

MT. DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY NEWS

MARCH 2025



The Mt. Diablo Iris Society exists for the purpose of stimulating and fostering interest in the propagation, culture and hybridizing of the genus Iris. As well the scientific and horticultural education of all those interested in learning about any phase of the genus Iris, and in the protection of these plants in their native habit.

▶▶ **MDIS Meeting** ◀◀
▶▶ **Sunday, March 9th, 1-3 pm** ◀◀
Remember Daylight Saving Time Clock Reset
▶▶ **San Ramon Community Center** ◀◀
12501 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings MDIS Members,

March is the magical month where things really wake up and start growing in our area. The daffodils are half done, the California Poppies are blooming and the weeds are growing fast. The thing about weeds is that you can't pull them until they get big enough. So, if you start when they are all perfect for pulling, by the time you get to the last ones, they are 4-5 feet tall. At least that's how it is for me in such a large area. It's too late to use a pre-emergent to prevent weed growth. These warm days we had this last week really makes them take off. Our irises too take off as the soil warms. So be diligent at getting those weeds removed before they make seeds for next year.

For our meeting this month, we will have a presentation on a special hybridizer from the 1930's to the 1950's. Dr. Rudolph Kleinsorge is the Hybridizer of 104 named varieties of bearded irises he grew from about 100 square feet of area at his home garden in Silverton,

Oregon. He line bred his irises for 25 years to create many award winning irises that competed with all the top hybridizers of his time. Come learn more about Dr. Kleinsorge at our meeting.

We will also briefly talk about our upcoming Iris show at Alden Lane Nursery in Livermore and the Virtual Iris Show that has started now.

Also, bring any irises you have blooming now to show our members. I'll be bringing a few myself. Enjoy the beautiful days ahead and I'll see you on March 9th at 1pm.

Your Bearded President,
Jeff Bennett

Botanical Word of the Month

XYLEM: from the Bottoms Up!

March Meeting

Topic:

We will have a presentation on a special hybridizer from the 1930's to the 1950's, Dr. Rudolph Kleinsorge. See more details in the President's Message above.

Location: San Ramon

The March meeting will be at our Sam Ramon location. San Ramon Community at 12501 Alcosta Blvd. The room is 201.

Remember Daylight Savings Time Clock reset...

If you need a ride to the March meeting, contact MtDiabloIris@gmail.com

Social Lunch Prior To Meeting

Some of us plan to have lunch before the meeting at 11:30. Feel free to join us. We will be at:

Panera Bread
3121 Crow Canyon Place, San Ramon

This is 5 minutes from our meeting place at the San Ramon Community Center.

Alden Lane Show and Fundraiser

The Alden Lane Show and Fundraiser is just a little over FOUR weeks away. You are encouraged to join the fun by entering stems and artistic arrangements. The theme is *IRIS, The Queen of Flowers*. The event will be discussed at the meeting.

Please post/share this event. Details are on Eventbrite and Facebook. The event poster is included near the end of the newsletter. If you would like an electronic copy of this poster or the press release, please contact mtdiabloiris@gmail.com. Thank you.

Tidbits of Information

There has been a brief lull before the upcoming BUSY iris season. Here are some reminders and bits of new info.

- Take photos for the ongoing Virtual Show
- The winner for **2026** Show Theme is a Wizard of Oz. At the March meeting we will decide on the title: Lions, Tigers, and Bears. Oh My! or Somewhere Over the Rainbow.
- Be sure to peruse the February Meeting Minutes near the end of the newsletter. Jan does an amazingly thorough job of summarizing our meetings! And thank you, Jeff, for an informative presentation on BioChar.
- IF your dues have not been paid for **2025**, this will be your last newsletter.
- After more than 50 years in business, Terry and Barbara Aitkens have retired. They will continue to participate in the American Iris Society. Terry still hybridizes, albeit at a slower pace. New introductions will be sold through [Sutton's Iris Gardens](#) beginning in January, 2026. (Copied from their Website).

