT MEETING MARCH 10 – WASHINGTON LIBRARY

KIRKWOOD WINTER GARDENING FAIR

Kirkwood Community College

6301 Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Saturday, February 18, 2012

Tired of winter? Ready to think about spring and gardening? Then plan to attend Iowa State University Extension's Winter Gardening Fair at Kirkwood Community College on Saturday, Feb. 18. The keynote speaker is Kelly Norris, who will talk about "Garden Design". Many of you will remember Kelly from his presentation about median iris at our club meeting last March. The \$49 tuition covers a full day of workshops of your own choosing along with a box lunch. CVIDS president Zora Ronan will be giving two different workshops: Perennials 101 and Daylilies: The Perfect Perennial. Registrants can choose 5 workshops from among topics like blueberries, herbs, water gardening, trees, Iowa fruits and vegetables, butterfly gardens, prairie gardens, garden photography, ornamental grasses, edible mushrooms, good and bad bugs, composting, and many others. CVIDS will have an informational booth at the fair. For more details and registration information, go to www.kirkwood.edu/ce search: Winter Garden Fair or call 319-398-1022 or 1-800-332-8833.

NEW MEMBERS

Our club is growing! In the past year we've added 22 new members. Be sure to watch for these new folks at meetings and say hello! If you see someone listed here who lives in your town, call them and offer them a ride to the next meeting!

Jo Ann Christofferson (Nichols)
Phoebe Drape (Waverly)
Kathleen Fichtel (Hiawatha)
Lois Fradel (Bettendorf)
Colleen Hansen (Wilton)
Richard and Edelyn King (Monticello)
Dave and Sue Kramer (Cedar Rapids)
Joyce Lee (Bettendorf)
Sharon Lynch-Voparil (Solon)
Barb & Rex McCreight (Lowden)
Lyle Moen and Nancy Rash (Washington)
Dick and Jo Palmer (Dysart)
Jerris and Ronald Richardson (Missouri Valley)
Jan Rogers (Cedar Rapids)
Cheryl Todd (Columbus City)
Nancy Wehrheim (Solon)

SIBERIAN IRISES: JEWELS OF THE SPRINGTIME GARDEN

BY LYNN STOLL

For many CVIDS members and other gardeners, the word “iris” automatically brings to mind a vision of billowing, dramatic clumps of tall bearded irises, sometimes called German irises. The tall bearded iris, or TB for short, is often considered the queen of the spring garden, with wonderfully varied colors and patterns and a heavenly fragrance. Unfortunately, tall bearded irises are not without problems, particularly in this part of the country, and the combination of iris borers, crown rot, weak stalks, and leaf spot disease have discouraged many Midwestern gardeners from growing TBs.

Fortunately for Midwestern gardeners, there are many other types of irises that are much better suited than TBs to the wet, soggy springs so prevalent in Iowa and surrounding areas. Median irises (dwarf and intermediate bearded, or IBs) provide one group of alternatives. Dwarfs and IBs come in all the colors and patterns found in TBs but generally exhibit greater inherent vigor and disease resistance than TBs. Dwarfs are the earliest to bloom, often starting in late April. Intermediates are hybrids between dwarfs and TBs; as their name implies, IBs are intermediate between dwarfs and TBs in height, flower size, and bloom season. Peak bloom for IBs is usually around May 10-May 20 in Iowa.

Another group of irises which thrive in Midwest gardens are the beardless irises, of which Siberian irises are the best known examples. Other beardless irises which are useful garden subjects in Iowa are spurias, Japanese, certain Louisianas, and many species, especially *I. versicolor* and *I. pseudacorus* varieties. This article will focus on Siberian irises.

Siberians are noteworthy for their graceful, upright grass-like foliage which remains clean and attractive throughout the growing season (and which makes an attractive companion to the arching foliage of daylilies). Established clumps are hardy and long-lived and tolerant to wet springs; the slender stalks are very wind-resistant. Modern Siberians are found in white, all shades of blue and purple, pink, lavender, wine red, and pale yellow; newer varieties are being developed in deeper and stronger shades of yellow. The main period of Siberian bloom coincides with mid- to late-season TB bloom, although some varieties bloom either earlier or later.

