



Newsletter

Waco Iris Society



Be PREPARED

Our March meetings have always been a time for members to get excited about the iris bloom season, which will be here before you know it. I hope everyone fertilized their irises before the rains of the last couple of weeks. We are already seeing improvements in the color and vigor of our iris clumps. The March meeting is also a time for a refresher course in getting irises ready for the April Iris Show. We will do that at our meeting on March 15th, starting at 10:00 a.m. This preparation includes grooming your irises, selecting the best ones for the show, and understanding the criteria for showing. Meetings are held at Crestview Church of Christ, in their Community Center, 7129 Delhi in Waco.

This will be our 2nd year having a Photography Division in our show, and it's a great opportunity for members to challenge themselves and strive for excellence. Included in this newsletter are some tips on how to photograph and enter Blue Ribbon photo entries. Dan has also prepared a PowerPoint program with photos to help you better understand some of the terms he wrote about in his article. Also included in the PowerPoint are tips on getting

your irises groomed and ready to win awards at the show. Peggy, an AIS Garden/Exhibition judge, will discuss this program portion. So, bring the tips and tricks you use to get ready for the show, plus any questions on how to enter any of the Divisions of the show, whether it is horticulture, artistic design, off-scape entries, or photography. There are 6 Texas Iris clubs, all having their shows on the same day as ours. Let's see if we can't make ours the BEST, with the most show entries in AIS Region 17! Don't be afraid to jump into the deep end and show your irises. Once you receive that first ribbon, you will be hooked. Remember, Iris shows are open to everyone, not just WIS members. We encourage all iris enthusiasts to participate and share their love for these beautiful flowers. The top criteria for showing are: 1. The exhibitor must have grown and entered the irises, and 2. They must be shown in green bottles or vases. There are no entry fees; entry cards will be available at the meeting and the show. Remember to complete both the top and bottom of the entry card. See you on the 15th!

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Greetings to all of our members. My goodness! What chilling days we have had recently. But let's take a moment to appreciate the resilience of our irises, which have weathered the severe freeze with their characteristic strength. If the bloom season is not great this year, it certainly will not be due to a lack of chilling nights. The last freeze was quite severe. I am sure everyone experienced the loss of plants that usually survive winter temperatures into the low twenties or even lower. However, the last icy blast of air came with a lot of wind and temperatures that stayed around fourteen degrees for about ten hours here in Gatesville. That was a very hard freeze compared to some of our winters. There was damage to many plants and the complete loss of others. I noticed the tips of the leaves of the spuria irises were frozen, resulting in some unsightly damage to the foliage. I spent part of one afternoon trimming off some of this damage. The picture below was taken before I attempted to improve the look of the bed.



Before

My suggestion for dealing with the unsightly discoloration is to snip off all those frozen tips, especially the ones toward the front of the bed. All the fans will eventually put on several more inches of growth, plus the bloom stalks will grow even higher and hide much of the brown edges toward the back of the bed. It is much easier to address the issue at this growth stage than to wait until later in the season when the new growth will have increased, making it much more challenging to cut out the unsightly tips while trying to avoid damaging the new growth of the fans and emerging bloom stalks.

After a bit of trimming, the bed looks somewhat improved. It will only get better as new growth appears. Looking around my garden, I see many positive signs promising a good bloom season. Last fall, I had a few varieties of tall-bearded irises that seemed to be declining, which made me concerned they might

After



not survive until spring. Surprisingly, they have returned with several increases, producing some fans that may bloom this season. January and early February usually offer little hope for irises. But when March arrives, dramatic changes begin to unfold. I hope our members witness this miraculous circle of life in their gardens. It's that wonderful time of year when anticipation turns into appreciation. It's the time of year that all gardeners come to love and cherish, as spring ultimately arrives, bringing the breathtaking beauty of the bloom season. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on Saturday, March 15, at 10:00 a.m. at the Crestview Church of Christ Community Center in Waco. Our program will focus on preparations for the Iris show on April 12, just five weeks away. This show is a highlight of our club's activities, and your participation is crucial to its success. After the business portion of our meeting, Peggy Cathey will demonstrate how to prepare an iris for exhibition and will answer any related questions. In addition to her presentation, Dan Cathey will provide information on photography, using a PowerPoint presentation that will help those seeking to understand what constitutes a great photograph of an iris rather than just a simple picture of a pretty iris. He has extensive experience with photography and is always willing to share his tips for taking great photos. For newer members especially, please don't hesitate to ask questions. We are fortunate to have these two members in our club who possess a wealth of knowledge regarding show preparation, extensive experience in showing irises, and a strong desire to help and encourage new members. I wish you a wonderful spring filled with beauty in your gardens and hope you will find ways to participate in our upcoming show.

