

# Cedar Valley Iris and Daylily Society

Volume 3, Issue 2

February 2026

## CVIDS NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2026

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear CVIDS members,

I hope you're all staying warm and safe in this arctic blast we've just been going through. According to my weather ap, we should be in the 20-degree range by the time this newsletter arrives the first week of February.

In many ways we should actually feel fortunate that we don't live farther south or east where the ice and snow are making everything so much worse. Many years ago, my husband and I were coming back from New Orleans in February and hit a really intense ice storm in Missouri. We couldn't even pull off the interstate ramps because they were solid ice. We saw power poles break off with the heavy ice coating the lines. There was no place to stop so we just kept going until we got into Iowa and were finally able to pull off into a truck stop.

It was a scary situation and one I never want to go through again. So, sitting here next to my wood stove looking up daylily prices for our August club plant silent auction isn't really a bad thing. In fact, just thinking about this wonderful flower and how it brightens my life is a wonderful thing. This year I'm even looking forward to the blooms of the iris plants we received last year. I haven't grown any iris for over 40 years so I'm hoping they do well.

But, getting back to our club business, I received word from Nancy Carlisle, chairman of the regional planning committee, that she has booked a speaker for our convention in July 2027. His name is Chad Bush and he's a hybridizer from Alma, Michigan (zone 5).

His website is [colorfulchaosdaylily.weebly.com](http://colorfulchaosdaylily.weebly.com). Take a look at this website and you'll see some beautiful daylilies and you can find out more about him.

Thanks, Nancy, and now the work really begins!

(continued from previous column):

Just a reminder that I'll have the committee signup sheets available at our Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> meeting in Iowa City at the Extension Office on the fairgrounds. I've had four more members volunteer for a committee and there's still many slots available. If you're not on a committee, you need to register for one either at this meeting or contact me asap. We really need everyone's help, please.

Finally, at our next meeting we'd like to conduct a program especially aimed at our new members who'd like to learn more about daylilies, iris and what our club does to promote them.

Be thinking of a question you have about anything concerning these plants. For instance, tips on planting, fertilizing, weeding, dividing, etc. and our members can offer advice and suggestions. It will basically be a round table discussion and I'm sure we can all benefit from each other's experiences.

That's it for now and hope to see you on Valentine's Day!

Take care, Diane Deganz

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*"Wake up, breakfast is ready"*



**Nancy Rash, Newsletter Co-Editor (Serious)**  
**Lyle Moen, Newsletter Co-Editor (Fun Stuff)**

## **CVIDS CALENDAR**

February 14, Johnson County Extension Office, I.C.

March 14th, Coralville Public Library, Coralville.

Speaker: Scott Keller

April 11th, Wilton Community Room, Wilton,

**CLUB PLANT POWER POINT**

May 9<sup>th</sup> Spring Plant sale, Muscatine Discovery Park

May 16th, Club Plant Distribution, Floral Hall,

Muscatine Co. Fairgrounds, West Liberty

Aug. 22nd, Monticello Fairgrounds,

Youth Development Center

Oct. 10th, Hybridizers roundup TBA

November 14, CVIDS Fall Banquet

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**PLANNING AHEAD:** Our March 14 speaker will be Region One Director Scott Keller of Pick A Daylily Garden, <https://www.pickadaylily.com/about-us>. Please plan to attend and learn about Scotts hybridizing program and his role with the American Daylily Society.

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## **SAVE THE DATE**

Hospitality Chair Nancy Rash announced upcoming dates and speakers for upcoming CVIDS Fall Banquets.

November 14, 2026:

Speakers Bill and Diana Waldrop, Marietta, GA;

<https://kennesawmountaindaylilygardens.com/index.html>

November 13, 2027:

Speaker Bobby Scott, Yukon, OK;

<https://younggundaylilies.com/Welcome.html>

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## **SPRING – DIG AND DIVIDE**

Our own Heather Harroun has once again offered a hands-on Dig and Divide experience to CVIDS members. CVIDS members will keep a piece of what you divide and the rest is to be taken to the Fall CVIDS Plant Sale. Her address is: 11723 238th St W Illinois City, IL. Plan ahead and talk to Heather for more details. This is a great opportunity to learn from Heather.