Many Iowa gardeners grow one or two older Siberians, often the vigorous purple Caesar’s Brother (Morgan 1932) or the white Snow Queen (Barr 1900). While

these varieties can still play a useful role in landscaping, gardeners who try a few of the newer varieties by modern hybridizers like Bob Hollingworth or Marty Schafer will be delighted by the variety of colors and patterns now available. These newer varieties have better branching and bud counts, providing a longer period of bloom. (The best modern Siberians have up to seven buds which bloom sequentially, as compared to the two buds of Caesar’s Brother.) Many of the newer Siberians are tetraploids; as with tetraploid daylilies, these have double the number of chromosomes found in the naturally occurring diploids. Tetraploid Siberians typically have larger flowers and thicker stalks. Diploid flowers are usually (but not always) smaller; however, the diploids often compensate by putting up more flower stalks. As a result, diploid clumps have a mass flowering effect that is often compared to butterflies fluttering in the breeze. Diploids and tetraploids are equally vigorous.

Siberians are at their best in established clumps. A first-year plant of even the newest and best Siberian is inevitably disappointing when compared to a large, established, free-blooming clump of a much more “ordinary” variety. These mature clumps produce masses of glowing color that become more beautiful with each year. I have often wondered if the extra time Siberians take to become established compared to TBs may be a reason that they are less well known and less popular than their bearded cousins. A newly planted TB rhizome of a respectable size will usually produce a good-sized bloomstalk the first spring after planting and will usually produce an impressive display of bloom the following year (if it doesn’t succumb to rot or borers first!). By contrast, a newly planted Siberian is unlikely to bloom at all the first year and rarely makes an impression even the second year after planting. These graceful beauties don’t really attain their full glory until the third year and beyond. But the patient gardener will be rewarded with many years of trouble-free performance and beauty that increases with every year.

Some Siberian irises also rebloom. Unlike reblooming tall bearded irises that bloom heavily in the spring, take a break for a couple of months, and then put up sporadic blooms in the fall, Siberian irises simply continue to put up additional bloomstalks in the spring. This is similar to the phenomenon known as “instant rebloom” in daylilies. Usually there is no break in the cycle. Although the repeat bloom is never as heavy as the first flush of bloom in May, there are often several blooms open at a time throughout June. When the reblooming Siberian is a strong deep blue like Springs Brook, it provides a stunning blue companion plant to daylilies!

SIBERIAN IRISES (CONTINUED)

It is unclear exactly what produces repeat bloom (the preferred term) in Siberian irises. Genetics and cultural conditions both seem to play a major role. As with rebloom in daylilies, repeat bloom in Siberian irises seems to be correlated with abundant water. There is also a consensus that even among varieties that are genetically inclined to repeat, the phenomenon is likely to occur only in large well established clumps that have been undisturbed for a few years.

Recommended Varieties

For the beginner who would like to try a few inexpensive modern Siberian irises, some suggestions can be drawn from the annual popularity polls of the Society for Siberian Irises, as well as from the top award winners of the American Iris Society. (The Morgan-Wood Medal is the Stout Medal equivalent for Siberian irises, and the Award of Merit has the same importance in both societies.) Some of these winners, along with a few of my own personal favorites, are as follows. In the descriptions below, the term “blaze” refers to the lighter colored area on the “shoulders” of the falls.

Blueberry Fair (Hollingworth 1995; Morgan-Wood 2005) is an extravagantly ruffled and flared deep blue-violet with large white signals.

Careless Sally (Schafer-Sacks 1996; Morgan-Wood 2003) is a pretty round and ruffled blend of pastel rose, blue, and yellow with ornate curly styles and sunrise yellow signals.

Cheery Lyn (Miller 1991) is my personal favorite of Anna Mae Miller’s fine lavender pinks (and no, not just because of the name!). To my eye, its floriferousness, grace and proportion in a clump rivals or even surpasses that of Aqua Whispers, Miller’s 1995 Morgan-Wood Medal winner.

Coronation Anthem (Hollingworth 1990; Morgan-Wood 1997) is a gorgeous large, very ruffled mid to deep blue tetraploid with a creamy yellow blaze that fades to white. It’s an extremely vigorous grower and a profuse bloomer and has displayed a consistent tendency to rebloom into July in our garden. I have also seen it reblooming in Minnesota on a daylily tour! It’s also still high on the popularity poll.

