

REGION 2 OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2020



'Daughter of Stars' (D. Spoon, 2001) Wister Medal, 2007

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WHO WE ARE

Region 2 of the American Iris Society

Officers

President & RVP

Kathryn Mohr – kemohrke@aol.com
Ballston Lake, NY 12019-9748
(518) 952-4995

Vice President - Position Open

Secretary – Position Open

Treasurer

Vaughn Sayles – vsayles47@aol.com
Ithaca, NY 14850-9253
(607) 273-1355

Committee Chairpersons

Archives

Dorothy Stiefel – irisacher@aol.com
Spencer, NY 14883
(607) 589-7465

Bylaws – Position Open

Awards & Exhibitions

Marilee Farry – farmare@aol.com
Cheektowaga, NY 14227-3140
(716) 668-1789

Judges Training

Wendy Roller – gwr67@frontier.com
Rochester, NY 14616-4133
(585) 621-8985

Membership

Vaughn Sayles (see Treasurer)

Newsletter Editor & Webmaster

Kate Brewitt – just1moreiris@gmail.com

Technology Consultant

Neil Houghton – images@irises.org

Youth Committee - Position Open

Affiliate Chairpersons

Capital-Hudson Iris Society (CHIS)

Linda Knipper – linda.montanaro@gmail.com
Schenectady, NY 12309
(518) 377-4987

Greater Rochester Iris Society (GRIS)

Cara Hutchings – thehutchings@me.com
Rochester, NY 14621
(585) 266-0302

Ontario Iris Society (ONIS)

Terry Laurin – tlaurin@rogers.com

Western New York Iris Society (WNYIS)

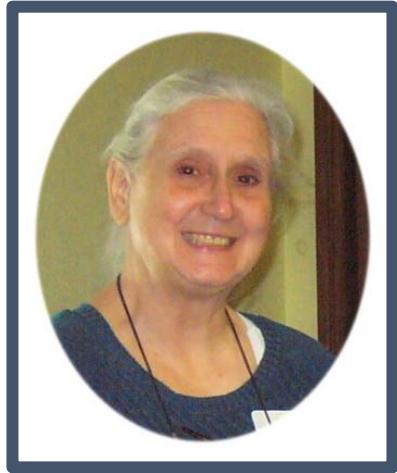
Marilee Farry – farmare@aol.com
Cheektowaga, NY 14227-3140
(716) 668-1789



'Cream Pixie' (Chapman, 1996)

RVP MESSAGE

Greetings, Iris Lovers



Wendy Roller sent me a note a few weeks ago

"My uninterrupted iris season was 106 days – March 16th– June 29th. One bloom stalk on a species-x iris is all that's left in the garden – 'Violet Swallows' will probably bloom within the next 7-10 days."

We are all so fortunate to have our gardens! Gardening seasons are always unpredictable. There are years when our gardens are remarkable and years that everything seems to go wrong. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has presented us all with challenges, but gardeners are adaptable people. We are well-suited to respond in a positive way to unforeseen events.

Region 2 has risen to the challenge. We have adapted. Neil

Houghton has spent many hours working to provide Region 2 members an online place to meet and socialize. With his encouragement, the region purchased a Zoom-Pro license that allows the region or any affiliate to hold an online meeting. There have been some technical struggles with laptops and internet services, but everyone has been patient and cheerful.

We are planning an online Region 2 Annual Meeting in October, with a speaker and Judges' training. Details have not been finalized; they will be sent through your club newsletter, by email or by letter.

Sadly, former RVP (2013 to 2015) and long-time WNYIS member, Judy Tucholski-Zon passed away on July 16. She will be missed. Also, Carolyn Schaffner, Assistant RVP has resigned. As chair of the Bylaws committee this past year, she was an invaluable resource.

I hope everyone in Region 2 is safe and healthy.

Kathryn Mohr, President and AIS Region 2 RVP

Looking for Board Members and Officers

Region 2 has the following openings on its Board and Committees. Please consider helping your region by volunteering for one of them. Time commitment varies by position but is usually minimal. Please contact Kathryn, RVP, (kemohrke@aol.com) by October 1st if you are interested.

