



American Iris Society Region 4

NEWSCAST

Latest News and Information from around the Region

March 2026
Volume 69
Number 1



'Lakeside Ghost' (C. Harris 2012), a species iris, as seen in the Tevebaugh Garden

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Affiliates Of American Iris Society Region 4

BAYSHORE IRIS SOCIETY - Terry Holman, Easton, MD 21601

Email: thereseholman@gmail.com, (908) 963-9227

CENTRAL VIRGINIA IRIS SOCIETY - Wayne Bryant,

N. Chesterfield, VA 23236 (804) 512-1040

CHARLOTTE IRIS SOCIETY – Charisse Miller, Charlotte, NC

28226 Email: grandnanny6@gmail.com. (704) 957-0932

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA IRIS SOCIETY - Susan Miller,

7613 Hazelhurst Circle, Apex, NC 27502 (301) 980-7049;

copresident: Diana Dudley, PO Box 429, Creedmoor, NC 27522

(919) 528-3591

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY IRIS SOCIETY - Carol Gitter, 8408 Park

Heights Avenue, Pikesville, MD 21208 (410) 653-8408

FREDERICKSBURG AREA IRIS SOCIETY - Leisa Mullen, 42

Olive Place, Falmouth, VA 22405 (540) 847-1236

SHENANDOAH & POTOMAC IRIS SOCIETY - Patti Meagher,

35072 Newlin Court, Middleburg, VA 20117 (703) 999-3169



Alophia silvestris

Photo Dennis Kramb

LA, MS)

Alophia silvestris

Similar to other *Alophias* and has white (silver) flowers. Comes up frequently between the ruts of forest roads and trails.

Native Range: Yucatan (Mexico, Belize



Alophia veracruzana

Photo Rodney Barton

Alophia veracruzana

Common Names: Mexican pine wood lily

Description: Flowers are 2" (5cm) across in cool blue and face sideways on 12" (30cm) graceful plants.

Distinguishing Features: Flowers are cool blue and white

Preferred Habitat: The original type specimen was discovered along a sandy roadside south of Alvarado, Vera Cruz, Mexico

Alophia drummondii

American Native Plant



Alophia drummondii

Photo Rodney Barton

Common Names: Purple pleat-leaf, pine lily, pinewood lily

General Description: The flowers are approximately 2" (5cm) across, and only last for a day. The plants are perennial and can be grown easily from seed.

Distinguishing Features: Sometimes confused with *Tigrida* and *Herbertia*, *Alophia drummondii* can be distinguished because its flowers are blue with curled inner segments marked with yellow, and the flowers are also side-facing instead of upward-facing

Hardiness: Estimated Zone 8-10

Native Range: USA (TX, OK, AR,

From the Regional Vice President



It's snowing outside. I don't know for how long, but it is pretty and that's the reason I settled in the mid-Atlantic. In December, I took another trip – this time to Oklahoma City. I had an absolutely great time and spent entirely too much money at a wonderful Asian market that was as big as any Walmart. While visiting my seedlings at Hugh Stout's garden, he decided to introduce my seedling 'Sapphire Dragon' (Moran R. 2025) this year (2026).

Looking at the calendar, time is running out to participate in the AIS Popularity Poll. The last votes will be accepted on January 31, 2026. Two weeks after that, I will be analyzing the data we received. I am so happy with the results of the number of people participating from Region 4. In the last Tall Bearded Symposium, fewer than 16 people responded. As of January 5th, we exceeded that by one person, with 17 Region 4 members participating. I am hoping for more. I do not know whether others will take advantage of the winter distraction. I spent my time naming and registering seedlings and developing more iris beds before the freeze made it impossible to work in the garden.

The region meeting this spring is being hosted by the Fredericksburg Area Iris Society (FAIS) on the 1st and 2nd of May. You will find the information in the back of this issue. The regional meeting is a great place to gather judges training hours and to interact with regional hybridizers and other irisarians. For now, I would like to let you know that the American Iris Society National Convention will be held in New York/New Jersey from the 18th to the 23rd of May, with the first and last days designated for arrival and departure. Thus, the Convention is only four days, and each day will be spent in a single garden. Many may not get a closer National for a while, so I encourage all to attend.

Attending local, regional, and national meetings is my time to talk and immerse myself in irises when my family and friends are not interested in the plants I so enjoy. If you cannot go to a meeting, ask a local grower if you can visit their garden. You never know what you might find in others' gardens that will work in your own.

Later in the *Newscast* is a copy of the 2026 Rebloom Information Chart. No more X's in little squares, just the date of the first rebloom. If your iris blooms again after a rest period, please put the first date of the second rebloom. If you want to note down the spring bloom, please feel free to note those dates as well. The PDF file (https://www.irisregion4.com/Rebloom_Chart_2026.pdf) will appear on your screen, and you can print it. If you have CutePDF Pro, you can use the typewriter function to fill it out. The Excel file will download automatically, and you can find it in your download folder.

Region 4 has several positions that need to be filled and others that people should consider taking over. Look in the Help Wanted section to see if it interests you. I hope to see you at the various meetings.

Anita Moran
RVP AIS Region 4

From The Editor

As you can see, this issue of the *Newscast* is unlike several previous ones and is a little light on content. The reason for this is that MS Publisher will be removed from the active update list of Microsoft programs this fall (2026), and it will only be a matter of time before it becomes unusable. This winter, I have been “Renting” or doing “Free Trials” for several products. This issue is from a program many already have, and so far, it has been the easiest to develop a template for others to use. I want myself and anyone who follows me to be able to use the template until a new publishing program is developed to fit the needs of the *Newscast*. Most newsletter/self-publishing programs that support more than 5 pages require training, but if they aren't easy to use, they won't work for our situation. It is not expedient to use a program that is difficult to use and requires extensive training.

Below is a job description of the editor's position for the *Newscast*. I have been writing since I was a child, so a new editor would not need that experience, given how many good editors there are in the region. Some writing experience is needed, though, since you may need to create content. I am not going anywhere just yet, but I need to hand the *Newscast* over to competent hands after 22 years of being its editor.

Newscast Editor Duties:

The editor of the *Newscast* is a voting member of the board. The editor shall write, gather, edit, and publish articles for the publication, which shall be published twice a year in Spring and Fall. Publish reports from board members given during the twice-yearly board meetings to include all officers and committee chairs. Must provide a report twice a year at board meetings. Work to improve the *Newscast* by adding sections. Report on gardens visited. Learn new technologies to improve publication and distribution, such as a working knowledge of current publishing software. Work with the board and Affiliate Presidents to receive and publish their twice-yearly reports.

Besides introducing Region 4 members to species irises that do well in our region, I am thinking of adding a section for those irises that grow exceptionally well, like ‘Thornbird’ (Byers 1989) and ‘Shaker’s Prayer’ (Warner 1990), both of which I have seen blooming well in several gardens in each state of Region 4.



**‘Thornbird’
(Byers 1989)**
Blooming in
Sue
Shackelford’s
Garden



**‘Shaker’s
Prayer’
(Warner 1990)**
Blooming in
Janet LeJune’s
Garden

If there is anything else you would like to see, please let me know.

Mike Locketell

January 22, 1953 – August 4, 2025

The Lord called Mike home on August 4, 2025, after complications from open heart surgery.

Mike was born in Nyack, New York, and grew up in Bergen County, New Jersey. He attended Bergen Community College in New Jersey and Bryant University in Rhode Island. Mike had degrees in business and ornamental horticulture. He was a landscape professional and turf manager for over 40 years. Mike relocated to Virginia in 1996. In 1999, he met Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg, a respected hybridizer of reblooming irises. Dr. Zurbrigg became Mike’s mentor. After the passing of Dr. Zurbrigg, Mike continued with his hybridizing of irises.



Mike had several gardens throughout his career featuring irises and peonies. His gardens were always open to the public. He loved sharing the beauty of his plants and interacting with the visitors. His first garden was featured on *Virginia Home Grown*, a weekly show on PBS. Mike was a guest speaker at numerous garden clubs and organizations throughout Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. He even got to travel to Texas, Idaho and Missouri to speak about his work. His iris introductions won numerous awards and are grown throughout the U.S. Mike shared his work and knowledge via his



websites, *Roots and Blooms* and *Springtime in the Fall*. His work was written about in numerous publications including the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, *Richmond Magazine*, and *Virginia Living Magazine*. He was a frequent vendor at plant sales and farmers’ markets.

Maymont group visit with Sue Shackelford, Glenna Witter, Jim Schrotter, Ann Dumbler, Shirley Shelton, Janet LeJune, Bob Pries, Peggy Singelman, Bobbie Sullivan, Mike Locketell, Jim Diggs, and Sallie McCrea

Mike was the past president of CVIS and the Old Dominion Herb Society. He served a term as the American Iris Society’s reblooming iris chairman for Region 4. He was a long-time member of the Old Dominion Herb Society. He was an avid model train collector and a member of the Train Collectors Club. Mike had three parrots that he loved dearly. He enjoyed all sports, especially hockey. His favorite sports teams were the New Jersey Devils, the New York Giants, and the Mets.

