



The Newsletter of

The Santa Rosa Iris Society

51st YEAR NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2025



Officers 2025:

President

Anna Cadd

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Anna Marie Hermansen

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Kathy McCallum

Directors thru 12/25:

Paul Barthlome

Ellen Johnson

Directors thru 12/26:

Linnea Polo

Steve Albert

Denise Plummer

LBAGC Representatives

Jeff Davis

Anna Cadd

Alternate - Paul Barthlome

October 13 - meeting at LBA&GC : noon

Please join us on October 13, 2025 at noon in Luther Burbank Art and Garden Center, 2050 Yulupa Ave., for our meeting. Kitty Loberg will make a presentation about the gardens seen during 2025 AIS National Convention, the irises in the gardens, and people attending the Convention in Billings, Montana. It will be an interesting presentation. And please read further in the newsletter about the “non – garden “activities. Attending an AIS National Convention is great fun!



President's Message - from Anna Cadd

Uff, what a busy summer it was! After returning from the Convention in Billings, Montana and the vacation in Yellowstone, the members of our club started with digging the Convention iris bed, divided the irises and sent them to participating Region 14 clubs. Then we made plans for digging the Club Iris Bed and then we dug them! We had the Picnic and Iris Auction sale, making some money for the club. Then we dug the irises from the Center and from the Club members' gardens and sold them for our Public Sale. Digging is the "easy" part of the preparations, with cleaning and brushing the rhizomes, signing them and making the pictures. But the fun was not over! Thank you Steve, Paul, Cheryl, Mark, Jeff, Lin, Diana, Don, Sally, Anna Marie, Ellen, Kitty, Denise, Pam, Linnea and Anna for participating in all this work!

On Monday, September 22 - Steve, Kitty, Diana, Don, Jeff, Ellen and Anna brought 75 bags of steer manure, fertilizer and soil amendments to LBA&GC. We spread all this stuff on three big beds and planted 25 years of Dykes Medal winner irises, new club irises for door prizes and iris Auction in 2026 and SRIS Members 100 favorite irises. On Tuesday Anna planted the representatives of different types of irises. Everything was watered and we worked on the hottest day of summer.

Now we need to dig and re-plant the irises in our own gardens. Spring will be here in 6 months!

You may wonder what a bunch of 70-ish people can do? Together the seven of us are almost 500 years old and older than Count Dracula. We are almost pushing Methuselah's age, but we planted over 400 rhizomes in two days! Are we crazy, or what?

Minutes: Meeting - September 8 - no meeting Diana Ford



Something to Look Forward To.....

2026 Spring Regional - Region 14: May 15 - 17 : Reno

Hosted by the High Desert Iris Society in Reno, Nevada

There will be two guest iris gardens, both in the Reno area. Plans are for general iris viewing, selection of iris for awards, and in-garden judges' training sessions.



2026 AIS National Convention: May 18 - 24: New Jersey and New York

Convention Hotel: Newark Liberty International Airport Marriott Hotel

Convention website: ais2026convention.org

There are four gardens, each with their own day:

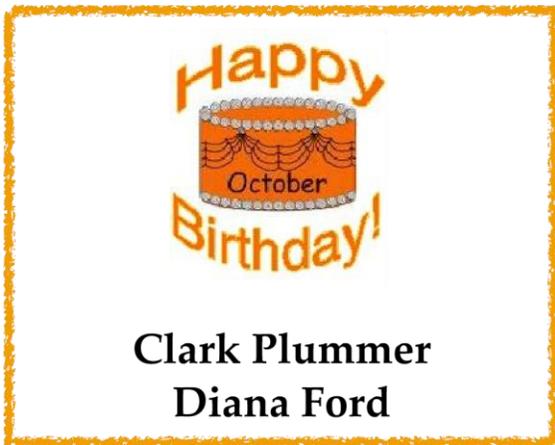
Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, Presby Memorial Iris Gardens,
Rutgers Gardens, and Gary Slagle's Garden - Phanaticville

2027 AIS National Convention: April 27 - May 1 (tentative): Oklahoma City

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2025 SRIS Dates
Monday, October 13 - noon at LBA&GC
Monday, November 10 - noon at LBA&GC
Monday, December 8 - Board Meeting - noon at LBA&GC

Lovely Dahlias from Kitty Loberg

We all love a good garden... flowers blooming, lots of color. But what is blooming in the fall? Dahlias are blooming! There is a beautiful display of dahlias at the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens in Fort Bragg. The best bloom for Dahlias is in August, and late July is good as well. It's a 2 plus hour drive from Santa Rosa, and I'd suggest going up Hwy 101 to Willits, and then Hwy 20 over to Fort Bragg. It's definitely a day's event... the Noyo Harbor has good food, and who doesn't love looking at the ocean?

Here is what to expect in the gardens...



