



Waco Iris Society News



Website: http://www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html E-mail: wacoiriss@gmail.com

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An affiliate of the American Iris Society

November, 2020

NOVEMBER WIS MEETING



November 21, 10:00 a.m., Crestview Church of Christ

Waco Iris Society will meet November 21, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. Meetings are held at the Crestview Church of Christ Community Center, 7129 Delhi (Sanger becomes Delhi shortly after crossing Hwy. 6). Masks are required by the facility.

Member, Ken Fuchs will present our program this month, a webinar video by Gary White, immediate



past president of the American Iris Society, with part one of *Iris* and *AIS-The Early Years*. Gary had

prepared this program to present during the 100 Year Anniversary of the American Iris Society in New York City, where it all began. Unfortunately, the Anniversary Celebration had to be canceled due to the national pandemic.

Please join us for this informative history of the American Iris Society.

September Sale

The Waco Iris Society annual Rhizome Sale was held as scheduled on September 26th at GreenLife Nursery, 1312 N. New Road, Waco. We want to thank all our special guests who came to pick out great irises for their gardens. We are also happy to welcome a new member, Laura Green, who joined at the sale.

Thanks to you, we had our biggest sale EVER!

A photo list of all the irises offered for sale was emailed to everyone who receives the club newsletter, as well as posted on our club Facebook page. Several came with a list in hand.

We tried something new this

year—each different iris variety was placed in a large paper bag. Each bag had a photo and description of the iris it contained. When all the irises were sold from a bag, it was then folded flat and left on the table so you didn't have to search for one that was already gone. Everyone seemed to love the new way of presenting irises for purchase.

Help with Refreshments

Due to the current government restrictions placed on group meetings, all club refreshments must be in pre-packaged. Please help by bringing snacks and drinks for our refreshment table.





September 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes by Ken Anderson

The Waco Iris Society held its first meeting of the 2020-2021 year on Saturday, September 19, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. at the Crestview Church of Christ in Woodway. Dan Cathey called the meeting to order. He announced that Mitch Whitley would be serving as president for the 2020-2021 year.



Mitchell Whitley
Waco Iris Society
president 2020-2021

Roll call was conducted. Members present were: Ken Anderson, Linda Barnard, Dan Cathey, Peggy Cathey, Ken Fuchs, Glenn Huddleston, Dr. Joyce Jones, Jerry Keeth, Mary Keeth, Jim Landers, Don Peterson, Frances Peterson, Linda Roper, and Mitch Whitley.

The club welcomed a new member, Robb Startzman of Temple. Also attending the meeting was Oliver Earl, the great grandson of Don and Frances Peterson.

Minutes of the previous meeting were not read as they are available for members to review through the newsletter.

Mitch Whitley reported that the club has approximately \$8400 in the checking account as of August, 2020.

Old Business: It was announced that plant markers are available for member for \$9 per set of 25. Also, it was announced that there would be no regional meeting. It was also suggested that we make arrangements for venue for the spring show. Dues needed to be paid at the September meeting.

New Business: The club will hold its annual rhizome sale on Saturday, September 26, 2020, at the Green

Life Nursery in Waco from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Members were encouraged to help with setting up the sale at 8:00 a.m. Dan Cathey discussed the change in the way the sale will be managed, using paper bags with pictures for each variety of iris instead picture boards and trays.

Drawing for AIS Membership: The drawing for a one-year membership in AIS was won by Linda Barnard.

It was announced that the club is in need of a secretary and a program chairman. Ken Fuchs suggested using the ZOOM presentations that have been given by various experts throughout the year. There was a consensus among members that these presentations would make excellent programs. There was a brief discussion of the articles found in the most recent AIS journal. Several members noted that these articles were very interesting and of great quality.

Rhizome Give-Away: Members were given the opportunity to see a video slide show of all the rhizomes on the auction list. The video repeated several times providing each member the opportunity to make note of several choices. Each member received a token with a number and as numbers were drawn, the person whose number was called could choose any iris from the list. In addition, members who were not present but who were eligible for a rhizome also received a free iris. Olive Earl was allowed to choose a rhizome for his assistance with drawings and distribution of rhizomes during the auction.

Rhizome Auction: Glen Huddleston agreed to conduct the auction. Auction concluded at 11:25. The auction yielded a total sale of \$428.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30.



Iris for Giveaway and Auction purchased by the club from Mid-America Iris Garden and Superstition Iris Garden. A drawing is held and each member gets to choose a new iris. Remaining irises are then auctioned to help pay for expenses.

Photos by Ken Fuchs.



Fall is in the Air by Peggy Cathey

With the onset of Fall and cooler temperatures, it is a great time to be in the garden. Fall is the perfect time to prepare new beds for the spring, and to tidy up existing beds to get a head start on next season of blooms.



If you have trees, you are going to have leaves. What to do with all those leaves? They make the best FREE organic matter! Trees have mined minerals from deep in the subsoil and brought them to the surface. Leaves are a rich source of calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and more.