Mike is survived by Carolynn Martinez, his life partner; James Locketell (Sherry), Thomas Locketell (Ginny), Barbara Robinson (Jack), and Aimee Ouellette (Ron). He was preceded in death by his brother, Steven Locketell, and his parents, Joyce and Peter Locketell.

AFFILIATE REPORTS

Charlotte Iris Society Fall 2025 Report

After a very busy spring culminating with our annual iris show, Charlotte Iris Society enjoyed a quieter summer season.

Several of our members attended the Spring Regional Meeting hosted by Eastern NC Iris Society in late April. Four members travelled to the AIS National Convention in Montana in June. Both were highly enjoyable and informative events where connections with other irisarians, hybridizers, sellers, and local clubs were strengthened.

Jill & Prescott Rogers graciously hosted our Summer Picnic in early August at their home and shade garden as about a dozen members gathered to catch up with one another.

A generous gift from the family of our late member Kay Roderick bolstered the scholarship fund we sponsor at Central Piedmont Community College.

Our September meeting featured esteemed guest Anita Moran speaking about reblooming irises. In addition to her informative program, the meeting included an important vote to update our constitution/bylaws and policy guidelines documents, a herculean effort led by Charisse Miller.

Later in September, our annual iris rhizome sale was held at the Charlotte Regional Farmers Market, including an educational component led by Sarah Sue Miller, where the public could learn about and participate in iris horticulture. Our longtime sales chair, Grey Drum, again produced a quality and popular sale that increased our visibility to the public, although rainy weather decreased revenue. We look forward to two more general meetings this fall, plus a new holiday luncheon event in cooperation with our friends in the Piedmont Daylily Club.

Lewis Bozard, President

Central Virginia Iris Society - Fall 2025 Report

The CVIS show in May had great participation with 100 entries, brought by 13 exhibitors. Best Specimen in Show (and Best of Section – Tall Bearded Iris) was won by ‘Marital Bliss’, entered by Joni Truscott. First and second runners-up, respectively, were Susan Aumen’s tall bearded, ‘Copatonic’, and Judy Durant’s border bearded, ‘Boundless Berry’. The 2nd annual Robert Y. Sandford People’s Choice Award was presented to Karen Linkous for her beautiful tall tearded iris, ‘Superstition’. Having our show at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden has been beneficial for encouraging interest and attendance from the public, as well.

Our raised-bed iris display in Hanover Master Gardeners’ Horticultural Learning Center, located at the Hanover County Extension Office in Ashland, Virginia, continues to draw interest during the bloom season, and is a great educational tool for the public to become acquainted with the various bearded iris varieties.

We had outstanding results at our iris sale as a part of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden’s Fall Plant Sale in September, and appreciated the efforts of CVIS members, as well as assistance from our friends from FAIS, to provide irises and help with set-up and sales. A potting party and picnic was held a week after the sale to preserve leftover plant donations for next year.

CVIS members are excited to be hosting the AIS Region 4 Fall Meeting on October 4, and look forward to meeting iris fans from the various chapters throughout our region.

Wayne Bryant, President

AFFILIATE REPORTS

Fredericksburg Area Iris Society Fall Report 2025

In April, we had a program on Cultivating Technology for Gardeners, presented by Robin Allen, which covered creating garden maps, using Excel and the Brother P-touch label maker for garden labels, backing up data to the cloud, and Zoom meetings.

In May, we had a great turnout for our gardens' Open Garden Day and our Annual Iris Show.

In June, Oscar Gutierrez presented a program on preserving iris memories and turning our garden favorites into art with photography. Oscar is a long-time FAIS member and an accomplished photographer who has won awards in the American Iris Society's national photography contest. He provided tips on taking photos with both 35mm cameras and phone cameras, as well as information on composition, focus, lighting, and more. He also had suggestions for choosing photos to submit to contests and for finding events and contests to showcase our photos.

On August 4th, we mourned the loss of a close friend and fellow member, Mike Lockett, who touched many lives in both FAIS and AIS.

Our iris sale in August, at the newly renovated Meadows Farms Nursery, was a great success. Customers were surprised when we dropped our prices this year, giving them the opportunity to buy even more irises. We also gained 20 new members from the sale.

We awarded one scholarship this year to a worthy student from Virginia Tech.

In September, Lois Rose graciously hosted our annual picnic at her home. Everyone had a great time.

Plans are being finalized for hosting the upcoming Spring Regional Meeting which we are looking forward to with great anticipation.

November 8th we are having our annual harvest dinner and board meeting which will wind down 2025.

Leisa Mullen
FAIS President

Francis Scott Key Iris Report

As we approach the autumnal equinox, we notice the changes unfolding in our gardens and begin to think ahead—planning changes and improvements for the next blooming season. Even now, there is still important work to be done.

Our group looks forward to a mushroom foraging event led by Sarah Chillson, followed by our fall program luncheon. At our final meeting before going dormant for the winter, we will welcome a program on reblooming irises, presented by Anita Moran.

We also anticipate ushering in our new slate of officers for 2026 and sharing our intentions for a very special occasion—our 60th Anniversary Spring Regional Convention: “A Legacy of Color: 60 Years for FSK” on May 22–23, 2027. We look forward to welcoming many of our regional affiliate members to celebrate this milestone together.

Carol Gitter, FSK President

Committee Reports

**AIS REGION 4
TREASURER'S REPORT
AS OF 9/22/2025**

Audited balance when records were transferred	\$21,358.52
Receipts	
Plant sale receipts from Spring Regional meeting	+ \$1,518.00
Interest earned for May, June, July & August	\$ 0.74
Expenses	
RVP expenses for National Convention	- \$800.00
Postage for Zurbrigg-Mahan award to Convention	- \$ 35.42
Postage to mail Affiliate Renewals	- \$ 28.00
Revere Bowl for Epperson Award at Spring meeting	- \$ 221.65
2 Revere Bowls Fall 2025 & Fall 2026	- \$ 299.18
 Current Balance	 \$ 21,493.01

"The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul." –Alfred Austin



2026 Budget For Region 4 of the American Iris Society					
Expenditure	Contact	Description	Dollars	Actual	Sub Total
Printing and Mailing	Newscast Editor	Two issues of Newscast per year	\$1,500.00		
		March 2026		\$0.00	
	August 2026		\$0.00	\$0.00	
	Newscast Editor	Instant Ink		\$0.00	
RVP Travel Expenses	RVP	\$800/yr for AIS Conventions stipend	\$800.00		
		New York, NY		\$0.00	
		In Person Meeting,		\$0.00	\$0.00
Membership Committee	Membership Sec.		\$100.00		
				\$0.00	
Memorials	RVP/Board	In Memory donations	\$300.00		
				\$0.00	
Zurbrigg-Mahan Award	Award Chair	Engraved Cup (\$300)	\$300.00		
		Awarded to:		\$0.00	
		Shipping:		\$0.00	\$0.00
Epperson Service Award	Award Chair	Engraved Silver Bowl	\$140.00		
		Awarded to:		\$0.00	
Sunshine Fund	Sunshine Chair	Get well and sympathy cards	\$100.00		
				\$0.00	
AIS Youth Program	Board		\$100.00		
				\$0.00	
Region 4 Website	Website Manager	Costs associated with website	\$100.00		
		Web Hosting		\$0.00	
Zoom Account	Board	Annual Pro Subscription	\$170.00		
				\$0.00	
Miscellaneous Expenses	RVP/Board		\$300.00		
Total			\$3,910.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Budget Spent/Remain			\$3,910.00		
Submitted by	Anita Moran				

Region 4 Newscast Fall Report

In August, eight of the top-10 pages accessed were the *Newscasts*, current and historical, which are read worldwide. These 177 August *Newscast* hits occurred only in the last nine days of August 2025. In the first few days of September, the August 2025 *Newscast* remained #1, but the newly posted Fall Rebloom Recorder introduced our followers to the Reblooming Iris Society. As the new President of the Reblooming Iris Society, I want to thank the Region 4 board for hosting the site for 11 days.

The *Newscast* and I need input from members. We have editors who can help you with content and grammatical needs. Please consider writing an article. These articles can be anything about irises and/or gardening related to irises, i.e., weed control, companion plants, competing plants, etc. I have been the editor of *Newscast* for 20+ years, and I'm running out of ideas.

Committee Reports

Fall 2025 Regional Vice President Report

I'm sorry I was away from the region most of the year. I spent many weeks traveling before and after the National meeting. At the national meeting, I felt it was my job to make Region 4 shine, and I hope I did that. The most significant addition Region 4 makes to the National meetings is our award of the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup. In 2012, while discussing the lack of attention to seedlings (I was a new judge and, of course, I knew everything. NOT!), I talked with other judges who had much greater experience, and with hybridizers. From 2003, the first convention I attended, until that 2012 convention, seedlings were ignored. After two years of discussion with the board and members of Region 4 and the AIS board, it became a reality in 2014 when the Lloyd Zurbrigg-Clarence Mahan Cup was awarded to Alton Pyburn of Texas for his seedling 08-6-10, later introduced as 'Southwest Sweetheart', which led the way until the cup was awarded to Gary Slagle for his seedling GDM42: Seedling GDK43 ('Spring Madness' x seedling GDI116: ('One of a Kind' x 'Reckless Abandon')) X 'Haunted Heart'. What was different this year? As I walked among the rows after rows of irises, the number and quality of seedlings on display were incredible. I will write more in this for the spring *Newscast*.