Assistant Regional Vice President – The Assistant RVP shall perform the duties of RVP in the event of the latter's absence and assist him/her in all regional activities.

Secretary – The Secretary shall record the minutes of official meetings. These minutes shall be kept as a permanent record and shall also be printed in the Region 2 newsletter. He/she shall conduct official correspondence and mailing, either electronically or by surface mail, under the direction of the RVP.

Bylaw Committee Chair – Shall be responsible for the maintenance of the Regional Bylaws and for insuring compliance with the state and federal requirements, as well as consistency with the Bylaws of American Iris Society.

Youth Committee Chair – Shall be responsible for the maintenance and administering to the youth members of the region.

START THE 2020/2021 JUDGES' TRAINING PERIOD NOW!

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 2nd at 8:30 pm ET for a presentation and **Judges' Training session** given by Jody Nolin, AIS President, on “Species Irises”.

The webinar is conducted via Zoom Webinars and an email invitation to register online will be sent to all AIS members a week before each event. Once you register you will be sent the webinar’s link. All webinars are FREE of charge to all members of AIS, AIS sections, and local iris clubs.

If you are not an AIS member but want to participate, send an email to aiswebinars@gmail.com. The test is optional however you may be interested in testing what you learned!



SPX 'Roy's Surprise' (Borglum, 2007)

Growing Irises from Seed

by Tom Waters (*taken from The World of Irises, the Blog of the American Iris Society*)

We usually propagate irises by division: digging up a large clump, breaking apart the individual rhizomes, and replanting. This method is easy, and because most irises increase rapidly, within a few years you will have plenty of them. This post is about a different way of propagating irises: planting seeds. This is a process that has some challenges, but also has some wonderful rewards. If you've never thought about growing irises from seeds or have wondered about it but are unsure how to start, read on!

Why?

If you are hybridizing, you will necessarily be growing irises from seed. Hybridizing refers to cross-pollinating irises to produce new varieties. When you cross two different irises, the result is a pod of seeds. Each of the seedlings will grow into a new individual, not exactly like any other iris.

Propagating by division only creates exact copies of the original plant, whereas propagation from seed creates only brand-new plants, different from either parent. Even if you are not intending to embark on serious hybridizing program to create new varieties to sell commercially, making crosses and raising seedlings can be fun and interesting.



Woohoo! Iris seeds just arrived from Czechia

But hybridizing is not the only reason you might want to raise irises from seed. Some types of irises may just not be obtainable from commercial growers as plants, but you may be able to acquire seeds from a collector or from a seed exchange. This is especially true of iris species, the wild irises from different parts of the world. It can be exceedingly difficult to import live plants from other countries, but importing seeds is usually much easier. I've gotten seeds of iris species from collectors in the Czech Republic and from seed exchanges run by the Species Iris Group of North America (SIGNA), the British Iris Society (BIS), the Scottish Rock Garden Club (SRGC), and the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS). Although the seedlings from a given offering of species seeds will all be different, in subtle or obvious ways, they will all still be plants of that

named species, unless the person providing the seed misidentified the plant, or unless it was accidentally cross-pollinated by a different species growing nearby.

Growing irises from seeds also has some other advantages: you get a wide variety of different plants, so you can choose the ones that do best in your climate or whose appearance you prefer. Growing from seed is also a way to eliminate virus infection, should that be a problem.

Finally, growing irises (or any plant) from seeds is a very satisfying experience. It connects you with the whole process of growth, from its very beginning. There is nothing quite like seeing the first bloom of a plant you've grown from seed yourself.

How?

The process of growing irises from seeds is not (usually) very difficult, but it does require patience and attention to factors that you might not have considered if your only experience of raising plants from seeds is growing vegetables or annuals. There have been many articles written on special ways to grow iris seeds; you can find several of them on the web. In this post, I am not going to suggest one method as superior, but just give you an overview of the basics, so that you can get started and learn what works for you.

There are two requirements for germinating iris seeds:

1. They must experience several months of cold temperatures, followed by a warming period.
2. They must have adequate moisture.



