

Newsletter of the Capital Hudson Iris Society

Volume 23

Number 2

February 2016

2016 Calendar

Sunday, February 21, 11:30 a.m. Annual Doldrums Party (we're the hosts this year) at the **Albany County Cooperative Extension in Voorheesville**, with guest speaker Rob Handel, Chef at The Bees Knees Café at Heather Ridge Farm in Preston Hollow who will talk on **"Rethinking Wild Edibles."**

Sunday, March 20th, Meeting, 1:30 p.m., East Greenbush Library, Virginia Dorwaldt and Ronnie Siegel **"Composting Made Easy."**

Sunday, April 10th, Meeting, 1:30 p.m., East Greenbush Library, Speaker to be announced.

Saturday, April 16th, 9:00 a.m. - noon, Rain date Sunday, April 17th: **Siberian Dig and Potting Party** at Euthemia's house, bring your clumps of named Siberian irises to be divided and potted for our May 15th Sale.

Sunday, May 15th, 9 – noon. Siberian Iris and Perennial Sale, Main Square Shoppes Parking Lot, 318 Delaware Avenue, Delmar. Rain or shine.

May 23-May 28: American Iris Society Convention in New Jersey/Pennsylvania. Most of us will go on Wednesday, returning Sunday morning. An opportunity not to be missed, only a 2.5 hour drive from the Capital District. For full information, go to <http://ais2016convention.com>.

Saturday, June 4, Annual Iris Show, Bethlehem Public Library. Open to the public from 2-4 p.m. An opportunity to show your prized named irises.

Join the
American Iris Society
www.irises.org

Rethinking Wild Edibles at the Doldrums Party, February 21st

Sunday, February 21st is the date for the annual Doldrums Party at the Albany County Cooperative Extension – a joint effort among three Capital Region gardening clubs, the Capital Hudson Iris Society, the Hudson Adirondack Daylily Society, and the Upstate New York Hosta Society. This year we are the hosts of the party, so we have some extra things to think about.

We've arranged for a very special guest speaker this year. Rob Handel has been cooking since his grandmother first set him to cracking eggs and peeling potatoes in her resort kitchen as a child. Since then he has broadened his culinary horizons through research and travel, as well as periods of formal study in biology, chemistry, and culinary arts. Rob is currently the executive chef at The Bees Knees Café at Heather Ridge Farm, where he crafts both classic dishes and unique preparations pairing the meat and poultry raised on the farm with local produce, cheeses, dairy, and foraged goods. While not in the kitchen, Rob can be found in the woods foraging mushrooms and wild foods, or tending to his own small home farm.

The title of his talk is "Rethinking Wild Edibles". Many gardeners are familiar with the edible wild plants that threaten to overtake their neat beds. Despite this, getting these from the garden to the table seems like no mean task. Foraging books are redolent with the same old recipes for sauteed greens and sparse salads that fail to excite and make the diner want more. In this presentation, Rob discusses some unique uses that he has developed for using wild edibles in sodas, condiments, sauces, and more. The presentation will include samples of some of the preparations discussed, as well as recipes for you to try in your home kitchen. Rob's hope is that you never look at a patch of burdock or garlic mustard the same again!

You should arrive between 11-11:30 a.m. and bring with you a dish to share and a contribution for the door prizes if you can. Your dish can be a casserole, a main dish, side dish, dessert, salad, anything that you make that is particularly delicious and you want to share with others. If you would like to help with the set-up, arrive earlier (10:00) – your assistance will be highly appreciated. We hope to have many door prizes, including gift certificates to growers and garden centers and other garden-related items. If you have something you know would be appreciated for the door-prize table, please bring it and add it to the table.

If you need travel directions to the Cooperative Extension, call Euthemia at 439-3758 or email her. See you all on Sunday, February 21st!

See article on AIS Convention on Page 3

with beautiful photos of “**Spectacular Gardens of Paris** Overlooked by Guidebooks and Tourists Alike.” We are looking forward to seeing the new photos from their next trip to Paris on February 1. Thanks for a wonderful talk and slide show, Dan and Joanne!

Sunday, February 21st, is the **Doldrums Party** where we join with the Hosta and Daylily Societies for a pot-luck feast, an interesting speaker and some great door prizes. This year we are in charge of the party and Euthemia is looking for people who can arrive at 10:00 to set up the Cooperative Extension. Our speaker, Rob Handel, is a chef who uses local and **foraged** ingredients at the Bees Knees Café at Heather Ridge Farm in Preston Hollow. His talk is entitled “Rethinking Wild Edibles.” I, for one, cannot wait to see what he’s going to teach us.

Please look at the Calendar on the front page and mark your appointment books. Also pay close attention to the information on the **American Iris Society Convention** which will be held in New Jersey and Pennsylvania this May. Many of us are going from Wednesday, May 25 and returning home Sunday morning, May 29. This is a rare opportunity to attend the national convention on the east coast, and very close to us! Think about including this in your vacation plans for 2016. Go to the website and find out more about it.

Because of the crowded spring schedule, we won’t do a **bus trip** until the fall this year. If you have any ideas about a good place for our fall trip, please inform us. We’ve done the Highline in NYC during the fall and that was lovely. There are probably other great sites for a day trip that you know about, so let me know.