## **ADS REGION ONE MEETING JULY 9-11, 2027**

### **DO YOU HAVE MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN DAYLILY SOCIETY?**

As our ADS Region One Director, Scott Keller will ask how ADS can better serve its membership. Are you a member of ADS? There will be ADS Daylily Journals at the next meeting for you to take home with you.

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### **UPDATE ON MEMBER PETE CONNOLLY:**

Following back surgery on January 23, Pete is at Mill Valley Care Center in Bellevue. He'll be there for therapy. Diane D. reports he's getting along okay. His surgery was intense as it took 4 ½ hours but he said the doctor was pleased. The address of Mill Valley is 1201 Park St., Bellevue, IA 52031. Phone for Pete: 563-221-2949; Pat: 563-659-7611.

**TAKING TIME:** Please take time to call or send a message to Pete and Gary. They would love to hear from you. They take the time to check on us, please take time to tell them hello!

Pete Connolly:

email is: [daydreaminpete@yahoo.com](mailto:daydreaminpete@yahoo.com)

home address is 105 Riviera Drive, Bellevue, IA 52031

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### **THANK YOU**

Members Lisa and Jeff Schmidt, of Bismark, ND, gave our January 2025 program on the International Peace Gardens and the role the North Dakota Club played in the planting of 200 daylilies to add to the beauty of the gardens. The garden is near the geographical center of North America, with a dedication on July 14, 1932. Manitoba donated 1451 acres and North Dakota purchased and donated 888 acres to the garden along the international boundary line. Thank you, Jeff and Lisa, for your presentation on January 10, 2026.

**MEMBER: GARY OSTER**

On the way home from January's meeting, Nancy Carlisle and Heather Harroun stopped to see longtime member Gary Oster in Tipton. Gary is no longer able to attend meetings, but he keeps up with phone calls to many members and reads the newsletter faithfully.

One of his prized possessions that holds a prominent position in his room is his Grandmother's Christmas cactus which is estimated to be over 100 years old!

Gary's grandmother Katie Oster came to the US from Germany in 1914. After her passing in the 1970's at the age of 85, her Christmas cactus went to his aunt and then came to Gary's family in 1979.

Gary Oster: Prairie Hills, 219 S Cedar Street, Room 210, Tipton IA 52772; 563-340-9446.



## MEET THE MEMBERS JONATHAN & SUSIE POULTON



Perhaps you've had the same experience? You are going about your daily routine when you suddenly meet somebody who sends your life's journey off in a completely unexpected and more positive direction. Meeting my wife-to-be Susie in 1988 was such an event, for which I am eternally grateful! Another one was when Susie and I were vacationing with our young sons in Door County (Wisconsin) in the summer of 2006. We were staying in Egg Harbor but decided to spend that day on the Lake Michigan side of the peninsula. As luck would have it, Susie drove, and I attempted to get us to our destination using an old-fashioned map. I remember that at a four-way stop she asked: "Well, dear, do we go left, right, or straight ahead?" I replied: "Sorry, but we're lost!" and threw the

map over my shoulder in desperation. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I glimpsed a field of daylilies. Not just the common Midwest orange ditch lilies to which I was accustomed but daylilies exhibiting an amazing blaze of different colors. "Please stop the car!" I requested. "Let's take a closer look!" Luckily, the owner Ron Mickelson was there and invited us to tour his garden. It was nothing short of breathtaking! Of course, we purchased a few lilies! As he helped load them into our truck, he said: "You know, I get many of these by hybridizing." I asked how easy daylily hybridizing was, to which he replied: "Simple, any fool can do it. Just cross pretty with pretty and see what you get!" Well, I thought to myself, I teach botany to 450 medical school students three times a week, I should be able to do this! On returning home, I found several of our daylilies were blooming including 'Frans Hals', an orange bicolor that was a favorite of mine. So, I crossed pretty with pretty and was rewarded with lots of black, shiny seeds.



