

*The
Siberian
Iris*

Spring 1992



THE SIBERIAN IRIS

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President's Letter (Hal Stahly)	2
Treasurer's Report (Gunther Stark)	4
Siberians - A Love Affair (Marty Schafer)	5
1991 Registrations and Introductions	11
Siberian Irises in Japan	
From The Archives - Siberian Irises in Japan (Akira Horinaka)	15
Breeding of "Yaezaki-Ayame" (Ho Shidara)	17
Notes on Mr. Shidara's Siberians (Ben Hager)	19
Development of Siberian Irises in Japan (Hiroshi Shimizu)	21
The Peachy Forties (Lorena Reid)	22
In Memoriam - Harley Briscoe, Ray John	24
1991 HM to Bee Warburton's ISABELLE	24
A Variegated Siberian (Edmundas Kondratas)	25
Another Variegated Siberian (Bob Hollingworth)	26
From the Mailbag (Dorothy Hamilton, Jennifer Hewitt, James Waddick)	28
Southern Siberians (Earnest Yearwood)	31
New Members	33
Book Sales Report (Julius Wadekamper)	34
Last Word - Editorial	35
Advertisements	36
Officers and Committees	39

Front Cover:

GRAND JUNCTION in the Rebert Garden,
AIS Convention, Washington D.C. 1991
Photo: Bob Hollingworth



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

We are just over one year away from the first ever national - or should we say international? - Siberian Iris Convention. I am already excited about it, and I know others are also. A large number of guest plants are now beginning their second year of growth and at last report are looking good. There should be an impressive amount of bloom to greet conventioners in 1993.

Now - is this going to be a one-shot thing or a continuing event? If continuing, do we want it every two or three years? Or every year? Give the future some thought and let us know your ideas. I have not yet heard any talk of a future meeting; but if this thing is to continue, plans should be underway. I think we certainly have enough interest and enthusiasm for regular meetings of some greater or lesser frequency.

I hope this has been a good winter for your Siberian irises. Many parts of the country seem to have had inconsistent snow cover, what with some unusually warm weather in January and February. In any case, we will know by the time you read this just how kindly we were treated by Mother Nature.

I want to express my thanks and appreciation to Julius Wadekamper for his service to SSI as a director. He finished his term of eligibility last year, but we hope and expect that he will continue to be an active member. Welcome goes to newly elected director Marty Schafer of Region 1. Welcome also to Dave Silverberg of Region 13, whom I have appointed to fill the director position that was held by Tom Abrego. Tom vacated the position

when he was elected second vice president.

We are fortunate that, as change occurred with some of our officers, our editor remains on the job. Judy Hollingworth -- I am happy and relieved to report! -- will continue her great work with TSI. But she can't do the entire thing by herself; she needs contributions, and not of money. Please - think of what you might contribute in the way of something to print, and then follow through and send it to her. Articles don't have to be long. We need your ideas on things such as hybridizing, culture, and your experiences with transplanting, landscaping, pollination, or any other subject related to growing and enjoying Siberian irises. What have you seen that you liked? This could include ways the plants are being used as well as impressions of individual cultivars. Varietal comments are always interesting reading, but you need not limit yourself to that.

The Atlanta Convention will very soon be upon us. I hope to see many of you there. At this time of the year, most of us are ready for some warm weather and colorful flowers.

Hal Stahly

Re: The Atlanta Convention

SSI Board Meeting will be held
Tuesday April 28th at 2 pm.

SSI Section Meeting,
Wednesday April 29th from 8 to 10 am.

Everyone is welcome to attend both meetings.