See you all at the Doldrums Party! - Linda

Pondside Nursery Newsletter

Last September Robert Clyde Anderson from Pondside Nursery in Hudson gave a really good talk on the natural planting movement. Some of us signed up for his free newsletter. It’s really informative with great photos and ideas for your garden. If you’re interested, just write to him at robt.c.anderson@gmail.com and ask to be put on the mailing list. You won’t regret it. – E. Matsoukas

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Garden and Flower Show

At the Doldrums Party, you will have the opportunity to sign up to help man the booth at the Capital District Garden and Flower Show from March 18-20th at Hudson Valley Community College. We share the booth with the Hosta Society and the Daylily Society. The show

enables us to meet the gardening public, distribute flyers about upcoming shows and sales, and answer questions about iris gardening that people are sure to ask.

If you aren’t going to be at the Doldrums Party (where there will be sign-up sheets) but want to work at the show, please let Euthemia know. Although in the past there have been some free passes available, in recent years they’ve been less generous so we’re pretty sure that free admission won’t be included. But it’s really fun to sit and help people with their questions and let them know about our activities. Some of our best new members have come to us through this yearly show!

Hidden Gardens of Paris

CHIS members Joanne and Dan Maier were our tour guides on January 17 as they took us on a virtual visit to two of their favorite gardens in Paris. Neither garden is well represented in the guidebooks and, maybe as a result, neither is overcrowded as so many of the museums and attractions in Paris are.

The Albert Kahn garden was established in the final years of the nineteenth century by a wealthy financier who melded a variety of styles from all corners of the earth and dedicated his garden to world peace. Having toured this garden in both spring and winter, Dan and Joanne were impressed with both the detailed hardscape and the wealth of plant material to be seen.

The second garden, located at the headquarters of UNESCO (near the Eiffel Tower), is anchored by a uniquely modern Japanese garden complete with a bamboo grove, water features, monolithic sculptures and terraced seating areas. This installation, designed by renowned sculptor Isamu Noguchi, is also dedicated to world peace.

If you’re planning a visit to Paris in the near future, check with Joanne and Dan for details on finding and enjoying these hidden gems in the City of Light.
– D. Maier

Minutes—1/17/2016

Linda conducted a short business meeting, welcoming visitors and telling a little about what the Society does. Thanks for the donated goodies was extended. The members once again voted to authorize Ann Vandervort \$500 to buy plants to supplement those dug from member gardens for the Siberian/Perennial sale in May.

Euthemia made an announcement about the Winter Doldrums to be held on February 21st at the Cooperative Extension in Voorheesville, with a special request for members to contribute items for door prizes. Information on the AIS Convention in New Jersey/Pennsylvania in May was made available. - V. Dorwaldt

Door Prizes Needed for Doldrums

Since we're the hosts of the Doldrums Party this year, we're also responsible for making sure there are some terrific door prizes available to attendees. If you have any garden-related items that are useful, decorative, or educational, please bring them to the Doldrums and put them on the door prize table. You may have some great garden books that are practically like new, or some beautiful pots, or a poster or painting that you know someone would love to hang in their home. Be creative and be generous – it will be appreciated!

HIPS Database

Is it possible you are growing a rare iris? The Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS) is hoping to expand its database of historic irises. If you grow bearded or beardless irises that were introduced before 1987, please send Kathryn Mohr (kemohrke@aol.com) a list of what you grow, for inclusion in the HIPS database. If you know the provenance of your iris please include that as well: e.g. 'I got Butterfingers from Great Aunt Hermione in 1999. She's been growing it since 1960' 'I purchased I. variegata from Iris Pond in 1995.' The names of participants in the database are kept private. – K. Mohr

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"Going East in 2016", the AIS Convention in May

This May we have a unique opportunity to attend the annual national convention of the American Iris Society

relatively close by in Newark, New Jersey. Most of the AIS conventions have been in Washington, Oregon and areas where a majority of the hybridizers live. So we're excited that we can attend a convention within an easy drive, 2.5 hours.

The full convention runs from Monday, May 23 – Saturday, May 28, but most of us will be going on Wednesday morning, May 25 and returning Sunday morning, May 29. Besides dinners and receptions, the convention includes garden tours Thursday – Saturday of Presby Memorial Iris Garden in Upper Montclair, NJ, The Hildenbrandt Garden near Slatington, PA, and Glenora Gardens in Palmerton, PA. Wednesday includes programs from the affiliated societies such as the Median Iris Society, Reblooming Iris Society, Spuria, HIPS, Japanese, and Louisiana Iris Societies. On Thursday, after the tours, there are programs from the Aril, Siberian and Tall Bearded Iris Societies. For those who are interested, a "Land of the Free" tour leaves early morning on Tuesday, May 24, going to Philadelphia for the US Independence National Historic Park, Liberty Bell, and the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania. The host hotel is the Newark Liberty International Airport Marriott Hotel. Separate reservations can be made with the hotel by Monday, May 2, by calling 973-634-0006 and asking for the American Iris Society event rate of \$114 per night.

For detailed information on the convention, and for the registration forms and the full Event Schedule, log onto www.ais2016convention.com. If you don't have internet access, contact Euthemia and she'll get you the forms.

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WINTER DOLDRUMS PARTY

Sponsored by the
IRIS, DAYLILY, & HOSTA SOCIETIES



Guest Speaker: Rob Handel, Chef
The Bee's Knees Café at Heather Ridge Farm in Preston Hollow

“Rethinking Wild Edibles”

Rob is a talented young chef who uses both farmed and foraged local products, and will talk about unique uses for wild edibles in sodas, sauces, condiments and more.

Sunday, February 21st, 2016
11:30 a.m.

Location: Albany County Cooperative Extension
24 Martin Rd. Voorheesville, NY 12186

Potluck lunch - bring a dish/dessert to share and bring a friend
Great door prizes including garden gift certificates

Questions contact:
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