Planting on September 22 at the club garden.....Thank you Don & Diana Ford, Ellen Johnson, Anna Cadd, Jeff Davis, Kitty Loberg, and Steve Albert



Finishing up planting at LBA&GC



After planting



September 26: Many thanks to 3 hard working members **Ellen Johnson, Dianna Murphy, and Diana Ford** who potted all our extra rhizomes for next year's sale.



Thank you to the following people for contributions to the newsletter ...
Linnea Polo, Diana Ford, Ellen Johnson, Kitty Loberg, and Anna Cadd

Highlights of AIS National Iris Convention Programs in Billings, Montana... by Anna Cadd



This Convention was organized by the Big Sky Iris Club in Billings, Montana from June 2-7, 2025. The Convention Committee Co-Chairs were Delane H. Langton, Jane Tibbs and Tina Muller. The Convention Hotel and Convention Center was located at 1223 Mallowney Lane, in Billings, Montana 59101.

Santa Rosa Iris Society was represented by Anna Cadd, Jeff Davis, Kitty Loberg and Steve Albert. We all had a great time, as this was one of the best organized National Conventions ever! After arriving to the Convention Hotel we were greeted by flower arrangements in every nook and cranny in the hotel. They were changed every day and really beautiful! I made many pictures of these arrangements, color coordinated with the art hanging on the walls. We were given the “goody bags” and the garden tours

had been allocated in advance, so there was no confusion where everybody belonged. This was a great way to meet the old friends and make new ones. The busses were old, well used school buses. Not very comfortable, but there was no way to get to some of the gardens with bigger busses. It was fun!

The 1st day was an optional tour to the Bighorn County Historical Museum, Pompeys Pillar (which was the staging area for Custer’s troops) and a nearby Trading Post and early frontier building. It was limited to 90 people, so, of course we missed it with “the registration procrastinations.” Oh, life! On Tuesday evening we enjoyed a buffalo burger dinner and all ‘first timers’ were welcomed and forewarned what the following days held for them.

Wednesday consisted of meetings and more meetings. Judges trainings were provided in gardens as well as in the breakout sessions. The first program of the day, at 8:00 AM, was the Spuria Iris Society program presented by me, the hybridizer from Cadd’s Beehive Iris Garden, Healdsburg. I was worried that nobody would attend it, being still in beds, but everybody was clutching cups of coffee and pretty much awake! I presented the new Power Point presentation about Spurias in my garden, as I have introduced 33 Spuria varieties, but rejected thousands of seedlings. Spurias may be left in place for 20 years, and I tried to show the difference between species and hybrids, and what judges look for in the garden and during a show. Everybody laughed, as I tried to make this presentation nice and easy!

The Society for Siberian Iris program was presented by SIS President, Gary White. He provided the history of the club, formed in 1951. We learned of the ground breaking Siberians being developed, and he had many questions from attendees from Northern climates.

Tom Waters presented a program of 75 years of Dwarf Irises. This category includes AB dwarfs, MDB, and Reticulata iris, which all must be under 8” tall. As these iris enjoy cold winters and the “cold climate attendees” again asked for his favorite iris and culture recommendations.

The Median Iris Society program (SDB, IB, MTB, and BB iris) focused on the hybridizing and the crossing of chromosomes between TB’s and various Pumila iris. We learned that 80% of SDBs can be traced back to 3 varieties, which were introduced in 1951.

The Novelty Iris Society seminar was hosted by Tammie Clark. This group includes Space Age, spoons, the variegated foliage, broken color, and flattie iris. Ms. Clark was very animated, which was good, as the packed room skipped lunch and bathroom breaks to listen to her presentation - wondering how to get more novelty iris into the gardens. She presented future introductions and suggestions of good performers to add to our iris gardens. Of particular interest was a Blue Tulip iris, which was auctioned off as well as a few 2025 intros. There are many new seedlings in the pipeline by Sutton and Schreiners.

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'Arilbreds by the Bay' (Union City, CA) was presented by Jeff Bennett. This was probably the most interesting seminar of the day. He controls 2400 iris in Dry Creek Garden, which was started in 1920. The property is in Zone 9B and the native soil is compacted clay. He elevated his beds 6"-8" high with native soil, 3" of compost (no manure) and 1" of Bio char. Planting iris 2' apart, he waters once a week until mid to late November. In season his water emitters are 1' apart and provide 1 gallon of water an hour. Bloom period is March 15 to early June. He uses zero fertilizer. He averages 2,000 visitors a year, was only open April to June in 2025, and has had 1,000 iris stolen to date. They now have this part of the garden fenced with security cameras. He has begun to hybridize, but is in the early stages. What is Bio char? The city produces wood chips, which are cooked to 1200* - they are charred, but cooking is stopped before they turn to ash. Bio char loosens the soil, holds 7 times its weight in water, absorbs nutrients from existing soil and lasts 100 to 1,000 years. They find it changes their soil structure but is sterile, and will not change the PH. One square foot bag sells for \$40 at a local nursery, but this public garden receives it at no charge.

