

## March, 2025

Next meeting      Friday 21, 2025  
 Eating Starts      7:00 P.M.  
 Meeting              7:30 P.M.  
 Place                  Aptos Grange,  
 2555 Mar Vista Drive, Aptos

## 2025 Calendar

Monthly meetings are held on the third Friday at the Aptos Grange unless otherwise stated

### Regular Meeting

Friday, March 21 .....7:00 P.M.

**Program**—Arboretum: conservation of native plants

Lucy Ferneyhough

### Refreshments

St. Patrick's potluck

### Regular Meeting

Friday, April 18 .....7:00 P.M.

### Program

Mini Show

### Refreshments

Pot luck

### 50 Year Anniversary Celebration

Jo Chisholm's Home, April 20. 1-4 P.M.

Garden tour, wine and delicious food

### Annual Iris Show

London Nelson .... April 26 to April 27

Set up

Friday, April 25 .....6:00 P.M.

Show

Saturday ..... 1-6:00 P.M.

Sunday..... 10:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

*Bring a good appetite to the March Corned Beef Meeting! Eating starts at 7:00.*

### March Birthdays

*Tom Karwin, March 19*

*Linda Hood, March 24*

*Ann Pike, March 27*



Mammoth Orange, M. Sutton, 2015

Photo M. Lango

## From The Prez

**G**ET READY FOR AN EXCITING IRIS CELEBRATIONS! Spring is in the air, and that means the iris bloom season is just around the corner! Now is the perfect time to groom your irises, visit neighboring societies and gardens, and gear up for two of our most anticipated events—the Iris Art Display and our big IRIS Show!

Cabrillo College workday... 9:30-11:30 on Saturday, March 22.. the day after our meeting! Diane will meet you at the top of the Campus... the professors there present a half hour of class before friendly gardening near the parking lot. They are replanting their walkway area with an eco-friendly design.

One thing that has always worked for this club is for everyone to be involved. This is a good time to step up, be a clerk, help a friend in their garden, go to the show, enter an arrangement if you never have before. We become a vibrant group as we step out of the old routine, and enjoy new experiences with irises.

We have lots of room for art at the Community Center, so tell your friends they are welcome to bring iris art 9-12 noon for people to enjoy on Saturday, March 29, to the London Nelson Community Center.

Be sure to go to the PCI training after you drop off your Iris Art. Contact Linda Stremel for that event 408-241-9249.

See you at the show! 🌸Diane

## SAVE THE DATES

### DATE FOR OUR 2025 SPRING SHOW

The date of our spring show, will be April 26 and 27, with set up Friday evening April 25. Please mark your calendars accordingly. Details will be forthcoming at the meeting

### Celebrating 50 Years of Growth and Beauty!

Join us on April 20th, 1pm to 4 pm for the Monterey Bay Iris Society 50 year anniversary celebration given by Jo Chisholm and Lloyd Clark. We will gather from 1pm to 4 pm. RSVP: Jo Chisholm, JoChisholm0700@gmail.com, 408-209-5708. More information on page three.

### Iris Themed Art Show

There will be an iris art show to be hung on the walls of the hall outside the show room at London Nelson. The show will be hung on Saturday March 29 and come down on Sunday April 27, the last day of our annual iris show.

### PCI Judges Training

Saturday, March 29—Pacific Coast Native Judges Training at 11:00 AM at the Apple Computer Campus. For details, contact Linda Stremel at 408-241-9249.

## Celebrating 50 Years of Growth and Beauty!

Sunday, April 20 —Yes! Easter!

15750 Adams Ridge Road, Los Gatos, CA. 95033

Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Join us as we mark a monumental milestone in the history of our beloved Monterey Bay Iris Society—50 years of nurturing nature, community, and irises grown by Joe Ghio! From humble beginnings to blossoming into a vibrant group of passionate gardeners, we've come together to share knowledge, cultivate beautiful gardens, and create lasting friendships.

We invite all Iris Society Members, Region 14 past and present, plus guests to come celebrate this amazing event with us! Jo Chisholm has a wonderful venue at her home with a view of the Monterey Bay, and about 1000 irises at this time.