Seeds planted into pots sunk in the ground (gravel on top protects from washout)

The simplest way to meet these two requirements is to plant the seeds outdoors in the autumn or early winter, and let nature take its course--assisting with supplemental water if natural precipitation is insufficient. Seeds can be planted straight in the soil, or in pots sunk into the ground or just left on a porch or in a cold frame. A planting depth of 1 cm or 1/2 inch is suitable for most seeds. Germination usually occurs around the time of iris bloom in the spring.

Some growers prefer to give the seeds their cold treatment ("stratification") indoors, by putting the seeds in baggies with slightly moist vermiculite, perlite, or other sterile medium and refrigerating them for 60 days or more. Some growers prefer to give the seeds their cold treatment ("stratification") indoors, by putting the seeds in baggies with slightly moist vermiculite, perlite, or other sterile medium and refrigerating them for 60 days or more. The advantage of indoor stratification is greater control over the conditions, and the possibility of getting germination a few months earlier. The disadvantage is that you need to be prepared to grow on the seedlings indoors under grow lights for some time, until they are ready to be hardened off and planted outdoors. The advantage of indoor stratification is greater control over the conditions, and the



Newly sprouted seedlings!

possibility of getting germination a few months earlier. The disadvantage is that you need to be prepared to grow on the seedlings indoors under grow lights for some time, until they are ready to be hardened off and planted outdoors.

I prefer the outdoor method, as it is less bother and easier to manage with large numbers of seedlings. If I had an extra refrigerator to use for seeds, I might prefer indoor germination.

Whatever method is used to germinate the seeds, they should be transplanted to a semi-permanent seedling bed outdoors when they have at least three leaves. Some may bloom a year later. The year after that, most should bloom, and you can decide which ones to keep and which to discard.

The reason the period of cold temperature is needed is that irises, like many perennials from temperate climates, cannot easily survive a winter while still small seedlings. When germination occurs in the spring, rather than in the fall, the young plants have the best possible chance of survival. In contrast, most annuals are fast-growing, opportunistic plants that can grow, flower, and produce seed whenever there is a few months of warm weather.

Dormancy

Even if the requirements above are met, not all the seeds will sprout the first year. With garden variety bearded irises, the percentage will usually be more than 50%, and can approach 100%. Most of the remainder will sprout the following year. At the other extreme, aril irises may sprout a few at a time over a period of 10 years or more. Why is this? It is nature's "insurance policy" against calamities and harsh conditions of various sorts. If all seeds sprouted at the same time, a drought, flood, fire, or other disaster could destroy the whole population. By having the seeds sprout over the course of several years, it is virtually guaranteed that some will survive.

For the gardener, however, such protracted dormancy is a frustration. Few of us want to wait a decade for the seeds we plant to sprout! In irises, dormancy has at least two causes: the hardness of the seed coat, which makes it mechanically difficult for the seedling to emerge, and chemical germination inhibitors inside the seed itself. In nature, the action of water and the cycles of freezing and thawing serve to gradually weaken the seed coat and to leach away the chemical inhibitors.

Some growers have success by planting seed fresh before it has a chance to dry out. For some types, at least, this can bypass dormancy and result in immediate germination. Of course, one then needs a way to care for the seedlings over winter.

A variety of techniques are used to overcome dormancy artificially. One can attempt to leach out the germination inhibitors by prolonged soaking or use of running water. One can overcome the hard seed coat by abrasion or chipping (cutting away the seed coat to expose the embryo). This

"forced germination" procedure is often recommended for difficult oncocyclus seeds. The ultimate procedure is to excise the embryo under sterile conditions and germinate it on a nutrient agar medium. This "embryo culture" can be used to germinate seeds that will not germinate any other way, but it is very demanding work and the young seedlings are very vulnerable.

Whether you choose to use any of these techniques for overcoming dormancy will depend on whether the basic method is giving adequate germination for the types of seeds you grow. I think the best advice is to try natural germination first, and then move on to progressively more invasive and difficult techniques if you need to.

The Payoff

I encourage everyone to trying growing irises from seeds at least once, whether it's making a cross or two in your own garden or ordering a packet of seeds from a seed exchange. It's an adventure, and the first bloom of an iris you have raised from seed yourself makes it all worth the wait!

Kathryn, our RVP, and Kate, our editor, shared some of their hybridizing efforts.

