

The Iris Fan

Volume 12, Number 2
Fall/Winter 2000

THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY-----

YOUTH NEWSLETTER /
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Volume 12, Number 2
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JEAN E. MORRIS, Chairman
Youth Committee
682 Huntley Heights Drive
Ballwin, Missouri 63021

YOUTH NEWS FROM THE REGIONS -

Harmony Muller of Reg. 11 (Montana) grows about 20 iris varieties. She likes PEACE AND HARMONY, TOMORROW'S CHILD, LET'S DANCE and BEAUTY CROWN. She writes, "In late May and early June I work at my irises and help my family with the varieties we grow. We have a family iris business. I also like to hybridize." Her sister, Heidi Likes GNUZ FLASH, ART FAIRE, CHERRY SMOKE, BURGERMEISTER, PLANNED TREASURE and TOP GUN. She writes, "Because my family has the largest iris garden locally, many people come here to visit. My bloom season is at the end of May and the beginning of June. That is when I tend to mine and my family's iris garden. I also practice hybridizing."

We heard from Andy Simmes, Deja Bennett and Sumer Potter of Region 22 (Oklahoma). They are part of the Classroom Iris Project (CIP) at Mannford School. Andy grows watermelons and pumpkins and likes tall bearded irises. Sumer grows roses and petunias and likes the iris LINGERING LOVE. Deja grows tulips, daisies and irises. There are about 30 irises in the school garden. These youths will be joining the AIS Pen Pals program.

From Dr. Carolyn Schaffner, RYC of Reg. 2, "The Central NY area has a great new youth member, Amanda Cummings, granddaughter of long-time member, Anna Mae Cummings. Her mentor reports 'She's a joy!' " The youth membership has been growing in Reg. 2 and they now have 19 youths. Way to go!

We heard from Chris Rogers of Reg. 5 (Georgia) who likes CAMI FOSTER, ANNA COOK, TURNER MILLS and SUPERSTITION, and writes, "During bloom season my whole yard is alive with color. Family and friends come to look; strangers also stop." Chris grows 78 TBs and JIs.

From the Reg. 14 Bulletin, Vol. XLIV, Number 2, p. 37 we read news about Andrew Acosta. He is pictured with his iris Science Fair project. "Below is Andrew Acosta, youth member of the Leo T. Clark Iris Society with his 1st

place iris Science Fair project at Orland, CA. Andrew is one of 19 members of the Glenn County 4-H Iris Group. His project shows his work with iris. Andrew kept a notebook, recording in a detailed account, his experiences with iris and how to raise and show them. Congratulations Andrew!"

Jennifer Plank of Reg. 3 (Pennsylvania) wrote to say hello. She is a new AIS youth and grows a few TBs and has already clerked a show. She likes ALENE'S OTHER LOVE, a nice peach SDB that we love too. She writes, "I have three iris and this is my first year. I had one pretty bloom but then it died!"

Katherine Yancey of Region 13 (Washington) wrote to thank the Youth Committee for the irises that were sent to her for her participation in the youth activities. She writes, "Thank you for the irises, it was very thoughtful of the Youth Committee to send them. It was certainly a surprise to receive them. Please also thank the Greater St. Louis Iris Society for me." The postage for shipping the plants was paid for by GSLIS.

Welcome to new AIS youth member, Sheridan Southerland of Reg. 20 (Colorado) who writes, "I am new at this. I have gone to a few iris gardens and have gone to the iris show at the botanical gardens. I do not have my own iris garden but I help my Grandma with hers. I like iris and my family has planted them for a long time. I received the iris you sent and have planted them. Thank you."

From "Irid-ISM," Vol 19, #1, we were pleased to read an article by Larry Doucette about the events of the Reg. 4 Spring Tour. He writes, "The garden tours held some interesting surprises. The first surprise we noticed was two adults acting as mentors to young iris-talented youths. They remained together throughout the activities of the meetings and garden tours." Great idea!

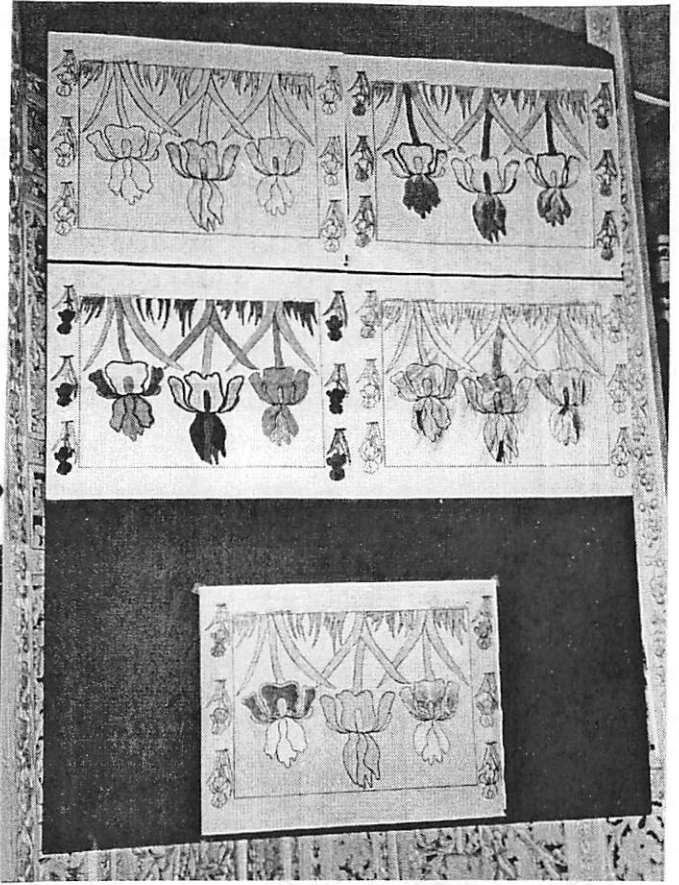
Kristen Laing of Reg. 4 (Virginia) likes VANITY, TOY BOAT and WILLIAM A. SETCHELL. She attended the Reg. 4 tour and writes, "I am a new member. I would like to be in the AIS

First Place Coloring Contest winners in each of the five age categories:

Top - Overall Winner and 1st Place in the age 10-12 category is Rachel Hindle, Region 18.

