

For Iris Lovers in the Cold Zones



Aurora

Newsletter of the Can-West Iris Society

Summer, 2009

Volume 3. Issue 2

Update From The Organizing Committee

The 2009 iris season is behind us and in spite of the weather, it was a good year.... not great but good. Across the prairies, conditions ranged from too wet in some places to way too dry in others. It was cold and windy. On the upside, the cooler temperatures allowed for more intense bloom color and blooms seemed to last forever.

The CWIS second annual AIS sanctioned show was a huge success. Because of the vagaries of the weather there weren't as many 1st place ribbons given out but the sheer number of entries exceeded our expectations. We totally ran out of stem holders again and are taking steps to ensure this doesn't happen again and that the iris are displayed to their best advantage. See the article on page 2 to read all about it. Also included is an article by our distinguished judges on page 7 following the picture pages (3 to 6)

The siberian iris we were to have available for the sale table did not fare well in the cold and frosty weather of this past spring. They had little new growth and the decision was made to plant them out, grow them on, and see how they do over winter. Our thanks to Sandy Eggertson, Brenda Newton and El Hutchison for dedicating some valuable garden space to growing them for us.

In other news, webmaster Debby Nelson has been asked to move the past newsletters from the 'members only' area of the website to the public pages. All but the most recent edition will be available for viewing by members and the public without the additional hoops. It was our reasoning that doing so would increase traffic to the website and educate the public as well as members which, after all, is our mandate.

The annual rhizome sale starts next Wednesday, July 27th. The Rhizome Sale Committee is busily putting on the final touches. See page 8 for more information. And finally, on page 7 is the call for Top Performers for 2009 and on page 8, the AIS 2009 Award Winners.

So sit back, relax and have a good read. The Organizing Committee:

**B. J. Jackson (jacksonb@brandonu.ca),
El Hutchison (eleanore@mts.net),
J. Bishop (jb@dataways.com) and
Deborah Petrie (petrie@mts.net)**

Show Report – 2nd Annual Edition

By B. J. Jackson

Saturday, June 13th 2009 will go down in CWIS history as the day our members and friends celebrated the world of iris by entering 167 stems for exhibition and judging at the 2nd annual show held in Winnipeg at the Bourkevale Community Centre. And what a job it was for the two visiting judges from Aurora, ON (Terry Laurin and Kate Brewitt, see elsewhere for their report) as well as our own El Hutchison, along with student judges B. J. Jackson and E. Czarnecki.

It was quickly apparent that we were going to have more stems than containers in which to put them. We literally went through everything that could hold a stem in the entire building including the stem holders on loan from the Manitoba Regional Lily Society, all the vases we could find in the kitchen and even those brought in by members 'just in case'. We were totally out of containers. But we made do and it was a wonderful day!

Eleven exhibitors were on hand and the classes represented included Miniature Dwarf Bearded, Standard Dwarf Bearded, Border Bearded, Intermediate Bearded, Miniature Tall Bearded, Species and Species-X as well as a single Tall Bearded and a single Siberian.

We learned a lot of things from the first show last year including the importance of having a Court of Honor for winners. Deborah Petrie did an excellent job along with her helpers in putting it together.

The first awards presented were the 2008 Sweepstakes Medals that were not available at the time. Presentations were made by B. J. Jackson to Sandy Eggertson for the Silver Medal and to El Hutchison for the Bronze Medal.

This year's winners were:

- AIS Best Specimen in Show – SDB Wish Upon a Star (P. Black, 2006) – El Hutchison
- AIS Silver Certificate Sweepstakes – El Hutchison (most first place ribbons in show)
- AIS Bronze Certificate Sweepstakes – Brenda Newton (second most first place ribbons in show)
- CWIS Best Canadian Hybridized Stem in Show (sponsored by OnRussell Gardens)/ Section Certificate – Section A Bearded Iris - SDB Ruby Eruption (Chapman, 1997) - El Hutchison
- CWIS People's Choice Award (voted by show visitors) - IB Double Your Fun (Aitken, 2000)
- B. J. Jackson

The sale table was once again a beehive of activity which is really not a surprise. Several varieties sold out in a flash. I never did get the computer set up so folks could see the pictures! Also forgotten was the raffle that was to occur. But, don't despair. I am keeping all the items and we will do it next year for sure with some additional treasures to be added.

In summary, the second annual show was a huge success and that success is directly attributable to the volunteers who did what was needed and got the job done. My thanks to Gerry and Wilma Maurice, Naomi Wiebe, Sandy Eggertson, Deborah Petrie, Brenda Newton, El and David

Hutchison, Len and Rita Giesbrecht, Jennifer Bishop (in absentia), Ed Czarnecki, Valerie Dnesiuk, Irene Hyland and Terry Laurin and Kate Brewitt.

See how it went in the following photos.

All Show
Photos
Courtesy
Of
Brenda
Newton
and
Valerie
Denesiuk



B. J. Jackson presents the 2008 AIS Sweepstakes Medals to Sandy Eggertson (silver) and El Hutchison (bronze)



Court of Honor Table



Rows and rows of iris on display!