Jo Chisholm and her partner Lloyd Clark are the amazing hosts, and they invite all Region 14 plus hybridizers for a lovely celebration event. We are requesting an informal \$10 donation for interested folks who are not members of Monterey Bay Iris Society.

Expect fun activities, a garden tour, a delicious spread, and a heartfelt ceremony with awards to honor the club's history, growth, and future. Let's gather to reminisce, reconnect, and look ahead to the next 50 years of flourishing together!

RSVP: JoChisholm0700@gmail.com , 408-209-5708 (in case you get lost on the Santa Cruz mountain roads on the way!)

## Board of Directors 2025

### President

Diane Sampson dianesampson@baymoon.com 831 206-1444

### Past President

Craig Tarr cht2325@yahoo.com 408 425-7207

### Vice President

Wayne Crabbs wayne@lomaprieta.us 408 353-4089

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Joe Ghio ghiobayview@att.net 831 423-3656

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### 1 Year Board

Joanne Abel

Elena Laborde

Linda Lomperis

### 2 Year Board

Jo Chisholm

Rosa Radicchi

Kathy Wood

## Contacts

### Hospitality & Refreshments

Anna Helms anna93950@yahoo.com

### Birthday List

Wayne Crabbs wayne@lomaprieta.us 408 353-4089



## March Dinner & Meeting

For March we are looking forward to our annual corned beef blast. Brenda will be cooking and Larissa will be helping. There will also be potato salad. Brenda goes to a lot of work and it takes all day to prepare this feast so let's all be sure to give both Brenda and Larissa a thank you hug. Members may bring sides that will go with the dinner if they wish. We will also have the birthday cake!

Please come to the meeting willing sign up to help at the upcoming show. We need clerks and need staff greeting the public. Then, after the signup, we will have a special speaker, Lucy Ferneyhough, UCSC Arboretum Project Manager for the Native Plant Program. She will share insights about the Arboretum's Native Plant Preservation Program—a must-hear presentation for plant lovers!

## DUES ARE DUE

Single dues are \$10 Two or more at the same address, \$15. Add \$10 if you want the newsletter by mail. Please pay at the meeting or send to our treasurer, Larissa Daniel, 520 San Miguel Canyon Road, Watsonville, CA, 95076. Phone 724-9162. Memberships that are not renewed will be dropped.

## Call for Iris Art

Join us for the Iris Art Show at London Nelson Community Center! Attention, artists and art lovers of Santa Cruz County! The much-anticipated Iris Art Show is just around the corner, and we need YOU to make it a success. Diane Sampson has been reaching out to talented members of the Santa Cruz County Arts Council, local painters from the Cummins House, and students from Cabrillo College—and the response has been fantastic! Artists are lining up to showcase their work, including a variety of mediums like acrylics, watercolors, and more. We can't wait to see the amazing pieces that will come together for this celebration of iris-inspired art!

### How You Can Get Involved

If you're an artist and you have an iris painting (or you're inspired to create one), we'd love to have you participate! Drop off your artwork at either of two locations:

- ◆ March 21: Join us at the Aptos Grange at 7:00 PM during our regular meeting.
- ◆ March 29: Bring your art to the Santa Cruz London Nelson Community Center from 9 AM to Noon.

Feel free to tell any artists you know to join in, too! It's a wonderful opportunity to share their creations with the community.

### Setting Up the Show

The setup for this show will be a breeze! There are no commissions involved, so the sales will happen directly between the artist and the buyer. This means hanging the artwork will be easier than ever. We can use nails, hooks, and push pins at the London Nelson Community Center, which should make the process go smoothly.

If you're interested in helping with the setup, I would love your support! Please come join me on Saturday morning, March 30, at 9 AM at the London Nelson Community Center, located at 301 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA. Together, we'll hang the artwork and get everything ready for the opening.

### Need Inspiration?

Artists who are looking for inspiration can always turn to the greats! A quick Google search of "famous iris art" will show a wealth of beautiful pieces created over the centuries by iconic artists like Vincent van Gogh, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claude Monet, and even Japanese artists such as Hiroshige. The iris has inspired so many throughout history, and we'd love to see how local artists interpret this timeless subject.