Middle - (L) age 6 and under, 1st Place is Ashlee Wilson, Region 12; (R) age 7-9, 1st Place is Taylor Reina, Region 15.

Bottom - (L) age 13-15, 1st Place is Kali Niswonger, Region 18; (R) age 16-18, 1st Place is Pamela Kratzer, Region 21.

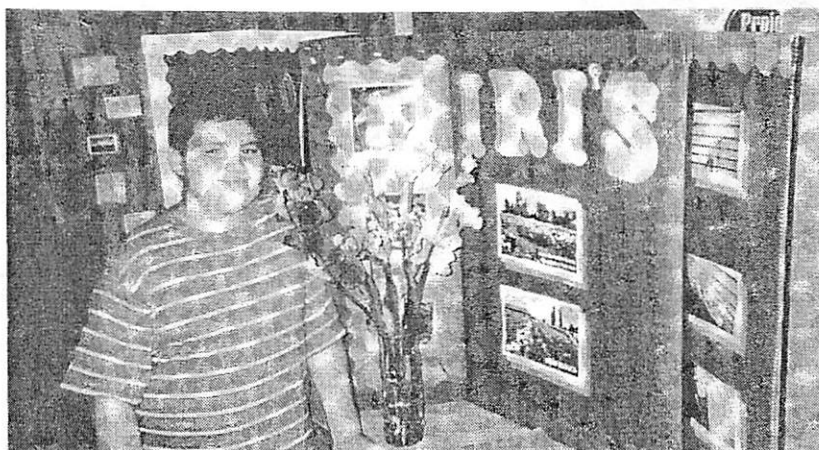


Brittany White (L) of Milledgeville, GA, gets some help from her friend Erica at planting time. Brittany is a member of the Oconee Valley Iris Club of Region 5.



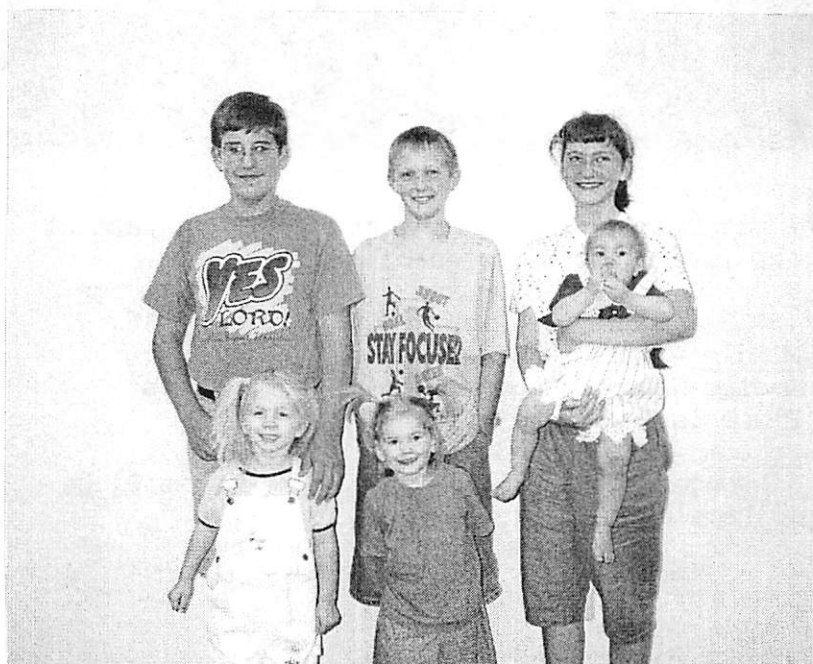
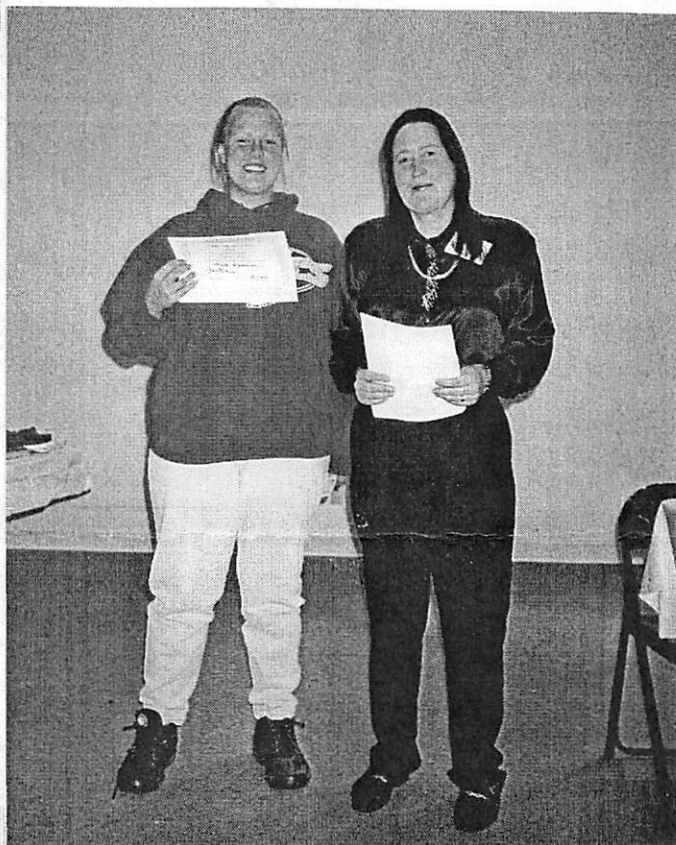
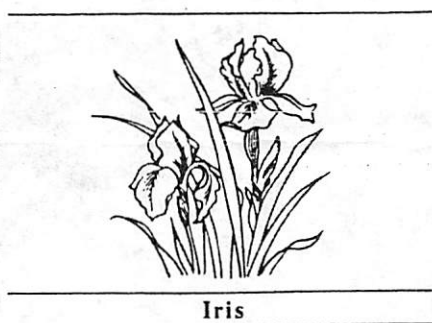
The iris garden of Heather, Cory and Erin Ritenour of Champion, PA, Region 3. Is that BEVERLY SILLS in the center?