One of my botany lectures focused on optimum conditions for seed germination, but I had no clue how to successfully germinate daylily seeds. I went online and to my good fortune discovered that the Cedar Valley Iris & Daylily Society was having a plant sale in Monticello on the following Saturday. I had such fun at this event and of course I bought more daylilies! Everyone was so friendly and helpful. I remember asking the advice of many members including Lynn Stoll, Vern Moore, and Gerald Hobbs. After becoming a club member, I returned home to raise my first batch of daylily seedlings, and I'm still doing it 20 years later, all because we got lost in Door County and fortuitously met Ron Mickelson.

## CVIDS MEMBERS JONATHAN & SUSIE POULTON:

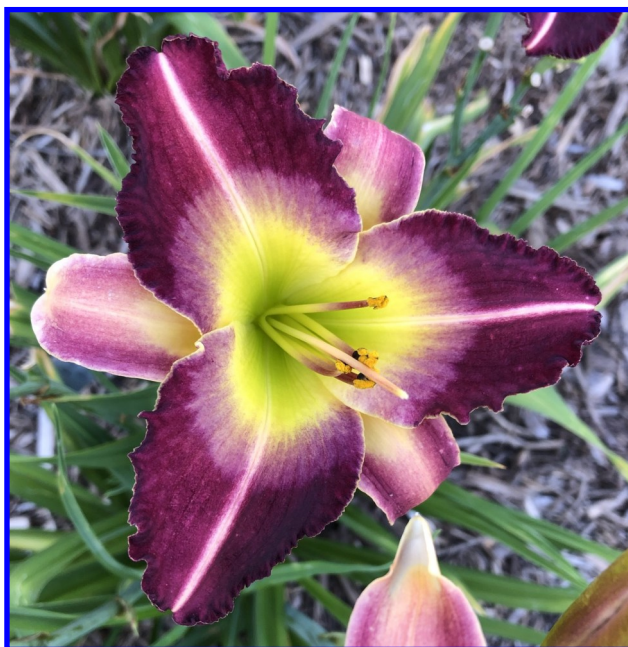
For a few years, I focused on creating novel bicolors, although several club members advised me that they were deemed “old-fashioned”. (I still enjoy cultivars with wildly different petal and sepal colors). Lynn also recommended that I should “stay focused with your hybridization efforts, rather than just crossing pretty with pretty”. After reading that there were no daylily cultivars that exhibited true blue colors, I turned my attention to that challenge. As a plant biochemist, I understood how other plant species (e.g. delphiniums, hydrangeas, and the Himalayan blues poppy) achieve their blue-colored petals, but the scientific literature provided little knowledge about the chemical nature of daylily pigments. I asked my colleague Dr. Erin Irish, a plant cell biologist, how to create blue daylilies, to which she replied: “Make lots of crosses and hope for a lucky mutation!” Undaunted, I

bought several of the “bluest” daylilies available (e.g. ‘Blue Beat’, ‘Blue Gold Macaw’, and ‘Asian Fairy Bluebird’) and began crossing them. Boy, that was expensive! Were my efforts successful? If I’m honest with myself, I probably did no better than other hybridizers having that goal. My unregistered cultivar #13-9-3 (‘Monday Morning Blues’ à ‘Bluebird Butterfly’) was perhaps the best that I achieved. If you are interested in learning more, I suggest that you read



my article “Out of the Blue, part 2” published in *The Daylily Pioneer*, Spring 2014, pp. 41-45. It can be accessed from our website: <https://www/cvids.org/education.html>

As you well know, hybridizing efforts require lots of space to plant out seedlings, and it wasn’t long before I ran out of room in our small Iowa City garden. To my rescue came our longtime friends Mary Jo and Joe Duffy who lived north of Iowa City and offered us a quarter-acre plot. Before long, it was packed with hundreds of my seedlings and provided a stunning view similar to that of Ron Mickelson’s garden. We were extremely grateful to the Duffy Family for their kind offer and always enjoyed hosting garden tours there for CVIDS members. If you have never dabbled with hybridizing daylilies, I heartily recommend that you try it. Yes, it’s lots of work (and physiotherapy visits!), but there is nothing like the excitement that you have when going out to the plot knowing that one or more of your seedlings will be flowering for the very first time. Sure, there will be disappointments. Some of your babies will be ugly, while others will fail to open well! But when you spot a pretty baby among your brood, the delight is unmatched. Between 2014-2019, I registered 11 of my babies with the American Hemerocallis Society (AHS), many of which were in honor of my family (e.g. ‘Bellevue Beauty’ for Susie, and ‘One for Rosemary’, ‘One for Richard’ and ‘One for Brian’ for my siblings). Susie and I joined AHS and enjoyed going to regional meetings in neighboring states. I recommend that you do that too!