TREASURER'S REPORT 1992

(to March 1992)

Submitted by Gunther Stark_____

On hand, checking account.....4722.72

INCOME

Dues	2249.85
Misc. sales	9.00
Interest	570.38
Book sales	788.66
Check list sales	784.97
Ad. revenue	35.00
Slide rental	70.50
N.E. Apogen Auction	200.00

Total income.....4708.36

9431.08

EXPENSES

Two issues TSI	2678.42
Flyers and brochures	156.25
Check list cost	1112.00
Postage, cards, shipping	416.20
Purchase C.D.s	1500.00
Envelopes	75.12
Deposit box rent	5.00

Total expenses.....5942.99

On hand, checking account.....3488.09

Total deposits (C.D.s) 10500.00

SIBERIANS - A LOVE AFFAIR

By MARTY SCHAFFER _____

I wanted to breed Siberian irises the first time I saw Bee Warburton's seedling patch in 1982. At the time I was a novice irisarian with no more than 10 named irises in my garden and none of them were Siberians. She had the most beautiful display, a half acre of every shade of blue violet, each clump waving in the breeze trying to attract attention. Bee asked Jan and me if we had names for any of her favorites. We asked her to teach us about them. She led us through the rows patiently pointing out flowers and features and I left in a swirl of Siberian excitement.

We visited Bee a year later at SDB season in the delightful company of Marian Schmuhl and Barbara Schmieder. We marveled at her little ones for about an hour, then sat under her apple tree to talk about hybridizing, hybridizers, dogs, cats and vegetables. Before we left Bee held out a flat of newly germinated Siberian seedlings and asked "would anyone like some?" Before I knew it she had three labeled crosses - about a hundred seedlings - neatly lined up in a flat. "You grow them and they are yours!" That night my imagination was on fire. For hours I lay awake thinking of all the possibilities. We put Bee's seedlings in a small bed in our garden and they formed an island of blue and white surrounded by deep orange oriental poppies, soft pink dame's rocket and brilliant pink and red peonies. From these seedlings I selected a short, shapely white from SKY MIRROR X GEORGE HENRY to use in breeding and a tall, dappled blue-violet from GEORGE HENRY by a sib. It had two strong branches, a lovely flower form and when it repeated strongly the next two years we named it SPRINGS BROOK.

It was time to experiment and learn about Siberians. I felt wonderful seeing my first crosses bloom. All of the colors and the subtle shadings that I'd seen in Bee's garden were now in my seedling beds. People would say to me, "As a

beginner what is your breeding program?" I tried to be polite, but I didn't have one, not yet. I just wanted to see what would happen. Often my crosses were determined by what flowers were open that day. (I was lucky to have such a strong gene pool in Bee's irises.) Sometimes my experiments led to beautiful results, sometimes to new ideas and sometimes to dead ends. DEVIL'S DREAM came from one such experiment. I took two of Bee's best recent introductions, PERCHERON and PURPLE PROSE, and got something that I never would have expected - a deep wine red. I learned something else from DEVIL'S DREAM that was very important. It is impossible to judge Siberians by their first year bloom. In its first year DEVIL'S DREAM was a wonderful color, but by the third year it became a beautiful flower as well, carrying on the tradition of its parents with large well formed flowers, good branching, bud count and vigor.

Another standout among the early seedlings was S85-6-6. It was from a cross of STAR CLUSTER X RUFFLED VELVET and was creamy white with large, gold, pointed signals that spread out on to the shoulders of the falls. We gave it the garden name of "Gold Shoulders". It combines the modern fashion for wide, round ruffles with the old fashioned pendant look. It has given interesting results in breeding - but more about that later.

In my second year I used SPRINGS BROOK as a parent with very positive results. Crossed with FORREST MCCORD it gave a large number of beautifully formed blues and purples on sturdy, tall, branched stems. All of the seedlings have large flowers that show a very velvety sheen not visible on either of the parents. A few of the purple ones show a white wire rim on the falls like FORREST MCCORD. Nothing has been introduced among them but I have been using them for breeding and I am trying to figure out which parent donates the velvetiness.

SPRINGS BROOK crossed onto ARV82-31, a recurved fading-yellow seedling of Bee's, gave me ROARING JELLY - a raspberry SPRINGS BROOK. It has arching falls with three shades of raspberry dots and veining applied with an impressionist's technique. The standards are lavender veined with raspberry. We have never seen another iris like it.