When I was preparing this article, the show was only about five weeks away, and there was no sign of an iris bloom anywhere in my yard. But the rhizomes are certainly springing to life. Ready or not, the burst of blooms will soon be here. As mentioned in my president's message, our March meeting will focus on show preparation. The show will be at a new venue this year. We will be at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites Waco South. More detailed information about the hotel, its location, and the location of the room in which the show will be held will be distributed at the March meeting. As usual, there will be several items available for every member. Show schedules will be available for each member at our meeting. Also, there will be flyers to help promote attendance for the show and the potted iris sale. All members bringing entries will be able to pick up entry cards and entry sheets so these can be prepared before the day of the show.

Our experienced members, who have been instrumental in making our shows successful, will be reaching out to our new members to encourage their involvement. We understand that the details may seem overwhelming at first, but remember, every member was once new. Don't hesitate to ask questions or seek help with your entries. Your participation is crucial to the success of our show.

If you're planning to bring potted irises to the show, please provide an estimated number of plants you expect to have ready. This could be something like 10 or less, 10 to 20, 20 to 30, 30 to 40, or a similar range. This early communication will greatly assist those responsible for setting up the tables. More specific pot label directions will be provided in the first week of April.

In addition, if you have been a member for a while, you have heard this before. I encourage you to participate and bring your irises for the show. Of course, everyone wants blue ribbons, but I encourage people to bring irises, even those with some obvious slight imperfections or even those you are sure will not earn a blue ribbon. If you have only a few blooms open the day before the show, or even just one, please bring it. It is important to have as many members participating as possible. We must have at least five exhibitors and 25 cultivars to qualify as a sanctioned show. One year, we were on the edge of not having enough entries until one member came in with several and put us over the top. In addition, even though we tend to focus on the perfect iris, the public sees the irises in all their colors and varieties. They don't care about how old or new it is, whether it has a tear or a little blemish somewhere. They enjoy seeing all the blooms.

Behind the scenes of planning an iris show are many phone calls, text messages, and emails. One of the main tasks is making arrangements for judges. This year, we will have judges who are relatively new to Texas. I asked them to provide some background information about their experiences with shows and judging and some information about their history with growing irises.

Brenda Griffin and Ken Fladager will judge the horticulture and artistic divisions, and Kathy Fladager will judge the photography division. Brinda was an apprentice judge at our show just a few years ago.

Brenda Griffin

Brenda Griffin shared a great deal of information at my request regarding her love for growing irises and how that interest grew. I will paraphrase much of



what she provided me in an email, and you may find parallels in your own experiences. She has loved irises for as long as she can remember but says she did not know the importance of names and related terms until about nine or ten years ago. At first, when she ordered irises to plant, she just tossed the tags, thinking, "What does it matter?". At the time, she knew nothing about falls or standards and thought a beard was "fuzzies on a man's face". She joined the Prescott Area Iris Society but rarely attended meetings. Eventually, she started attending meetings, and her interest in growing irises and participation in the club grew. She began Judge's Training right before the COVID outbreak, delaying her completion of training, but officially became a judge in 2024. She judged her first show last year. She grows approximately 1300 cultivars and has irises for sale online at www.brendasjoyiris.com. She also expressed what a change it was to move from Arizona to east Texas and adjust to significantly different weather conditions for growing irises.

Ken Fladager (Master Exhibition Judge)

Ken Fladager has a long history with irises. He attended his first iris show in 1987 in New Mexico. He was amazed at all the colors and varieties of irises and immediately joined the New Mexico Iris Society. He has been an active member in various organizations in several capacities throughout many years. He was also a member of the Albuquerque Iris Guild and the Albuquerque Aril Society. He served two terms as president of the New Mexico Iris Society. He is a master judge and has judged iris shows throughout New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas. He has also provided



training on a wide variety of iris-related topics. He and his wife, Kathy, moved to Corpus Christi two and a half years ago. He was in the military for twenty-seven years, having served both in the Navy and later in the Air Force. The success with tall-bearded irises

is very limited in South Texas because of the need for the winter chill. However, he has had tremendous success with Louisiana irises.

Kathy Fladager (Photography Judge)

Kathy Fladager has been asked to judge the photography section of our show. She is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Art. Some of her photographs were in an exhibition at the college when she was a student. She enjoys photographing wildlife, particularly birds, and also likes to photograph flowers that interest her. Last year, she judged the photography division of the Austin Iris Society Iris Show. In addition to that experience, while living in Albuquerque, she judged the photography division of the New Mexico Iris Society Iris Show for several years.

We are eagerly anticipating the arrival of our judges and their expert evaluation of the various divisions of our show. Their presence will undoubtedly add a new level of excitement and anticipation to our event.