'Jack Loving' (D. Spoon 2006)



Outside the National Convention, seeing a Region 4 iris was wonderful – 'Jack Loving' (D. Spoon 2006) in the Grey Cliff Garden. At the Museum of the Rockies in Missoula, Montana, where "Sue", the *T. Rex*

Pasqueflower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*)



skeleton, was displayed, there was an unusual plant called Pasqueflower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*), showing three stages of its bloom. It was just fantastic, and my sister Ginny had to pull me away from taking pictures of them. I'm sharing this because I think you should leave your gardens, visit others, and attend regional and national meetings. Meet hybridizers and other gardeners who can not only impart knowledge but also enrich your lives with new ideas and wonder.

The Reblooming Iris Society will assist in collecting data to create a phenology database. Phenology records when plants bloom. The new rebloom report covers twelve months, and all you need to do is note the first day a flower blooms and the date it reblooms for the first time. Even if the flower does not rebloom, the data is still useful. I brought a form to use next year that can be sent to the Region 4 Reblooming Chair, Colin Campbell, and/or the Reblooming Iris Society Checklist Editor, Sarah Sue Miller.

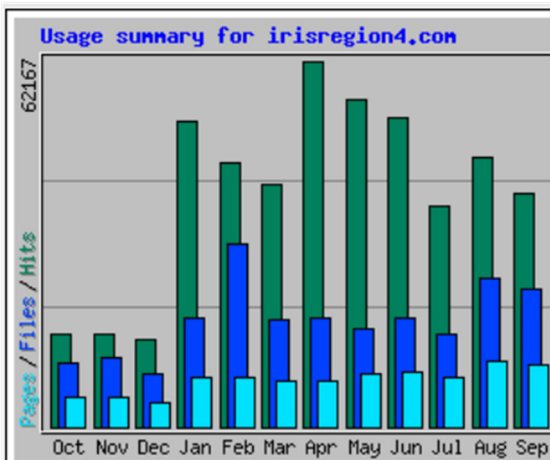
Committee Reports

Region 4 Website Report

Other than performing some maintenance as needed by AcornHost, making emergency changes, adding pictures as they are corrected, and temporarily moving the reblooming site to the Region 4 site, not much has changed. As shown in the bar graph, the Region 4 website became very active, with high activity beginning in April following the March 2025 Newscast. and it resurged when the August 2025 Newscast was posted in late July.

Beginning in November, I will update some menu items, but there are other ways to reach the pages; the best is to receive a direct link from me. One link repair was an emergency because it did not work, and the page was active, so it was repaired immediately.

We have two new country additions with enough activity to reach the top ten: the British Indian Ocean Territory and Viet Nam. Unfortunately, I can't tell where they spend their time on our site, but they are all welcome.



Website Yearly Activity January 2025 to December 2025

There were zero 404 errors (Page not found or inaccessible). AcornHost's security remains excellent. Out of thousands of attempts, mostly from Google bots (BOTS = Fake users made by hackers looking to represent code for the site they originated), Mozilla, Apple bots, Apple WebKit, Amazon bots, a new one called ClaudeBot, and others, all tried to affect our website. Over 2,000 printed pages since September 1st, which list the attempts, sources, and resolutions of these attacks on our site. Before switching to AcornHost's non-profit hosting, I tried to resolve these issues on my own, which had increased by 1000% in recent years due to AI-generated bots. Because of this, I moved the Reblooming Iris Society website to AcornHost, and the files are no longer on the Region 4 website. I want to thank the Region 4 board for allowing me to use Region 4's web space. To temporarily host the RIS site.

#	Hits		Files		KBytes		Country
1	28934	63.53%	7746	50.77%	1970934	65.18%	Unresolved/Unknown
2	14942	32.81%	6596	43.24%	984670	32.56%	Commercial (com)
3	534	1.17%	253	1.66%	58077	1.92%	Network (net)
4	368	0.81%	79	0.52%	279	0.01%	European Union
5	175	0.38%	160	1.05%	393	0.01%	Russian Federation
6	140	0.31%	132	0.87%	307	0.01%	British Indian Ocean Territory
7	106	0.23%	94	0.62%	6339	0.21%	Germany
8	66	0.14%	34	0.22%	120	0.00%	Non-Profit (org)
9	51	0.11%	2	0.01%	2155	0.07%	Czech Republic
10	49	0.11%	46	0.30%	116	0.00%	Viet Nam

HELP WANTED:

Region 4 needs the following board Chairs filled:

Median Iris Chair: Collect data on Median Irises in Region 4 and for the Median Iris Society.

Youth Chair: Contact and guide Youth members in Region 4.

Newscast Editor: See *Newscast Editor Duties* on page 5.

Website Manager: Able to make changes to the current Region 4 website and develop new pages as necessary. Make corrections as needed.

Committee Reports

Judges Training Report – October 4, 2025

In the Judges Training (JT) year running from August 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025, Region 4 had a total of 21 active judges, two apprentice judges, and five retired judges. The active judges included 10 garden/exhibition judges, nine master judges, and two emeritus judges.

Judges for 2026:

If the recommendations in my 2025 report to AIS JT Chair Lorene Crone are adopted by the AIS Board at their Fall BOD Meeting in November, two apprentice judges (Lewis Bozard and Amy Fletcher) will advance to G/E and one G/E judge (Sue Shackelford) will advance to Master. We lost four judges in 2025: one (Marilyn Naylor) resigned, one (Pat Bowen) retired, and two (Randell Bowen and Mike Lockatell) passed away. This means that in 2026 Region 4 will have 10 G/E judges, 7 Master judges, and 2 Emeritus judges, for a total of 19 active judges, a loss of 2 active judges. There will be no apprentice judges in 2026 as none of the student judges filed paperwork to advance to apprentice status.

Student Judges: Most attendees at judges training sessions turn in their tests whether or not they are judges or intend to become judges. Would-be student judges who turn in their tests should remember that I do not officially consider them a student judge and track their training unless they have filed with me a written application to become a student judge. A form for this purpose can be found under the “Judges” tab at the Region 4 website. It is a fillable PDF form that can be filled in online and emailed to me. If you have been turning in your tests and therefore assume you are a student judge, you should probably check with me to see if you have such a form on file. At the present time, I have 6 “official” student judges with applications on file. Other would-be student judges shouldn’t panic; I keep all tests for at least three years, so I can add them to an organized folder and give you credit as a student for any training taken in the last three years if/when I receive an application form from you. We need more judges in Region 4. Please, would-be students, get those applications filed!

Webinars for JT credit: Webinars which AIS has offered for JT credit are still available on the AIS YouTube page. A list of all available Webinars, with a notation of which qualify for JT credit, appeared in the Winter 2025 issue of *Irises*. Judges who need classroom credits, or just want to refresh their training, can use these Webinars for credit provided they take the test. However, finding the test isn’t always easy. A link to it appears in the description of the Webinar session, but you usually have to click the “more...” button to find it. Tests are usually available as downloadable PDFs or fillable online tests. However, a major problem with the online test, despite what the description may say about it, is that there is currently no way for Regional JT Chairs to automatically, or even manually in my experience, be informed on who has taken the online test. So, if you view a webinar for credit, PLEASE USE THE DOWNLOADABLE PDF VERSION OF THE TEST. Print it and fill it in. Then either send it to me snail-mail, or scan it, or take a photo of it, and email the scan or photo to me. I have recommended to AIS that all tests be FILLABLE PDFs, so they can be filled in online, saved to your computer, and then

Committee Reports

Judges Training Report – October 4, 2025 (cont.)

emailed to me electronically as an attachment, i.e. no scan or photo necessary. I've been told they are working on this for the future, and hope to even revise PDF tests for past webinars to make them fillable, but it hasn't happened yet that I know of. Also, at present I know of no AIS limitations on how many times a judge can use the same JT Webinar for credit. My personal recommendation would be no more than once in any three-year period.

Additional Region 4 Training Requirements for Apprentice Judges:

In addition to the requirements for apprentices outlined in the AIS Handbook for Judges and Show Officials, Region 4 requires two additional hours of beardless training, at least one of which must be in-garden. This was finally reconfirmed and documented in the minutes of the 2023 Region 4 Fall Board meeting which appear on p. 34 of the March 2024 *Newscast* under “unfinished business.” Because 1) this requirement is so poorly and obscurely documented; and 2) in-garden beardless training is not often offered in Region 4 (last was for Siberians in May 2022), I waived this requirement for the two apprentices I recommended for advancement to G/E judge this year on condition they pick it up at their first opportunity. I will also do my best to schedule in-garden beardless training around the Region in the future.

