

# MT. DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY NEWS

## March 2026



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 8<sup>th</sup>, 1-3 pm** ◀◀  
▶▶ **Remember Daylight Savings Time Change** ◀◀  
▶▶ **San Ramon Community Center** ◀◀  
**12501 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon**

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Happy Spring around the corner MDIS!

I don't know about you, but Spring has sprung in my book. After another short rainy spell where I couldn't pull any weeds, we are now in the fast growth period. The temperature peaked at 77 degrees on February 27<sup>th</sup>. That's pretty warm for end of February. It's still not too late to apply your low nitrogen fertilizers, use slug and snail bait or spray to prevent leaf spot, especially if you overhead water.

Last month we had a wonderful presentation by our own member, Gayla Peek, on the beautiful art she creates with watercolors. She gave a nice history on her family's history in the Hayward area from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. She had examples of some of her paintings for us to enjoy. Some of them can take time to complete as she adds to them as she has inspiration to do so. She has an art studio in her backyard to work on her pieces

just steps away from the irises that inspire her. It was inspiring to listen to her presentation. Thanks Gayla!

So, April is just around the corner and that is when we have our first fundraiser at our annual Iris Show at Alden Lane Nursery in Livermore. By now, you should have sent Nancy Pahl your list of potted irises for the sale so she can bring the photos for you. If you weren't able to get your list to her, please make your own. [You can also send her an email to see if she has time to make the photo.] Irises in pots just don't sell if there is no photo of the variety. We really need people to make themselves available to work at the show. Helping to set up on Friday April 24<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon. Then helping to clerk at the show with the judges. Contact Mary for this. Helping with the customers that get our potted irises is important. Assisting them with questions and helping them shop, gets more pots out the door. All the funds from the pot sales pay for the cost of the show. Dry Creek Garden is open during the show and I have to be there to

work this year, so please assist at the checkout table. Learn how to ring people up. Both Sergey and Riley have done this before and having others know how to do it is very beneficial when someone can't be there.

We are still looking to fill the Vice President position. Basic job description is procuring topics for our meetings, getting meeting places rented in advance. On the extremely rare occasion of filling in as President at one of our member meetings. It's not difficult, but necessary and you can do it all inside your home on the phone.

With all that, I hope to see you at our March meeting in San Ramon on Sunday!

Your MTB President,  
Jeff Bennett

### March Meeting

We will be holding our Mar 8<sup>th</sup> meeting from 1-3pm at San Ramon Community Center, 12501 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon, CA

Our meeting topic is "Keeping track of your iris purchases, plantings and labeling them." Jeff is going to share how he does his excel spreadsheets and his new labeling with QR codes. Looking forward to it!

### Social Lunch Prior To Meeting

I'm not sure if anyone has plans to have lunch before the meeting at 11:30. But feel free to show up, even if the group is small.

PANERA, 3121 Crow Canyon Place  
San Ramon, CA

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2026

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Mar 8     | MDIS Meeting, San Ramon Community Center   |
| Apr 24    | MDIS Meeting & Alden Lane Setup, Livermore |
| Apr 25-26 | Alden Lane Show & Fundraiser               |

May 2 Volunteer Event at Ruth Bancroft Garden

May TBD MDIS Meeting

June 14 MDIS Meeting

Jun 27 MDIS Board Meeting

July 12 MDIS Auction

Aug 8 Benicia Peddler's Fair

### Upcoming AIS Events

May 15-17 Region 14 Spring Regional  
Reno, CA

May 19-26 National Convention  
Newark, NJ

### Region 14 Spring Regional

The Regional is May 15-17 in Reno, CA. You can find the Registration Form and Schedule at

[aisregion14.org/events/spring-regional/](https://aisregion14.org/events/spring-regional/)

### Iris Photos for Alden Lane

If you have potted iris and have not sent Nancy your list yet, please contact her to see if she will have time to make photos for your pots. Here is the previous article:

**Potted Iris for Alden Lane:** If you have one gallon potted irises for the MDIS Fundraiser at Alden Lane, it is important to provide a list of the **variety names and quantities to Nancy by March 1**. She will print photos for each pot and bring them to the March meeting to give to you. Her email is [npahl@gmail.com](mailto:npahl@gmail.com)

### Alden Lane Show and Fundraiser

The Alden Lane Show and Fundraiser is quickly approaching. You are encouraged to join the fun by entering stems and artistic arrangements. The theme is *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. The event will be discussed at the meeting.