ROARING JELLY (Schafer/Sacks 1992)

Photo: Marty Schafer

My first cross made with a real goal in mind was BUTTER AND SUGAR X SPRINGS BROOK. I wanted to make yellows with more shapely, larger flowers, better branching and repeat bloom would be a bonus. I didn't expect it to happen right away but thought it was a reasonable project. Contrary to my goal, what resulted was SAILOR'S FANCY - a lovely blue. At first it impressed me because of its form, all swirls and ruffles on flaring petals. Then it slowly dawned on me that this was the first almost blue amoena that I had ever seen. So I made it a project to clarify the standards to pure white while making the falls darker blue. While I was at it I decided to look and work for seedlings that showed bitone effects in red and purple as well. (Other people have seen the challenge of BUTTER AND SUGAR to make it an all yellow flower. My response is to use BUTTER AND SUGAR as a tool to bring the amoena pattern to other colors.) The first cross I

made with this project in mind was ISABELLE X SAILOR'S FANCY. ISABELLE is a light yellow child of BUTTER AND SUGAR X BELLISSIMA with exquisite form and ruffling and a green flush. Two of the children showed exactly what I wanted. The first was a large flower with excellent yellow color and repeat and the second was a blue, one step closer to the amoena pattern. Other blue bitones have appeared in a similar cross between ISABELLE and SILVER ILLUSION. The contrast between standards and falls is striking, but more work needs to be done on the standards to make them white.

Before leaving the subject of bitones, I should mention one strange cross between MAD MAGENTA and "Gold Shoulders". I made the cross without regard to color. I remember being interested in the flower shapes of the parents which were very attractive and totally different. Two of the seedlings began to be interesting when they were still in bud. We had never seen anything like them - they were an eerie charcoal gray. When they finally opened they continued to be completely strange. The standards are a smokey light purple with purple veins, the styles are light purple with blue shading and midribs; the falls are darker smokey purple with even darker veins. As if this isn't enough they have large triangular yellow signals and green hafts. In these flowers we have an odd collection of colors. Is it ugly or just new? It's hard to tell after one viewing, but it doesn't fit the current standard of pure, jewel-like tones. One other seedling from this cross produced a different sort of bicolor. The standards and falls are both the same shade of rosy-violet but the style arms are blue! All in all a cross made for shape has produced some astonishing and strange breakthroughs in color.

Another cross that bloomed last year was "Gold Shoulders" X ISABELLE. In four seedlings the warm yellow color almost covered the falls. It was good to know that the light yellow pigment in ISABELLE can act as an extender for the brighter color in "Gold Shoulders". I'm glad that it worked in this cross. I made similar crosses between BUTTER AND SUGAR and ARV82-31 and BUTTER AND SUGAR X GEORGE HENRY (which has a very bright, large gold signal) and only light yellows resulted. In a few generations I hope to have golden amoenas worth introducing.

There is more to yellow and BUTTER AND SUGAR than amoena patterns. When I crossed BUTTER AND SUGAR X PERCHERON, the result was a creamy white with a distinct yellow rim around the falls. It is not like the wire rim on the fall edges of FORREST MCCORD and its seedlings. It is an eighth to a quarter of an inch wide on a ground of a different color like the plicata patterns in bearded. A wide rim has also appeared in a rosy-pink seedling but in this case the rim is a lighter color than the rest of the falls. (And ROARING JELLY faintly shows this lighter rim pattern.) The flower with the yellow rim has poor form and will take considerable work to enhance the rim and make the shape better, but I am looking forward to improvement.

New colors and color patterns are always worth looking for and developing. So are the flowers whose forms make them distinctive and attractive. There has been a lot of energy directed at making standards and falls bigger, more flaring, substantial and ruffled. What about the other parts of the flower - the hafts and style arms? One seedling from PERCHERON X ISABELLE is white with wide, round and ruffled falls like many of its contemporaries. What makes it different is that its narrow hafts, which are in perfect proportion to the style arms, are just the right length, and hold the falls at just the right angle to make a very pleasing picture. Haft length and angle sound like minor features, but in this seedling, make the basic propeller shape look beautiful. It reminds me of modern Pacific Coast Native irises and Cattleya orchids.