Upcoming 2025 AIS Events

The AIS National and Regional Events are approaching. It's time to register and get lodging.

May 2-3 **Region 14 Spring Regional**
Santa Rosa, CA

<https://aisregion14.org/events/spring-regional/>

June 2-7 **AIS National Convention**
Billings, Montana

<https://bigskyirisclub.com/2025-ais/>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2025

- Mar 9 MDIS Meeting. San Ramon Community Center, 12501 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon
- Apr 11 Alden Lane Show Setup & MDIS Meeting. Alden Lane Nursery, Livermore
- Apr 12-13 Alden Lane Show & Fundraiser. Alden Lane Nursery, Livermore
- May 10 Shirley Trio Memorial at Dry Creek Garden, 2pm
- June xx Awards Picnic, TBD
- July xx Bearded Auction, TBD
- Aug 9 Benicia Peddler's Fair
- Sept 14 MDIS Meeting, Pleasant Hill
- Oct 12 MDIS Meeting, Pleasant Hill
- Nov 9 MDIS Meeting, Pleasant Hill

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SEE FOLLOWING PAGES for

→ **March Door Prize Iris** pg 3-5

→ **Alden Lane Show Event Poster**
pg 6

→ **Feb 2025 Meeting Minutes** pg 7

MDIS Door Prizes – MAR 2025

(Iris photos and descriptions are courtesy of commercial hybridizers and wiki.irises.org.)



UKULELE GIRL (Cadd 2025) TB, 43", EM, (RE). Standards light creamy yellow, darker at base, delicate light brown veins; falls white ground, red-purple plicata, with the touch of creamy yellow, delicate lines and purple dots, less colored in center, edged 1/16" brown-purple band; beard tipped yellow; pronounced musky fragrance. It may rebloom, but it is not a consistent RE.



LIGHTED PATH (Ford 2023) TB, 30", E-M. Standards white flushed yellow, yellow veining, dark veining in throat; falls dark red violet, lighter pink-violet belly stripe, darker veining, edges lighter, dark wire rim, white hash marks around beard; beards cadmium orange, tipped violet in throat; slight sweet fragrance.



FULLY CHARGED (Sutton 2022) TB, 36", M-L, HM. Standards and style arms yellow-orange; falls greyed orange, mottled red-purple, ½" yellow-orange band at edge; beards red-orange; ruffled; sweet fragrance.



AUBRIANNA (Tyson 2024) TB, 34", M. Standards light violet streaked dark violet; falls light violet streaks and wedges of dark violet; beards burnt orange; slight sweet fragrance.



MARK MY WORDS (Johnson 2024), TB, 39", M. Standards golden yellow; yellow ground, deep mahogany red plicata wash and band; beards gold; slight fragrance.



DESERT NECTAR (Dash 2024) TB, 34", M. Standards white, yellow veining; falls golden brown, white zone around beard, brown veining, tan rim around petal; beards orange.



EASTER WEEKEND (Tasco 2024) AB, 25", M-L. Standards purple; falls purple, quarter sized black signal; beards bronze throat, bronze middle, grey end.



DANGER AHEAD (Dash 2022) TB, 35", M. Standards red-brown, gold rim; falls red-brown, white and pale yellow zone under beard with red-brown veins, faint pale gold rim; beards orange; slight fragrance.



TODAY'S SPECIAL RAINBOW MOCHA (Kanarowski 2023) TB, 35", M. Standards apricot, tinged peach; falls menthol-blue-violet center, broad coco-chocolate edge, shoulder and veining; beards red-tangerine.



MAGIC IN THE AIR (Johnson 2023) SDB, 11", E-M & RE. Standards medium violet blue; falls deep violet with medium violet blue rims; beards orange; pronounced sweet fragrance.



CREOLA (Schreiner 2024) TB, 35", M. Standards yellow; falls lavender wash with gold edging; beards yellow; pronounced fragrance.