From Kathryn, two seedlings from SDB 'Zap' x bee



From Kate, left: Siberian 'Tipped in Blue' x bee, right: SDB 'Gentle Grace' x 'Mikey Likes It'



CAPITAL-HUDSON IRIS SOCIETY

(CHIS)

Submitted by Euthemia Matsoukas

At the last minute, the speaker at our annual Doldrums Party potluck luncheon was changed. Amy Howansky, who had been our planned speaker for a later meeting in the spring, was able to step in.

The topic of her talk was “Attracting Pollinators and Birds to the Landscape.” A dynamic and interesting speaker, she helped us understand the issues that negatively impact birds and pollinators in the landscape, and to discover the importance of “keystone” and “indicator” species. We learned steps to protect, enhance, and manage good habitats. In addition, she helped us determine if our landscape is a “sterile” or “non-supporting” habitat for butterflies as well as how to create “pollinator pathways” in the yard. Finally, she addressed the best annuals, perennials, trees, and shrubs to attract birds and pollinators. We learned a lot and we appreciated her stepping in at the last minute. Then with the arrival of COVID-19, we were happy we’d had the chance to hear her!

The remainder of our plans for March until we-are-not-sure-when were cancelled because of COVID-19. We have had no newsletters, no sale, no speakers, no elections, no revisions of by-laws, nothing. People’s gardens are probably pristine because there is not much else to do! Those of us who are still hopeful are planning to resume meetings when there is a viable, proven vaccine. Meanwhile, we hope everyone else is healthy and keeping safe!

If you have any questions on the above, feel free to contact Euthemia Matsoukas at the email address below.

CHIS Officers:

Chair: Linda Knipper - Linda.Montanaro@gmail.com

Vice Chairs: Dan and Joanne Maier - Danjomaier@gmail.com

Secretary: Virginia Dorwaldt - vmdorwaldt@gmail.com

Treasurer: Don Salhoff - driris2000@hotmail.com

Newsletter editor: Euthemia Matsoukas - EuthemiaMatsoukas@gmail.com

Iris Show Chair: Kathryn Mohr - kemohrke@aol.com



Siberian ‘Pink Haze’ (McGarvey, 1980)
Morgan-Wood Medal 1988

GREATER ROCHESTER IRIS SOCIETY

(GRIS)

Submitted by Cara Hutchings, Affiliate Chair

The Greater Rochester Iris Society has been in hibernation this year, as has everyone else in the Region 2 area. But in August we did manage to venture out and hold a sale of iris rhizomes at Bristol's Garden Center in Victor, New York. Despite the pandemic, there was a good turnout, and we raised a decent amount of money for the club. And most members got some great iris to add to their garden collection!



Left: Bristol's Garden Center Right: Wendy and Neil 'staying safe' while selling iris rhizomes

We are going to hold our September meeting as a Zoom meeting; it will be on (Wednesday) September 9th at 7:30 pm. If you are interested in attending, please contact me for an invitation. We will be discussing Bulbous Iris, showing the AIS presentation on them.

We hope our October meeting will be a face-to-face meeting however, if need be, we will change it to a Zoom meeting. For now it will be held on (Sunday) October 11th at 2 pm at St. John's Episcopal Church in Honeoye Falls, NY. Diane Henderson, a highly active member of the gardening community in Rochester, will be giving a talk on woodpeckers. What do woodpeckers have to do with iris, you ask? Nothing really, but our members have shown an interest in a more diverse program, but we will always keep our primary focus on iris.

We are hoping 2021 will be a more active year than this one. May all of you stay healthy!

GRIS Officers:

President: Cara Hutchings - thehutchings@me.com

Vice President: Neil Houghton - images@irises.org

Secretary/Treasurer: Nate Hutchings - thehutchings@mac.com

ONTARIO IRIS SOCIETY

(ONIS)

Submitted by Kate Brewitt, Affiliate Secretary

Twenty-twenty will be an iris season to remember. After attending the Newmarket Seedy Saturday on March 2nd our iris world came to a rapid halt. Every event following this date was cancelled. This included our June show and our August rhizome auction and sale. We quickly had to reinvent ourselves for a ‘self-isolating’ society.