Activity Reports: I would like to thank all the Region 4 judges and apprentices who were so good about getting their Activity Reports to me on a timely basis. It made my job of getting my composite report sent to the AIS Judges Training Chair on time so much easier. I urge all judges to establish some method of keeping track of your training so you can easily provide me with an accurate and timely activity report at the end of each JT year. This could be an activity log kept on your phone or computer, faithfully filling in the log sheet at the back of the Handbook, keeping a photo or electronic copy of all tests taken –whatever works for you. My job is to verify what you send me, not to prepare your activity report for you. And remember judges, you get credit for being an instructor at an approved JT session or for tutoring an apprentice.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Rose
AIS Region 4 JT Chair

Committee Reports

Fall 2025 Auction Report

Earlier this year, members of AIS Region 4 were wonderfully generous with plant donations for the Spring Meeting in Durham, North Carolina. The auction featured 120 separate lots and included irises (of course), daylilies, hellebores, hosta, sedum, yucca and a wide assortment of potted trees. There was a three-way tie for the highest price realized that evening, which was \$40: standard dwarf bearded iris ‘Monster Peach’ (a 2022 intro by Anita Moran), Siberian iris ‘Complex Character’ (a 2025 introduction by Marty Schafer and Jan Sacks), and daylily ‘Illegal Alien’ (a 2013 introduction by Robert Selman).

In all, the auction generated \$1,578 for the region, which is a little lower than Fall 2024 (\$1,675) and Spring 2024 (\$2,324).

Our longtime ringmaster Anita Moran has decided to pass the torch on collecting and organizing a PowerPoint for plants donated for regional auctions. Heather Haley agreed to take on this task, and is looking forward to supporting regional activities in a new way. Anita’s boundless energy, enthusiasm, and love of all things Iris is a gift to everyone in Region 4. It will be a tough act to follow, but a delightful one. Who wouldn’t enjoy an excuse to shuffle through iris pictures and find the best ones?

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Haley

Fall 2025 Iris Program Resource Report

The regional repository of iris programs continues to grow, and currently includes presentations about;

- Antique garden tools
- Aril and arilbred irises
- Beardless irises
- Calendar for iris culture
- Credit card processing
- Delaying iris senescence (plant death)
- Dwarf irises
- Historic irises
- Hybridizing
- Iris companion plants
- Judges activity report
- Launching an iris farm... sustainably
- Median irises
- Tall bearded irises and
- World of iris

If you would like to preview one of these programs or set up a collaboration for a virtual Zoom meeting for your AIS affiliate or garden club, please contact me by e-mail or text message. heather.haley@gmail.com or 707-315-0866.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Haley

*The earth is quiet
Covered in a blanket of white
Beneath there is life
Roots and seeds wait
Their time is coming
Awaiting warm to emerge in sight*



2025 Epperson Service Award

EPPERSON AWARD RECEIPIENTS

- 2011 Clarence Mahan
- 2012 not given
- 2013 Carol Warner
- 2014 Lois Rose
- 2015 Carrie Winter
- 2016 Susan Grigg
- 2017 Ginny & Don Spoon
- 2018 Anita Moran
- 2019 Doug Chyz: Award given at the Spring 2020 meeting
- 2020 not given
- 2021 not given
- 2022 not given
- 2023 Heather Haley & Sheryl Campbell
- 2024 Bob Pries: Award given at the Spring 2025 meeting



The 2025 Epperson Service Award Goes to Katharine Steele

by Sue Shackelford

I want to talk to you for a moment about the Epperson Service Award. You are one of a handful of members who knew Roy Epperson [AIS President 2008 – 2010] personally. You actually served on the first nominating committee.

Records indicate that you joined the American Iris Society in 1974. Aside from being a mother, teacher, grandmother, published author (I enjoyed reading your book, by the way), great photographer, and iris hybridizer, you found time to serve as president of your local chapter numerous times. You conducted many judges training sessions and hosted judges at your home from time to time. You have been an AIS Judge since 1979 and a Master Judge since 1994. You have even stepped up to judge a show alone when other judges had to cancel at the last minute. I am told that the clerks boasted how they had benefited from your knowledge and comments as well as having an example of how to gracefully conduct oneself in a challenging situation.

You have attended numerous AIS and Regional meetings, often encouraging new and old members to participate, even driving them or sharing your room with them. You retired from judging in 2020, and in that same year, you received the first Carrie Winter Mentoring Award for your generosity with your time and advice. As a knowledgeable member, you listened patiently to new ideas, doubts, and thoughts. These conversations always resulted in advice, encouragement, or action.

In 2024, after learning that members in your Charlotte Iris Society were interested in hybridizing, you reached out to your AIS friends and secured some hand-pollinated crosses of Siberian iris seeds and wrote an instruction paper titled "Getting Started with Your Iris Seeds". The response to this was amazing, with 10 members participating in



Katherine Steele
2025 Epperson Service Award Winner

the experiment. So many that you had to reach out again to Marty Schafer and Jan Sacks in Massachusetts for more seeds. Your 'Petit Monet', an MTB, received the Williamson-White Medal. Your 'Foxcroft Full Moon' species iris was a 2005 Honorable Mention and 2007 Award of Merit recipient, and your 'Richard's Joyous Love', a Siberian, still brings joy in many gardens. In 2024, you were awarded an honorary doctorate degree from the Trevecca Nazarene University for your long-standing financial contributions to the school.

I hope I have not left out too much. You have been a stellar example and role model in your local society and an invaluable ambassador for Region 4 and the American Iris Society.

You are a true Southern lady, and it is my pleasure to let you know that this year, your fellow Region 4 members have chosen you to receive the 2025 E. Roy Epperson

Service Award.

From the President of the Reblooming Iris Society

Happy Spring, everyone. I would like to introduce you to the new Reblooming Yearly Report Sheet. I believe it will be much easier to use than the previous one, since you only have to enter the date you first see the bloom. In other words, just put the number of the day of the first bloom. If your iris reblooms after a lull in bloom, say three to four weeks later, add that number. Unlike the last version, this data can be used not only by the Reblooming Iris Society but also by AIS at large. This data, called Phenology data, will eventually provide a map of rebloom for irises across the world. If you add the spring bloom as well, then that is even better. The USA Phenology Network could also use our data.

We hope you use this chart to collect data throughout the year and keep a copy for yourself to see year-to-year differences.