So, whether you're a seasoned artist or just starting out, this is your chance to be part of something special. I hope to see you there—whether you're displaying your work or simply enjoying the show!

Let's celebrate the beauty of iris art together!

## Monterey Bay Iris Society Art Display

### Call for Iris-Themed Artwork

The Monterey Bay Iris Society is thrilled to announce an upcoming art display featuring the beauty of irises during the month of April! We've reserved 150 linear feet of wall space in the London Nelson Community Center hallway to showcase iris-themed art, and we need your help to fill the hallway space with vibrant works inspired by this stunning flower.

### Event Details:

- ◆ Date to Hang Art: Saturday, March 29, 2025, at 9:00 AM-noon.
- ◆ Date to take down: Sunday, April 27, 4-5 PM
- ◆ Date of Iris Show: Saturday, April 26, 1-6 and Sunday, April 27, 2025, 10 AM-5 PM.
- ◆ Sale of Art will take place directly from the artist. No commission required to MBIS.
- ◆ Location: London Nelson Community Center Hallway, 301 Center Street, Santa Cruz, 95060

We are looking for any form of wall art that is about iris.



Sharon Medler showing her iris art painting at meeting  
photo M. Lango

## AIS Region 14 Spring Bulletin

The Spring 2025 Region 14 bulletin. It can be accessed online via: <https://aisregion14.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Spring-2025-bulletin-reduced.pdf>

## Joe Ghio: From Lawn Mower to Iris Master

In 1953, a young boy named Joe Ghio, around 13 years old at the time, found his world forever changed when he stumbled upon a magazine article that sparked a lifelong passion. His mother's Flower Grower Magazine featured an article on the "100 Best Irises," with stunning color photos of the top five irises. Among them was Pink Cameo, a new pink iris that immediately caught Joe's eye. The irises were being sold by Shreiners for \$5.00, plus shipping — a price that Joe couldn't easily afford.

But this didn't stop him. Determined to own these beautiful flowers, Joe started mowing lawns to raise the money. He worked hard, putting in the time and effort, and before long, he had enough to order the irises. Armed with the Shreiners catalog, Joe soon found himself fascinated by the variety of irises. He was intrigued not only by the familiar purple and pink varieties but by the more unusual brown and green irises as well.

Lloyd Austin, a grower from Northern California, had an iris called Green Pastures listed in a group of irises for just \$3.00 each. Joe was captivated by this unique iris and decided to expand his collection. He ordered seven more irises from Lloyd Austin, each offering a new color and variety, marking the beginning of Joe's deep immersion into the world of irises.

### The Early Years of the Iris Society

By 1960, Joe Ghio had become well-versed in the world of irises, connecting with others who shared his passion. Clara B. Rees was an important club in the local iris community, as they represented the society from this area, one of 14 iris societies in Region 14 of the American Iris Society. Region 14 covers Hawaii, Nevada and Northern California, where the Pacific Coast Native Irises (PCI) grow. Joe and fellow iris enthusiasts began trading PCI irises, exchanging pollen and seeds to propagate and grow their collections.

The Sierra Foothills in particular caught Joe's attention because of their true blue irises, which became one of his passions. Among his early successes was a blue iris called Soquel Cove, which he fondly remembers as one of the first irises he grew that had the perfect blue hue he was searching for. The influence of the Seward sisters, who were highly regarded in the world of irises, was also significant during these formative years, as they helped shape Joe's approach to iris breeding and cultivation.

### Becoming a Leader in the Iris Community

Joe Ghio's journey is a fascinating blend of teaching, local politics, and an unwavering dedication to iris cultivation. Here's a summary of his remarkable achievements:

- ◆ **Teaching and Politics** In 1967, Ghio settled back in Santa Cruz after college, and became a teacher at Harbor High School. His involvement in local politics began in the

mid 70s, culminating in him serving as Santa Cruz's mayor in 1975, 1977, and 1980, as well as serving 3 terms on the city council.

