

Newsletter of the Capital Hudson Iris Society

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March 2020

2020 Calendar

Sunday, March 15th, 2020: 1:30 p.m., CHIS Meeting, East Greenbush Community Library. **Speaker: Amy Howansky on Beautiful Flowering Trees and Shrubs**

Friday, March 27 – Sunday, March 29: Capital District Garden and Flower Show, Hudson Valley Community College, Troy. Sign up for a two-hour stint to help man the table for CHIS/HADS/ UNYHS. And look for the table when you go to the show!

Sunday, April 19th, 2020: 1:30 p.m., CHIS Meeting, East Greenbush Community Library. **Speaker: Elisabeth Zander, President of the North American Rock Garden Society will talk about Using Irises in the Rock Garden.**

Other events of interest

AIS 100th Anniversary Convention, May 18th– 23rd, 2020. Based at Marriott Hotel, Liberty Airport in Newark, with tours and events in New York City, New Jersey and surrounding area including the **New York Botanical Garden, the Highline, Presby Memorial Gardens, and Wave Hill.** Google “American Iris Society Convention 2020” and take a look at the program and registration forms.

Join the American Iris Society
www.irises.org

Amy Howansky on “Beautiful Flowering Trees and Shrubs”

Many of you heard Amy Howansky at the February Doldrums Party when she graciously stepped in for Matthew Benson when he was called away on a family emergency. And if you did, you realize what a wonderful and engaging speaker she is and how much you learned! Well, she’s going to give another talk at the Sunday, March 15th meeting at 1:30 p.m. at the East Greenbush Community Library. Her talk will be on Beautiful Flowering Trees and Shrubs.

At the meeting you can expect to learn about lesser-known trees and shrubs that will add colorful flowers to your landscape. Discover newer types of old favorites, as well. By combining plants, she’ll help you have even more flowers in your garden from spring, through summer, and into autumn.

Amy Howansky is a horticulturalist, award-winning landscape designer, educator, and Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional. As a former educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension, she coordinated the Master Gardener Program and the Community Gardening Program. During her 37 years in the trade, she has taught extensively about landscape design, tree care, pest diagnosis, and all things horticultural. As owner of Backyard Solutions, she creates landscape designs, and educates employees for other area landscape businesses. And to add to her talents, in her spare time (among other things), she enjoys hot-air ballooning!

The East Greenbush Community Library is located on Community Way off Michaels Road in East Greenbush, New York. If you need driving directions to the library, you can go online to www.eastgreenbushlibrary.org, hit “contact us” and in the lower right corner is a map and a way to access directions.

Doldrums Party on February 16th
Old Man Winter was kept at bay for a few hours on February 16 as this year's Winter Doldrums get-together unfolded at the Cooperative Extension in Voorheesville. The food was delicious, as always, the company convivial and there were door prize gifts aplenty to choose from.

This year's keynote speaker was Amy Howansky, a notable local horticulturist who presented a fascinating and in-depth program on attracting pollinators to our gardens. Amy touched on everything from habitat and biodiversity to the effects of pesticides and the importance of encouraging native flora and fauna in our landscapes.

CHIS is pleased to welcome Amy to our March meeting where she'll talk about beautiful flowering trees and shrubs for our gardens. – Dan Maier

I understand that the February Doldrums Party was a great success, with Amy Howansky stepping in at the last minute because of a serious family problem Matt Benson had. We all hope his daughter is doing well.

We'll have another opportunity to hear Amy Howansky on March 15th, at our regular CHIS meeting, planned way before the February substitution. This time she'll be giving a talk on Beautiful Flowering Trees and Shrubs. Those of you who heard her at the Doldrums Party or at the Hosta Society meeting in January will know what a great speaker she is and how much she has to teach us all. I'm thrilled that she's coming and I hope you will, as well.

I'd like to thank Margo Heck for writing up her experience on a Road Scholar trip to the Rose Parade over the holidays. If any of you have an interesting garden-related trip to report on, please let Euthemia know. She'll use those that are sure to be of interest to other members whenever she has space in the newsletter.

Let me know if you've got any ideas on talks you'd like to hear or speakers you've listed to whom you know we'd also like. We're always looking for new ideas.

See you on March 15th. Remember, it's almost spring!
- Linda

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Volunteer for the Rose Parade!

This past Christmas season, I took a week-long Road Scholar trip to California and volunteered with 420 others to assist building some of the many floats that make up the Rose Parade in Pasadena. (Check out Roadscholar.org to find out more.)

The first full day was dedicated to decorating floats including cutting long-stem roses and inserting them into individual vials, prepping static and straw-flowers to make a powder, mounting scaffolding to glue flowers on the floats, and covering the "skin" of the Statue of Liberty with eucalyptus leaves with a very sticky glue. Since floats have many nooks and crannies, they have to be covered with small organic matter such as chia seeds, pepper-corns and crushed rice.

On subsequent days we met the Executive Committee who talked about the 900+ volunteers or "White Suiters," ambassadors who accompany floats and perform community services. We also met a former Rose Queen who explained the selection process and her experiences as Rose Queen. We went to the Getty Museum and their fabulous garden created by artist Robert Irwin. We also watched 5-6 marching bands at Bandfest perform their field demonstrations for the parade. During the evening some mini therapy horses came to our hotel and we were thrilled to see them the next day in the parade. We also heard an internationally known Rose Judge talk about judging for the awards. After watching the parade (and cheering for "our" floats) we went back to our hotel and watched it again on TV so that we could see some of the details we couldn't see from the curb. The day after the parade, you can walk up to the floats which are amazing temporary works of art. The artistry is remarkable as they use different colors within certain flower petals or variegations of striped seeds to create patterns. It takes 13 months to put these floats together so they have already started work for next year.
- Margo Heck

Mason wins Youth Coloring Contest

Our ten-year old youth member, Mason Drummer, won third prize in the AIS 2019 Coloring Contest for Youth Members. Way to go, Mason!