Anita Moran
 President, Reblooming Iris Society

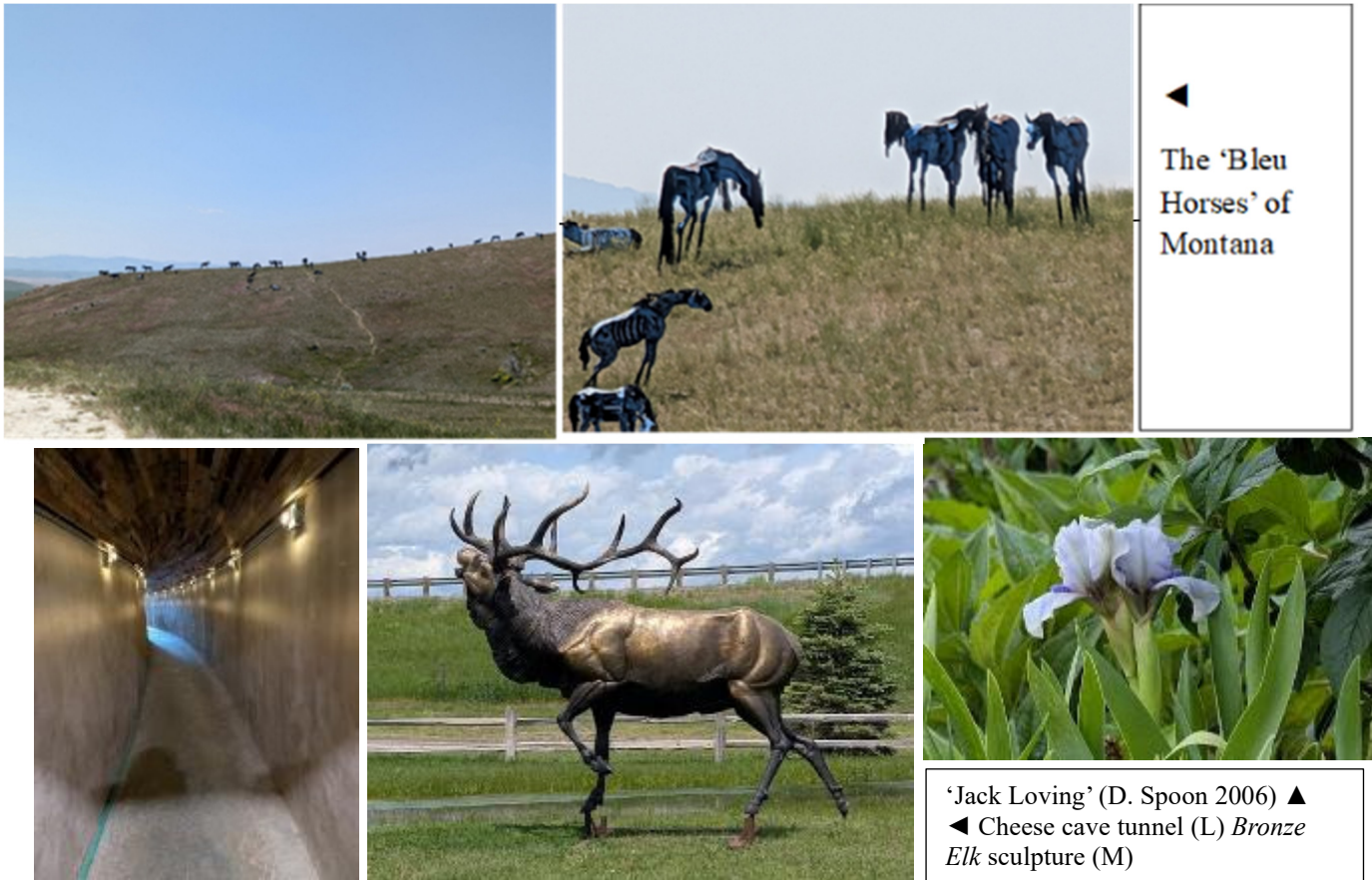
□

Side Trips We Took Around the 2025 AIS National Convention

by Anita Moran

Often exciting draws of the annual American Iris Society (AIS) National Conventions are the Optional Tours. In the past, these included trips to the Ghio Garden, Mount St. Helens, and the Keppel Garden. Due to construction, we were unable to visit the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, which was closed. Since we were driving, we had a wonderful opportunity to visit many areas of Montana. These visits included the *Montana Bleu Horses* by Jim Dolan outside Three Forks, Montana, on Route 287, and Greycliff Mill between Bozeman and Billings, Montana, which included a wonderful restaurant called “The Mill” and a cheese cave. Then there was Great Falls, and the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, where “Sue”, the only complete skeleton of a *T. rex*, was found (*T. rex* “Goliath had ~90% of the skeleton found in South Dakota, and *T. rex* “Trix”, found in the Netherlands, had 78-80% of the skeleton recovered.)

Driving across the US, road signs can be very important, even if they lead you well away from your goal. After

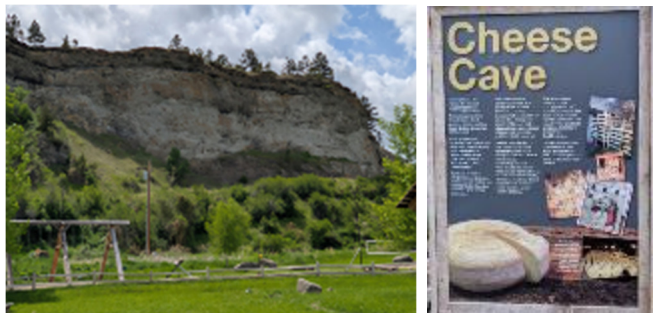


◀ The ‘Bleu Horses’ of Montana

▲ ‘Jack Loving’ (D. Spoon 2006)
 ◀ Cheese cave tunnel (L) Bronze Elk sculpture (M)

visiting The Craters of the Moon, just north of Twin Falls, Idaho, we were supposed to head to Billings; but we wanted so see the *Bleu Horses*, a set of metallic sculptures that were supposed to be on the side of the road. We were sure we knew their location as we headed north out of Wheatland, but saw no sign of them and knew we had gone too far when we reached Toston, Montana. Making a U-turn, we headed back and realized we had missed them because we thought they were an actual herd of horses. Pulling off onto a parking area, it was amazing that these skeletal representations looked like any other herd of horses. Back on the road, we headed once again to Billings

A sign again grabbed our attention and off we went to find the “cheese cave” at Greycliff Mill and Farm. The farm was called that because it was built beneath a long escarpment of light-colored stone. Can you think of anything more worth getting off the freeway to check out than a CHEESE CAVE? But we didn’t get off the freeway because we found out they were closed on Sunday. So now our focus was on deciding when we could get back to the cave. Well, that was simple. Early Monday, we headed off to the Little Bighorn Battlefield, only to find it closed. Disappointed, we headed back to the Greycliff Mill. The smells from the restaurant were wonderful, but we decided to make the cheese cave our first stop. One thing I love about such places is the samples they offer. The cheeses were great, but something I could never see myself wanting was Cherry Habanero Jam. I am not big on cherry anything except the raw fruit straight off the tree. But after a small taste I went back again and again and a jam ended up in my basket, followed by spectacular sharp cheddar and a block of pepper jack cheese that



The Grey Cliffs, Montana

was so soft and flavorful I had to have it. Then I put another jar of the jam in my basket. Don’t judge – they were small jars and how often will I get to Montana? Leaving the cave, we traveled through a tunnel that opened into a large greenhouse, where herbs were grown to put with the cheese and use in “The Mill”. The side door led to “The Barn”. Yes, a literal barn, where weavers were working their looms; and many handmade items were for sale.

At the restaurant, I ordered the Forester Panini with turkey, pepper jack, sun-dried tomatoes, avocado, and ranch dressing, and paired it with a chocolate shake. YUM! After eating, we walked in the garden past a large bronze sculpture of an elk; and, lo and behold, an iris was blooming in a planting area. It looked like ‘Jack Loving’ (D. Spoon 2006).

After the iris convention ended, we were saddened to learn that Glacier Park roads were closed due to severe weather, but we had alternate plans. It was on to Great Falls. We were determined to find our grandparents and our uncle “Bus”. I never met the man and had no idea if he had kids or a wife. It was a good thing my oldest sister, Mary, was with us because she was the only one of us who knew “Bus” was actually named Leo. Even then, although Grandma and Grandpa were easy to locate, we needed the Cemetery manager to help find “Bus”; but we



were successful. The town was filled with *Buffalo* sculptures, each painted differently, including one that was part fish. “The Great Buffalo Hunt” is a great way to see the painted bison throughout Great Falls by artists connected to the C. M. Russell Museum, but some were hard to spot. Actually, we only found two. No one told us they could be inside buildings; and if not for a red light, we might not have seen the

second one.

It was time to move on to the falls. The previous year, my sister Ginny and I were not able to go to Ryan’s Island because it did not open until June. The suspension bridge to the island looked sturdy enough; and if one person went across with no wind, the crossing was pretty innocuous. We did not have that. Mary refused to cross; Ginny took five steps across and turned around; Peggy and I continued, and the evacuation warning signs were not comforting.

Being on the island was the best way to get pictures of the falls, and the island was filled with blooming wild wood roses (*Rosa woodsia*). Below the falls we saw a school of large fish, but I had no idea what kind of fish they



Warning Sign on Ryan's Island



Wood Roses (*Rosa woodsia*)



Unknown large fish gathering



The skeletal replica of *T. rex* "Sue"



Horse sculpture made using chains

were. On the way back across the bridge, the wind started to kick up, and I was ready to get off the bridge. By the time I got to solid land, I had to rethink my idea that the bridge was sturdy. It had turned rickety.

I had one more stop to make in Montana, and we headed for a museum in Missoula. I wanted to see "Sue", the only complete *T. rex* skeleton in existence. Although they found the *T. rex* "Goliath" in South Dakota, which was larger (believed to weigh 11 tons and to be 28 years old at its death), they still recovered only about 90 percent of its bones. We saw a sculpture of a horse made entirely of heavy chains. I couldn't find a plaque with more information, but it was cool. The Pasqueflower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*) (similar to a dandelion flower) showing every phase of its bloom from bud to a spiky seed pod, was growing throughout a planter by the entrance to the museum. Unfortunately, it was Sunday, so the museum was closed. Thankfully, a replica of "Sue" 's' skeleton was outside the building. The actual skeleton is at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, along with a bronze replica of the femur bone of the *T. rex* "Big Mike". "Sue" was believed to be the same length as "Goliath" at 43-feet in length; but, in comparison, they believed she was only nine tons and up to 33 years of age at her death [determined by bone growth rings like a tree].

That was the end of the Montana phase of our trip. We then headed to Idaho, then Washington state, down to Oregon, and back to California

to drop off Peggy in Paradise, then to Denver to drop off Mary, and finally to Brule, Nebraska, to pick up my car and head home.

This year's AIS National Convention will take place in New Jersey/New York, and the optional tour is to the New York Botanical Garden, located in Upper Manhattan. I am also looking forward to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, one of the guest gardens. The chance to see these two renowned gardens will make the trip special, and I hope many from Region 4 will join me.

Reprint from Newscast V2, No. 1 March 17, 1960 p21

LITTLE OLD LADY

Old and bent, she smiled and quietly
Partook of the simple meal I had for her.
Then I pursued my task, she paused to scan
The posies beds I'd just begun to stir,
For spring was in the air,
With trembling, broken voice, she softly said:
"I once grew pansies too; the size?
O, large and velvety ones". Then listlessly
She cast a parting glance with wistful eyes
As on her way she slowly trudged.
My mind began to surge and meditate
Of potted shrubs and blooms, plain, blue and red,
That she had raised; and I could visualize
A child not old, a garland on its head
Playing in sifted sands.
As magically she slipped away from view,
I wondered if her eyes were tearful, too.