Fond Kiss (Schafer-Sacks 1999; Morgan-Wood 2008) is a distinctive warm white with a large pink flush on the falls.

Gull’s Wing (McGarvey 1988) is an excellent late-blooming pure white; it’s free-blooming and relatively tall, with excellent flower form. It’s usually the last

Siberian to bloom here.

Helicopter (Shidara 1988) is a vigorous, distinctive blue violet that is a favorite in our garden. Like the pink **Rikugi Sakura** by the same hybridizer, **Helicopter** also has the flat, six-fall form commonly associated with Japanese irises. (I have always found it particularly interesting that this Japanese hybridizer selected among his Siberians a form that looks so much like a Japanese iris!)

Jewelled Crown (Hollingworth 1987; Morgan-Wood Medal 1993) is a stunning large, flared deep wine-red tetraploid with a circular gold blaze. It’s a vigorous grower that is still among the top ten of the popularity poll.

Kaboom (Bauer-Coble 2001) is a navy blue-violet tetraploid double (9 to 12+ petals) with gold and white signals. A favorite on the popularity poll.

Kita-No-Seiza (Shidara 1999) is a very vigorous and distinctive six-fall dark blue-violet with large white feathered signals.

Lake Keuka (Borglum 1994; Morgan-Wood 2002) is a nicely ruffled violet blue blend with lighter edges and aqua stylearms.

Magnum Bordeaux (Bauer/Coble 2000) is a very large ruffled velvety red-wine-purple with very wide, ruffled styles; first place finisher in the latest popularity poll.

Mesa Pearl (Bauer-Coble 1994) is a late-blooming pale lavender with a pearly sheen and near-white edges, slightly deeper color in center of falls; simple, tailored form.

Over In Gloryland (Hollingworth 1993) is a very vigorous large, round, velvety dark blue-purple tetraploid with a striking light gold blaze.

Rikugi Sakuri (Shidara 1988) is an exceptionally vigorous flat pink, with the six-fall form commonly found with Japanese irises.

Riverdance (Schafer-Sacks 1997; Morgan-Wood 2006) is a rich true blue with large ruffles, white wire edges and a sprinkling of white on the falls.

Roaring Jelly (Schafer-Sacks 1992; Morgan-Wood 1999) is described by the hybridizers as a “raspberry jelly” color. It has grown well, has an appealing flower, and has rebloomed heavily for us in some years. It’s still high on the popularity poll.

Seneca Cloud Puff (Borglum 1995) is a pretty pure white with wide petals; very vigorous.

Ships Are Sailing (Schafer-Sacks 1998; Morgan-Wood 2007) is a nicely ruffled clear blue, with pale blue standards and styles with lighter rims on darker blue-violet falls; makes a striking and very floriferous clump.

SIBERIAN IRISES (CONTINUED)

Recommended Sources

The Society for Siberian Irises. Membership secretary Susan Grigg, 105 Trotters Ridge Dr., Raleigh, NC 27614-9620. Single Annual Membership \$10.00, Family Annual \$12.00; Single Triennial, \$25.00; Family Triennial, \$30.00.

Joe Pye Weed Gardens (337 Acton St., Carlisle, MA 01741-1432; www.jpwflowers.com) carries the Siberian iris introductions of Marty Schafer (plus a few older Warburton cultivars) along with a number of species irises. Their website has an outstanding photo gallery.

Ensata Gardens 9823 E. Michigan Ave., Galesburg, MI 49053; www.ensata.com) features the introductions of John Coble and Bob Bauer, along with many other hybridizers. Ensata specializes in Japanese irises but also carries a good selection of Siberian and species irises as well as daylilies and hostas. Their website features a nice selection of representative pictures.



Siberian Iris Bed – Walnut Hill Gardens



Caesar's Brother (1932)



Blueberry Fair (1995)



Fond Kiss



Jewelled Crown



Kita-No-Seiza



Rikugi Sakura



Magnum Bordeaux



Seneca Cloud Puffs



Springs Brook

