

# Twin City Iris Society

## NEWS & VIEWS

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### "MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE ARBORETUM"

by Dr. Leon Snyder  
Head of the Department of Horticultural Science  
University of Minnesota

Guaranty State Bank  
3700 West Broadway

February 15, 1968

8:00 P.M.

In addition to Dr. Snyder's talk on the Arboretum, members will have a short discussion on sprays, insecticides, and poisons. And don't forget our president asked us to respond to a roll call with the name of a favorite iris at the February meeting. For a quick biographical sketch of Dr. Snyder, we recommend the article on the Arboretum in the December 1967 issue of The Minnesota Horticulturist.

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COMING ATTRACTION - The Annual "Come as an Iris" party and potluck supper in March. Reading the lists of irises in old catalogs to inspire an imaginative spark for a costume is as much fun on a cold winter evening as looking at a. . . . .

### SEED CATALOG

How nice to have a catalog  
On this cold and blustery night...  
The magic of its pages  
To fill my heart with sweet delight.

And linger there amidst the blooms  
Of bright and sunny marigolds;  
The rainbow hues of tall larkspurs  
Where velvet petals now unfold.

For while the backlog crackles  
And glowing flames leap high,  
I still may go where fancy leads me  
Down flowering paths neath summer skies

Then pause I must, where pansies grow  
And lift their faces to the sun,  
That I might feel the joy and rapture  
Of this hour before my dream is done.

Thank you for this catalog,  
Its pages bright and gay...  
For its spell of sweet enchantment  
Has unveiled a lovely summer day!

- Joy Belle Burgess

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - Far Afield for Valentine's Day

Valentines remind me of hearts. In context with last month's letter - I think of having your "heart" in your work. There are times when our minds know what work must be done, but somehow we can't get started because we lack the energy. I believe this is not pure laziness. There must be some other reason for the lack of energy. So I wonder...

I remember a tank of tropical fish that I had neglected which went out of balance, and the fish became sluggish. As the aquarium went further out of balance, a number of the fish died. And so I wondered...

I remember reading the symptoms of some kinds of poisoning...carbon monoxide, for instance...that the body becomes sluggish and sleepy before the poisoning is complete. I fit these bits of information together in a kind of jigsaw, and I wonder...is my jigsaw picture correct?

I know there is a range of tolerances, in which one person will become ill much sooner than another, just as some of the fish lived while the weaker ones died. Nature brings the aquarium back into a natural balance, and the fish population builds up again to repeat the cycle. I believe the world is at the point where the pollution is ready to take over, for the same thing is happening, except that mankind's enclosure is world-sized instead of two cubic feet of fish tank. The world problem is more than just pollution or just overpopulation; it is both, for each leads to the other. More population means need for more things; this means more factories, more smoke, more pollution. Pollution seems to trigger a subconscious fear mechanism which seems to say, "If I am to die, at least a part of me will live in my children." Therefore more children, more need for things, more factories, smoke, etc.

How does this affect iris? Air pollution creates a wrong atmosphere for proper growth of plants. It is well known that a gas leak in a house will kill houseplants. What about that abnormal gas leak outside - from smokestacks, chimneys, rubbish burning, automobiles, cigarettes and other sources? The problem seems insurmountable, but it has to be solved. Man has brains and needs to use them. We shall overcome!

But in the meantime...back at the farm, in every home, there is one thing everyone can do. Each person can be less wasteful. During World War II we found that life could go on without using the car as much. Each time it is not used means fewer poison fumes in the air. We can turn out the lights when they are not being used. Each small saving means a bit of coal not burned with the resulting smoke in the air. As gardeners, we can compost our leaves and plant wastes which will make a little less smoke from the burning of dumps.

What price clean air? The American Public Health Department says \$65 per year (Air Engineering, Dec. '67, p. 21). That's the price to clean up the mess we make when we live under the delusion that there is a lot of air in which we can dump our wastes. What of the unseen costs - sickness - allergies, cancer, respiratory diseases?