Taking a page from the American Iris Society, ONIS had its first Virtual Iris Show. We quickly developed a show schedule based on the different iris classes. There were also divisions for seedlings, youth and floral arrangements. Participants were asked to submit three garden shots of each iris entered: top, side and stalk. One could enter as many pictures as they liked. Pictures were judged according a set of criteria such as how well the iris was grown for its cultivar and presentation.

In the end there were over sixty entries submitted by four eager photographers. A \$10 Tim Hortons gift card was given to each participant as a thank you for their efforts. Below are just some of the entries received.



'Blueberry Tart' submitted by Lyn Hickey in the Standard Dwarf Bearded Section



'Dance the Night Away' submitted by Karen Lockyear in the Tall Bearded Section



'Hot News' submitted by Kate Brewitt in the Miniature Tall Bearded Section



'Strawberry Fair' submitted by Teri Morris in the Siberian Section

In July we decided to have an on-line sale. All classes of bearded irises were offered, supplied by our President, Terry Laurin. Fourteen people took advantage of this offer. All proceeds will go towards future ONIS events.

Our FACEBOOK page became highly active during the last few months with our number of friends tripling since March. We had lots of posts with lots of shared experiences and pictures. Join us. We would love to hear from you!

Otherwise, our annual meeting is in the planning stages. Will it be a virtual meeting, an email meeting, or a conference call? Time will tell!

ONIS Officers:

President: Terrance Laurin – tlaurin@rogers.com

Vice President: Jinny Missons - jojimissons@sympatico.com

Secretary: Kate Brewitt – kbrewitt@rogers.com

Treasurer: Lyn Hickey – lhickey94@hotmail.com

WESTERN NEW YORK IRIS SOCIETY

(WNYIS)

Submitted by Marilee Farry, Affiliate Chair

We were all extremely excited to get the irises delivered for our Spring project. We buy a certain amount from our treasury every year and divide them among current members. We raise them and give their offspring to our annual iris sale. It is kind of an iris evaluation and a way of helping our society at the sale. Unfortunately, this year COVID-19 caused the cancellation of most of our programs, including our iris show and sale.

We are planning our first meeting, since the COVID-19 cancellations, at the end of September and all members seem happy to get together. We will meet outside at David's big red barn, with lots of fresh air. We shall do the necessary business, set up our 2021 budget, vote on officers, make a tentative program with dates for the iris show and iris sale and discuss Region 2 Zoom meetings. Contact me for date and time.

We wish all Region 2 members stay safe and enjoy the holidays with special friends and family.

WNYIS Officers:

President: Marilee Farry – farmare@aol.com

Vice President: Maria Gerbracht – mgerbracht@verizon.net

Secretary: Velma Szczesny – frank123451@icloud.com

Treasurer: Annette Kuhn – akuhn@rich.com



*Siberian 'Lake Keuka' (Borglum, 1994)
Morgan-Wood Medal 2002*

Judges Training Report

Submitted by Wendy Roller, JT Chair for AIS Region 2

REGION 2 OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY – JUDGES and STUDENT JUDGES Status Roster – as of July 31, 2020

<u>Active Master</u>	<u>Garden / Exhibition</u>	<u>Apprentice Judge</u>	<u>Retired Master</u>
David Baehre	Kate Brewitt	Suzanne Perry	Raymond Ives
Joanne Bassett	John Colley		Daniel P. McMillen
Chuck Chapman	Marilee Farry		Gloria McMillen
Maria Gerbracht	Terrance Laurin		James McMillen
Donna James	E.J. Mattson		Carolyn Schaffner
Donna J. Lowry	Jinny Missons		Helen B. Schueler
Maureen Mark	Vaughn Sayles		Kathleen Shadreck
Wendy K. Roller	Janette Smith		
Dorothy Stiefel	Mary J. Urist		

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Region 2 accredited judges and student judges collectively earned 21 hours of credit for attending classroom sessions held during the 2019 Region 2 Annual Fall Meeting event in Honeoye Falls, New York. AIS Garden/Exhibition Judge Hugh Stout presented a one-hour course on “Exhibition Judging of Tall Bearded Irises” and a two-hour course on “Garden Judging of Tall Bearded Irises.” Hugh, an iris and daylily hybridizer, is the owner of Stout Gardens at Dancingtree in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The COVID-19 pandemic severely limited the possibility of any additional judges training opportunities being held during the remainder of the period from August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020. The American Iris Society Centennial Convention scheduled for Newark, New Jersey and the 2020 Median Iris Society Convention scheduled for Oklahoma City, Oklahoma were both cancelled. Three proposed Region 2 in-garden judges training sessions were also cancelled. The American Iris Society made the decision to extend eligibility of all Student, Apprentice, Garden and Master Judges who lack judges training hours for one year.

