



Newsletter



Welcome Back!

Welcome back to the 66th year of the Waco Iris Society! Our first meeting of the 2024-2025 club year will be September 21st at the Crestview Church of Christ Community Center, 7129 Delhi, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Please don't be late as we have a LOT to do. This will be our annual Gift Iris Giveaway to qualifying members, followed by an Iris Auction, which is open to all bidders.

Members who have attended at least 3 meetings in the past club year, or any new member joining between September, 2023 and May, 2024 qualify. Here are our 22 lucky, qualifying members:

- Ken Anderson
- Linda Barnard
- Dan Cathey
- Peggy Cathey
- Preston Floyd
- Connie Harwell*
- Dawn Holmes
- Mary Keeth
- Carol Lane
- Donna Little
- Michael Lowe



- Rosa McHenry*
- Bonnie Nichols*
- Hooker Nichols*
- Dianne Reagan*
- Katrina Rieser
- Diane Roberts
- Jacky Roberts
- Linda Roper
- Ellen Singleton*
- B.J. Wheeler
- Frank Wheeler
- Mitchell Whitley



*New members MUST be present to receive their gift iris.

We will have a lot of irises to choose from. Both Mid-America Iris Gardens and Sutton's Iris Gardens were very generous with our orders. Attached is a list of all the irises which will be offered in the giveaway/auction. There are new 2024 introductions as well as a few historic. There will be Novelty iris-such as Space Age and Broken Color. There are also lots of Rebloomers. All are Tall Bearded irises and there is a color pattern to make each of you happy! (***Dues must be current to receive your free iris.***)

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It is that time of the year when excitement grows about another season of iris blooms in our gardens. No matter how hot the summer has been, there comes a time when the days begin to grow shorter, and the sun is not so direct. Even though we had some sweltering days, we fortunately did not have nearly as many 100+ degree days as last year. It might be a little early to say, "Fall is in the air," but at least some early fronts have brought rain and cooler temperatures. It is certainly nice to step outside and find that the temperature is not that different from inside. It really helps recharge one's desire to be outside and energizes gardeners to get busy with what lies ahead.

I always mention in my September article that this is the perfect time to take a walk in your garden and see how your irises have held up through the hot days of summer. I have spoken to some of our members, and nearly everyone has had to deal with rot in some of their iris clumps. We had considerably more rain in late May and June than usual. I am sure you recall that late May brought some really hot weather along with the rain. Those two things provide the perfect conditions for rot to develop. Not only did that hot weather have a negative impact on irises, but it also spawned a tornado, or more likely two tornados, in the Temple area. One of our members, Preston Floyd, had considerable damage to trees, his patio covers, and hail damage to his roof. Just this past week, all the repairs have finally been completed. Unfortunately, he lost a beautiful cedar elm tree on the west side of his home that provided a lot of shade to his breakfast nook. Not only was there a loss of beauty and a place to hang birdfeeders, but there was also a loss of significant shade on those west-facing windows.

In addition to rot, another problem that most of us see on our irises is a bit of sunburn. If your irises are



Photo on the left shows bleached leaves from the bright sun and the right has green leaves from being in the shade.

in full sun, you have probably noticed that the fans have become somewhat bleached. Fortunately, this appearance will begin to return to normal as the sun is less direct and the temperatures start to drop. My observation is that it is more the effect of the direct sun than the extreme temperatures because those irises that have a little shade in the afternoons look much better. If you are a member who has just begun working with irises, don't be discouraged by this condition. It might look terrible right now, but it won't last long. And besides that, by the time spring rolls around, new leaves will be emerging and soon replace the old ones.

The early September walk through your iris garden provides an excellent opportunity to decide which clumps must be dug and divided. If you plan to bring rhizomes to the iris sale, it is not too early to start making a list of what you will be bringing, nor is it too early to begin the actual digging process. Here are some hints and tips for this process, especially if this is a new experience for you. Dig one clump at a time. As you begin to break up the clump, write the name on the innermost leaf of the fan on every rhizome (or even on the rhizome itself if the leaves are tiny) before doing anything else. After all, most tall bearded irises look exactly alike until they bloom. Once the clump of rhizomes has been cleaned, it is time to divide them into three groups. The first group contains the ones to be kept for your garden. The second group are ones that are well-developed and can be prepared for the sale. The third group are the smaller ones that can be put in pots of two or more rhizomes for the potted iris sale in the spring. Remember that the smaller ones might look insignificant when planted, but with minimal care throughout the winter, they can sometimes produce rhizomes large enough to bloom the following spring. Please refer to your yearbook for more specific information regarding trimming up and cleaning rhizomes, attaching price tags, determining prices, etc. If you have questions, please ask any member who has been doing this for a while. Here is one more hint for those doing this for the first time. Pace yourself. Determine the total number of clumps you will be digging and then spread this work over several days, doing one or two varieties each day or more, depending upon how many clumps you plan to divide and how much of your day you can devote to the task. One of our members told me that this was his first time digging and dividing rhizomes, and he did not realize how much work was involved. Yes, it

President's Message, May 9th by Ken Anderson

is a lot of work, but it is gratifying.