- ◆ **Iris Passion:** Despite his political and teaching roles, his true passion has always been with irises. His work in iris breeding is highly regarded, with the Mystique iris (1975 TB) being awarded the prestigious Dykes Medal in 1980 by the American Iris Society (AIS). This medal is the highest honor given to a single iris each year.
- ◆ **Recognition in the Iris World:** Ghio's contributions to the iris world are vast. He received the AIS Hybridizer's Medal in 1979 and has registered 924 irises in the AIS Register, which is a remarkable achievement. His work with Pacific Coast Irises (PCIs) has earned him numerous Sidney B. Mitchell Medals.
- ◆ **Innovations in Iris Breeding:** One of his contributions to the iris world is the term "bubble ruffling," which refers to the appearance fancy form of iris petals.

In 1975, Joe's involvement in the iris community took on a new role when he was persuaded to become the Regional Vice President (RVP) of Region 14 of the American Iris Society. The catch? Elsie Nicholson, a fellow iris enthusiast, would serve as his assistant. At that time, Joe was already a respected figure in the iris world, and it was clear that his leadership would help grow the community.

As part of his duties, Joe Ghio was encouraged to start a new iris society in the Monterey Bay area. This led to the formation of the Monterey Bay Iris Society, which brought together local enthusiasts and provided a space for people to share their love of irises. Ralph Coleman, an early member, and Lois Belardi, who joined shortly afterward, helped shape the society from the beginning. Together, they created a vibrant community of iris lovers, furthering Joe's passion and commitment to sharing the beauty of irises with others.

### A Lifelong Journey with Irises

From his humble beginnings mowing lawns to purchase his first irises to becoming a leader in the American Iris Society, Joe Ghio's story is one of passion, dedication, and love for the art of iris cultivation. Over the decades, his contributions to the iris community have been invaluable. His work not only helped grow the popularity of irises in California but also inspired generations of iris enthusiasts to come.

Today, Joe Ghio's name is synonymous with high-quality irises, and his legacy lives on through his breeding efforts, his leadership, and the countless irises he cultivated. His passion for true blue irises, his dedication to sharing knowledge with others, and his willingness to go the extra mile to make his dreams a reality are just a few reasons why Joe Ghio remains a beloved figure in the world of gardening.

## **Essential Iris Care Tips** Essential Iris Care Tips for a Flourishing Spring Bloom

Irises are one of the most beautiful, easy-to-care-for flowers in any garden. But to get those stunning blooms, you need to give your irises a little extra attention—especially now as we move into the spring months. It's the perfect time to check in on your plants and ensure they're set up for success. Here are some essential iris care tips to help you achieve a healthy, vibrant iris patch.

### **Sun Exposure—Ensure at Least 6 Hours**

Irises thrive in full sun, which means they need at least six hours of direct sunlight each day to bloom well. If you've noticed that your irises aren't putting on their best show, it might be because they're shaded by nearby shrubs or trees. Now is the perfect time to check and trim back any foliage that could be blocking the sun's rays. Extra sunlight can go a long way in encouraging beautiful blooms!

### **Check for Rust, Rot, & Other Damaging Issues**

While irises are generally hardy, they can still fall victim to common pests and diseases that can harm both the plant and its blooms. One of the most frequent issues you'll face is rust, a fungal infection that leaves unsightly red spots on the leaves. Another problem is bacterial soft rot, which can cause parts of the rhizome (the iris's root system) to decay. And don't forget to watch out for iris virus or damaged leaves with dry tips.

Take some time to carefully inspect your plants for these signs of trouble. If you find any infected leaves, remove them immediately, but don't compost them—dispose of them in the trash to avoid spreading the infection.

For rot, especially in heavy clay soils, it's important to expose the rhizome to more sunlight. Gently pull away excess dirt from the top of the rhizome to keep it in the sun for optimal health. If parts of the rhizome are rotten, carefully cut them away. To help prevent the rot from spreading, apply two tablespoonfuls of Comet or Ajax directly to the rhizome—this can help kill bacteria and prevent further decay.