**All Show
Photos
Courtesy
Of
Brenda
Newton
and
Valerie
Denesiuk**



Kate Brewitt makes an observation



Sandy Proulx gives Gwen Jamieson a peek at her booty from the Sale Table while Naomi Wiebe and Deborah Petrie assist customers.



First place winners table



All Show Photos Courtesy of Brenda Newton and Valerie Denesiuk

B. J. Jackson and El Hutchison's seedling entries



B. J. Jackson presents El Hutchison with the Best Stem in Show Award for SDB Wish Upon a Star.



People's Choice Winner "Double Your Fun" in B. J.'s garden. Photo: B. J. Jackson

So Many Irises, So Little Time

by Kate Brewitt and Terry Laurin

One disadvantage of attending this year's AIS National Convention in May was that we missed peak dwarf iris bloom in Ontario. Little did we know when we offered to judge the Can-West Iris Society show on June 13...some four weeks later...that the MDBs and SDBs would be in full bloom in Manitoba. What luck!

Arriving at the Winnipeg airport, we were greeted by El and David Hutchison. It seems we were El's 'second choice' as she inadvertently hugged another 'blonde' before she settled on us. From the airport we drove to their Canadian Iris Display Garden in Ste. Anne. Here we received a tour de force of their garden where we enjoyed approximately 250 MDBs and SDBs in flower...more than enough to compensate for missing our own dwarf iris season. And the variety was amazing!!! We saw irises in bloom that we'd only seen in pictures...and irises are always so much nicer in 'real life'! El and David have a beautiful garden full of comfortable seating areas and flower beds displaying all kinds of perennials...not just irises.

The afternoon was spent doing garden training with Ed Czarnecki and B. J. Jackson. Since most of our training has been on TBs, it was nice to have the opportunity to train on, and in the process learn about, the smaller irises...problem being though, there were TOO many irises to choose from. Although, when you think about it, can we ever have TOO many irises?

The flower show on Saturday was another story. We've been showing irises ourselves for ten years and, with over 160 bloom stalks, this was by far the largest flower show we've ever attended. Kudos to all CWIS members who took the time and effort to cut and display their bloom stalks! Although this did result in a judging marathon like we've never seen, but it went well despite our race against the clock. Joining us in this 'marathon' was El Hutchison. It was a pleasure to work with someone with her knowledge and expertise...we made a good team!

Our 'wee' sojourn to Winnipeg was a lot of fun, but too short. 'Big sky' country never fails to impress. From the storm cloud formations over the prairies to the hospitality of CWIS members it was a trip well worth the effort...and it's always a pleasure to spend time with such enthusiastic iris lovers. You've got a great club there! Keep up the good work!

Top Performers Sharpen Those Pencils!

By: B. J. Jackson

Now's the time to start looking at your records and recording your top performers for the 2009 season to be published in the Autumn 2009 newsletter due out sometime in October. I will need your top three picks from any class, along with a comment or two on their performance in your garden and the reasons you would recommend it to others.

If you have photos, send them along with your e-mail. Appropriate photo credits will be given. Submissions can be send to me any time prior to October 10th to jacksonb@mts.net, subject line of the e-mail should read "CWIS Top Performers for 2009". I look forward to receiving yours!

News Flash!!! CWIS Rhizome Sale 2009

Let the games begin! The 2009 rhizome sale is scheduled to begin on Wednesday, July 29th! The Sale Notice will be posted to the Open Forum list on Yahoo Groups some time that day.

We have received some excellent rhizomes from Mike at Sutton's Iris Gardens, including recent and even new introductions from the Sutton family, but all are in very limited supply. There are also some excellent donated rhizomes not available very often.

So, read the directions carefully and be prepared to lighten your wallet just a bit and support CWIS while acquiring some cutting edge iris at below market prices!!! Time will be of the essence so check your messages periodically. First come, first served is the order of the day.

B.J., Rhizome Sale Chair for 2009



American Iris Society Awards 2009

DYKES MEMORIAL MEDAL

GOLDEN PANTHER (Richard Tasco); *Runners Up*: HAPPENSTANCE (Keith Keppel), STARRING (Joseph Ghio), DAUGHTER OF STARS (Donald Spoon)

THE COOK-DOUGLAS MEDAL (SDB)

PUDDY TAT (Paul Black); *Runners Up*: ULTIMATE (Thomas Johnson), BOURGEOIS (Paul Black)

THE CAPARNE-WELCH MEDAL (MDB)

TINY TITAN (J. T. Aitken); *Runners Up*: CHEMISTRY (Paul Black), WIGGLE (Paul Black)

THE KNOWLTON MEDAL (BB)

BORDER CONTROL (Thomas Johnson); *Runners Up*: MANGO SMOOTHY (Carol Lankow, deceased, by J. T. Aitken), BERMUDA TRIANGLE (Anna & David Cadd)

THE HANS AND JACOB SASS MEDAL (IB)

DEVIL MAY CARE (Paul Black); *Runners Up*: CONCERTINA (George Sutton), RUBY SLIPPERS (Keith Keppel)

THE WILLIAMSON-WHITE MEDAL (MTB)

SOMEWHAT QUIRKY (Riley Probst); *Runners Up*: DANCING LILACS (Stephanie Markham), THAT'S RED (Kenneth Fisher)