Andrew Acosta, youth member of the Leo T. Clark Iris Society, Reg. 14 with his First Place Science Fair Iris Project. Congratulations!

Nicole Grzeskowiak (L) winner of the Reg. 18 Stanley Goodman Youth Award posing with Reg. 18 Youth Chair, Cindy Rust.



Some of the youth members of the Augusta Iris Society (Reg. 18) are L to R, back row, Joshua Winzer, Matthew Cliburn & Grace Cristensen. L to R, front row, Charity, Faith & Hope Winzer. The group posed at a Judge's Training School which the three older youths attended for 5 hours credit. Joshua serves as Treasurer of his club and Grace is the Secretary.

contests. The iris Coloring Contest was held in September. I like coloring."

From the Reg. 4 Newscast, Vol. 41, #2, RYC Dennis Pearson writes, "The current number of youth members stands at 31 in Reg. 4. These are not all AIS members. I keep mailing information to all youths whether or not they are members of AIS, knowing that gardening is a lifetime activity and that the 'bungee cord theory' will work at some point in the future. I believe that once you appreciate the beauty of irises, you are hooked for life. It is then a matter of intensity..... I applaud some of the creative work going on in some of our affiliates: the hybridizing project, the school plantings and other efforts. Great work!"

From the Reg. 4 Newscast, Vol. 41, #3, Bill Mull writes, "We met with 3 elementary schools: Taylor, Willard and Camp Allen which is on the naval base. At the Camp Allen year-round school, we taught 3rd, 4th and 5th graders one full day, teaching them about iris and the planting and care of them. At Willard we helped students plant beds of reblooming iris. At Taylor we planned two large beds for iris, ordered 700 reblooming iris in the school colors, only to learn that the school was in litigation with the contractor and we could not plant the iris. The iris were heeled in at the Mull garden and are still waiting the outcome of the litigation."

Andy Simmes of Reg. 22 (Oklahoma) sent in his youth questionnaire. He belongs to the Tulsa Iris Society and likes RIPPLING RIVER and ASCENT OF ANGELS. He began his iris hobby as part of the Classroom Iris Project at Manniford Elementary School and he enjoys writing to his AIS Pen Pal. ♣

THANK YOU!!!

Thanks to the Dallas Convention Committee for sending recent iris introductions to all AIS youth members. Youth member Seann Perry along with his Mom packed and shipped the irises. Thank you!!! Expressions of thanks were received from many youths. Additional irises were shipped to youths by Schreiner's Garden, Maryott Gardens, Ada & Bill Godfrey of Hermit Medlars Walk, Rex Clark and the Greater St. Louis Iris Society. The Youth Committee is grateful for your generosity.

Also, thanks to the Iris Society of Dallas and others who donated money to the Clarke Cosgrove Youth Fund and to those who contributed to the Ackerman Essay Fund and to the Classroom Iris Project Fund. You are all angels! ♣

COLORING CONTEST WINNERS -

There were 40 entries in the Coloring Contest held in the last issue of THE IRIS FAN. Entries were divided into 5 age categories and came from 11 different regions. The OVERALL WINNER WAS RACHEL HINDLE of Reg. 18 (Kansas). Congratulations!

Other winners are as follows:

Age 6 and under - 1st place, Ashlee Wilson, Reg. 12; 2nd place, Jazlyn Wolford, Reg. 15; 3rd place, Devon Wilson, Reg. 12. Creativity Awards went to Nash Houskeeper, Reg. 12; Chelsea Thompson, Reg. 22 & Chris Raymond, Reg. 18.

Age 7-9: 1st place, Taylor Reina, Reg. 15; 2nd place, Chelsea Smith, Reg. 15; 3rd place, Jessica Wolford, Reg. 15; Creativity Awards, Erika Wilson, Reg. 12; Evelina Padilla, Reg. 15. Honorable Mention, Samantha Salazar, Reg. 15; Ashley Rigney, Reg. 15; Erin Rosales, Reg. 15; Katie Grove, Reg. 15; Leah Emmerson, Reg. 24; Alex Mohr, Reg. 2 & Sara Provost, Reg. 3.

Age 10-12: 1st place (and Best Overall) Rachel Hindle, Reg. 18; 2nd place, Victoria Adkins, Reg. 7; 3rd place, Jennifer Plank, Reg. 3. Creativity Awards, Joshua Winzer, Reg. 18, Alexa Cahalan, Reg. 18, Kira Archibald, Reg. 14. Honorable Mention, Monique Torres, Reg. 15; Michelle Ross, Reg. 15; Vanessa Montes, Reg. 15; Clair Jewell, Reg. 3; Jessica Clark, Reg. 18 & Bryan Wilson, Reg. 12.