## New Member Fred Newlan

It's always a pleasure to welcome a new member who loves and appreciates irises but more importantly wants to share his knowledge with others while he learns from MDIS members.

Fred Newlan, formerly a Maryland native, moved to the Bay Area with his wife Carolanne, to be near his daughter and family who reside in Pacifica. Fred's family owned a business setting up professional lighting and background for classroom photography.

Fred joined DIGS, a Brentwood organization focused on propagating plants. He is currently interested in propagating coleus with red leaves but has many more trials in his future. Then, a Brentwood historical society reached out, asking for helpers to clean up a historical iris garden. After dividing the rhizomes, he took some home and had successful blooms the following spring. Jeff Bennett identified a black iris Fred grew, and that dig likely sparked the iris virus in Fred!

Fred wants to learn more about the iris cycle and caring for his new iris beds, and he knows the membership can help him. We are here to help Fred, who has the curiosity of a teenager when it comes to irises.

Fred was interviewed by Marilyn Kaplan.



Ken W. and Fred N.

As Jeff mentioned in his Message, help is needed for the Alden Lane Show and Fundraiser. More hands make the work easier and contribute greatly to the success of our event! Even a few volunteer hours make a huge difference.

**April 24<sup>th</sup>**, 3-5pm. Setup.

**April 25<sup>th</sup>**: staging and judging of iris happens in the morning. 1-5pm: The show is open to the public along the selling of pots.

**April 26<sup>th</sup>**: 9am – 4pm: the show is open and we continue to sell pots. 4-5pm: tear down and pack up.

If you'd like ideas on how to help, contact Mary at: [smiata91@comcast.net](mailto:smiata91@comcast.net)

Please post/share this event. The event poster is included near the end of the newsletter. If you would like an electronic copy of this poster, please contact [linda.woods@comcast.net](mailto:linda.woods@comcast.net). Thank you.

## Camellia and Daffodil Shows

Fred found the information about an upcoming Camellia Show. Thank you, Fred!

Northern California Camellia Show  
St Andrews Church, 1601 Mary Drive  
Pleasant Hill  
March 14 1-4:30pm  
March 15 9am – 2pm  
Unusual Camellias will be on sale at  
good prices as will the show  
All are welcome to Attend

The Alden Lane website has info about the Daffodil Show.

Northern California Daffodil Society  
Alden Lane Nursery, Livermore  
March 7 1-5pm  
March 8 10am – 4pm

## Monthly Finance Report

Financial Statement February 2026

January ends – checking \$15,232.72

February \$14,172.72

\$50 - Presentation.

$165+300+200+165+180=\$1,100$  Door Prize Iris

Cash - \$151 same

Savings - \$6,449.76 same

### FOLLOWING PAGES for

→ **March DOOR PRIZE IRIS** pg 4-5

→ **Alden Lane Event** pg 6

→ **February Meeting Minutes** pg 7-8

## MDIS Door Prizes – March 2026

(Iris photos and descriptions are courtesy of commercial hybridizers and [wiki.irises.org](http://wiki.irises.org).)



**TROPICAL CHARM** (Dash 2025) TB, 35", E-M. Standards white, pale red brown flush on midrib, gold rim; falls red brown, faint beige rim; beards red-orange; slight fragrance.



**MERCED EASY STREET** (Kanarowski 2025) TB, 36", M. Standards buff pink; falls pale blue-violet, randomly dry-brushed deep red-violet, more concentrated at shoulder, 3-eighth-inch buff-pink rim, limited cream-ground haft marks; beards bright red-tangerine; slight sweet fragrance.