The day before I began working on my article for the September newsletter, I received a call from Frances Peterson. Last year, she and her husband, Donald, had to withdraw from being participating members because of health issues. However, Frances has graciously offered to provide rhizomes for the rhizome sale. I passed this information on to Peggy Cathey, who has already emailed everyone regarding this offer. Anyone who wishes to help clean and tag rhizomes should contact Peggy or me. I am aware that several people were interested in assisting in digging the irises. Still, the bulk of the work involves cleaning them properly, trimming the fans, labeling and pricing all of them, and attaching a tag to identify them as ones donated by Frances Peterson to the sale. As of early yesterday, I already had four people, Dan and Peggy Cathey, Jacky Roberts, and myself, who would be glad to help dig the rhizomes. Soon after Peggy sent out the notice of this project, several more people expressed interest in digging. I talked to Frances, and we agreed that it would simplify things to set a time for members to gather at her place at the same time rather than people showing up at different times and days. I decided to drive out to her place late this afternoon (Friday) and see what would be available for the sale. She had already made a list of her rhizomes, and she went around her garden with me to tell me which ones would be available for sale and how many the club members could dig. To accommodate her wishes and expedite the process, I made a list of everything she would allow us to dig and how many we should take from her garden. After making this visit and making note of the layout of her garden, I realized that the four of us, Dan and Peggy, Jacky, and I, would be able to complete the digging. Anyone else who is willing to help with cleaning and tagging can let me know by Saturday, September 14th. Then, we will know approximately how many varieties to set aside to bring to our meeting on September 21st. This will give some of the newer members the opportunity to prepare rhizomes for sale, even though they might not yet have any of their own varieties to divide. Frances will provide about forty named varieties for our sale and several "landscape" irises. What a significant contribution that will be.

I am sure everyone is looking forward to our first meeting as we kick off a new year. One of the perks of being a member is the Iris "giveaway" and auction, which will be on Saturday, September 21st, at the

Crestview Church of Christ, 7129 Delhi Road in Waco. Our rhizome sale will be the following Saturday, September 28, at the GreenLife Nursery, located at 1312 N. New Road in Waco.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our first meeting. It is always great to see everyone, and the "giveaway" and auction meeting is always special. In addition to our first meeting, I look forward to our rhizome sale the following Saturday. I know that some members will have many rhizomes to bring, and there will undoubtedly be a great variety from which to choose.

Until then, happy gardening. Stay healthy and safe!

Meeting Minutes by Jacky Roberts

The May 18th meeting was called to order by Ken Anderson, President. We met at George's Restaurant for the yearly luncheon. We had 13 members present and welcomed a new member, Connie Harwell.

Secretary and Treasurer reports were sent in last month's newsletter. Drawing for A.I.S. Membership will be conducted at the next meeting.

No Old Business was discussed.

New Business, Mitch Whitley talked about summer care of Iris. Ken Anderson explained the 2024 A.I.S. Symposium and where to send it. Discussion about the 2025 Iris Show, Show Themes, Venue and Judges. Decision to be made at the next meeting.

Ken Anderson handed out Show Awards to those present and took pictures. Meals were served with lots of conversations. See everyone in September.



Starting on the left and going around the table: Mitchell Whitley, Connie Harwell, Dianne Reagan, Linda Barnard, Katrina Reiser, Michael Lowe, Ken Anderson, Mary Keith, Carol Lane, Linda Roper, Jacky Roberts, and Diane Roberts.

2024 Iris Rhizome Sale September 28th From 9-Noon

We are fortunate to have several new members who have never participated in our Fall Iris Rhizome Sale. Following are a few tips to help you get your plants ready. You can donate your plants to the club for the sale, or you can choose to receive 50% of the sale price back as a “club bonus”. To receive your member bonus for the plants you brought for sale, please follow the instructions in your club yearbook for *Preparing Plants for Sale*. Take a walk around your garden, make a list of the irises you will dig to bring to the sale, and get the list to me as soon as possible. I will post photos of the irises for sale on our club's Facebook page, where we have over 1,000 followers. I will begin posting daily photos starting two weeks before the sale. If you aren't already a follower of our club's Facebook page, you can join us now at: <https://www.facebook.com/WacoIrisSociety>.

Please email the list of plants you will be bringing to wacoiriss@gmail.com so I can post a list of all the plants, plus photos of each. The “Event” has already been posted on Facebook, and several followers are

your friends. If anyone uses other social media, I encourage you to share our sale information on them as well.

I will print the photos for the sacks. Let me stress the importance of sending your list ahead of time. Plants with photos sell quickly. Plants in trays with no pictures will not sell or will sell only if someone is there to show the buyer a photo on their phone. Early planning and timely submission of your list can significantly boost the chances of your plants being sold.