Upcoming Zoom Meetings



AIS Region 2 has scheduled regular Zoom meetings for the remainder of the year and into 2021. Some meetings will be Board meetings where the Board and Committee chairs discuss Region 2 business. Others will be social gatherings where you can share local news and catch up with your Region 2 iris friends.

If you are interested in being notified of each upcoming meeting, send your email address to Neil Houghton (images@irises.org). When it

has been determined what type of meeting will be held, you will receive an email invitation with the log in details. Neil can also provide help with using the Zoom program.

Meetings are the first Tuesday of every month. **Start time is 7:30 PM Eastern Time (US & Cda):**

September 1, 2020 – Board Meeting

December 1, 2020 - TBD

October 6, 2020 - TBD

January 5, 2021 - TBD

November 3, 2020 – TBD

AIS Region 2 Annual Meeting

This year's Annual Meeting will be held via Zoom! No more long distance travelling or stays in hotels. You can join the group from the comfort of your own home! Mark your calendars for **Saturday, October 24, 2020**. The meeting is still in the planning stages however every Region 2 member will be notified once the details have been finalized.

Bylaw Amendments

Submitted by the Bylaw Committee

As Region 2 of the American Iris Society adapts the virtual world it becomes necessary to change the way business is conducted. For that reason, the Bylaws Committee is proposing the following Articles/Sections be amended so that meetings can be held virtually. In accordance with Article XIII, all members must be notified of the proposed amendments at least 15 days prior to voting. Voting takes place at the annual meeting. **Please read the following and come prepared to vote at the October 24th Virtual Annual Meeting.**

For a full copy of the Region 2 Bylaws visit the Region 2 website, wwwaisregion2.org. A link can be found on the Officers/Chairpersons page.

Article VI – Officers/Section 2 - All the officers and representatives on the Board of Directors shall be elected annually, with the Regional Vice President being subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of the AIS. No officer or representative, except the Treasurer and Secretary, shall be elected or appointed to the same office for more than three consecutive years.

The purpose of this amendment is to allow the Secretary to hold office for more than three consecutive years.

Article VIII – Board of Directors/Section 2 - *The Board of Directors shall meet at least once annually at a time and place designated by the Regional Vice President. The Board of Directors may also conduct region business via electronic mail (email), teleconference or videoconference. Minutes from these meetings will be reported in the region newsletter when appropriate.*

Article X – Nominations and Elections/Section 4: *The election is to be held each year during the business portion of the Annual General Meeting by show of hands or by roll call vote. A simple majority of the members present, and voting, is necessary for elections.*



Treasurer's Report

Region 2 of the American Iris Society

Submitted by Vaughn Sayles, Treasurer

As of July 6, 2020 the account balances for Region 2 are as follows:

checking -- \$2,742.38,
savings -- \$3,625.72
certificate of deposit -- \$3,617.30.

Since January 1, 2020 we have received \$17.33 in revenue (savings: \$.90, certificate of deposit: \$4.50 and Amazon Smile: \$11.93. We have expended \$334.05 (Judges' training postage: \$15.80, fall meeting – Zoom license for 2020: \$149.90, and website fees for 2020: \$168.35).



Enjoy the convenience of on-line shopping while supporting Region 2 at the same time. If you shop on Amazon, you can have .5% of eligible purchase prices donated to Region 2 of the American Iris Society.

Use this link <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1743524> to log directly into **AMAZON SMILE**. You won't even have to search for Region 2 of the American Iris Society and 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases will be donated to Region 2. There is no cost to Region 2 and there is no additional cost to you. It is a win-win situation if you shop this way.