This is going to be a good year for our show. Hopefully, we will continue having spring-like weather and no damaging storms for the next few weeks. Once again, I encourage everyone with something to cut for the show to please bring it and enter it in the horticulture division. Remember, many people come to see the color, variety, and beauty of all the flowers. Whether it gets a blue ribbon, red ribbon, white or pink is unimportant to the attendees. Let's try to have as many varieties and entries as possible and make this a memorable show!



Meeting Minutes by Jacky Roberts

President Ken Anderson called the January meeting of the Waco Iris Society to order. Ten members were present, and no new members or guests were present. Peggy Cathey made a motion to approve the November 2024 meeting Minutes, which was seconded by Carol Lane.

Carol Lane won the A.I.S. Membership drawing.

The raffle was held, and Peggy Cathey, Jacky Roberts, Carol Lane, and Linda Roper each took home a prize.

Old Business: Katrina Rieser and Mary Keeth received their Silver and Bronze medals won for 1st and 2nd most blue ribbons won at the 2024 Iris Show.

New Business: Discussion on Officers for 2025-26. This will be voted on at the March meeting.

The 2025 show will be at Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Waco South, and the same outline for the show schedule as last year was discussed and agreed upon by members present.

Reminder for everyone to sign up for Artistic Design.

After refreshments, we had Iris Garden Presentations by Carol Lane, Mary Keeth by Carol Lane, Jacky Roberts, Katrina Reiser by Michael Lowe, and Ken Anderson.

Meeting Adjourned

Treasurer's Report by Peggy Cathey

REMINDER: Please bring plants and iris/garden-related items for our March meeting raffle. Then, at the meeting, when a member comes to you selling tickets, please buy one or more tickets for your chance of winning that prize you have your eye on. Money collected from ticket sales goes to the club to help sponsor our annual April Iris Show, May luncheon, and September Iris giveaway, where qualifying members can choose an iris purchased by the club. Our

April Iris Show is a highlight of our club's calendar, featuring a stunning display of irises from our members' gardens. The May luncheon is a great opportunity to socialize and share gardening tips, and the September Iris giveaway is a chance for members to expand their iris collection.

So, keep bringing items and, most importantly, buy those tickets. Each ticket is just \$1, or you can get 6 for \$5. Let's keep making our raffles a great success!

Income since January 1, 2025		Expenses from January 1 through February 28, 2025:	
Income:		Donation for meeting room	\$ (35.00)
Raffle	\$ 47.00	AIS Membership	\$ (30.00)
		AIS Affiliation dues	\$ (30.00)
Total income	\$ 47.00	Total expenses	\$ (125.00)

We have a new policy: The checking account balance will now only be reported during the meetings.



Tips for Blue Ribbon Iris Photos by Dan Cathey

The following is written for photographing irises for Division IV, Photography Section of the Waco Iris Society's annual Iris Show. These guidelines are primarily for using cell phones as cameras, and since there is a wide range of controls and options from one phone to another, you will have to adjust accordingly for your make and model. These are the three categories that the judging is based on.

COMPOSITION:

Composition in photography is the arrangement of visual elements in a frame. It's a way to organize the objects in a scene to create a well-composed shot. These are some of the basic rules for great composition:

- Rule of thirds: Divide the frame into thirds with two horizontal and two vertical lines. Place the subject at the intersection of two of the thirds, leaving the other two-thirds more open. This applies primarily to photos featuring multiple flowers, i.e., other than single blooms. See the example at the end of the article.
- Leading lines: Use lines or curves to guide the viewer's eye to the subject. Leading lines can be straight, curved, diagonal, or converging. It is mainly for Garden scenes but may also apply to other Sections. Examples would include pathways, tree lines, repetition of color or colors, etc., but be very subtle when employing this; never take interest away from your subject, just lead the viewer's eye to it.
- Simplify the scene: Declutter the background of all distractions to draw attention to the subject. Look carefully at what is in the frame BEFORE you take the picture. Obviously, trash, but other things such as hoses, other plants and/or flowers, and textures such as a brick wall or chain link fence can distract from your subject and lower the quality of the photo. The key word here is distraction, taking away from your subject.
- Fill the frame: Avoid too much unused

space. Concentrate the viewer's attention on your subject. This is preferable to having to crop later to achieve the same results. Zoom with your feet whenever possible rather than using the camera to zoom in electronically. Get as close as possible to achieve the result you are aiming for.

- Crop carefully! Never truncate (cut off parts) of your subject unless that is your intention. Use cropping to eliminate waste space and bring emphasis to your subject.

TECHNIQUE:

A photographic technique is a method used to capture an image, such as how light is used or how the frame is composed.