**THIS IS CRAZY** (Johnson 2023) TB, 36", M-L. Standards deep lemon yellow; falls rust to burgundy, white rayed pattern extending out from beard, wide lemon border that is etched by a thin red line; beards orange; pronounced sweet fragrance.



**DESERT CHAPARRAL** (Keppel 2024) TB, 40", M. Standards light blue, midrib and edge flushed green-yellow; falls white to pineapple across upper petal, reed yellow reverse and marginal band flush.



**DIVINE MADNESS** (Tasco 2025) TB, 37", M-L. Standards dark indigo; falls dark indigo; beards golden brown throat, black-violet middle, black-violet end; slight sweet fragrance.



**ADMIT IT** (Sutton 2025) SDB, 13", E. Standards brilliant yellow-orange; falls strong purple, brilliant yellow-orange shoulders and edge; beards vivid red-orange petaloid or horn, top side brilliant yellow-orange, bottom side strong purple appendages; slight sweet fragrance.



**MOM'S GARDEN** (Ford 2025) TB, 35", M-L. Standards medium pink; falls mauve pink, lighter at edge; beards white base throat, white base, pale orange in throat, pale pink at end tips; slight sweet fragrance.



**CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU** (Johnson 2023) TB, 35", E-M. Standards light lemon yellow, deep yellow centers becoming lemon veining toward edge; falls plush, deep velvety, maroon-black with a wide lavender and pink band; beards orange; pronounced sweet fragrance.



**CELEBRITY DREAM** (Johnson 2024) TB, 36", M-L. Standards white ground, washed pink with a deeper pink stitched band; falls white, with a wide raspberry to purple dotted band across hafts and precise dotted edge; beards burnt orange tipped purple and then white; slight fragrance.



**STARE INTO MY EYES** (Tasco 2025) AB (OGB-), 23", L. Standards light yellow center, blended to wide white band shot with light yellow veins; falls big dark tyrian purple spot irregularly blended into wide light amethyst band, cream hafts with dark brown lines and sanding; beards mid marigold; slight sweet fragrance.



**BRING IN THE CLOWNS** (Black 2023) TB, 34", L. Standards small light yellow center heavily plicata marked dark charcoal brown, blending to very wide solid dark charcoal brown band; falls white luminata patch lined and sanded brown-black, light mid yellow ground with narrow charcoal brown plicata band; beards dark old gold; pronounced musky fragrance.



**SCRUMDIDDLYUMPTIOUS** (Schreiner 2023) TB, 40", L. Standards lavender; falls lavender; beards red; pronounced fragrance. **HM 2023.**



## Mt. Diablo Iris Society Event

The annual Mt. Diablo Iris Society spring show and plant fundraiser will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2026, between 1:00 and 5:00, and Sunday April 26, 2026, from 9:00 to 4:00 at Alden Lane Nursery, 981 Alden Lane, Livermore, CA. This is a judged show of many colorful and different varieties of iris cultivars and will also feature flower arrangements and a photo contest open to public contributors. Admission is free. For additional information, call Mary Sindicic at 925 606-0355 or email [MtDiabloIris@gmail.com](mailto:MtDiabloIris@gmail.com)



**Heart of Hearts**  
**Best of Show Winner in 2025**  
(Arilbred, 2015 by Paul Black)  
Exhibited by Mary Sindicic



An affiliate of the American Iris Society



## Mt. Diablo Iris Society Monthly Meeting Minutes **February 8, 2026**

Attendees included: Jeff Bennett, Jan Blaedel, Marilyn Kaplan, Stan and Pat Morgan, Kathy Oldham, Nancy Pahl, Gayla Peek, Riley Probst, Mary Sindicic, Ken Walker, Corinna Wise, Linda Woods

Quorum 10 ? Yes

Guest – Gayla’s husband, Roy

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

The minutes of the January 11, 2026 meeting were approved/revised. Motion was made by and seconded by . Motion passed unanimously.