S87-10-1 from a cross of MAD MAGENTA X PERCHERON has dramatically different style arms. The flower is wine red with standards at a 45 degree angle and nice, flaring ruffled falls. The styles, however, are bolt upright in the center of the flower and have well developed floret crests. The crests are wine red, but the rest of the styles are a blend of red and blue creating a fascinating effect. The upright styles expose all of the signals and most of the hafts which are green UUs. This is the least attractive feature of the flower. I would like to work for more attractive signal and haft areas to show off these wonderful style arms. One of Bee's strong interests in Siberian flowers has been the style arms. She feels they are a beautiful adornment and always includes the curls,

fimbriations and feathering in her registration descriptions. She has wondered, however, if someday the styles might be too much of a feature and become gaudy. I hope this is not what she had in mind. I think they are beautiful and an exciting development.

It doesn't seem so long ago that I started with no irises and no breeding program. Now thanks to Bee and the irises, which have pointed the way, I have a book full of projects - colored amoenas, bitones, golden yellows, upright styles....I'm also working for reds with DEVIL'S DREAM and MAD MAGENTA. (MAD MAGENTA stands out as a versatile parent for me -- a giant!) Pinks keep popping up in unexpected places and I have been working with them as they appear. The best so far have come from LAVENDER LIGHT X MAD MAGENTA and have the added benefit of extreme earliness (blooming in SDB season). I hope that somebody who reads this article will feel encouraged to make a few crosses this year. Its not that hard, and there's an abundance of good material with which to breed. When they start to bloom the fun has just begun.



JAN AND MARTY WITH BEE IN
BARBARA SCHMIEDER'S GARDEN

Photo: Bennett Jones (from a color slide)

1991 REGISTRATIONS

AND INTRODUCTIONS_____

BUTTERFLY MODE (L. Reid, R. 1991). Sdlg. Btfl 40#7. SINO-SIB, 42" (107 cm), ML. S. violet blue (RHS 95C); bright violet blue (95A) styles; F. violet blue (97C), white signal striated with almost black lines, rimmed violet blue (95A). Unknown parentage.

BUTTERMAKER'S BRIDE (A. Cronin, R. 1991). Sdlg. F-28. SIB (diploid), 38" (97 cm), L. S. white, cream at midrib; styles same; F. pale yellow; yellow signal. Floating Island X Dreaming Yellow.

CASCADE CREAM (L. Reid, R. 1991). Sdlg. Btfl 40#8(aw 40). SINO-SIB, 42" (107 cm), ML. S. white; white style arms; F. white, pale yellow cream in center with barest hint of grey lines, insignificant gold signal. Unknown parentage.

CHATTER BOX BELLE (C. McEwen, SIB, R. 1990). Pope's Perennials, Seaways Gardens 1991.

CHEERY LYN (A. Miller, SIB, R.1990). Old Douglas Perennials 1991.

DOTTED LINE (L. Reid, R. 1991). Sdlg. 90-3-6+7. SINO-SIB, 24-30" (61-76 cm), EM. S. violet blue (RHS 93D), darker (93B) vertical stitch marks, crinkled white edge; violet blue (93C) styles; F. violet blue (93D), vertically stitched white and violet blue (93B), large white signal, violet blue (93A) edge and lines at center. Butterfly Mode X unknown.

DULAS (H. Foster, R. 1991). Sdlg. R51/87. SIB (tetraploid), 37" (94 cm), L. S. rich dark purple blue; F. same, rose purple center, strong silver edge; ruffled. Dear Dianne X Reddy Maid.

EVER AGAIN (C. McEwen, R. 1991). Sdlg. T8 86/40 (2). SIB (tetraploid), 34-40" (85-100 cm), E & RE. S. dark violet blue (RHS 89A); styles violet blue (blend of 89A and 83B); F. close to true dark blue (93A), white wire edge, white signal; ruffled. T5 80/34: (T4 76/30(1): (Reddy Maid sib x T1 69/12A)

x T4 76/30(3), sib) X T7 83/135(7): ((Dear Dianne x Happy Event sib) x Windwood Spring).

FAIRY FINGERS (A. & D. Willott, SIB, R. 1990). Willott 1991.

FOUR WINDS (H. Stahly, SIB, R. 1990). H. Stahly 1991.

FROSTED CRANBERRY (A. Miller, R. 1991). Sdlg. 85.41.4. SIB, 32" (81 cm), ML. S. red violet (RHS 80C), aqua veins; F. darker (78B), veined darker, greenish hafts and signal; red spathes. 80.9.3: ((Pink Haze x 78.5, wine sdlg.) x Pink Haze) X self. Old Douglas Perennials 1991.

