

## *Distinguished Service Award:* **Sara Marley**

SARA IS A NATIVE OF BUFFALO, NY, AND MOVED TO ATTICA, NY, in 1945, graduated from high school and married Walter, her husband of 53 years. They bought a small farm and raised their three children there. The whole family became involved in their pure-bred Holstein cattle and laying hen operation. Daughter Kae is currently living in California, a son Gregory was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1981 at age 28, and son Carl has relocated to Portsmouth, Ohio, from Oregon.

Sara was active in her church and PTA Association, a 4-H leader for 15 years, a member of the County Agricultural Committee, and sat on the School Board, among other activities.

After selling their farm in 1983, the Marleys moved to Northern Virginia in 1986, where they worked as estate farm managers for: doctors, an accountant, an office building contractor, and lastly for a lawyer and his family. While at Stoneleigh Knoll Farm they maintained a flock of pure-bred North Country Cheviot sheep for nine years in addition to establishing a retail garden enterprise. Walter and Sara 'retired' from farming in 2000 and returned to Central NY. The snowy winter of 2000-1 dumped over 200" of the white stuff. The irises loved all that insulation and really thrived after the snow finally left in April.

Meanwhile, Sara's interest in flower gardening was rekindled and more importantly with the genus Iris. She became a member of AIS in 1989 and was active in the Chesapeake & Potomac Iris Society, working at flower shows and sales, and attending the Region 4




Sara & Walter Marley

meetings. She served as Show Secretary and Newsletter Editor for seven years, was President of C&P, Secy. of The Reblooming Iris Soc., Display Garden Chr. for the HIPS Section, and is actively participating in the Display Garden programs of the: Median, JI, HIPS and Reblooming Iris Societies. She is also an accredited Garden Judge. Sara attended her first National Convention in 1991 and has missed only two since then.

In April of 1999, Sara was called to step in as AIS Secretary after the untimely death of Ruth Simmons. She relinquished her position as RVP of Region 4 after serving for one year. The continuing health problems of Walter and son Carl necessitated her 'early retirement' as Secretary in December, 2002.

Sara and Walter recently moved to Southern Ohio, to get away from all that snow and to be near son Carl. They will continue to maintain Rainbow Iris Garden that was started in Virginia with over 1000 different cultivars of iris. Now that they are "towners" and reside on a half-acre lot, their garden is scaled down to about 400 cultivars of irises, 60 daylilies, hostas and other perennials. They have become active in the Wheelersburg Methodist Church and the local garden club. At present there is not an AIS Affiliate close by, but that is okay; the Marleys need a little breather.

Sara says that she is very honored to be chosen to receive the Distinguished Service Medal, but that her service to others would not have been possible without the support of family, co-workers and mentors. 

### **Liz's Honor: A 2003 New Introduction**

TB, 40", M. Standards are light blue-violet edged with a darker violet wash. Falls are violet in the center fading to light blue-violet at the edges. Dark violet spoons. Great show stalks! \$35 shipping included. See picture at <http://www.angelfire.com/nj4/erinsiris>

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