### **Watch Out for Pests and Animals**

Irises can be quite appealing to a variety of pests and animals, and it's important to keep an eye out for potential threats. Snails and slugs are notorious for munching on iris leaves, leaving behind holes and slime trails. If you spot any, simply pick them off by hand. Another effective and organic solution is to let your chickens roam freely through your iris patch—they'll happily feast on the snails while giving your flowers a much-needed cleanup!

For larger pests, such as gophers, you might notice holes around your irises. To protect your plants, set up traps, like those from McAbee Gopher Traps, or use sound emitters that send vibrations into the soil to deter gophers. Just make sure to avoid solar-powered models, as they won't work at night when the gophers are most active.

### **Fertilization— Final Call for the Season**

Fertilization is another important step in ensuring your irises stay healthy and vibrant. Right now is the last call for fertilizing before the bloom season begins. If you're using granulated fertilizer, a simple 10-10-10 or 15-15-15 mix will do wonders for your irises. Sprinkle a handful of granules around each rhizome, then gently work them into the soil to provide long-lasting nutrients.

For a more concentrated boost, some gardeners prefer a crystalline formula like Miracle-Gro (15-30-15), which promotes larger blooms. However, be cautious with this type of fertilizer—too much can damage your plants. Always follow the recommended application instructions to avoid over-fertilizing and potentially harming your irises.

### **Get Ready for Gorgeous Blooms!**

Now that you know the essential steps to caring for your irises, it's time to roll up your sleeves and give your plants the attention they deserve. Whether it's trimming nearby shrubs, treating for rot, or applying that final round of fertilizer, taking these simple steps will pay off when your irises bloom in vibrant colors this spring.

Remember, a little time and care now will ensure that your irises thrive for seasons to come. Happy gardening!

## **CULTURE TIPS**

**W**e had plentiful rain last year (2024) and this year (2025). Part of the difference is that this year the rain started a lot later. Likely you still have some weeds in your iris plantings. If your plantings still have plentiful weeds and the soil soggy wet, let the ground dry out enough so you don't sink when you try walking in it.

We had some rain that worked the fertilizer in the ground. It gives the irises the nutrients they need to perform well. But, if you fertilized the irises as the new growth began in early February, the rains likely leached away some of the benefits of that fertilizing, so it would be well to give them another light application now. Apply it as you have before and work it into the soil, but if the rains continue that will do the job.

With the weather conditions being what it has been it is difficult to predict when "peak" bloom will be. Normally here on the coast it is end of April to the beginning of May for TB's. Having growing irises for 70 years I have seen how "best" bloom has become more variable and less distinct as to timing. For example spurias definitely didn't start blooming until well after the TB's were pretty well done. Now I find they can begin blooming pretty much at the same time the TB's are in bloom. The "normal" is in flux as changing weather have its affect on plants, irises being no exception. 🌸 Joe



1. Ahh May Zing, Burseen, 2023



2. Amazon Sunset, Kepple



3. Born To Party, Johnson, 2023



4. Bountiful Bloom, Black



5. Can't be Denied, Johnson



6. Candy Coated, Burseen, 2022



7. Coal Tar, Keppel, 2022, IB



8. Desert Chaparral, Keppel



9. Edging Ahead, Johnson



10. Flip a Coin, Johnson, 2023



11. Follow My Lead, Johnson, 2023



12. For the Ages, Johnson



13. Gone Viral, Johnson, 2023



14. Hot Granny, Stout



15. I'll Be The One, Johnson



16. Indiscriminate, Black



17. Just Between Us, Johnson, 2023



18. Leading Role, Johnson



19. Luxurious Folks, Cummins



20. Major News, Johnson



21. Make up your Mind, Black



Bay News, March, 2025



www.montereybayiris.org



24. Moving On, Keppel



25. Nebraska Dawn, Burseen, 2022



26. Night After Night, Black



27. On Angel Wings, Johnson



28. Pinch Me Pink, Tasco



29. Ripples In Time, Black



30. So Happy Together, Black



31. Streaking Skies, Tasco



32. Take My Hand, Johnson



33. Upscale, Keppel



34. WATCHING YOU,  
Johnson



35. Wild About You, Black

**Not A Rebloomer Month!**

Irises are now blooming. It is March, so there is no Rebloomer drawing. You can still choose to bring iris!