PUSSYCAT EYES (Black 2019) AB, 28", M-L, AM. Standards palest lilac-white, light lilac rib; falls big black signal spot blending and streaking into narrow rose-red band blending to paler rose-white outer and upper band, darker rose-violet lower center, mid gold band; beards smoky mid orange in throat and center, ends light grey-white.



SOMEBODY SPECIAL (Keppel 2023) TB, 35", E-M. Standards. opera pink; falls lavender-white, 1/2" edge daybreak to viola, pink shading on inner hafts; beards strawberry in throat, tiger lily in middle, ends pink-white.



Jeanne Clay Plank
Best of Show Winner in 2024
(Tall Bearded, 2011 by Fred Kerr)
Exhibited by Mary Sindicic

MT. DIABLO IRIS SHOW & PLANT FUNDRAISER

Saturday, April 12, 2025 & Sunday, April 13, 2025

Alden Lane Nursery
981 Alden Lane
Livermore, California

Saturday, April 12

Cultivar Staging: 7:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Judging: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Open to the Public: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Demonstrations: 3:00 p.m. Planting &
Growing Iris

Sunday, April 13

Open to the Public: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



An affiliate of the American Iris Society



Find us on Facebook, Mt. Diablo Iris Society
Or email: MtDiabloIris@gmail.com



Mt. Diablo Iris Society Monthly Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2025

Attendees included: Jeff Bennett, Jan Blaedel, Marilyn Kaplan, Joelle Medina, Sergey Melnikov, Carl Meier, Stan and Pat Morgan, Kathy Oldham, Nancy Pahl, Gayla Peek, Eileen Roark, Mary Sindicic, Riley Probst, Ken Walker, Linda Woods Quorum? Yes

The Mt. Diablo Iris Society monthly meeting was called to order by president, Jeff Bennett at 1:07 PM at the San Ramon Community Center.

The minutes of the **January 12, 2025** were approved. Motion was made by Carl Meier and seconded by Riley Probst. Motion passed unanimously.

Linda Woods moved that the January MDIS Board minutes be approved. Eileen Roark seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Door Prize iris drawing:

Banana Wind	Sergey Melnikov
Butterscotch Latte	Eileen Roark
Cast Adrift	Stan Morgan
Color Crush	Sergey Melnikov
Cosmic Design	Mary Sindicic
Gotham	Joelle Medina
Gypsy Rhapsody	Marilyn Kaplan
Midnight Voyage	Jan Blaedel
Mighty Power	Pat Morgan
Outer Banks	Riley Probst
Sir Lines A Lot	Linda Woods
Vaguely Noble	Jeff Bennett
We Are Magic	Linda Woods

Rebloomer iris rhizomes brought by Riley for the drawing. Thank you Riley.

Autumn Joy	Pat Morgan
Azure Reprise	Kathy Oldham
Barbara Jean Lauer	Carl Meier
	Stan Morgan
Chartered Course	Gayla Peek

Jeff Bennett presented BIOCHAR

- Biochar is an old process. Early cultures used biochar and found they could grow more food. Then they could support larger families. Then they cleared more land because they needed more food for their larger families. It became a vicious cycle.
- It takes nature 500 years to create 1" of soil.
- Biochar is very dusty – water it down and you will control the dust.
- Seeds die at 140 degrees so all seeds are destroyed in biochar
- Biochar reduces sewage by 90%

- Biochar lasts at least 100 years
- Biochar repels bugs, it does not kill them
- Ideally, mix biochar and compost (1 : 3), add it to the soil, mix and plant.
- FalkForestry.com Manufactures CARBONATORS

Biochar – It's not new

- Thought to have been used at least 8,000 years ago
- Highly productive carbon rich soils –terra preta – black earth
- Found only where humans lived
- Slash and char areas of the Amazon
- Burned then buried to smolder
- Went on for centuries
- Able to produce more food
- Population grew by millions