By John C. Vivian [1887 – 1967, 30th governor of Colorado (1943 – 1947), attorney, writer, and poet].



**Minutes of the 2025 Fall Region 4 Board Meeting, October 4, 2025
Virginia Crossings Hotel and Conference Center, Glen Allen, Virginia**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:20 a.m. by RVP Anita Moran, who confirmed that a quorum of 9 members was present. Ten board members were present.

Minutes of the Spring 2025 Region 4 Board Meeting were accepted as printed in the last *Newscast*.

RVP Report: Anita Moran strongly encouraged judges to vote High Commendations on their annual judges ballots. Anita said she travelled a lot this year, notably to the AIS national convention in Montana, where the guest irises included almost as many seedlings as introduced varieties.

Anita announced that the Reblooming Iris Society has developed a new form for reporting rebloom. Starting next year, write down the date of the first rebloom and, if the grower wishes, the first spring bloom. Send your report to the Region 4 Rebloom Chairman, Colin Campbell, with a copy to Sarah Sue Miller [the new Reblooming Iris Society Checklist Editor]. Anita provided copies of the report form and explained that GRP (Group) refers to the iris type (TB, IB, SIB, etc.).

Assistant RVP Report: Kathy Huneycutt reported that she, her husband, and their cat have been homeless for the past two months [following a house fire in May 2025]. They are now living in an apartment. She announced that the Fall 2026 Region 4 meeting will be hosted by the Charlotte Iris Society. Both the Fall 2027 and Spring 2028 regionals will be hosted by the Shenandoah and Potomac Iris Society. Ginny Spoon reaffirmed SPIS will do both.

Treasurer's Report: Sue Shackelford provided a written report showing that, when the records were transferred to her, the audited balance was \$21,358.52. Receipts were \$1518.00 from plant sales at the 2025 spring regional and \$0.74 interest. Expenses included \$800 to the RVP for the AIS national convention, \$62.42 for various postage, and \$520.83 for three Revere bowls (Epperson Awards for 2024, 2025, and 2026), leaving a balance of \$21,493.01 as of September 22, 2025.

Sue noted that Mike Lockett passed away. The Region 4 budget for memorials is \$300. We voted that we donate \$300 to the Reblooming Iris Society in memory of Mike Lockett. There was a discussion of putting part of our financial balance in a money market account, which earns more than a Certificate of Deposit (CD). Our money remains at Truist Bank.

Charisse Miller from the Charlotte Iris Society will draft a Policies and Guidelines document for Region 4 as an addendum to our bylaws. This will include a \$5/member/year donation to help fund the Region. This is now recommended, but only two societies are donating at present. It was noted that Region 4 is a 501(c)(3) organization. [This means we are tax-exempt. This was reaffirmed in a letter from AIS Legal, sent to the RVP, who shared it with the Treasurer.]

Budget Report: Anita read the budget report she prepared. It does not include \$271.00 for Instant Ink and the amount spent on the last *Newscast*.

Judges Training Report: Anita read the Judges Training (JT) Report prepared by Lois Rose. We started the year with 21 active judges and ended it with 19 active judges. Most attendees of judges' training sessions turn in their tests, whether or not they are judges or intend to become judges. Presently, we have six student judges in Region 4. To become a student judge, you must fill out and submit a written application, a fillable PDF form available on

the Region 4 website. Lois keeps the tests she receives for three years, so folks who want to become judges should check with her to be sure they have signed up. You can retroactively get credit for any training taken in the last three years once you have submitted your application.

AIS is giving some judges training via Zoom. Lois recommends that you submit copies of your completed tests to her. AIS is working on making all JT tests fillable PDFs.

Remember that Region 4 has an additional requirement of Apprentice judges: two hours of beardless iris training, including one hour in-garden. For in-garden training, you can copy the 1 – 2- page summary at the start of each chapter of the JT Handbook and take it with you for reference, rather than lugging the whole book around. Note that the deadline for submittal of the annual Judges Activity Report to Lois is August 10 for the year ending July 31. All JT forms are available online on the Region 4 website.

Membership Report: Ginny Spoon reported that this year’s \$10 full AIS membership campaign has greatly increased Region 4 membership so Region 4 may now rank #1 in AIS membership. Heather encouraged folks to share links to the membership drive information on social media.

Website Report: Anita stated that the Winterberry Gardens section was viewed frequently. She noted that our server blocks malicious visitors. In one month, AcornHost blocked 28,934 “bots” for the Region 4 website.

Newscast Report – Editor Anita Moran stated she needs articles to publish. She has editing help from Alleah Haley and Lewis Bozard, who can assist contributors with content and grammatical needs. Articles can be anything about irises or gardening related to irises; i.e., weed control, companion plants, competing plants, etc. The group suggested a “Garden Gossip” column. Anita said that this fall, Microsoft Publisher will no longer be supported by Microsoft. This means that in two to three years, some of Microsoft Publisher’s functions may no longer work. She is currently looking into other programs, and we may have to budget and pay for them.

Epperson Service Award Report: Sue Shackelford, chairman, summarized that the award has been given every year since its inception in 2011, except for the COVID years 2020, 2021, and 2022. Thirteen awards have been given - once to a couple, Don and Ginny Spoon. One year, two awards were given - to Sheryl Campbell and Heather Haley. Four recipients have passed away, but all others are still actively participating in Region 4 activities, many of whom are still holding offices. The 2025 Epperson Service Award will be announced and presented at tonight’s banquet.

Sunshine Report: Kathy Huneycutt reported that she sent two sympathy cards and three thinking-of-you cards. Kathy has a new email address and phone number:

Khuneycutt3652@gmail.com
804-683-1050

Iris Program Resource Report: Heather Haley reported that she has 15 iris-related topics in an online repository available for use. The programs are PowerPoint and can be given via Zoom. To preview a program or set up a collaboration for a virtual Zoom meeting for your AIS affiliate or garden club, contact her by email or text message:

heather.haley@gmail.com
707-315-0866

Auction Report: Auction Chairman Heather Haley reported that the Spring 2025 Region 4 auction in Durham, North Carolina, brought in \$1578.00, slightly lower than the Fall 2024 (\$1675) and Spring 2024 (\$2324) auctions.

Reblooming Report: None given.

Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Award Report: Anita announced that this year's Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Award, which Region 4 provides to AIS for the best seedling voted at their annual national convention, went to hybridizer Gary Slagle for his tall bearded seedling GDM42.

Anita asked members to please meet the deadlines she sets. She will post new forms online.

Nominating Committee Report: This is a two-year duty. The five members of the Nominating Committee are: Board members Lewis Bozard from Charlotte Iris Society and Leisa Mullen from Fredericksburg Area Iris Society, both of whom volunteered to continue. New members are Deadra Moore, who volunteered from the Central Virginia Iris Society, Grey Drum (chair) from the Charlotte Iris Society, and Janice Bock from the Fredericksburg Area Iris Society.

Written Affiliate Reports were provided by Charlotte Iris Society (Lewis Bozard), Central Virginia Iris Society (Wayne Bryant), Fredericksburg Area Iris Society (Leisa Mullen), and Francis Scott Kay Iris Society (Carol Gitter). See submitted reports. The Bayshore Iris Society report was given orally by Pat McNeal, and the Shenandoah and Potomac report was given orally by Ginny Spoon. Notable highlights were Bayshore stating that they need a new meeting place. They have some new members and are working on how to further increase membership. Shenandoah and Potomac stated that they are having trouble finding meeting and show places. Their sale in 2026 will be at a historic mansion on 400 acres. The 2025 sale was held in conjunction with the local lily society, which attracted more customers and boosted income. Anita reported that Dave Oktavec's daughter will give a program on mushroom foraging later this month, and Anita will give a reblooming iris program, both at Francis Scott Key Iris Society. FSK will celebrate 60 years next year.

New Business: Heather Haley was behind a revamp of the AIS Symposium. Starting November 1, through January 31, you can vote for any 25 irises in the Symposium, not just tall bearded irises. Information will be provided via both AIS News and Notes and the AIS website.

Affiliate paperwork – Anita will send out reminders that AIS Affiliate societies need to submit their annual affiliation paperwork and pay affiliation fees to AIS.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Alleah Haley, Secretary

Minutes of the 2025 Fall Region 4 General Meeting, October 4, 2025

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by RVP Anita Moran at approximately 7:20 p.m.

The following Region 4 officers will take office immediately at the end of this meeting:

RVP Anita Moran

ARVP Kathy Huneycutt

Secretary Alleah Haley

Treasurer Sue Shackelford (changed from Acting Treasurer to Treasurer)

Roll Call:

Bayshore Iris Society – 1

Charlotte Iris Society – 3 + 2 online

Central Virginia Iris Society – 10

Eastern North Carolina Iris Society – 3 + 1 online

Fredericksburg Area Iris Society – 5

Francis Scott Key Iris Society – 1

Shenandoah and Potomac Iris Society - 1

Guest – 1

Winners of the Reblooming Iris Show were announced:

Best in Show – ‘Constant Companion’ by Pat McNeal

1st Runner-up – ‘Over and Over’ by Ginny Spoon



◀ IB ‘Constant Companion’ (Marsh 1995)



‘Over and Over’ ▶ (Innerst 2001)



The 2025 Fall Region 4 plant auction brought in \$1578.