Early preparation is crucial for our fall sale. We strongly recommend digging your plants a few days before the sale. This allows you ample time to trim and clean the plants and give them time to dry. The day before the sale, sorting the different varieties into plastic shopping bags makes the process smoother



and ensures a more organized setup when it's time to put them in paper sacks on the sale tables. The sacks on the show tables will have a photo of your irises, which can significantly boost their sales potential.

Irises: Gather everything you will need before you



already showing interest. A Facebook ad will begin on September 14th, reaching Facebook followers within a 50-mile radius of Waco. I will email the list to our 600 Newsletter subscribers on the Friday before the sale. The deadline to get your plants on these lists is September 25th. If you want your plants highlighted on Facebook earlier, send your list as soon as possible. Please share our Facebook posts with all



2024 IRIS SHOW (cont.)



Gather all your supplies ahead of time

begin. You can dig the entire clump or take increases off the side of the main plant. Please write the iris name on a **center leaf**. Outside leaves will turn brown and fall off, and the name is lost). Use a permanent marker like a black Sharpie®



Freshly dug iris

(do not use an ink pen). Write on them as soon as you dig them and before moving on to the next clump. Once all your irises are dug, move to a shady spot and trim the leaves into an inverted V, place your hand around the roots, just under the rhizome, and trim off any roots below your hand. Don't worry about trimming off the roots; they will die anyway. The remaining roots will help anchor the plant in the ground until new white roots develop. Once trimmed, wash them in 10% bleach water (1 cup bleach to 1 gal. water) to kill any pathogens in the soil still clinging to the roots. Add a "squirt" of Dawn dish soap to the water to help clean them. Let them soak for about 10 minutes. Use a vegetable brush and scrub the rhizomes well. Rinse them in fresh water and lay them in a shady spot to dry. The day before the sale, sort them by name and put each variety into a bag. This will aid in getting them put out faster. You can even write the name on the bag to make it go even quicker. Please remember that irises brought to the sale should be "bloom-size" rhizomes, which are the most attractive to buyers. If you have small ones, please put them in a pot and grow them for our spring sale. They will develop and increase to be nice-sized plants by spring.



- Write name on center leaf
- Hybridizer and Year of introduction optional
- Tear-off paper tag with initials and price if you want club bonus
- Write price on plant and tag.
- Bloom size rhizome
- Increases

Pricing: It's important to have your plants priced BEFORE you arrive. We have a pricing guide to help you, but please remember, these are plants you donate to help the club. You can price them for any amount you choose. If you have a nice big rhizome with many increases, it might be worth more than a smaller one. In the example above, we have nice big rhizome with five increases (2 are on the back side). The suggested price on the pricing guide is \$6. I chose to price it at \$7 because of the size and increases; it is a fan favorite and would probably sell for even more. Newer varieties are worth more than historic irises (more than 30 years old) because there are not as many available. Irises that have won the Dykes medal could be worth more because they have won the highest award for an iris in AIS and have proven themselves over the years to be outstanding plants. We trust your judgment in pricing and encourage you in this sale aspect. Your role in this process is crucial, and we sincerely appreciate your dedication to the club and the sale.

Let's have a GREAT SALE!





Waco Iris Society

An affiliate of the American Iris Society

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Membership dues \$10/yr.

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Iris Names beginning with SEPTEMBER

I G F W V I N N R O M D J K G
 H L G X R I Y I L E O T E F S
 U E U Q N A D D A G S B C A J
 F A T X L H T S A R T N O C S
 Q M P P D M X Y U H L R J E Y
 R Q E Y L F R E T T U B A G M
 O R K M R E L K R A P S K O E
 L M Y W M E S T H K G E O T N
 I R I D T R L K E C O N L E I
 A Y S S E H A U I R L L L U H
 S Z A X U S D H E E D L H Q S
 C P E C I A A V C A S R L U N
 V L Z M Q E W O M M S V S O U
 Z E T E D A N E R E S G J B S
 F R O S T S O N G D B P E V H

We're on the Web!

[http://](http://www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html)

[www.kenfuchs42.net/](http://www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html)

[waco_index.html](http://www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html)

Website has been updated—Check it out!



<https://www.facebook.com/WacoIrisSociety>

Word bank

1. bouquet
2. butterfly
3. charm
4. contrast
5. cream
6. dawn
7. frost
8. gleam
9. gold
10. moon
11. morn
12. pastel
13. replay
14. sailor
15. seas
16. serenade
17. skies
18. song
19. sparkler
20. sunshine

Treasurer's Report by Peggy Cathey

Beginning bal. 5-1-24	\$ 11,647.80	Expenses:	
Income:		Show expenses (ribbons, room rental, etc.)	\$ (764.16)
Membership dues	\$ 80.00	May Luncheon	\$ (220.92)
Total income	\$ 80.00	Newsletters (Apr/May)	\$ (29.76)
		Postage	\$ (7.56)
		Show awards	\$ (49.50)
		Show vases (for single blossom)	\$ (44.99)
		Show advertising	\$ (48.00)
		Sale photos	\$ (12.60)
		Total expenses	\$ (1,177.49)
		Ending bal. 8-31-24	\$ 10,550.31