- Framing is a popular compositional technique that involves using elements of a scene to create a frame around your subject. This may serve to emphasize your subject but can also provide context and help you tell a story through your image. For example, you might use the branches of a tree or shrub to frame your subject.
- Contrast can also be used to advantage because including contrasting elements in a photograph allows you to make a more substantial visual impact. The most common types of contrast you will encounter in photography are tonal and color contrast, but contrast can also be added to a photograph in textures and shapes. Never use contrast unless it accentuates your subject!
- In photography, "depth of field" refers to the distance between the nearest and farthest objects in any scene that appear acceptably sharp in a photograph, essentially defining the area that is in focus within an image; a shallow depth of field means only a small area is in focus, while a deep depth of field means a larger area is in focus.
- Depth of field can change the composition of your images and turn an average snapshot into something more artistic and eye-catching. Playing with depth of field allows you to clearly define the

foreground and background and dictate what the viewer will focus on. For example, if you're photographing a bloom stalk in a chaotic or messy environment, a shallow depth of field allows you to blur out everything else behind the image and make sure your subject is the only thing in focus. This is one of the most useful techniques you can use. Go to the portrait setting to accomplish this technique. See the example at the end of the article.

- Use the highest resolution possible. Your phone camera has settings for high resolution and lower resolution. Settings called things such as email are low resolution and will result in an inferior photo when enlarged to the 8" X 10" size requirements. The lower the resolution, the poorer the print will be, period.
- Focus. Be sure you are focusing on your subject! Too many times, the ground or the plant behind the flower is what the camera has chosen to focus on. There should be a method for determining what the focal point for your camera is. Do some research and find out how to accomplish this. Nothing ruins a picture faster than being out of focus. Camera shake will result in poor focus; try to use a tripod or some form of firm support to prevent shake. This is especially important if you are using any zoom, as zooming in will magnify camera movement. Preview your photo before moving on. Finding out that it was out of focus when you go to print will be a crushing disappointment.

INTEREST:

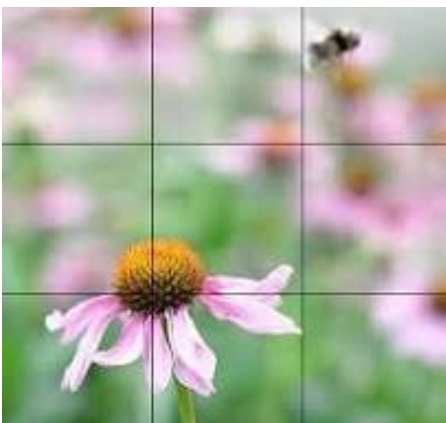
Impact created by your photography.

- The WOW factor! This is impossible to describe but obvious when you see it. The "wow factor" in photography is the quality that makes a photo stand out and capture the viewer's attention. It can be achieved by using unusual angles, breaking rules, or adding creative elements. How to add the wow factor? Try an unusual angle, may be low or high; use vibrant colors and unusual subject matter; look for high contrast situations, originality, and symmetry, and experiment to see what may just give that WOW! The greatest thing about digital photography is you can experiment at will, with no costly development fees or film to buy; just use your imagination and delete what didn't work. Practice-practice-practice!

These are just a few things that can give you those blue-ribbon photos at the next Show. Google the categories for an almost endless supply of ideas.

Five points are possible for each of the three categories for a total of fifteen. For each picture entered, 13 to 15 points are a blue ribbon, 10 to 12 are red, 6 to 9 are white, and five or less are pink. The photo with the most points, resulting in a blue ribbon in each section, will be awarded the "Best of Section" award. If there is a tie on points, it will be decided by the judge's choice. Each "Best of Section" will compete for the "Best of Show".

Remember to read and understand the Show Schedule for Division IV: Photography and follow all the rules.



Example of the rule of thirds and Depth of Field:
Why does this flower stand out? Can you see a distraction?
On the right, cropped to 8" x 10"



How clutter can ruin a photo.
What is the subject of this picture?



New Tomorrow
(Sexton, 1981)



Iris Names beginning with **SPRING**

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

Waco Iris Society

An affiliate of the American Iris Society

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We're on the Web!

http://www.kenfuchs42.net/waco_index.html

Website has been updated—
Check it out!

1. awakening
2. beauty
3. bouquet
4. break
5. caper
6. cheer
7. chimes
8. classic
9. dawn
10. delight
11. fancy
12. fantasy
13. festival
14. fever
15. fling
16. frolic
17. goddess
18. harmony
19. harvest
20. idyl
21. magic
22. melody
23. reverie
24. serenade
25. sonnet
26. sprite
27. sunset
28. symphony
29. valley
30. waltz



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