How
not to
make
Biochar



Soil
profiles



Normal soil

'Terra preta'

Carbonator

Heats wood chips to
approximately 1,300
degrees
Low oxygen
environment
Pyrolysis

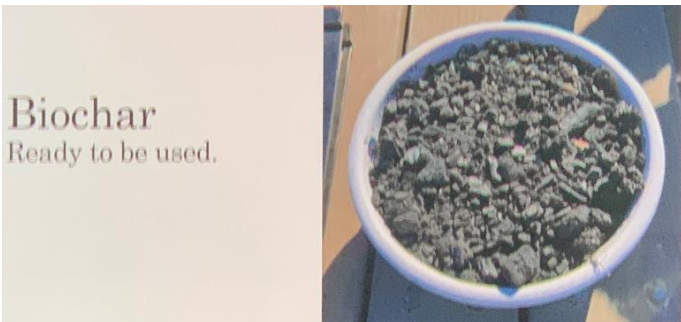


Final Product

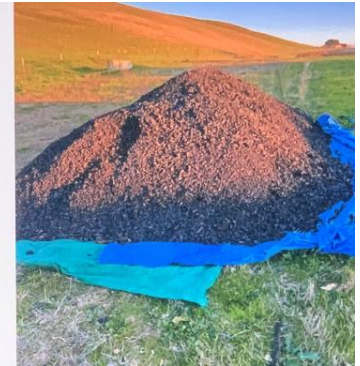
- Black charred campfire wood
- Chunky and very light
- Porous
- Odorless
- Dusty and dirty
- Flammable – when in piles or stored in containers
- Sterile
- Empty, no fertility
- Expensive to produce - for now

Materials used

- High carbon organic materials
- Chipped wood from trees- not construction materials
- Other hard organic waste products from plants;
- Walnut shells, rice hulls, pistachio shells, fruit pits, corn cobs, any plant parts that can be burned but incompletely.



Delivered Bulk or Super Bags



Benefits of Bio Char

- Improves soil structure
- Remediate toxic soils
- Minimizes waste materials
- Revitalizes exhausted soils
- Locally produced
- Enhances nutrient retention
- Reduces fertilizer use
- Helps retain moisture in soil at root level
- Lasts 100 to more than 1,000 years

More Benefits

- Sequesters carbon dioxide -long term storage -delayed emissions
- Filters water
- Removes odors
- Edible by wildlife and pets/ non toxic
- Can be used in cement
- Potting soils
- Increased health of forests and agricultural plants
- Pest resistant
- Resists compaction

Yes, More, More, More

- Improves nutrient use efficiency and availability, but no nutrients itself
- pH neutrality
- Improves habitat for microbes
- Holds up to 7 times weight in water
- Very large surface area creating micro and macro pores for air, water, beneficial bacteria and fungus to break down organic materials
- More robust root systems
- Prevents leaching of soil fertilizers
- Replaces the need for peat moss, perlite production from environment

Using Bio Char

- Needs to be worked into the soil –not a top dressing
- I prefer to make biochar less chunky
- Slow to take up nutrients
- Best if mixed with fresh compost
- Can be used as litter in chicken coops to pre -charge it
- Add about 1” to top of soil, then 3’ of compost - mix in. I use a rototiller.
- Water down before working with it - could soak it in a water soluble fertilizer.
- Never have to add biochar again



Ready to plant

- Visible on surface and when digging
- Wildlife seems to like it
- Maintains loose soil
- First used in February 2024 in iris beds
- Added to main garden below in Summer of 2024
- Also added a lot of compost there
- Great growth - probably because of compost
- Time will tell if growth is better - 2027?
- I like being able to add to our soils



Soils Most Helped



- Soil types that benefit most from Biochar
- Low organic matter soil
- High clay soils
- High sand or gravel - (has poor retention of water and nutrients)
- Compacted Soils
- Poor drainage soils
- Container and planter soils
- Not an immediate fix
- Improves over time

Results Study

- Oasis Vineyard, Field trial on Grapes. Monterey County, California
- Sandy soil with low organic matter
- 8 acres, after 6 years
- 2 acres each trial
- Control- no amendments
- Biochar only - 10 tons per acre. \$11,432 more per acre
- Compost only - 15 tons per acre. \$15,689 more per acre
- Compost and Biochar 15/10 per acre. \$17,607 more per acre
- Amounts are after cost of amendments paid.

