

Greater Rochester Iris Society
an affiliate of the American Iris Society
August 2021 newsletter

ed. Cara Hutchings

What a summer this has been! I hope you are not too inundated with weeds right now. I know it has been a bit of a struggle with all this rain. But what a great excuse to be outside in your garden!

While you're out there, it's time to decide what iris you will be able to dig up and divide this year, to donate to our sale. While we do buy new iris in (this year we are getting them from Hugh Stout at Dancingtree Gardens), it is the iris from our members' gardens where we make our money.

Our sale this year is being held at Bristol Garden Center in Victor on August 14 and 15. Bristol's is located at 7454 NY-96, right down the road from Eastview Mall. The hours for our sale are 10 AM to 4 PM. We will need help setting up and taking down, along with help during the sale times. Anytime you can help would be greatly appreciated, please email me and let me know if you can help at anytime.

The proper way to divide your iris is: the whole clump of iris should be dug up, and then sorted through. Cut off the rhizomes that have bloomed because they will not bloom again. You can cut the foliage down about 6-8 inches. Write the name of the iris on the foliage using a permanent marker, and the type (TB for tall bearded, SDB for standard dwarf bearded, etc.) and if possible, the falls and standards color. Then wash off any excess dirt, check them over for borer damage, getting rid of as much as you can, and dip them into a 10% bleach solution. Don't forget to plant at least one back into your garden! All bearded and beardless types of irises should be done this way, including Siberians and Japanese. Those then have an extra step, since they like to be kept moist, please take a baggie and add a wet towel or jell beads and put the Siberians and Japanese in the baggie. I do have jell beads, and I will make sure to bring them to the sale, if you just have a wet towel in the baggie.

If you don't know the name of the iris, that's ok, we have use of NOIDs (no identification) we sell them for a \$1, give them away to those that buy lots of named iris and give them to people who have a coupon from our show.

To help people make decisions on their purchases, we make cards that have the picture of the iris on it. The sooner you can let Neil (images@irises.org) know what you expect to bring, the better. Even if you end up not being able to bring a certain cultivar, we'll have a card. Better a card and no cultivar than a cultivar and no card. A picture really does help people make their decision.

I also will be sending out a list of the iris we buy in as well as the ones from our gardens, so people can shop by email, so keep your eye open for that email if you aren't able to come to the sale.

Before I continue with our future events, here's a brief rundown on our past events:

In early June, we had a club picnic – garden celebration at Neil’s house. It was very well attended, and everyone had great fun. Kathryn Mohr, our Region 2 RVP came, and she certainly bakes a mean pie! Prizes and raffles were part of the fun, and the club made \$86 with the raffles.

A few weeks later, a small group of us went on a trip to Iris Country Gardens, formerly Borglum’s Gardens. We met Sara and Reba Martin, the new owners of the Gardens, and had a great time with them. We filled the van with perennials on the return trip, there was not a bit of empty space left! The sisters are looking to have a complete collection of Dana Borglum’s introductions, mostly Siberians. If you have some of his introductions and are looking to trade with the sisters, let me know, I have the list of what they are looking for.

All during the months of April, May, June, and July we were running our virtual show. Thanks to our great judges – Terry Laurin, Vaughn Sayles and Kate Brewitt, we have a list of winners. While we are still in the process of figuring out who the winners were, here is a small sample:

Tall Bearded: Whisper in the Wind

Border Bearded: Brown Lasso

Siberian: Rikugi Sakura

We are working on getting the winner’s names matched with their winning photos and hope to get a gallery of all the photos going at some point I will let you know in a future newsletter.

We have two more meetings planned for 2021, and we are hoping they will both be in-person meetings. September 12th will be the first meeting, at 2 pm at St. John’s Episcopal Church Hall, 12 Episcopal Ave., Honeoye Falls, NY. I’m still working on a topic for that meeting, but whatever we decide, it would be great to see everyone!

October 10th will be our last meeting of the year, at 2 pm at the church hall. Diane Henderson will be giving a talk on hummingbirds at that meeting. If you were able to make last year’s October meeting, you know what a great speaker she is. I am looking forward to that meeting!