The leaves of one large tree can be worth as much as \$50 worth of plant food and humus. Pound for pound, leaves contain twice the mineral content of manure. The huge amount of organic matter they offer can be used to improve soil structure.

- Leaf humus can lighten heavy clay soils. They feed earthworms and beneficial microbes.

- Leaves increase the moisture retention of dry sandy soils.

- They make an attractive mulch in the flower garden.

- They are a fabulous source of carbon to balance the nitrogen in your compost pile.

- They insulate tender plants from cold.

Following are 6 ways to use your bounty of leaves by not sending them to the landfill or polluting the air by burning them.

1. CREATE A COMPOST PILE



Make compost for a valuable soil amendment. Pile autumn leaves in the corner of your yard. You can help contain them by using chicken wire or some type of structure. To speed up composition, shred those leaves with a mulching lawnmower (or use a chipper or leaf shredder).

Layer these carbon-rich “brown” leaves with high-nitrogen “green” material such as grass clippings, dead plant matter, and kitchen scraps. The “green” feeds the bacteria that will be doing all the work of breaking down the leaves. Layer three or four inches of leaves with an inch of fresh grass clippings or other green, leafy yard waste.

Let the compost sit all winter, turning the pile occasionally to aerate it. If the compost pile starts to appear dry, spray it down with a garden hose and turn with pitch fork. By the time spring rolls around, you should have some nice compost to add to your garden.

2. IMPROVE YOUR SOIL



Mix shredded leaves right into your garden. Next spring, your soil will be teeming with earthworms and other beneficial organisms.

Note: If you add shredded leaves right to the soil, add some slow-release nitrogen fertilizers to help the leaves decompose and to ensure that soil microbes don't use all of the available nitrogen.

3. MAKE LEAF MOLD



Composting sound like too much work? Then make leaf mold. Simply rake the leaves into a big pile. If you shred them, they will decompose faster, but you can still make leaf mold without shredding. Keep the leaves moist and let the fungi take over. After one to three years, the leaves will have disintegrated into a dark, sweet-smelling, soil conditioner that is high in calcium and magnesium and retains water. It's exceptional as an amendment for veggie and flower gardens and a great addition for potting soils.

4. MAKE MULCH



Leaves make an excellent protective mulch for vegetable crops, and ornamental shrubs. They not only suppress weeds and help retain soil moisture, but because they contain no weed seeds themselves, they won't encourage the spread of new weeds.

Be sure to chop or shred leaves before using them as mulch. Whole



An affiliate of the American Iris Society
And the Texas Garden Clubs, Inc.

**Meetings held 3rd Saturday of January,
March, May,
September and November at 10 a.m.
Crestview Church of Christ
Community Center, 7129 Delhi, Waco**

**Mitchell Whitley, President
Peggy Cathey, Newsletter Editor
wacoiriss@gmail.com**

Join WIS today!

Only \$10 per year. You may join at a meeting, download membership form from our website, or send a check with your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to:

Mitchell Whitley, Treasurer
812 Dayton, Waco, TX 76706



November 21, 2020

Crestview Church of Christ, Waco, TX



January 16, 2021

Crestview Church of Christ, Waco, TX



March 20, 2020

Crestview Church of Christ, Waco, TX

Check out our website:

www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html



<https://www.facebook.com/search/wacoirissociety>

Leaves (cont.) by Peggy Cathey

leaves can form a mat that water can't penetrate.

Leaves make a good insulating cover for overwintering tender perennials, too. The best time to mulch perennials is after a frost.

5. MOW INTO LAWN



Research has shown that lawns actually benefit from a thin layers of leaves. Leaf litter improves the soil, lessening the need for fertilizer in the spring. A mulching lawnmower with a blade 3 inches high and mowing once a week while the leaves are falling is recommended. This will break down the leaves into smaller pieces over the winter, providing your soil with

nutrients. Older mowers can be converted to mulchers by installing a mulching blade.

Leave leaf litter to feed worms, fungi, and soil bacteria. Just don't leave thick layers of matted leaves on your lawn, as this blocks oxygen to the soil and invites disease.

6. LEAVE THE LEAVES FOR WILDLIFE



Leaves aren't just about being useful to us as humans. Fallen leaves also provide wildlife, especially pollinators, with some winter cover. Bees, moths, butterflies, snails, spiders, and dozens of arthropods and pollinators overwinter in dead plant material for protection

from cold weather and predators. For example, the mated queen bumble bees burrow only an inch or two into the earth to hibernate for winter, relying on natural leaf litter to keep them insulated. Also, many butterflies overwinter as chrysalises or cocoons disguised as dry leaves. (Be careful when you throw away leaves!)

Let's not rake, mow, and blow away a bit of nature that is essential to our natural web of life. Consider creating a leaf pile or two and allowing it to break down naturally. (Leave leaves whole; do not shred.) Leave leaves on your garden beds as mulch through the winter and don't be in a rush to remove in the early spring. (Don't worry; flowers have no trouble poking their heads through leaves.) Your butterflies and pollinators will thank you!

(Reference: *The Old Farmer's Almanac*) Photos taken from the internet.