## CVIDS MEMBERS JONATHAN & SUSIE POULTON:

I lived in Iowa City from 1979-2020, working as a faculty member at the University of Iowa until 2010. I have to say that, other than meeting Susie, discovering CVIDS and becoming a longtime member was one of the best experiences that I had. Susie became a club member in 2012, and we both enjoyed the members' camaraderie, good humor, and wealth of daylily expertise. We wanted to express our gratitude by giving back, so Susie served as Secretary from 2017-May 2020. We chaired/co-chaired the membership committee from 2015 - May 2020. Aided by our son Christopher, I established the CVIDS website in 2010 and



continued to be webmaster until now, except for a break in 2020-2022 when Mary Jo served as such. I admit that the website is not fancy-looking, but I purposefully set it up in such a way as to make it easy for all to use. Club members, and interested members of the public, can readily learn when the next meeting is, what happened at the last meeting, when this year's garden tours will be, who excelled at the last photo contest, etc. It also serves as the club's archive, going back to CVIDS' foundation in 1990. There is one downside, however. Our website goes hand-in-hand with the CVIDS Facebook group set up by Diann Davelka, but members cannot post directly to the website.

In 2020, Susie and I moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, to enjoy the hiking and biking there. Five years have gone by very quickly. We have made new friends here, and many family members and friends have visited us from Iowa and England. Susie stays busy working as a homecare nurse



two days a week, teaching CPR, and volunteering with the League of Women Voters. She became a Master Gardener in 2024 and volunteers with them regularly. On Mondays, I am a guide at the Butterfly House at the botanic garden in Fort Collins (Gardens on Spring Creek), and Tuesdays finds me volunteering at the Loveland Food Bank. We joined the Northern Colorado Daylily Club (AHS Region 9), and Susie currently serves as club President. We have about 15-20 active members and are currently recruiting new members with the goal of doubling membership by 2027. Our club looks after its ADS Display Garden at the botanic garden. If you have any recommendations about recruiting members, we'd be delighted to hear from you

(jonathan-poulton@uiowa.edu).

**COVIDS MEMBERS JONATHAN & SUSIE POULTON:**

Both Sherri Baldonado and Diann Pavelka warned us that daylilies are much harder to grow in Colorado than in Iowa and encouraged us to consider growing iris. They were right! We brought



Oxford Blue

I must admit that I haven't maintained the focus that Lynn recommended but have reverted largely to "crossing pretty with pretty". We discovered an iris farm east of town and bought many iris cultivars for our garden. Our neighbors love the efforts that Susie and I have invested in our Colorado garden. All of us enjoy a wonderful display of iris that slightly overlaps with the beginning of the daylily season.

We miss you, fine friends. Thanks for reading our contribution to Meet the Members. We wish you all the very best for 2026 and beyond.

several hundred daylilies with us from Iowa to face a very different climate from that of Iowa City. Fort Collins lies at 4,984 feet above sea level, receives an average annual rainfall of 15.9 inches. We enjoy having 305 days of sunshine a year, although the lower humidity and often scorching afternoon sun can make life very challenging for our lilies. And then there's the soil! Oh, if you've ever heard me complaining about Iowa soil, I apologize. I was sadly mistaken! Colorado soil is the worst, a mix of heavy clay and small pebbles. Susie and I have spent countless hours replacing 15-18 inches of our flowerbed soil with a better mix (but many PT visits were necessary!). I'm pleased to say that most of our transported lilies acclimatized to their new environment. I continued hybridization efforts until 2024 when, after building two raised beds for seedlings, I ran out of sunny spots for lilies.



Yolanda's Smile