



MT. DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY

E-NEWS AUGUST 2007

The Mt. Diablo Iris society exists for the purpose of stimulating and fostering interest in the propagation, culture and hybridizing of the genus Iris, in the scientific and horticultural education of all those interested in learning about any phase of the genus Iris, and in the protection of the genus Iris, and in the protection of these plants in their native habitat.

MEETING August 10, 2007 - 7:00 pm

First Baptist Church of Walnut Creek
2336 Buena Vista Avenue, Walnut Creek

August 10th, Friday Night Peddler's Fair Sort Night

The regular Friday night meeting in August is a working meeting to sort iris for the Peddler's Fair on Saturday. We will do the sorting outside in the school yard between the school building and the gym. Iris will be sorted into containers according to their type and color. Unknown iris will be used for GRAB Bags for sale on Saturday.

Please bring the iris that you are donating on Friday night. All iris need to be clearly marked with their name, kind of iris (TB, BB, SA, RE, PLIC, BiColor, etc.), and brief color. Irises are sorted by color and type. New iris (within the last 3 years) should be labeled with year of introduction. Please no chemicals on rhizomes.

Following the sorting there will be a short business meeting in the normal meeting room. Refreshments and doorprize iris will be available.

Refreshments: Members whose names begin with the letter **N** through **T** are invited to bring refreshments for the break time. However, anyone is welcome to contribute.

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Right: **Peddler's Fair Booth**

Booth in progress of being setup for the day's sale. Located on east side of First Street between East D Street and Pt. Benicia Way (alley).

Benicia Peddler's Fair - August 11th

The Mount Diablo Iris Society will again operate an iris sale and information booth at the Benicia Peddler's Fair on Saturday, August 11th.

The Peddler's Fair occupies the entire length of First Street in the city of Benicia from Military to the water. Our booth is normally located below D street on the east side of the street before Pt. Benicia Way. See booth photo on first page.

This is our largest fundraising event for the year. Workers are needed to operate the booth during the day from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm. Booth set-up is from 6:00 am to 7:30 am. A minimum of three or four people should be in the booth at all times. When it gets busy, five or six people are better. Minimum booth service should be two hours, but more time is appreciated if there are not sufficient workers to keep the booth operating. Sign up for booth duty on Friday evening or give either Bob or Joe a call.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 10th: Regular Meeting MDIS, Iris sorting and grab bag assembly for Peddlers Fair. First Baptist Church of Walnut Creek, 6:30pm to 9:30pm.

August 11th: Benecia Peddler's Fair iris sale. Booth SE side 1st street below D. 7:30am-5:00pm. Booth setup 6:00 am.

August 24th: Sydney B. Mitchell Iris Society regular meeting, Oakland East Bay Garden Center, Oakland, 8:00 pm -10:00 pm.

September 14th: Regular Meeting MDIS, Program how to grow and divide your beardless iris. First Baptist Church of Walnut Creek, 7:00pm to 9:15pm.

September 30th: Sydney B. Mitchell Iris Society Annual Sunday BBQ - details (TBA)

October 12th: Regular Meeting MDIS, Fall beardless iris auction except PCN's. First Baptist Church of Walnut Creek, 7:00 pm to 9:15 pm.

October 19 - 20th: Region 14 Fall Meeting hosted by San Joaquin Iris Society, Modesto. Contact Sandy Mann 209-578-4184.

October 26th: Sydney B. Mitchell Iris Society regular meeting, Oakland East Bay Garden Center, Oakland, 8:00 pm -10:00 pm.

November 9th: Regular Meeting MDIS, Pot-luck dinner and PCN auction. First Baptist Church of Walnut Creek, 6:30 pm to 9:15 pm.

December: No meeting this month, see everyone at the January 2008 meeting.



DIG YOUR BLACK IRIS NOW

This notice is for all members who are growing the black iris BEFORE THE STORM and BLACK FLAG that were distributed at the September meeting. Now is the time to bring your iris to this Friday evening Peddler's Fair sorting party and general meeting. Each named iris plant should be dug, divided, cleaned and marked with name and color. Please no chemicals. If you would like to keep the toe and plant it for next year, you can do so. Just let us know you are going to do that so we have an idea what we will be getting in 2008.



PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

It was a wonderful day in Mary Smith's garden for our annual July get together. There was plenty of shade and by afternoon a lovely breeze kept it on the cool side. The fundraiser on Saturday July 14th was a great success. We had a great group of bidders and friends for the event. There were 24 bidders with a crowd of 28. Some of our members who cannot normally make the Friday evening meeting were there. Walt and Alene Dean showed up for part of the day to visit and talk to old friends. It was good to see them again.

Eager bidders and great iris helped to raise the price a bit, but still allow for reasonable purchases. Prices ranged from \$4 to \$13 with one bid as high as \$15 and one at \$22. We made enough to pay for next year's iris, the day's expenses and still have a few dollars left over to help build up the treasury.

We had a surprise for everyone. July 14th was Mike Smith's birthday and Alan Robbins had brought a large carrot cake, Mike's favorite, to celebrate. The cake was cut and served during one of the breaks in the auction. It was amazing how fast the cake disappeared. Take a look at the photographs in this newsletter to see the action and the group.

The next fundraising event is the Peddler's Fair. This is our main fundraiser for the year and a great place to share your extra iris. Workers are always welcome to man the booth and help the customers with buying iris and answering questions.

See you Friday night, — Bob and Joe.



WHERE WE MEET

Remember we meet at the First Baptist Church in Walnut Creek. To get to the church, take Ygnacio Valley Road west, under 680 freeway, road becomes Hillside, go to end, turn right on Parkside, go to stop sign, turn left onto Buena Vista Ave. Church is on the right after the houses near the corner.



REMEMBERING THE PEDDLERS FAIR

By: Mary Smith

Bob Canning and I were recently chatting about the upcoming Peddler's Fair, the forty-fourth one having begun in 1963. I was swamped by memories of other times.

My friendships with those who love iris, including me, bloomed when I joined the Mt. Diablo Iris Society (MDIS) in 1978. I joined as the result of an adventure with my friend Penny Tingey who drove past a home close by when the front yard, filled with beautiful iris in full bloom. A white-haired gentleman came around the corner of the house, stopped and talked with us about these special flowers. "Come back on the first of August," he said, "and I'll have some for you." (This very generous man was actually Duane Meek.) When we returned on the first of August Duane had prepared THREE bags of iris for us! He was digging, he explained, for the Benicia Fair. Penny and I fell in love that day, and the rest, as they say, is history. Penny and I joined MDIS immediately. Duane and the Boswells mentored us in the "do's and don'ts" of iris care as did many others in the years that followed.

One of Duane's pet projects was the annual sale held at the Benicia Peddler's Fair. Penny and I went that year to help out and had lots of fun. As a result it was easy for Duane to twist our arms in the following couple of years (very, very early) to help with the set ups. I remember that, in the early 1980's there were no buildings on the block where our booth was traditionally assigned to us. By 1982 or 1983 we occupied two spaces as our business had grown so much. Behind us was a magnificent huge tree which, fortunately for us, was a Godsend providing shade for us in this very large open space with no buildings on it.

Michael, my husband and I owned a 19 foot motor home at that time and, in talking with Duane, we decided to bring it over on Friday night after our "last minute details" meeting. Penny and I thought we could sleep there overnight and be ready to set up the next morning. Who would think that the street

would not be busy until 4 AM Saturday. Not so. It was party time in Benicia beginning at 10 PM Friday night. No sleep was to be had!

Bringing the motor home did have it's advantages, however. We had our own private bathroom, running water, a refrigerator for sodas, snacks in the cupboards, and real seats to sit in for all of the workers who needed a break. Penny and I were not by ourselves that night. One of our dear members, Ruby Wilson, had a small pickup truck with a camper shell, and she joined us...what a trooper she was! Sadly our camp-out days were numbered. Two years later construction began along that section of the street as many new shops were built. It was also around that time that Duane decided to turn his pet project over to me. I owe many thanks to Alan Robbins, the Boswells, and so many other hard workers.

