

The Lincoln Iris Society's

Rainbow Messenger

A More or Less Monthly Publication for Anyone who Loves Irises!

Edited by David & Marjorie Lionberger

Lincoln, Nebraska

Volume 21 Issue 2 February 2019

President's Message

David Lionberger

About this time of the year, winter becomes very tiresome for me and I am sure many of you feel the same way. This winter has varied in temperature and snowfall quite widely, as last winter did. The abnormal warm periods for several days at a time cause some concern for the safety of our iris. As we all know, iris are exceptionally hardy, but the false starts encouraged by warmth is not conducive to good health and vigorous growth when true spring arrives. Last spring, following a similar winter, our bloom season was varied in arrival, quality of growth, and blossom size. Our Nebraska weather can vary greatly and predicting it very far in advance seems impossible, but we can all hope for a good season this year.

President's Quote

"Climate is what we expect, weather is what we get."

Mark Twain

ANNA SMITH'S 101st BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday Anna!

Our longtime friend and Lincoln Iris Society member, Anna Smith, observed her 101st birthday on February 15th. Anna's good friend, Eunice Cernohlavek, organized a birthday party to be held at Lancaster Manor on February 16th. Anna continues to enjoy good health and loves to hear from her friends. Cards may be sent to her at the following address:

Lancaster Manor
1001 South St
Lincoln, NE 68502

Meeting

Date: Monday, February 25, 2019

Time: 6:30 p.m.

**Location: St. Andrews Lutheran Church
1015 Lancaster Lane Lincoln, NE**

**Program: "Panorama of Daylilies"
Presented by Jenny Cich**

**Hosts: Marlene Tracy, Karen Kurbis,
and John Moss**

Questions about Iris or LIS? Contact:

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YOUTH NEWS

David Lionberger

Two major AIS Youth functions have attained their deadlines for entry. The Clarke Cosgrove Award had a nomination deadline of January 31st, and the Ackerman Essay Contest entries closed on February 15th. Several of our LIS Youth members are involved with these annual AIS opportunities. We wish them well and anxiously await the results of both events.

PREPARING FOR SPRING

David Lionberger

Each year about this time since we began publishing the newsletter, I have written an article similar to this. I do so because I am a firm believer in the practice of good iris garden sanitation. Many of our members are well aware of the benefits of spring clean-up, but we have newer members that may profit from the repetition. The major threat to an iris garden whether large or small is the iris borer. Infestations of iris borers can quickly decimate a garden in one season if not controlled. The nocturnal borer moth that lays its eggs in the fall in iris beds prefers to do so in leaves, dead foliage, and blown in trash at the base of the iris plant. These eggs, if allowed to overwinter in said trash, will hatch in the spring and begin the process of becoming adult iris borers. Therefore, from my experience, I find it beneficial to clean all debris from our iris beds in the fall and each spring in particular. The moth-laid eggs will hatch in the spring with two or more consecutive days of 70 degrees or warmer. I make every effort to have our beds cleaned prior to temperatures attaining that sum and duration. There are various chemicals available in liquid, granules, and powder form, which are helpful with borer control. As they are expensive, require proper application, are detrimental to the environment and health of the applicant, I avoid their use as much as possible. Faithfully adhering to a policy of thorough sanitation and no chemical use, our gardens have maintained zero borer infestation for many years. Another practice which pays big dividends is a regular stroll through the garden watching for signs of borer presence. Foliage with wet, slimy streaks, indications of chewing, and ragged edges is an indication of borer larvae activity. Simply remove the infected leaf or pinch the leaf in the area of damage and kill the larvae. All trash/debris removed from our iris beds is hauled away and never composted. This policy insures there is no carryover and is effective in breaking the borer cycle in the iris garden.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Linda

Rader There have been a few recent additions and changes in membership information. Please record these in your 2019 booklet.

New Member

Linda Wilkie

Renewing Members

Mark Nelson, April Eden, Samantha Eden

Corrections/Additions

Karen Kurbis & Marlene Tracy

Betty Szopo

HUSKER LAWN & LEISURE SHOW

Lois Linke

The Husker Lawn and Leisure Show is March 8th — 10th. Since it is a week earlier than previous years, we need to plan the booth and get volunteers as soon as possible. Keep in mind, this is a great opportunity to showcase our group, inform the public about irises, and advertise our upcoming show and sale. Getting volunteers is the hardest, yet most important task. When the sign-up sheet is passed around at the February meeting, PLEASE write your name in a space. A typical thought is, "I don't know enough about irises to participate." The answer to that is, "You don't have to know a lot." Handouts on growing irises will be available as well as show and sale fliers. Your job is to get those materials in the hands of interested people. Please make plans to donate 2 hours of your time in support of LIS.

SEEDLING PHOTOS

David Lionberger

As colored pictures greatly enhance publications of every sort, I wish to share these with you in a supreme effort to create another page in this newsletter for your pleasure and perhaps enlightenment. As an amateur hybridizer, I did not know that seeds from the same pod or same parentage could greatly vary in likeness. As the AIS Registrar explained when I inquired, the seeds and resulting plants are siblings which will express their various gene heritage in color, size, vitality, height, etc. All are eligible for AIS registration in accord with registration requirements. These photos of seedlings are from crosses made several years ago and they have bloomed for the past three years or more. None are registered and probably will not be.



Seedling #MDL11-01



*Iris above and below are from the same seed pod
Seedling #MDL14-06*