Anita announced the winners of this past spring’s voting for Region 4 garden awards:

The Alice Bouldin Award for the favorite seedling bred by a Region 4 hybridizer, seen growing and blooming in a tour garden, went to Anita Moran for 18Whh03, a yellow TB, which will be introduced as ‘Sisters of Sunshine’.

◀ Moran seedling 8Whh03: ‘Sisters of Sunshine’ (Moran R. 2025)



'Tempo Tantrum' (D. Spoon 2024)



'Centennial Celebration'
(D. Ford 2021)

The D. C. Nearpass Award for the most popular iris by a Region 4 hybridizer in a tour garden went to Don Spoon for 'Tempo Tantrum', a yellow TB

The B.Y. Morrison Award for the most popular iris by an out-of-Region 4 hybridizer seen blooming in a tour garden went to Diana Ford for 'Centennial Celebration'.

The Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Award for the best seedling seen growing and blooming in a tour garden at the 2025 AIS National Convention in Montana went to Gary Slagle for GDM42-5.

The Dr. E. Roy Epperson Service Award: Sue Shackelford discussed the award with the assistance of Anita Moran. She gave a 15-year history of the award, named after Dr. E. Roy Epperson of High Point, North Carolina. Dr. Epperson was a professor of chemistry at High Point University. Sue named past winners of the award and announced this year's winner, Katharine Steele, who was present via Zoom. Sarah Sue Miller of the Charlotte Iris Society will take the award, a silver bowl, have it engraved with Katharine's name, and deliver it to her [See pages 16 – 17 of this issue].

The General Meeting closed with the introduction of the night's speaker, iris hybridizer Hugh Stout, owner of the five-acre Stout Gardens at Dancingtree in Oklahoma City, which will be on the AIS National Convention tour in two years. Hugh mentioned irises that he introduced from other hybridizers, and spoke about irises he has bred and introduced, as well as his breeding goals.

Alleah Haley, Secretary

About the 2026 Region 15 [southern California and Arizona] Spring Trek: The Spring Trek will be held on April 10th and 11th in Phoenix. This is an excellent opportunity to tour three gardens hosting 250–300 guest irises. These irises were planted in the fall of 2024 by members of the Sun Country Iris Society (SCIS). The tour features newer introductions from 2023 and 2024 by hybridizers including Thomas Johnson, Paul Black, Jim Geditz, Lori Rhodes, Elizabeth Rieniets, Howie Dash, Robert Treadway, Hooker Nichols, and Rick Tasco. Jim Geditz, Lori Rhodes, and Elizabeth Rieniets also provided seedlings. The plantings include tall bearded, spuria, and Louisiana irises.

One of the featured gardens belongs to Sharon Petterson. As a former nursery owner and operator, Sharon has cultivated a magnificent garden that is sure to provide inspiration for our own backyard havens.

Bonnie Nichols, AIS President, is the guest speaker. On the evening of Friday, April 10th, she will speak on novelty irises. On Saturday, April 11th, Bonnie will lead a discussion in the garden.

If you are interested in attending, please register early so SCIS can plan more accurately.
<https://suncountryiris.org/events/region-15-spring-trek/>

Path To the Zurbrigg–Mahan Seedling Cup: A Ten-Year Journey

by Anita Moran

The Lloyd Zurbrigg-Clarence Mahan Seedling Cup award is provided for the best iris seedling viewed at the annual American Iris Society (AIS) Convention, as voted by attendees. Unlike other AIS awards, the Zurbrigg-Mahan Cup recipient keeps the award, and a new cup is donated each year. This award is awarded by the AIS and supported by AIS Region 4 in honor of two distinguished members. Lloyd Zurbrigg, a noted hybridizer of reblooming irises, and Clarence Mahan, a hybridizer and a past president of the AIS. It took almost two years for the Region 4 board to decide how to present the award idea to the AIS board.



Kay Ludi, Ginny Newbold Moran (my sister), Anna Cadd, and Joyce Poling

After returning from the AIS annual convention in Ontario, California, in the spring of 2012, I was concerned. Although I had only been an AIS judge for 2 years, I thought it a shame that the wonderful seedlings seen at the national meeting were not recognized, especially after talking to my sister Ginny, Anna Cadd, and Joyce Poling as we sat in the shade at the Holk Garden. After discussing the problem with the Region 4 board and hammering out a strategy, I wrote a letter to the AIS board proposing that Region 4 sponsor an award for seedlings, with a Region 4-provided take-home cup presented annually.



2014 Alton Pyburn’s seedling 08-6-10 (‘Stand In Awe’ X ‘Dance Recital’), later introduced as ‘Southwest Sweetheart’. Photo Perry Dyer

The AIS board accepted Region 4’s proposal to sponsor the Lloyd Zurbrigg-Clarence Mahan Seedling Cup. The following spring, Alton Pyburn’s seedling 08-6-10 (‘Stand in Awe’ X ‘Dance Recital’) was the first recipient of the new Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup. Mr. Pyburn said his “seedling must have sturdy bloom stalks and thick petals. If it meets this test, then come the other nice features to consider.” This iris was introduced the following year, named ‘Southwest Sweetheart’ (Pyburn 2015)

The following year (2015), the recipient was ‘Royston Rubies’ by Adam Cordes. Yes, that ‘Royston Rubies’ (‘Prestige Item’ X ‘Cranberry Sauce’), the 2025 winner of the American Dykes Medal. This seedling had a storied career after winning the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup in 2015. It went on to win an Honorable Mention in 2019, an Award of Merit in 2021, the Wister Medal in 2023, and, finally, the Dykes Medal in 2025.

The 2016 Winner of the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup was Bonnie Nichols’s tall bearded space-age seedling 2013-1 [(‘Storybook’ x ‘Avalon Beckons’) X ‘Dorothy Devenport’, which was later introduced as ‘Cha Cha Cha’ in 2018]. This iris went on to win an AIS Honorable Mention in 2021 and an Award of Merit in 2023. An extra is that ‘Cha Cha Cha’ has been reported to rebloom in Texas, USDA Zone 8.



2015 Winner: 'Royston Rubies' (Adam Cordes 2017)
Photo Anita Moran



2016 Winner: Bonnie Nichol's seedling 2013-1 'Cha Cha Cha' (B. Nichols 2018) Photo Riley Probst



2017 Winner: Howard Dash seedling ADG 11-02-04 'Flamingo Fever' (Dash 2019)

The 2017 winner, ADG 11-02-04 [(*'Zesting Lemons'* X Kelly seedling PFM-09-1: (*'Pennant Fever'* x *'Machismo'*))] was introduced in 2019 as *'Flamingo Fever'* by Howard Dash. After introduction, *'Flamingo Fever'* also received an Honorable Mention in 2022.

In 2018, the AIS National Convention was in Louisiana, and Cindy Dufrene's seedling 4-22-14 (*'Early On'* X unknown) won the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup. This Louisiana iris became the first non-tall bearded to do so. *'Sharon Conaway'* was introduced in 2020.

The Hooker Nichols seedling 1978 won the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup at the 2019 National Convention, but was not introduced. It made another appearance at the 2025 National Convention in Montana, where it faced a stellar group of seedlings. It was among my favorite seedlings of the 2025 convention.



2018 Winner: Cindy Dufrene's seedling 4-22-14 'Sharon Conaway' (C. Dufrene 2020) Photo Cindy Dufrene's



2019 Winner: Hooker Nichols seedling 1978
Photo Anita Moran



2022 Winner: Steve Kelly seedling SK17-1: 'Sparks to a Flame' (S. Kelly 2023)

Due to COVID, no cup was awarded in 2020 or 2021.

The 2022 National Convention awarded a Steve Kelly seedling SK17-1 ['Spice Trader' X seedling SK15-4: (seedling TAFCS12-6: ('That's All Folks' x 'Coffee Song') x 'Coffee Song')] the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup. It was later introduced as 'Sparks to a Flame' in 2023. It received an Honorable Mention in its first year of eligibility in 2025.

In 2023, an Ava Toth IB seedling 19A116i, whose parentage was unknown, won the award for best seedling and was introduced in 2024 as 'Running with Scissors' (Ava Toth 2024). It is eligible for the 2026 award season.

In 2024, the Japanese iris seedling 09JL3 ('Taiko' X 'Sunrise Ridge') from Chad Harris won the seedling award. However, it is not scheduled for introduction. Although Mr. Harris is keeping the iris for crosses, this seedling did not make it to his introduction selection list.