GOLDEN EDGE (C. McEwen, R. 1991). Sdlg. T7 83/107(3). SIB (tetraploid), 30" (75 cm), EL-LM. S. medium violet blue (RHS 98C); styles violet blue (blend of 86B and 89A); F. darker velvety violet blue, yellow (9C) wire edge, rich yellow (9B) signal shading to lighter (9D) at edge; ruffled. T2 80/260(2): ((Ruffled Velvet x Tealwood) x unknown) X T6 78/47(W-1): (Dear Dianne x Happy Event sib).

GREEN EYED QUEEN (D. S. Varner, SIB, R. 1990). Illini Iris 1991.

HARPSWELL CHANTEUSE (C. McEwen, R. 1991). Sdlg. T7 83/171. SIB (tetraploid), 36" (91 cm), M. S. white; F. creamy white, light greenish yellow signal; very ruffled. T5 79/174(4): (Lady of Quality sib x Dear Dianne) X Ivory Cream.

HARPSWELL SNOWBURST (C. McEwen, SIB, R. 1990). Pope's Perennials, Seaways Gardens 1991.

HARPSWELL VELVET (C. McEwen SIB, R. 1990). Pope's Perennials, Seaways Gardens 1991.

ILLINI FANTASY (D. S. Varner, R. 1991). Sdlg. 91111. SIB, 26" (56 cm), M-L. True lavender; heavily ruffled F.; icy styles, green midrib. Silver Illusion X Illini Rose.

ILONA LYLE (H. Foster, R. 1991). Sdlg. R57/87. SIB (tetraploid), 30" (76 cm), M-L. S. pale violet blue (RHS 93C); silver blue styles; F. rich ocean blue (95A), fine silver edge, golden green signal; ruffled. Harpswell Happiness X Dear Dianne.

ISLA SERLE (H. Foster, R. 1991). Sdlg. R36/87. SIB, (tetraploid), 34" (86 cm), M-L. S. pale violet blue (RHS 93C); feathered azure styles, crested; F. rich pacific blue (93A), pale green signal; ruffled. Harpswell Happiness X Dear Dianne.

LADY LILAC (C. McEwen, SIB, R. 1990). Pope's Perennials, Seaways Gardens 1991.

LAKE KEUKA (D. Borglum, R. 1991). Sdlg. D-4-34-1. SIB, 31" (79 cm), M. S. violet blue (RHS 95C); aqua style arms; F. violet blue (95B) edged lighter (95D); ruffled. Gulls Way X Outer Loop.

LANG (C. and M. Bacon, SIB, R. 1990). Old Douglas Perennials 1991.

LAVENDER STIPPLES (A. Miller, SIB, R. 1990). Old Douglas Perennials 1991.

LIGHTLY TOUCHED (J. Peyrard by C. Hansen, R. 1991). SINO-SIB, 30-36" (76-91 cm), L. S. milky white; pale yellow style arms; F. milky white to ivory with slight violet venation, touch of violet along lower half of edge, yellow throat. I. clarkei X I. delavayi.

LIZZIE (C. McEwen by Mrs. F. Love, R. 1991). SIB, 15" (38 cm), M. Royal blue. Unknown parentage.

LORENA CRONIN (A. Cronin, R. 1991). Sdlg. M-1. SIB, 27" (69 cm), VE. S. purple; purple styles; F. white, bright blue lines around edge, darker blue mid line, blue haze at end of F., inconspicuous yellow signal. Unknown parentage.

MOON SILK (H. Stahly, SIB, R. 1990). H. Stahly 1991.

MYSTIC LAGOON (A. & D. Willott, SIB, R. 1990). Willott 1991.

PURPLE SAND (A. Miller, SIB, R. 1990). Old Douglas Perennials 1991.

RED ROYALE (H. Pearson, R. 1991). Sdlg. 7797-1. SIB, 18" (45 cm), M. Dark red purple (RHS 71A) with bluish blaze on F.; red purple (72A) style arms; slight fragrance. 72-P-3 X Royal Ensign.