Age 13-15: 1st place, Kali Niswonger, Reg. 18; 2nd place, Lyle Newman, Reg. 18; 3rd place, Sarah Rooks, Reg. 7. Creativity Awards, Jennifer Schmidt, Reg. 18 & Matt Brooks, Reg. 18. Honorable Mention, Nicole Winkelmann, Reg. 9; Nick Yowell, Reg. 18; Joyce Fields, Reg. 18 & Matt Knipschild, Reg. 18.

Age 16-18: 1st place, Pamela Kratzer, Reg. 21.

Small cash prizes and Siberian or Louisiana irises were awarded to the various entrants. Some late entries were received from a newly formed CIP and also from the Reg. 3 Soergel Farm Iris Workshop participants. These entries were judged separately and AIS youth T-shirts were given as the prizes. Thanks to all who entered. The coloring was beautiful! ♣

THE IRIS SHOW AT CENTURY III MALL
by: Erin, Heather & Cory Ritenour
Youth Members Reg. 3

Last year in Western Pennsylvania, we had one of the mildest winters in many years with warm and rainy weather in late April and early May. For this reason we had an early blooming season and our iris, which were especially beautiful, had outbloomed themselves days before the show in Century III Mall. You can imagine our disappointment in not having a variety of iris to compete in the iris show.

Two years ago Erin won First Place in the Youth Division with her entry of BEVERLY SILLS and last year Cory won with COLOR ME BLUE. Heather had a beautiful stalk of TITAN'S GLORY with the top iris ready to bloom. She did receive a ribbon last year, but her iris did not fully come out until after the judging. It did look nice on the table by late afternoon.

This year Erin took first with CAESAR'S BROTHER, the only iris left in the garden that could be shown successfully. Cory had COLOR ME BLUE bloom a few days after the show. Waiting for the iris to bloom for the show is exciting because we live in the country and the only competition in the area for our iris is our own family in our own garden. Each day we check the iris to see whose is blooming and which one could be a blue ribbon. This changes daily.

Although we had no entry except CAESAR'S BROTHER this year, we did have a beautiful display of our iris in the garden. The picture enclosed (See p. 3) is of the blooms before the competition. As you can see, Queen of the Show is in the center of the picture! (Ha, Ha)

Growing and acquiring new iris is a wonderful experience because it teaches us about how different plants grow. Some grow from seed, and others by bulbs and rhizomes. We have been iris members for three years now and have a nice increase in our garden. This year we received a gift iris from the Texas Convention and can hardly wait until next spring to see what the iris will look like and how it will grow in western Pennsylvania.

(Continued, next column.)

The remainder of the above article was full of good gardening advice, so we decided to use it for "The Iris Clinic." Thank you, Erin, Heather and Cory for sending in such a good article for THE IRIS FAN.



THE IRIS CLINIC

GOOD GARDENING ADVICE

by: Erin, Heather & Cory Ritenour

We attended the iris workshop in Wexford at the Soergel Farm last year and learned a lot about the proper way to plant an iris. We do not use commercial pesticides to control borers which invade our iris, but look for signs that they are in the garden and try to kill them before they attack the rhizome. Our fertilizer is from our long-eared rabbit named Soldier and from table scraps (no meat) put into our compost heap. Our iris are large and healthy looking. In the fall we do cut back their leaves although some iris people think this is not necessary. We feel it keeps the garden clean. A clean garden is essential if you want to keep your iris free from unwanted bugs and pests. A dressing of mulch is put over our iris during the winter to keep them from freezing, but in the spring we pull back the mulch to let the sun hit the rhizome top.

Later this year we are going to make a new bed for our iris as some of our plants are three years old and will be needing to be thinned out by next summer. Preparing a bed in advance is a good thing because it gives the ground a chance to settle over the winter, and then compost can be added to make the soil easier to work and easier to weed.

Having a garden of iris is fun, but after the blooms in the spring are gone there is only the green fans to look at. That is why we plant other flowers in our garden, to make and enjoy the beauty that comes only from many flowers in bloom. We hope you have a successful iris garden this year and win Queen of the Show.



IRIS WORKSHOP AT SOERGEL'S FARM

by: Geraldine McFarland
Youth Advisor, Western PA

On September 23, 2000, the Second Annual Iris Workshop for Children was given at the Soergel Farm in Wexford, Pennsylvania.

A special thanks to the Iris Judges, Robert and Geraldine McFarland, who presented the workshop; to Bill and Jane Cadman, members of the Pittsburgh Iris & Daylily Society who assisted; and to Randy Soergel who provided Erin Jarvis and Alex Hofstra, his helpful employees, as well as the space, dirt, containers and delicious complimentary ice cream.

Although the day started sunny and bright, clouds soon settled over the farm and showered the area with a robust rain, forcing the presentation to be done under the cover of the garden porch. That, however did not deter the lively children anxious to participate in the coloring contest or the planting of the iris so generously donated by Larry Grundler, Vince Lewonski, Mike Corle and Robert McFarland.

The workshop was a success in the number of children enrolled. Last year 6 children signed up in advance for the workshop and 36 participated. This year's advance registration was 10 and 47 appeared, a noted increase despite the rain. The primary reason for the workshop is to encourage children to learn about and enjoy gardening, especially the growing and planting of iris and daylilies.

