

# Twin City Iris Society

## NEWS AND VIEWS

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#### Next Meeting

POT LUCK DINNER

March 27, 1958

Our next meeting will be our annual pot luck dinner meeting. Everyone is urged to attend. There will be an enticing array of home cooked hot dishes, salads, rolls and desserts. Gentlemen: bring yourselves, a big appetite and \$1.00 for all you can eat. Ladies must contribute food. If you have not been contacted about what to bring call Mrs. Maffett at UN 9-4836.

We have a new meeting place this month. It is the Y.M.C.A. at 1845 E. Lake. If it meets with your approval we will arrange to hold the rest of our meetings there. It is centrally located and should be easy for everyone to reach. It is just a few blocks west of the Lake Street bridge.

Remember the date, March 27, 1958, at 6:30 P.M. — BE PROMPT — Everyone come and mingle with your Iris Society friends.

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#### Gardening at Gables: G. B. Gable

To correct an error in the article last month, the iris mentioned should have been Frances Craig. Frances Fay is a very fine day-lily introduced last year.

So many folks ask, "What do you do to get a lawn to grow like that", or remark "I take good care of my iris but they don't grow like yours". There is no secret and I'll try to answer those questions and explain the routine work that John and I will do these next thirty days.

As soon as the snow goes off we will wait for a cold morning when the ground is frozen and apply a dressing of mineralized Loma, 5-10-5, to the lawn. No danger of burning at this time of year and plenty of time to leach down to the roots and become available when growth starts.

April 1st. is the time to commence removing the hay covering from the iris. Just a word of caution at this time. If iris have been too heavily covered with leaves or too much hay, we may discover plants that are bleached out until almost white and if so we will give those plants time to start growing and a chance to turn green before all of the hay covering is removed. We learned the hard way and had very few bloom stalks in one section of the display garden when we were too eager to clean up. Those of you who grow mums should also exercise the same caution.

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Leave a protective cover of litter over your mums and wait until the young shoots turn dark green and are almost two inches high before removing the litter. More mums are killed by the sun in the spring after gardens are raked clean than are lost by cold weather.

Some of the hay will be frozen down but we will remove all that will let go. Leaving the hay on iris too long causes mildew after warm days. I believe a lot of the rot starts at this time.

After a few days the garden will be sufficiently dry to start the final clean up. Look for winter injury to rhizomes. If soft spots are found we immediately scrape out the soft spots and treat with Carco X solution.

We then give the plants a good drenching with Carco X solution applied with a sprinkling can. Peonies, daylilies and phlox get the same treatment. The Garden Encyclopedia advises a weak solution of Bordeaux mixture applied to phlox and peonies as soon as they start coming up. Parzate or Captan are also very good but then I would add Ovotran or Malathion to the solution to destroy red spider mites which hatch out very early in Spring.

I have found phlox plants less than one inch high in April with deformed leaves, the under side covered with red spider mites. All insects are easily killed when they first hatch out and killing just a few is equivalent to thousands next summer.

We apply a side dressing of mineralized 5-10-5 Loma, keeping it at least three inches away from the rhizomes. Bone meal or super phosphate are also good and can be applied between the rhizomes in clumps or rows without injury. We prefer to fertilize clumps of iris the easy way with a Hozon siphon attached to the hose using Hyponex and Orthogro (liquid fish concentrate). Perhaps we use more than the directions call for but we lift the siphon hose out of the solution and rinse off the plants and saturate the soil thoroughly to get the nutrients down to the roots so the fertilizer is immediately available. This liquid feeding is done several times each Spring just before spraying for iris borer control, especially when the iris are sending up their bloom stalks.

Iris borer eggs start hatching during the warm days in Spring and that is the time to start the spray program. A three way solution can be mixed using DDT for iris borers, Parzate or Captan for leaf spot and Ovotran or Malathion for red spider. Red spider mites are getting to be quite a problem and by using DDT we are upsetting the balance of nature, killing off the other insects and permitting red spiders to increase so be sure to use some insecticide to destroy the red spider when you use D.D.T.

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St. Paul: W. G. Sindt

The last meeting in St. Paul brought out some people from that city with an interest in iris. In fact a couple of them were interested enough to become members. We welcome you Mary and Mary. Mary Shields and Mary Chisholm are not new to gardening circles since both have been very active members in the Garden Club of Ramsey County. Mary Shields at present is vice president and Mary Chisholm is corresponding secretary.