Besides polluting our air and water, we are poisoning our soil and destroying the environment of our natural helpers. So many people have spoken to

me about their not having as many birds at their feeding stations. Some haven't even seen a sparrow. It should make us think and act quickly before Carson's book becomes a reality...a Silent Spring. It would hardly be worth gardening without the cheerful background music of birdsong, or for that matter, even a cricket chirp.

All variety of life is put here for a purpose. We may not know what purpose, but I am sure that everything is a check and balance on everything else. Even the iris borer seems to spur the iris plant into more side shoot growth than normal, so that even though a bloom is ruined one year, the following year produces more stalks. I don't advocate letting the borers increase rampantly. I kill them every chance I get by squeezing the leaves. One could catch the moth stage by attracting them to black-light and traps. Even this might not be necessary if our plants were perfectly healthy, for it seems that invariably the insect will pick a sickly plant to start its cycle, the overall plan being that the weak plant is dying and the insect is fulfilling its appointed task of converting weak and diseased plant to soil, or a chopped up form that soil bacteria can more easily convert to soil.

What I am trying to say is WE ARE OUR BROTHERS' KEEPERS, whether it is the little brother of the woods whose cheerful song we like, or whether it is the neighbor farmer in India or South America or somebody else whose life may be in jeopardy because we have allowed the air and water and soil to become poisoned and polluted.

Others may have different examples and viewpoints, so at our next meeting we will discuss the problem awhile. If you can't attend the meeting, send your thoughts to News & Views.

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#### DID YOU KNOW THAT . . . . .

- Julius Wadekamper is wearing a "Golden Gate in '68" pin?
- "Golden Gate in '68" means the National Convention of the American Iris Society will be held in Berkeley, California, April 28 through May 2, 1968?
- A Flower-Garden-Landscaping and Patio Show will be a part of the annual Northwest Home and Builders Show at Convention Hall in Minneapolis, and that the Twin City Iris Society will have a booth at the show?
- New members since the last reporting in News & Views are:

Mrs. Mary A. Waterman, 2119 Sherwood Road, Minneapolis, Mn. 55432

Mrs. Waterman is really a new member who is an old member, for she and her husband were members of TCIS until 1956 or 1957 when Mr. Waterman had a heart attack and they were unable to attend meetings. When asked what hobbies she had besides raising iris, Mrs. Waterman replied, "Everything but tat and type!" And that seems to be true, for she paints, sews her own clothing, knits, crochets, makes braided and hooked rugs, and does cruel embroidery for which she makes the designs herself. She does some hybridizing just for fun.

Mr. & Mrs. David H. MacDonald, 690 Continental Drive, New Brighton,  
Mn. 55112

Member Warren Johnson arranged for the membership of the MacDonalds. Mr. MacDonald works in plant pathology at the University of Minnesota, with his main interest in plant parasitic nematodes. Mr. Johnson is trying to get Mr. MacDonald to make a study of iris scorch.

Dr. Peter D. Ascher, 1231 Rose Vista Court, Apt. 10, St. Paul, Mn.  
55112

Dr. Ascher first heard about the Twin City Iris Society through a friend in graduate school at the University of Wisconsin, and learned more about it from Mrs. Warren Johnson, who works in the same building. Garden space for Dr. Ascher is between Green Bay and Wausau on a farm owned by his parents and him. His work at the University of Minnesota is in plant genetics, and his bachelor's degree was in floriculture. Other hobbies include painting and sports.

And now that you've been introduced to the new members, here's something for the rest of us:

OLD MEMBERS - PLEASE NOTE

I see you at the meetings,  
But you never say hello;  
You're busy all the time you're there,  
With those you already know.

I sit amongst the people  
And yet I'm a lonesome guy.  
The new folks are as strange as I.  
You old members pass me by.

Why can't you nod and say hello,  
Or stop and shake my hand,  
Then go and sit among your friends.  
Now, that, I'd understand.

I'll be at your next meeting,  
Perhaps a nice hour to spend;  
Please introduce yourself,  
I want to be a friend!

- New Member  
Washington Printing Guild