Besides the change of chairs, there were other changes. It was then that MDIS expanded into two booth spaces in place of the one, added a canopy for shade purposes, and began sorting iris into plastic bins the night before setting up time. Doesn't that sound familiar, folks?

There was much pride generated in those days as the sale's proceeds continued to mount up and increase. We actually had a year when we were just shy of earning \$4,000! That was a year when we had some extra help. One of our members, Joe Grant, was running a large commercial garden near Sacramento, Ron's Garden. Joe brought us three burlap bags of newer introductions as well as top notch black and pink varieties. These special iris sold like hot cakes. I think we could have sold the leaver we trimmed off of the dried plants if we had thought of it!!!

I worked at the Peddler's Fair each year until 1998 when personal health issues made it too difficult. These were special years for me, and the Peddler's Fair gave me much pleasure. If you haven't had the opportunity to participate, my best advice is: TRY IT; YOU WILL LOVE IT.

Fun And Excitement At The Smith's Garden

Saturday the 14th was Mike Smith's birthday. We celebrated during the auction with a grand carrot cake (Mike's favorite).•



Alan Robbins cutting Mike Smith's birthday cake - everyone get a nice portion.

Marilyn Kaplan and Eileen Roark are to Alan's left. Across from Alan our auctioneer Bob Canning sorts the next iris for bidding after the party break.



Eileen Roark takes the first slices of cake to Mike and Mary Smith.



Our great group of intrepid bidders taking a break from the auction.



Marilyn Kaplan helping to distribute cake and Chuck Gabrysiak heading to his seat with his serving.



Mary and Mike Smith and their faithful dog Winnie.



We are down to the last piece of cake, Alan & Eileen are cleaning up.

Most of the group are finishing their portion of Mike's cake and eagerly waiting for the bidding to begin again. Left to Right: Left of Alan, sitting is Linda Drum and her granddaughter Jessica, behind Alan, far left Jim Whitely, Debbie Goncalvos, friend of Jeanne King and her son - standing with back to camera, Nancy Ashworth and husband in front, Betty Finbonner hidden behind Nancy Ashworth, Chuck Gabrysiak - standing, talking to Bruce Harden seated, , Marilyn Kaplan - standing, talking to Dixie Lee Post, David Shaw (left) and Jo Balch, Dotty VanHorst, talking to Fred Kovar, Debbie Goncalvos behind Fred, far right Mary and Mike Smith.

MOUNT DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Dues are \$7.50 annual or \$18.00 tri-annual, Please send payment to:
Mt. Diablo Iris Society, Treasurer, P O Box 5243, Walnut Creek, CA. 94596

American Iris Society dues - single yearly \$25.00, dual yearly \$30.00; single tri-annually \$60.00, dual tri-annually \$75.00; payable to: Tom Gormley, Membership Secretary, PO Box 28, Cedar Hill, MO 63016. aismemsec@earthlink.net

YOUR CURRENT BOARD:

Presidents - Joe Balch 925-447-6712 & Bob Canning 925-935-3980

Vice-President – Carl Meier 925-930-9022

Secretary – Jo Balch 925-447-6412

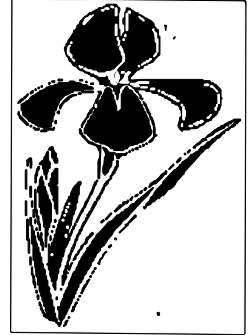
Treasurer – Barbara Meier 925-930-9022

Directors – Glenn Corlew, Alan Robbins & Barbara Whitely

Past President – Kent Lincoln

Newsletter & E-NEWS: Bob Canning, Editor & Janet Canning, Proof reader

Photographs by Joe Balch unless noted



MT. DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY IS AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY
AND REGION 14. VISIT THE REGION WEBSITE: WWW.AISREGION14.ORG



Mt. Diablo Iris Society News
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