If you already shop at Amazon, go one step further and shop at AmazonSmile! More details are available on the Amazon Smile website. Note, this offer is available to US residents only.

AIS Region 2

Membership Report

Submitted by Vaughn Sayles, Membership Chair

As of July 31, 2020 in addition to four affiliate memberships (Capital Hudson Iris Society, Greater Rochester Iris Society, Ontario Iris Society, and Western New York Iris Society) and four organizational memberships (Brooklyn Botanical Garden, Cornell University Library, Jardin Botanique de Montreal Bibliotheque and the Sayville Garden Club), there are 103 members of the American Iris Society who reside in Region 2.

We would like to welcome:

Ida Blasak (Buffalo, NY), Debi Chowdhury (Loudonville, NY), Raaya & Sterling R. Churigin (Speonk, NY), Lori Galletti (North Baldwin, NY), Jan Ellen McEneny (Albany, NY), Kelci McIntosh (Shelter Island Heights), Donald & Sharon Sweet (Penn Yan, NY), Anna Whittaker (Fairport, NY), Angela Zolfaghari (New York, NY)

Do you know when your AIS membership expires?

Go to www.aislookup.org to find out your expiry date. If your membership is expiring you can go to www.irises.org and renew on-line with PayPal. It is that easy to keep your AIS membership current.



Join the American Iris Society

Annual Single: \$30 US / Dual: \$35 US (includes a quarterly bulletin)

Triennial Single: \$70 US / Dual: \$85 US (Includes a quarterly bulletin)

A one-year electronic membership, or e-membership, is available for \$15 US.

Annual Youth Rates (under age 19): \$8 US without a Bulletin/\$12 US with a Bulletin

[Click here](#) to go to the American Iris Society website and a list of additional membership types. There is also a link that will allow you to pay for your membership through PayPal.

The Newsletter of Region 2 of the American Iris Society is published twice a year and e-mailed free to all members of the American Iris Society residing in Region 2 (New York State, Ontario, and Quebec). Members without email may receive a paper copy by mail upon request. It is the member's responsibility to advise of e-mail changes and to submit a written request for paper copies to the editor. Permission is granted to reproduce articles, with proper attribution, unless otherwise noted. It is appreciated that a copy of the publication is provided to the editor.

COPY DEADLINES

Spring Issue February 15 Fall Issue August 15

(Please note, submissions may be edited for style and clarity.)

Editor: Kate Brewitt – just1moreiris@gmail.com

Editor's Message



Thank goodness for our garden! It gave me great solace during the last six months of 'pandemic living'.

When a provincial state of emergency was declared on March 17, 2020 I turned to our garden. Even though it was a lacklustre iris season (in keeping with the year that has been 2020) I found myself paying closer attention to other aspects of the garden. I watched a family of rabbits grow from wee babies to adults. One evening I was lucky to catch three generations of rabbits feeding on the clover in our back lawn. At other times, usually around 6:00 pm, I sat on our deck to wait for the hummingbirds to come feed on the bee balm, weigela and echinacea. They are amazing birds to watch! I also participated in an

International Monarch Monitoring Blitz (July 24 to August 2) through the Espace Pour la Vie Montreal. During this period Terry and I observed twenty monarchs in and around our neighbourhood. Other activities included watching the night sky in hopes of viewing the comet 'Neowise' and attempting to do my own iris hybridizing rather than leaving it up to the bees. (Note: I was successful at neither!)

I know these activities are not on the top of everyone's 'to-do list' however, they suited me fine. They were a tremendous distraction at a time when I found world events overwhelming.

As summer turns to autumn indoor activities will become our new focus. Now that Region 2 has a Zoom license you may want to mark your calendar for one of the Board meetings or alternately you may want to join one of the 'social gatherings' to discuss, among other things, irises. Our October annual meeting will be easier than ever to attend as it changes to a virtual format. A list of upcoming Zoom meetings has been provided in this newsletter. Get on the mailing list to stay up to date.

Whatever activities you plan for the next few months I hope you find great comfort in them. The way we lead our lives will be different for many months to come however change can be good especially if it allows us to discover new and exciting activities to enrich our lives.

Until next time...

Kate