Although it is a little late in western PA to plant iris for a successful spring bloom, the advantage of having the workshop during the Soergel Octoberfest is that the children are attracted to the farm with its hayrides, apple cider and baby animals. Planned activities allow the children to make choices on how they will spend the day. This is a wonderful opportunity for those interested in gardening to become exposed to flowers that can be propagated without seeds. Because most garden centers are selling tubers and bulbs during this time of year, it is an excellent time to teach the children about the propagation of plants through rhizomes, bulbs and tubers and give them hands-on experience in planting.

The children are kept quite busy, so that the hour workshop goes by very quickly. Each child is given two iris rhizomes, one to plant in a container during the workshop, the other to feel and observe the root structure of during the lecture, and then take home and plant. Brown paper bags, cut to the height of the pots, are provided to hold the iris and to keep any extra dirt from falling over the sides of the containers onto the tables.

Planting the iris is loads of fun as the children scurry to the dirt pile to fill their pots half-full. Then the iris roots are inserted into the container along with a name tag, following which the child returns to the dirt pile for more dirt to cover the roots. Finally a trip to the watering station completes the planting of the iris.

During the lecture on how iris propagate and grow (very brief details), the children are busy coloring their copies of the iris picture for the competition. The judges then select the First, Second and Third Place winners. The prizes given for the coloring competition were three recent introductions donated by Larry Grundler and three Noah's Ark wooden garden ornaments donated by Robert McFarland.

Having an iris workshop for children is a fun and rewarding experience. ♣

CLASSROOM IRIS PROJECTS (CIPs)

Regions 7, 14, 15, 18, and 22 have CIPs in place. Thanks to Annette Milch, Rex & Shirley Clark, Cheryl Deaton, Cindy Rust, LaDeana Hindle and Paul Gossett for the setup and to the Bluegrass, Leo T. Clark, Hi Desert, Gr. St. Louis, Kirkwood, Hutchinson and Tulsa Iris Societies for the sponsorship of the CIPs. Teachers/leaders in the CIPs are Leanne Jones, Rex Clark, Kathi Wolford, Valerie Mertz, Laura Sturm, Brenda Huster, Darlene Grace and Jennifer Villines.

Many CIP students entered the AIS Coloring Contest. Rex Clark's 4-H members entered educational posters and iris dish gardens in the two iris shows held by the Leo T. Clark Iris Society and also in the County Fair. 4-H'er Andrew Acosta was featured in the Region 14 Bulletin along with a nice photo of his winning educational exhibit. (See photo, p.4) Students in other CIPs are working on posters for the iris shows of 2001. Members of Girl Scout Troop 679 are earning a badge by participating in a CIP. The 24 students at Powel County Middle School are just in the set-up process and at least some of the students will be Pen Pals with other CIP youths. Reg. 18 youths at Southview School will host an accredited, judged iris show next May during the school day. Marquette High School CIP students wrote the Show Schedule which has a sports theme. Marquette students will visit Southview by bus to enter exhibits and participate in the day's events.

Welcome to all new CIP students, sponsors, teachers and leaders. We hope your bloom is outstanding and that you have FUN with your iris activities. ♣

YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS IN THE REGIONS -

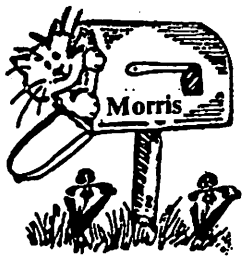
We are happy to report that more regions are now offering a yearly youth award. Region 22, as announced in their January Newsletter by RVP M.D. Faith, is the latest to do so. Congratulations! The AIS Youth Committee encourages regions with ten or more youths to consider adding such an award.

In the past, Regions 14, 23, 7 and 18 have had or now have youth achievement awards in place. To quote Bill McVicker of Reg. 22 (from a Youth Committee survey), "The youths are the seedlings of our Society. Unless they are nurtured and led, they and the Society of the future will reflect our failure. It is time for us to get to work."

Region 18's youth award - the Stanley Goodman Youth Achievement Award - was won in 2000 by Nicole Grzeskowiak (see photo, p. 4). First Runner-Up went to Rachel Hindle and Allison Grzeskowiak was awarded the Second Runner-Up. Congratulations to all. ♣

Solution to VERTICAL REALITY (from last issue)

1) Friends, 2) Judges, 3) Novelties, 4) Artistic, 5) Water, 6) Ribbons, 7) Register, 8) Exhibit, 9) Seedlings, 10) Rush, 11) Schedule, 12) Groom, 13) Wait, 14) Clerks. The solution to VERTICAL REALITY is "Fun at iris shows." ♣



JEAN'S JOURNAL - Welcome to new Regional Youth Chairmen (RYCs) Janet Hawel in Reg. 7, JoAnne McGrew in Reg. 14 and Martha Griner in Reg. 19. We now have an RYC in every region except Reg. 10. Janet Hawel has been very successful in Reg. 7 with securing Youth Advisors (YAs) for the local clubs. Welcome to YAs Annette Milch, Bluegrass; Jim Ennenga, East Tenn.; Jewell Hughes, Amer. Frontier; Nancy Maynard, Ken-Ten; E.J. Boyson, Middle Tenn.; Wilma Stallings, Ohio Riv. Val.; Betty Wilkerson, Southern Ky; Steve Stone, West Tenn. and Janet herself, serves as YA for the Louisville Iris Society. Thanks everyone! Youth Advisors at the local level are the key to a good youth program.

As of Jan. 31, 2001, AIS youth membership

stands at 404 with 263 regular youths and 141 CIP youths.

If you have failed to renew your AIS youth dues of \$4 (no Bltn.) or \$7 (with Bltn.) send them in right away to new AIS Membership Secretary, Anner Whitehead, PO Box 14750, Richmond, VA 23221-4750. Thanks!