Door Prize Iris drawing:

MDIS Door Prizes – FEB 2026 TB

BLUER THAN BLUE (Aitken 2023) Nancy Pahl

COUNTRY CONRBREAD AND JAM(Kanarowski 2025) Mary Sindicic

EDGING AHEAD (Johnson 2024) Stan Morgan

FOR DESSERT (Keppel 2025 Gayla Peek

GENTLY DOES IT (Aikten 2023 Riley

HOW BIZARRE! (Black 2023 Jeff Bennett

KEEPING WATCH (Johnson 2025) SDB Corinna

LOOKS LIKE GOLD (Tasco 2025) AB (OGB-), Pat Morgan

MIDNIGHT VOYAGE (Sutton 2023) Linda Woods

MYSTERY MAN (Keppel 2023) Nancy Pahl

PARISIAN (Sutton 2022) Kathy Oldham

STEADY DATE (Keppel 2024) Fred Newlan

Joy Returns Kathy Oldham

Perfume Counter – Jan Blaedel

Love Street-Jan Blaedel

Aaron’s Dream- Marilyn Kaplan

Riley offered aeoniums to give away. Just stick them in the ground. Succulents. Originally from Canary Islands. Go dormant in the summer. Dappled shady area.

If you have trouble hearing or seeing, please take the front seats. Turn off your cell phones and watches.

Gayla Peek presented a program on Botanical Illustrations. Her iris watercolors are stunning. The program included her personal journey with painting iris as well as the intricate steps for each of her creations.

Gayla will be at Ruth Bancroft Garden on May 2<sup>nd</sup> along with other members of her watercolor class. We are hoping to be able to feature her artwork at our iris show at Alden Lane in April. Thank you, Gayla for an inspiring lecture.

- Sign-up sheets on the front table for: May 2, 2026 at Ruth Bancroft Iris Garden

April Iris Show at Alden Lane Nursery April 24-26, 2026

- Treasurer Report:
  - Checking \$15, 836.76

Savings \$ 6,449.71  
Cash Box \$ 121.61  
Total \$22, 408.08

- Show Report – Mary Sindicic
- Grooming Training at Alden Lane Nursery – Mary Sindicic

#### New Business

Announcements – Jeff offered poppy seeds on the front table.

May 15-17 – Region 14 Spring Regional in Reno

Garden tours on Saturday and Sunday

July 12 – 12:30-4 room at Pleasant Hill Senior Center for AUCTION

Lemons from Kathy for offer on the back table.

Adjournment 3:00 PM

Respectfully submitted, Jan Blaedel, secretary

#### Member List – current February 2026

Ainslie Ken	/Becky Askin	Newlan	Fred
Albertson	Rae	Oldham	Kathy
Balch	Joe & Josie	Pahl	Nancy
Bennett	Jeff	Peek	Gayla
Blaedel	Jan	Pollon	Rebecca
Caprile	Janet	Probst	Riley
DeMara	Ethan & Keitha	Rieniets	Elizabeth
Harden	Bruce	Roark	Eileen
Kaplan	Marilyn	Robbins	Alan & Pat
Lincoln	Kent	Savarese	Jeanne
McNamee	Frances	Sindicic	Mary
Medina	Joelle	Walker	Kenneth
Meier	Carl & Barbara	Whitely	Barbara
Melnikov	Sergey	Wise	Corinna
Meyer	Tom & Catherine	Woods	Linda
Morgan	Stanley & Patricia		

**MT. DIABLO IRIS SOCIETY IS AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN IRIS SOCIETY AND REGION 14. VISIT THE REGION WEBSITE: [WWW.AISREGION14.ORG](http://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](mailto:jeff13bennett@gmail.com)**

**Vice-President –**

**Treasurer – Sergey Melnikov**

**Secretary – Jan Blaedel, Secretary: [mtdiabloiris@gmail.com](mailto:mtdiabloiris@gmail.com)**

**Newsletter Editor - Linda Woods, e-mail: [linda.woods@comcast.net](mailto:linda.woods@comcast.net)**

**Directors – Jan Blaedel, Carl Meier**

**Past President – Kathy Oldham**