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Just in case some people wonder about the status in the Sindt household as reported in the last news letter, I must say things are a bit hectic. Within the past year our street has been renamed for the boss (Mr. McKnight of 311) and our rural status changed to that of a village. So if anyone wishes to send condolences (or cash) either address will still reach us. The house number is still the same.

Program for the March meeting will be mostly food. The program committee did think that a speaker with enough fire could not be obtained to keep such a well fed audience awake. Consequently the program will be of the entertainment type so we should all have some fun.

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Minnetonka: Pat Wysocky

The Minnesota Peony Society will be hosts for the 54th annual National Peony Society show this year. The Northwestern Bank Building is where the show will be held June 23 and 24 and will be tied in with the Minnesota Centennial Celebration. Headquarters for The National Society will be the Curtis Hotel where the annual meeting and the banquet will be held on June 23. Minnesota Centennial decorations will be used on the banquet table as well as at the show.

We were delighted to see Japanese (Kaemphari) Irises, as they never look here but evidently as they should look, in the third Cinarama movie. These grew to a huge size and were grown right in the pool. All of us have been warned not to have these irises stand in water as they winter kill when the water freezes around them. Perhaps the answer is that in areas where the winter freeze is not as severe as here - grow them in water. In this area water them a lot but don't put them in a pool. In any case they hate lime and love aluminium sulphate, and they're well worth any extra effort they may require.

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South Side: L. V. Franklin

Not much local news from the fabulous south side Iris paradise. Your south side reporter has been touring the extreme south end of his territory looking for Iris.

We visited Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Old Mexico and the only Iris we saw was in the garden of the old mission of Tumacacori, a short distance from Nogales on the Mexico border. They had made about three inch growth and were just labeled "Iris". The garden had been restored as it was in the time of the Spanish occupation and Iris were probably the varieties our grandmothers grew.

We spent most of our time in Arizona and a good bit of that in Phoenix. Phoenix is in a broad flat valley; at the north edge of town rises the high range of hills called the Camelback Mountains. Central Avenue which divides the town into east and west ends in a winding road which climbs to the scenic heights overlooking the city, known as South Mountain Park. A long time ago the valley between was a desert, then water from the man made lakes nearby turned it into orchards of oranges and grapefruit. More recently as the population expanded these orchards have been divided into building lots. In one of these rather exclusive subdivisions lives our former Iris Society treasurer, Jos. Fliegle.

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Joe and his wife were vacationing in Old Mexico when we called so we could not ask them personally how they liked their new land of sunshine. We took several pictures of their long, low ranch type home with orange trees in the front yard and a bright block of blooming lantana accenting the front entrance. We may be able to show you the slides sometime.

Phoenix, like Minneapolis, is surrounded by fast growing suburbs. Youngtown is one of these. Mrs. Leone Hanratty's sister, Mrs. Bolin and her husband live there. It is a town especially for retired folks. The day we called they were just driving out, on their way to a picnic at South Mountain. We promised to call again on a trip we had planned to Joshua Tree National Monument but were unable to make it. They did say they like Arizona and they do live in a nice new home on the edge of the desert with all its charm.

To those of you who have not seen the desert as it exists in Arizona and imagine it as a vast sea of sand, we want to leave you with this picture: Every type of cactus from the giant Saguaro and tall Ocotillo and shorter barrel cactus down through the Cholla family, jumping, silver, cane, pencil, and teddy bear, etc. to the hedgehog and little pincushion types grow profusely all over. They are interspersed with the bright green Palo Verde and darker green desert willow and mesquite, bushy trees up to fifteen feet or more in height. Then there is the salt bush, the creosote bush, the desert broom and the desert holly. Most all of these plants and shrubs bloom. They are scattered over the desert, not so close as to be bushy but with room enough to walk among them and enjoy them. That is the Arizona desert.

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Golden Valley: Alice Foss

#### A \$5,000 Tree

A Missouri nurseryman heard of a marvelous apple tree in West Virginia which produced golden fruits instead of the usual red. He immediately paid \$5,000 for the tree and built a strong burglar-proof fence around it. Today this Golden Delicious is a popular apple!

#### A Garden Prayer at Easter

Help us, Lord, to grasp the meaning of happy growing things, the mystery of opening bud and planted seed, that we may weave it into the tissue of our faith in life eternal.

From Garden Facts and Fancies by Alfred Carl Hottes

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Don't forget the next meeting - - Thursday, March 27, 1958

POT LUCK - 6:30 P.M.

- BE PROMPT -