Youth participation at iris shows in 2000 was good. There were over 180 shows. This number includes several fall shows. We are proud to say that YOUTH MEMBERS WON BEST OF SHOW IN THREE CASES (in competition with adults). Way to go!

Youths winning major show awards in 2000 were as follows: BEST YOUTH SPECIMEN - Reg. 3, Erin Ritenour with CAESAR'S BROTHER (Sib), Grace Leathrum with BUMBLEBEE DEELITE (MTB) which went on to win Best of Show (Congratulations, Grace!), Ashley Ocamb with CONJURATION (TB); Reg. 4, Brittany Stoll with AZ AP (IB); Reg. 5, Kristen Geeter with HONEYMOON SUITE (TB), Andrew Cohilas with EGYPTIAN (TB); Reg. 7, Stuart Reynolds with OMINOUS STRANGER (TB), Vicky Adkins with CORAL CHARMER (TB) and Craig Watson (twice) with SONG OF NORWAY (TB) and GLACIER KISS (TB); Reg. 11, Brian Touchstone with JESTER (TB); Reg. 15, Beth Rocha with BELLA VEE (IB); Reg. 17, Stephanie Strauss with TARLETON (TB) which went on to win Best of Show (Congratulations Stephanie!); Reg. 18, Gabriel Lockhart with PARADISE (TB), Bethany Masterson with ROSETTE WINE (TB), Stephanie Rust with AGRIPPINE (JI), Christopher Rust with VITAFIRE (TB) and Stephanie Rust (again) with BROTHER CARL (TB) which went on to win Best of Show at a Fall Show (Congratulations Stephanie!); Reg. 19, Sue Marchetti with LADY FRIEND (TB); Reg. 22, Shelby James with HONKY TONK BLUES (TB) Eric Whitebay with EVERYTHING PLUS (TB); and Reg. 23, Jennifer Moran with NIGHT RULER (TB).

YOUTH SILVER MEDAL - Reg. 3, Clair Jewell, Ashley Ocamb; Reg. 5, Kristen Geeter; Reg. 7, Stuart Reynolds, Craig Watson; Reg. 18, Rachel Hindle, Christopher Rust (twice); Reg. 22, Eric Whitebay.

YOUTH BRONZE MEDAL - Reg. 3, Briana Hargett, Stephen Baldwin; Reg. 5, Kay Weathers; Reg. 7, Crockett Goode; Reg. 17, Stephanie Strauss; Reg. 18, Bethany Masterson, Isaac Hindle, Stephanie Rust (twice); Reg. 22, Dylan Friesner.

BEST YOUTH DESIGN - Reg. 1, Jolene Best; Reg. 5, Brittany White, Andrew Cohilas; Reg. 9, Heather Hamblin; Reg. 18, Rachel Hindle, Brenda Culberson, Nicole Grzeskowiak, Grace Christensen, Jennifer Schmidt; Reg. 22, Monica Combrink.

YOUTH DESIGN SWEEPSTAKES - Reg. 17, Chentel Burk, Caitlin Porter; Reg. 18, Nicole Grzeskowiak.

OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITS - Reg. 11, Brian Touchstone (twice); Reg. 14, Andrew Acosta; Reg. 18, Stephanie Rust; Reg. 22, Monica Combrink.

Congratulations to those who won as well as to those who entered. Good luck at the 2001 iris shows.

Here in the St. Louis area we have had a cold winter and quite a bit of snow. Last year we had the mildest winter I can remember. I am sure the irises loved the snow cover so we are looking forward to good bloom. Hope your bloom is great and your show entries successful.

Don't forget the YOUTH ESSAY CONTEST! The AIS Foundation decided it would be fairer to award two \$100 prizes, one for those youths age 12 and under and one for youths 13 through 18.

Hope to see some of you at the AIS Convention this spring or on a regional tour. Have a great spring! ♣

REMINDER Reminder REMINDER Reminder REMINDER

This is your REMINDER to participate in the 2001 Ackerman Youth Essay Contest sponsored by the AIS Foundation. You will not receive a post card reminder this year. See the Jan. 2001 AIS Bulletin, p. 14, for details. This year's topic is, "My vision for irises of the future." Essays should be written in 500 words or less and mailed to Claire Honkanen, PO Box 235, Isle of Palms, SC 29451-0235. The deadline has been extended to March 31. With two prizes of \$100 offered, the contest is fair for all ages. So think about what you'd like to see in irises of the future, put your thoughts down on paper and compete for the \$100. Good luck to all!

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YOUTH ESSAYS FROM THE 2000 ESSAY CONTEST -

IRISES IN BILLINGS, MT

by Harmony Muller, age 9, Reg. 11

I live in Billings, MT and there are no youth members here other than my sisters.

One way of improving my iris club would be for grownups to help give ideas on how to get other youth members to join into the club and learn more about irises. We need to know how to go about getting others interested.

Second of all, grownups should give pointers on how youths can garden on their own,

like how to make a flower bed for irises, all about fertilizers and when to water.

Third, they could help youths learn more about hybridizing. I know how to hybridize but others don't. Grownups should also tell kids what to do with iris seeds to get new plants growing.

I really like irises and I know other kids would too if they had the chance. ♣

ENTERTAINMENT IDEAS

by Christopher Rust, age 12, Reg. 18

One of the things I like best about our iris club is that we have some very nice people in it, and there are some really good cooks.