## DOOR PRIZES IRISES

1. AHH MAY ZING, Burseen, 2023
2. AMAZON SUNSET, Keppel
3. BORN TO PARTY, Johnson, 2023
4. BOUNTIFUL BLOOM, Black
5. CAN'T BE DENIED, Johnson
6. CANDY COATED, Burseen, 2022
7. COAL TAR, Keppel, 2022, IB
8. DESERT CHAPARRAL, Keppel
9. EDGING AHEAD, Johnson
10. FLIP A COIN, Johnson, 2023
11. FOLLOW MY LEAD, Johnson, 2023
12. FOR THE AGES, Johnson
13. GONE VIRAL, Johnson, 2023
14. HOT GRANNY, Stout
15. I'LL BE THE ONE, Johnson
16. INDISCRIMINATE, Black
17. JUST BETWEEN US, Johnson, 2023
18. LEADING ROLE, Johnson
19. LUXURIOUS FOLKS, Cummins
20. MAJOR NEWS, Johnson
21. MAKE UP YOUR MIND, Black
22. MARK MY WORDS, Johnson
23. MOONEETOON, Burseen, 2022
24. MOVING ON, Keppel
25. NEBRASKA DAWN, Burseen, 2022
26. NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, Black
27. ON ANGEL WINGS, Johnson
28. PINCH ME PINK, Tasco
29. RIPPLES IN TIME, Black
30. SO HAPPY TOGETHER, Black
31. STREAKING SKIES, Tasco
32. TAKE MY HAND, Johnson
33. UPSCALE, Keppel
34. WATCHING YOU, Johnson
35. WILD ABOUT YOU, Black



Door Prize iris, Born to Party, Johnson, 2023 Photo D. Sampson



I Stutter; Kanarowski, 2012

Photo D. Sampson



# SPRING BLOOM

clockwise from above: Bombay Eyes, Nichols, 2009, photo by R. Probst;; UNK, iris photo by S. Medler; Bottle Rocket, M. Sutton, 2017, phoro by D. Sampson; Autumn Explosion, Tasco, 2013; Double Shot, G. Sutton, photo by R. Probst



## Hold Harmless Agreement for Art Display at London Nelson Community Center

The London Nelson Community Center, in collaboration with the Monterey Bay Iris Society, is excited to showcase local artwork. However, as with any event where artwork is displayed, it's essential to address potential concerns regarding the safety and return of the pieces. To ensure clarity and set expectations, we've established a Hold Harmless Agreement that protects both the artists and the organizers.

### Key Points of the Hold Harmless Agreement

1. **Liability Disclaimer:**

The London Nelson Community Center and the Monterey Bay Iris Society, nor any employees or members of these organizations, nor any workers or helpers for the art display, are **not liable** for any damage or loss of art while displayed at the event. Artists should understand and accept that their artwork is displayed at their own risk.

2. **Security Measures:**

We take the utmost care in handling and displaying all artwork. There will always be a **person at the front door** of the London Nelson Community Center, ensuring the security of the exhibit. However, as with any public event, some risks are inevitable.

3. **Due Diligence in Returning Art:**

Every effort will be made to **return artwork to the artist in its original condition** once the display period has ended. To facilitate this process, artists must ensure their pieces are clearly labeled on the back.

4. **Unclaimed Artwork:**

In the event that artwork is unclaimed or the artist is unavailable, proper procedures will be followed to ensure the piece is safely returned. Having the label on the back of the art allows us to accurately identify and return unclaimed works.

### Agreement and Signatures

By participating in this art display, the undersigned artist acknowledges and agrees to the terms outlined in this Hold Harmless Agreement. This includes accepting the risks associated with displaying artwork and agreeing not to hold the London Nelson Community Center or the Monterey Bay Iris Society liable for any loss or damage.

**Artist Name:**

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**Artist Signature:**

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**Date:**

**Phone:**

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