Daphne Sawyer presented a session on Jill Copeland's Pseudata program on expanding the color spectrum. The Pseudata iris need an above average water supply and acidic soil. They bloom the same time as LA iris and were grown in pots originally, as Japanese gardens were small. Copeland's irises are in Ensata Garden where she works on developing true yellow iris.

Riley Probst's program on Reblooming iris provided many suggestions for success. He grows about 1500 irises, which receive ½ day of full sun, even if it's 112*. He deep waters every 3 weeks in the growing season, and applies granular 6-20-10 fertilizer twice a year. Gardens with long growing season should fertilize February, late May, and early September. His last suggestion was to only grow the Rebloomers known to rebloom in your area. He encouraged attendees to try hybridizing RE's because so few people are in this category. He shared his favorites, but I would need a separate page to note the names!

The final seminar was on Historic Iris, presented by Delane Langton of Eagle Ridge Iris Garden. All Historic irises must be 30 years or older. He doesn't like to 'chase' identifications as even a trusted source can make an error and ship the wrong iris. 'Love your NOID' was his motto. He also shared some of his favorite new iris and some of the 700 Historic irises he grows.

Soon after this last seminar we attended a welcome banquet with speaker Mike Sutton. His family's iris history began 32 years ago in Ukiah, and then in Porterville, CA. Every seedling they have is the 'most beautiful', but then reality strikes and most seedlings are trashed. Their first 'horned' iris was "Alabaster Unicorn", followed by SDBs and IBs with horns. He related that broken color iris are the best overall sellers, but the general public like Space Age iris best – with Iris Society people less so.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday were devoted to the tour of 7 gardens, each different from each other. Evenings included banquets, live iris auctions, a silent auction and more seminars! Thursday evening featured a panel discussion with Rick Tasco, Lynda Miller and Thomas Johnson. Each hybridizer had tips when growing iris and hybridizing. One topic was 'Scorch' – the iris malady, which has been around for 30 years, found in the Midwest, East Coast and in Billings. It is a bacterial infection transferred by a sucking insect such as a leaf hopper. The pathogen, which appears to only affect bearded iris, is found in the plant, not in the soil. The tip of the leaf will turn yellow, the base brown, and within 3 days the entire plant will be brown and dead. We saw these stages in several gardens on our tours and the hundreds of plant labels removed from destroyed rhizomes

Friday and Saturday evening sessions were devoted to LA iris. We saw before and after pictures of the bogs in Louisiana after hurricanes passed through and the work the LA Iris Conservation Initiative has been doing. Howie Dash will be introducing seedlings in 2026. Heather Pryor from Australia presented her program 'The Australian Style' to a packed room. She explained how the hybridizing in Australia is having an effect on LA iris worldwide. Her goal was to produce an orange iris and it went on from there: shorter stems, broken color, Rebloomers and increasing bud count. Her Power Point was beautiful, but considering the very long day, age of attendees, and the very late hour, she joked that she was unable to keep the crowd awake.

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On Friday night there was also the Geek dinner with the Auction of the irises for supporting the Electronic Services for AIS activities.

But Iris Conventions are not only about seminars. The gardens are the most important to see! Thursday, Friday and Saturday were devoted to the tour of 7 gardens, each different from each other. For the description of the gardens and the pictures – please look into American Iris Society Bulletin, Volume 106, No. 3 – Summer 2025! It is an excellent Bulletin! And of course – come to our October 13 meeting, where Kitty will present the pictures from the gardens!

All attendees were requested to vote for their favorite irises from the gardens. Here are the winners:

President's Cup - iris hybridized by hybridizer from the host Region 11

1st place - Mama Quel – Sutton 2023

2nd place - Cowboy Coffee BB, Sutton 2023

Franklin Cook Memorial Cup - iris hybridized by hybridizer out of Region 11

1st place - Ignite The Light – Johnson 2021

2nd place – Gotham – Schreiners 2022

Ben Hager Cup for Median Iris

1st place – Crazy Chaos MTB, Miller 2023

2nd place - My Gal BB, Black 2021

Zurbrigg - Clarence Mahan Award for Best Seedling

1st place - 1-a seedling by Mitch Jameson

2nd place - Seedling by Gary Slagle

Favorite Private Garden Award went to Cynthia St. Charles

And talking about Bulletin – if you are not an AIS member – you are missing 4 times a year an excellent Bulletin regarding irises and the people who grow them. Please, join American Iris Society and send your check to:

Jean Richter, AIS Membership Secretary
1226 High Street
Alameda, Ca 94501

Full Membership rates:

Annual Single: \$ 45.00 / Dual: \$ 50.00

Triennial Single: \$ 115.00 / Dual: \$ 130.00



Delane Langton



Anna & Jane Tibbs



November Newsletter Deadline, October 20th

Please note: Articles for the newsletter which are submitted after the 20th of the month may be placed at the end of the newsletter, due to formatting that has already been done.