One of my favorite things to do in the spring is have an iris tour at someone's house (usually Barb Fouts'). Later we would eat a potluck dinner. We would bring a pie or something for dessert and we would debate on whose dessert was best. People bring pies, cakes, cookies, brownies, etc. I think somebody should always bring a box of donuts, particularly jelly donuts for Jim Morris and me. And don't you dare forget the Pepsi!

I also think that every Judge's Training should have some hot cocoa instead of nothing but coffee, because kids don't like regular or decaff!

After the garden tours and supper, if it is still light out, all the kids would like going outside to play ball, tag or soccer. I think this is something that would be fun and a good thing for the AIS youth entertainment ideas - so add it to the pot! ♣

IRIS ESSAY

BY Sarah Anne Elliott, age 8, Reg. 7

Here are some of the things that you could do to help kids learn about iris that would be very, very fun.

You could make videos teaching kids how to plant iris and what to do. You could also have a television channel just for iris. If somebody you are with is in a meeting, you could have a little room with a speaker and a TV with the iris television channel.

How about some iris games? You could make a game with an iris shaped board with little iris moving pieces. Games would be very appealing because they would be teaching how to learn more about iris and would be very, very fun.

(IRIS ESSAY by Sarah Anne Elliott, continued)

You could also go to schools around the country talking to kids about iris and having a little iris club there. You could have contests and the prizes could be iris. You could send free iris too. You could also make books about iris and sell them in book stores all across the country.

These are some good ideas because they help us learn more about iris, especially the television channel. Think about it! ♣

Dear Iris Society,

I have a suggestion on how you can make meetings better for youth members. First off, I think we should have meetings every two weeks. Then you should choose a volunteer (for example one or two of the people that run the iris club) to let the youth members plant flowers in the little pots or let them play quiet games so it's like a little daycare.

Then when the adult meeting is over they can pick up their children. Of course if the kids don't finish their planting, they can leave it there or take it home and finish it. They don't have to bring it back. That is my suggestion.

Aaron Dixon, age 8, Reg. 18 ♣

WAYS FOR AIS Members to Improve Enjoyment for Youth Members

by Sylvia Chapman, age 13, Reg. 16

There are probably a lot of different opinions on the subject, but I think many of the youth members tend to get bored at meetings, auctions and other events held by our two iris groups. In general, not many youth members have been coming to the latest events. Maybe the newsletters should tell about upcoming events saying what it is and when. But the chance of this alone encouraging youth members to attend meetings, etc. is probably slim.

Events held by the society may be quite fun for the older members, but there needs to be more activities for the younger members, even something like board games, for when they get tired of the event. The older youth members could set up these activities and it would keep the youngest members occupied. Another idea for older youth members could be to have them help set up tables, chairs, etc. It could make the time move a bit faster.

Often, I hear older members complain about not being able to sell enough of their catalogs. Maybe youth members could take turns standing at the doors handing them out. Another way to organize this could be a booth set up outside the door and have people pick up the catalogs on their way in.

Overall, the society is pretty decent, but without extra activities for youth members, the events will not have good youth attendance. ♣

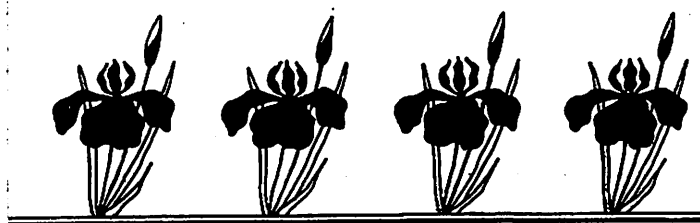
ENCOURAGE YOUTH HYBRIDIZING

by Stephanie Rust, age 14, Reg. 18

I think the one thing AIS adults could do to improve the AIS youth program is to encourage youth hybridizing. Hybridizing has done a great deal to get me more acquainted with irises. I have learned quite a lot with it and have grown more attracted to irises through the process. However, I was in the AIS for three or four years before I was ever shown how to hybridize. I think if the AIS took a poll on how many youth members actually knew how to do the process, they would be surprised at the low statistics!

My suggestion is to make it a point to let youth members know about hybridizing. It is a nice learning experience; you never know whether or not a person knows how to hybridize. I'm sure if anybody had realized I didn't know how to do this simple procedure they would have readily showed me, but it is easy to take these things for granted.

It may further encourage youths to pursue hybridizing goals if some needed pollen is sent from an iris they can't grow in their area. I'll bet that if you would whip out a catalog and let a youth member flip through it, it would interest them to know that the most beautiful iris was once just some hybridizer's dream. The dream had to be followed by someone. You are never too young for hybridizing! ♣



by Joshua Winzer, age 13, Reg. 18

I think adults could make iris activities more enjoyable for youth members by having drawings to win iris. Drawings would be good because it would help youth members construct their own iris bed and enter shows.

I also think it would be better if there was a section in the regional newsletter for youth members. It might help youth members learn more about iris.

I think it would be more fun for youth members to be able to hold office in local clubs. It would be good if youth members could earn points by helping in shows, meetings and winning ribbons in shows for a special iris auction held for youth members. ♣

MY THREE IDEAS

by Nicole Winkelmann, age 13, Reg. 9

What could the adults in the American Iris Society do to make the activities more enjoyable for the youth members? There are many things they could do. Clubs could have iris auctions for youth members only, they could make more fun things for us to do in the flyers and they could talk to us.

First, they could have auctions for the youth members only. This would help us learn about money and how to spend it. We would realize that we have budgets and we can spend only so much money. We would be able to buy more irises. We could buy the best irises that are there and the irises that we really want. I also think it would be fun and youth members would enjoy it.