In Montana, at the 2025 AIS National Convention, the Gary Slagle seedling GDM-42-5 [(‘Spring Madness’ x (‘One of a Kind’ x ‘Reckless Abandon’) X ‘Haunted Heart’)] won the Zurbrigg-Mahan Seedling Cup. Gary Slagle commented, “This seedling was reselected on its maiden bloom for its unique coloring on the falls. The second- and third-year blooms were even better than the maiden bloom, with more saturated color, better branching, and higher bud count. I wasn’t going to send this seedling to the Montana convention because I was afraid it would die from the shock of going from zone 7a to zone 4; but I really wanted to test its toughness, so I sent it off to Montana. Boy, did it surprise me!”



2023 Winner: Ava Toth IB seedling 19A116i 'Running with Scissors' (Ava Toth 2024)
Photo David Toth

2024 Winner: Chad Harris's Japanese iris seedling 09JL3

2025 Winner: Gary Slagle seedling GDM-42-5

The 2025 convention was the first I attended where the number and variety of seedlings available for evaluation were clearly extensive. Even well-established hybridizers sent seedlings. This was the ultimate goal of providing the seedling award. More exciting was two tall bearded irises, the Gary Slagle seedling GDM-42-5 and Mitch Jameson's seedling 17-17 'Peach Dandy', won High Commendations, something we had not seen in many years. A total of 52 different tall bearded iris seedlings received HC votes. And there were HC votes for seedlings for border bearded (1), intermediate bearded (5), miniature tall bearded (2), standard dwarf bearded (1), species (1), Siberian (1), Japanese (2), and Pacific Coast irises (2). With so many voting for seedlings now, it makes all the meetings and writing proposals worth the time.

Seedlings at the 2025 National AIS Convention, Billings, MT



Slagle Seedling GDO11-5 1



Cordes Seedling BB M19A 1



Moran Seedling 20DAYas01 1



McNeal Seedling MTB 19-SD11-A 1



Cereghino Seedling 19-1-2 1



Kauffman Seedling 17-26-2 1

2025 AIS Awards Region 4



TB AWARD OF MERIT
'Champion Bloodlines' (Patricia McNeal 2018)
Photo Anita Moran



TB HONORABLE MENTION
'Mama's Music' (Colin Campbell 2022)
Photo Anita Moran



TB HONORABLE MENTION
'Flight Of Bluebirds' - (Donald Spoon 2023)
Photo Anita Moran



TB HONORABLE MENTION
'Lemon Smoothie' - (Donald Spoon 2021)
Photo Ginny Spoon



SDB HONORABLE MENTION
'Tiger On The Green' - (Anita Moran 2021)
Photo Anita Moran



SDB HONORABLE MENTION
'Orange Kitty' - (Donald Spoon 2023)
Photo Ginny Spoon



SDB HONORABLE MENTION
'Hot Peaches' - (Donald Spoon 2021)
Photo Ginny Spoon

You are invited to the Spring Regional Meeting, May 1-2, 2026

On behalf of the Fredericksburg Area Iris Society (FAIS), we are pleased to invite you to the AIS Region 4 2026 Annual Spring Meeting. We are delighted to be hosting you here in the Fredericksburg area.

We have a lot of activities planned for you: judges training, plant auction, silent auction, banquets, awards and recognitions, two guest speakers, and, yes, the ever-popular Board Meeting. We also have five gardens available for touring which always allow for new and renewed friendships with iris lovers from throughout Region 4.

Check out our registration form and be sure to get it completed and in before April 15th.

We're looking forward to seeing you soon!

Room registration may be made by calling the Country Inn and Suites at 540-243-7157. Breakfast is included with your room registration. FAIS has reserved a small block of rooms for the meeting at a special rate of \$129.00 per night. To get the discounted rate you must reserve by April 1, 2026 and mention that you are attending the FAIS (Fredericksburg Area Iris Society) Spring Meeting. Thursday night is also available at the special rate for those desiring to arrive early.

Handicapped accessible rooms as well as pet friendly rooms are available at this location upon request.
 Last Day to Cancel with Refund: April 20, 2026

To donate Plant Auction items, contact Anita Moran at pilmore22@gmail.com.
 (E-mailed pictures are required for each plant donation by April 17, 2026, 2 weeks prior to the meeting)

To donate Silent Auction Items, contact: Sue Shackelford at smsgca@gmail.com or 540-379-1451

Restaurant suggestions close to the hotel for your enjoyment. (B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner)

Jimmy the Greek Restaurant M-F 7AM-8PM (B,L,D); Sat-Sun 6AM-3PM (B,L)	3401 Lafayette Blvd	540-891-0460
Four Seasons Family Restaurant (B,L,D) M-F 7AM-3PM; Sat-Sun 6AM-3PM	10660 Patriot Hwy	540-710-2515
Denny's (B,L,D) Open 24 hours	5325 Patriot Hwy	540-642-0492
Red Robin (L,D) 11AM -10PM	10109 Patriot Hwy	540-891-7970
Longhorn Steakhouse (L,D) 11AM-10PM	10012 Southpoint Pkwy	540-710-1600
Cracker Barrel (B,L,D) 6AM-9PM	5200 Southpoint Pkwy	540-891-7622
Bob Evans B,L,D 7AM-9PM	10011 Southpoint Pkwy	540-891-2853
Legends Grille	10500 Spotsylvania Ave	540-834-2443

Should you decide to extend your stay in our beautiful community either before or after our event, please check out these sites for additional information: <https://fxbg.com/rappahannock-valley-garden-trail/> and <https://fxbg.com>

Robin Allen
 Meeting Chairman

Leisa Mullen
 FAIS President/Room Reservation Information

Schedule of Events
AIS Region 4 Annual Spring 2026 Meeting Schedule
May 1-2, 2026

Friday, May 1, 2026

7:00 am -	Registration – Hotel lobby
7:30 - 10:00 am	Set up silent auction
10:00 am	Silent auction opens
10:00 - 12:00	Board Meeting
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch on your own
1:00 - 2:30 pm	Classroom Judges Training: Delane Langton
2:30 - 3:00 pm	Carpool to Rose Garden
3:00 - 5:30 pm	Tour Rose garden; in-garden training: Delane Langton
5:30 - 6:00 pm	Return to hotel
6:30 - 7:30 pm	Dinner
7:30 pm -	Plant auction

Saturday, May 2, 2026

7:00 – 8:30 am	Registration – Hotel lobby
8:30 - 9:00 am	Carpool to Gutierrez garden
9:00 - 9:45 am	Tour Gutierrez garden
9:45 - 10:00 am	Drive to Schroetter garden
10:00 - 11:00 am	Tour Schroetter garden
11:00 - 11:45 am	Drive to Shackelford garden
11:45 - 1:15 pm	Lunch; Tour Shackelford garden
1:15 - 2:15 pm	Drive to Mullen garden
2:15 - 3:15 pm	Tour Mullen garden
3:15 - 3:45 pm	Return to hotel
5:00 pm	Silent auction closes
5:30 - 6:30 pm	Dinner
6:30 - 7:00 pm	Awards; announcements
7:00 pm -	Guest speakers:
	Remembering Mike – Phil Yowell
	Hybridizing for Rebloom in Montana – Delane Langton

The Fredericksburg Area Iris Society (FAIS) Presents
2026 Region 4 Annual Spring Meeting
“Remembering Mike Lockatell”
Friday May 1, 2026 and Saturday May 2, 2026
Country Inn and Suites
10356 Patriot Highway, Fredericksburg, VA 22408
Phone 540-870-5463

Name (1): _____ Chapter or Region: _____
 Name Preferred on Nametag (1): _____
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
 Will you be attending “In-Garden” Judges Training on Friday? Yes___ No___ If you will be driving, would you be able to transport other participants? Yes___ No___ If yes, how many others could you transport? ____
 Saturday box lunch preference Club Sandwich_____ or Chef Salad _____

Name (2): _____ Chapter or Region: _____
 Name Preferred on Nametag (2): _____
 Street Address: (if different from above) _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
 Will you be attending “In-Garden” Judges Training on Friday? Yes___ No___ If you will be driving, would you be able to transport other participants? Yes___ No___ If yes, how many others could you transport? ____
 Saturday box lunch preference Club Sandwich_____ or Chef Salad _____

Full Registration

(Full registration includes all activities, garden tours, dinner on Friday and lunch and dinner on Saturday)

Special Note: Breakfast is included with your reservation at Country Inn and Suites

Before April 15th: Full Registration: **\$90.00** x _____ # of person(s) = \$ _____

After April 15th: Full Registration will be **\$100.00** x _____ # of person(s) = \$ _____

Partial Registration

Friday, May 1st Only
(Includes all activities, judges training & dinner) **\$50.00** x _____ # of person(s) = \$ _____

Saturday, May 2nd Only
(Includes tours, lunch and dinner with speaker) **\$70.00** x _____ # of person(s) = \$ _____

Saturday, May 2nd Garden Tours Only:
(Includes lunch and judge’s training) **\$30.00** x _____ # of persons = \$ _____

Saturday, May 2nd Dinner Guests Only **\$40.00** x _____ # of person(s) = \$ _____

Total amount enclosed for registration(s), tours and dinners = \$ _____

Do you have a special dietary needs? If so, please describe and indicate which person below:

Intentionally Left Blank