RILL (L. Bellagamba, R. 1991). Sdlg. S1-89. SIB 18" (46 cm), M. Medium blue, small white ray pattern; pale blue white styles. Unknown parentage.

SAILOR'S FANCY (M. Schafer/J. Sacks, R. 1991). Sdlg. S86-13-1. SIB, 33" (84 cm). M. S. light blue violet ground (RHS 97C), darker veins and shadowing (93C/B); light blue violet (97C) styles; F. mid blue violet (93D) ground, darker veins and shading (93A/B), paler edge, yellow signal, veined dark blue on S. and F.; ruffled. Springs Brook X Butter and Sugar. Joe Pye Weed's Garden 1991.

SAPPHIRE ROYALE (H. Pearson, R. 1991). Sdlg. 7777-13. SIB, 17 1/2" (45 cm), M. S. dark violet blue (RHS 94A); light purple (76B) stylearms; F. darker violet blue (93A). Caesar's Brother X White Swirl.

SEREN WIB (H. Foster, R. 1991). Sdlg. R55/87. SIB (tetraploid), 32" (81 cm), L. S. mid blue (RHS 90A); rose purple (87A) styles; F. rich purple blue (94A) stitched white, wide edge stitched silver. Dear Dianne X Harpswell Happiness.

TALDRA (H. Foster, R. 1991). Sdlg. R60/87. SIB (tetraploid), 48" (122 cm), M-L. S. dark lilac (RHS 89C); purple blue (89D) styles; F. rich purple blue (89A) edged silver. Harpswell Happiness X Dear Dianne.

VALLEY OF DELIGHT (D. S. Varner, SIB, R. 1990). Illini Iris 1991.

WINGS OF NIGHT (C. Helsley, SIB, R. 1990). C Helsley 1991.

SIBERIAN IRISES IN JAPAN

SIBERIAN IRISES IN JAPAN

By Akira Horinaka_____

(Reprinted from The Siberian Iris, Vol. 3, No. 7, Spring 1973)

The oldest well-known iris growing wild in Japan is Iris laevigata and the next is Iris sanguinea which is called "Ayame" in Japan. Iris kaempferi was not famous in the old days, but now it is, as the ancestor of the Japanese irises.

There is an old Japanese saying, used to express the difficulty of deciding which of two women is the more beautiful: "Which is Ayame and which is Kakitsubata?" - the latter being the Japanese term for I. laevigata. From ancient times Ayame and Kakitsubata have been the words used as metaphors of beauty. Both are considered too beautiful to compare their beauty.

In Japan the term Ayame also means "iris" and Ayame-zoku is Japanese for Genus Iris. As you know, the British collected I. sanguinea in Japan and crossed that with I. sibirica to establish the basis of the Garden Siberians.

We find I. sanguinea almost everywhere in our country and there are some differences in color and form according to their location. Botanically we have the following varieties: Shiro-Ayame (var. albiflora), Shirobana-chabo-ayame (var. minor forma alba), Chabo-ayame (var. pumila), Murasaki-chabo-ayame (var. pumila forma purpurata) and Kuruma-ayame (var. stellata). Horticulturally we find about two varieties in 1681, 1695 and 1698, and five in about 1868 including Momonokasetsu. But the plants fitting the latter five descriptions no longer exist. Dr. Tomino collected Sujiiri-ayame, white with a violet line, in 1956, and Buchizaki-ayame, white and violet vari-colored, in 1958. Both of these have shorter stems than typical I. sanguinea. For other varieties there are Kurumazaki-ayame,

with six petals on a violet flower (much like stellata), Edazaki-ayame, branched, with three violet flowers and with leaves wider than the typical form; Yaezaki-ayame, eight to nine petals; Kobana-ayame, a small white flower, and Chabo-ayame and Kamayama. It is said that a pink form can be found in the Akita Prefecture, but this is not proven. Shiro-ayame has two types of flowers: the typical one and another which has narrow horizontal falls with short stem. Kamayama, sometimes called I. sanguinea violacea, is a deep violet. The stem is taller than the foliage and it is one of the strongest. This seems to be a garden form in Korea and a hybrid between I. sanguinea and I. sibirica. We have Hatsumurasaki, a selection of early bloomers. Some say it is the same as Kamayama; it is not clear, but I think it would be a form of Kamayama. Chabo-ayame is a dwarf and there are two types, one very short and the other a little taller.