Second, they could put more fun things to do in the flyers they send out. There could be more essay contests. Some people enjoy writing. They could have more coloring contests. Many children like to color. If they would put more of these things in the flyers I think it would be worth it.

Last, adults could talk to us more. They could tell us some easier ways to do things. This could help us in our gardens. For instance, adults could tell us easier and faster ways to weed, keep weeds out and keep our gardens looking beautiful. They could also teach us more about irises.

As you can see there are plenty of things adults in the American Iris Society could do to make activities more enjoyable for youth members. I hope my ideas will be used. ♣

by Laura Gibson, age 18, Reg. 4

Iris gardening is rewarding and educational, but how can iris lovers convince youth of the fun to be had in the colorful world of irises? Sparking and maintaining interest in young people presents a unique challenge to iris society members. Let's investigate some ways that chapters could bring the iris world alive to youth.

It's great to be able to go to the gorgeous manicured iris garden of chapter members and bring home a wealth of new ideas and tips, but being able to implement them in your own garden is quite another story. That's why I think it would be neat if established irisarians in the local chapter would get together and hold a "garden decorating party" at the new youth member's home. On a mutually arranged date, iris members could come with a few "welcome" rhizomes in hand and spend a little time organizing a small plot for the youth's iris garden to develop. They could bring simple ideas for landscaping the new garden and creating interest through a variety of iris cultivars and species that would extend the blooming season.

Something that my local chapter is doing, and has done in the past, is to offer free rhizomes to willing "iris adopters." The rhizomes are cared for in the gardens of the host and then in a few years the increase is brought back to the chapter's benefit sale. A chapter member can keep in touch with the youth by calling or writing to find out about the progress of the iris transplant. The iris host can then keep one of the increase for his own garden. This is a great way for youth, who are most likely on a limited budget, to be able to obtain nice irises and also be involved in the growth of the chapter.

Another great way to include and inspire youth is by pairing them with an experienced irisarian and chapter member. From my very first iris show I had a wonderfully interesting and enthusiastic iris lady take me under her wing. She was and still is instrumental in teaching me iris culture. She has taken me to sales and shows, shown me the proper way to groom iris specimens, taught me how an iris garden and business is run through hands-on experience, and guided me through many other iris related activities that have helped to permanently capture my interest in the iris flower. This one-on-one personal attention is great for keeping youth from "falling between the cracks" in regards to the chapter's

(INSPIRING THE YOUTH by Laura Gibson cont.)

activities and the available opportunities to learn more about irises.

The key to developing a budding youth member is to take a personal interest in them by staying in touch, providing help and rhizomes to get them started, and taking them to the beautiful shows and garden tours that would make anyone's jaw drop. It sure made me fall in love with irises and for this I am greatly indebted to the attentive efforts of my chapter. ♣

INVOLVE THE SCHOOLS

by Alexa Cahalan, age 11, Reg. 18

What do you feel adults in your iris society could do to make iris activities more enjoyable for youth members?

I think that the members should get more kids involved with the Society. The Society members can also help by getting letters out to schools to tell people about the Iris Society. Then more kids can get a better education on irises.

The Iris Society is fun. I know from experience. The person in charge at Southview School teaches the youths here about irises. She teaches how to do designs, how to pick out good stalks, how to plant irises and also alot of other things. ♣

ENCOURAGE US!

by Stephanie Strauss, age 10, Reg. 17

I think there are a number of things that the AIS clubs could do that would make it more fun for kids in their clubs. The following quote means that it takes only a small thing to change the path of a kid's life.

"The happiness of life is made up of minute fractions - the little soon-forgotten charities of a kiss or a smile, a kind look or heartfelt compliment."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

I believe that the club members should not shoo kids away during meetings or expect them to stay silent. Kids have good ideas and should be encouraged when they have something to say. Listening to kids is an important thing you can do for them.

Kids should always have something to do or they might get bored. During iris shows give us a job. Let us be the clerks, the runner

or in charge of containers. Maybe we could draw posters for advertising the iris show or sale. Perhaps we could set up a table just to recruit other kids to join so we could have a large youth group.

On the meeting night, we could have a sub-meeting for kids and elect our own officers. When we are through we could join the rest of the club and make a report about what we did, what we have been doing, what we grow and which irises we want.

The kids in a club are always wanting to increase the number of irises in their gardens but don't have much of a way to pay for them. Maybe everyone could give us a small discount on irises at sales. That way we'll have enough money to buy a few irises to plant without taking a lot of money from our parents' pockets. Or, perhaps rewarding participation in the show and sale would be wise.

What about all those presentations grown-ups give during iris meetings? Why not give us a chance? Every once in a while, give us a topic for a program and let us research it. Then let the kids give an interesting presentation during the meetings.

We know this may sound weird, but we would rather be inside learning than running around outside. Don't underestimate what we want to learn or what we can do. The most important thing you can do is to ENCOURAGE US! ♣

The following came in the mailbox this morning from Region 5. See photo, p. 3.

My name is Brittany White and I am a member of the Oconee Valley Iris Club. I was asked by Selia Geeter the Youth Advisor to plant irises and daylilies. We planted them for the Habitat for Humanity. I had fun because my friend came and helped. I love irises. I think they are one of the most beautiful flowers in the world. I like coming over for iris meetings. I think they are fun too! ♣

The Augusta Iris Soc. (Reg. 18) has youths in every office except President. This report is from Youth Advisor, Laurie Winzer.

The kids in the new and improved Augusta Club have taken over their offices and are having a wonderful time! They love the idea of being able to plan, make motions and vote on their own ideas. They have excellent ideas for programs. I am tickled by the enthusiasm and can see new life flowing through our club. I hope it will continue to grow! ♣