Final Thoughts

- Look into adding Biochar to your garden - one time only
- Being used all over the world
- Buy in bulk
- Local produced
- Tell your Friends
- Questions?

Scientists discover process to produce breakthrough material with unbelievable capabilities — here's how it could help solve a global crisis

The material is stable enough that it can keep carbon underground for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Feb 09, 2025 Researchers at Shanghai Jiao Tong University are introducing new methods of biochar production that could significantly improve its ability to sequester carbon, according to TechXplore. Biochar is biomass that has been superheated in a zero-oxygen environment to create stable, porous carbon. The biomass used can include animal or vegetation waste.

Read in The Cool Down: https://apple.news/Ad3tm8nAtQf-uW5_uIU_Csw

Announcements:

- Be sure to put your volunteer hours next to your name on the sign-in sheet.
- Thank you Ken Walker for all your work on the ERF.

Ken Walker brought handouts Newcomers Guide to an Iris Show. He asked for feedback.

- New Exhibitor tags – color coded by division

Need only the variety or title, the section, and the class

- Nancy Pahl handed out Pix on Stix. She asked that people send her their lists by March 1, 2025.

New Business-

Iris Show Themes (which appeared in the January and February Newsletters) were voted on. The winner for next year is a Wizard of Oz theme. At the March meeting we will decide the title:

Lions, Tigers, and Bears. Oh My! Or Somewhere Over the Rainbow

Sergey Melnikov – ZOOM information-this is a complimentary program. You do not need to use it. It offers you the opportunity to review programs you enjoyed in person, get speakers from throughout the US, and watch a meeting remotely if you are unable to attend. For the next meeting, Sergey Melnikov will send a link in the newsletter so that you can watch the meeting remotely. There will also be a link in the newsletter to watch Jeff's talk on Biochar.

Share Table- pots, lemons, a plant from Linda. Linda Woods brought a Bundt cake and Banana teacakes to celebrate Riley's birthday. Thank you, Linda. This is reminiscent of Shirley Trio's cakes for Riley every February. We were kicked out (asked to leave) at 3:15.

Respectfully submitted, Jan Blaedel, Secretary

Approved: 2025

Mary stayed after the meeting to answer questions about the April Iris Show. If you have show questions, email Mary at MtDiabloIris@gmail.com

BIOCHAR presentation is on the MDIS YouTube Channel <https://youtu.be/bCUcDGpVhZE>

Please send your agenda items for the March meeting to MtDiabloIris@gmail.com

Once received, you will be notified that your email was received. Please resend if you do not get a verification.

If you have agenda items for the July MDIS Board meeting, please email those to MtDiabloIris@gmail.com

MT. DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY IS AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY AND REGION 14. VISIT THE REGION WEBSITE: WWW.AISREGION14.ORG

Dues are \$12.50 annual or \$30.00 tri-annual, Please send payment to club treasurer.

American Iris Society dues – \$30 print only, \$45 print and Emembership. Dual and multiple year pricing available. Visit: <https://www.irises.org/ais-memberships-emember/>

YOUR CURRENT BOARD:

President – Jeff Bennett, e-mail: jeff13bennett@gmail.com

Vice-President – Kathy Oldham

Treasurer – Sergey Melnikov

Secretary – Jan Blaedel, Secretary

Newsletter Editor - Linda Woods, e-mail: linda.woods@comcast.net

Directors – Jan Blaedel, Carl Meier

Past President – Kathy Oldham