We do not find any particular varieties other than these. These and other Siberians are beginning to be spread all through Japan by members of the Japan Iris Society.

Editor's note: This article raised so many questions that I asked Jean Witt if she was familiar with the various Siberians mentioned by Mr. Horinaka. Here is her reply:

The first group of names he mentions (paragraph 4) are, as he says, botanical names - these are types of flowers, not individual named varieties in the horticultural sense. So far as I know, none are in this country. We should really make an effort to obtain them, either as plants or seed.

Many years ago, I obtained as plants from Japan the tall purple that I have sold as Kamayama, and a short white with strap-shaped falls (no blade) named Kobana. This is probably equal to Horinaka's Kobana-ayame. When I went to check my record book, I couldn't find the original arrival date, but they came via the University of Washington Arboretum along with other irises from Japan that were planted in the Japanese garden (they may have come from Horinaka).

Shiro-ayame (var. albiflora) is probably equal to SNOW QUEEN; or more correctly stated - SNOW

QUEEN is an example of var. albiflora. Shirobana-chabo-ayame (var. minor forma alba) may very well be equal to the little thing that is floating around as 'Sibirica nana alba'. I am certain that it is an I. sanguinea; the 1949 check list has it listed as from Perry in 1940. This same checklist also has several entries under I. sanguinea attributed to the Japanese nurseryman Wada, but no indication that any of them reached the United States. I do have three I. sanguineas from Korea (as plants) and a beautiful purple one from Korea as seed. I expect to register a couple of these.

I think the Siberian section might give some real consideration to importing (at society expense) some of these varieties from Japan. They would be extremely useful in broadening our breeding base. In crop breeding wild materials are brought into breeding lines quite often - in iris we don't do nearly enough of this.

Jean Witt

Mr. Horinaka has agreed to update his article for the Fall 1992 issue of TSI.

Ed.

BREEDING OF "YAEZAKI-AYAME

(Double flowered Siberian irises)

By Ho Shidara _____

(translated from a Japanese text)

There are many people who breed Japanese irises, but I am the only breeder of Siberian irises in Japan. I am engrossed in breeding Siberian irises because I love that flower so much.

In 1954, I was absorbed in crossings of Siberians with several varieties, including 8 varieties provided by a horticulturist. After a few years, I happened to get a beautiful flower out of one of these crosses and I named it "Musashino". After several trials of crossing this "Musashino" with other varieties I was confident that I would get excellent flowers from the crosses. I impatiently waited for the coming of May, which is

bloom season for Siberians in Japan. Finally the season arrived. A new flower bloomed! I asked Dr. Suichi Hirao, the President of The Japanese Iris Association to come and see this new flower. Dr. Hirao was very impressed with the flower which had white standards and pink falls. He thought it might be the best Siberian iris in the world; there was no flower like this even in the United States. I was so proud. I sent this cross to Mr. Ben Hager in California, who was introduced to me by Dr. Hirao, and we started to exchange our cultivars.



MR. HO SHIDARA IN HIS GARDEN

Photo: Courtesy of Ben Hager

At that time I was also working on multi-petaled white varieties and "Shirahato", which is a six-petaled white flower was derived from the crossing of these varieties. Although "Shirahato" itself no longer exists, I often used it for breeding and obtained many six-petalled varieties.

In the course of crossing the six-petal varieties, some variation showed in different shapes on their petals and stamens. I named one "Funny Angel" and decided to use it for further breeding. As I expected it produced further double-flowered varieties, "Koku", "Uzushio" and "Ranman"*. Since then it has brought out excellent cultivars,

"White Dairin-yaezaki" (white, large, double-flowered), "Red yaezaki" (red, double-flowered) "Purple yaezaki" (purple, double-flowered).

Currently I am working hard to derive both a yellow double-flowered using yellow varieties which came from some whites, and a red large double flowered.

* These three varieties are guests for our '93 Siberian Convention.

Ed.

NOTES ON MR. SHIDARA'S SIBERIANS

By Ben Hager _____

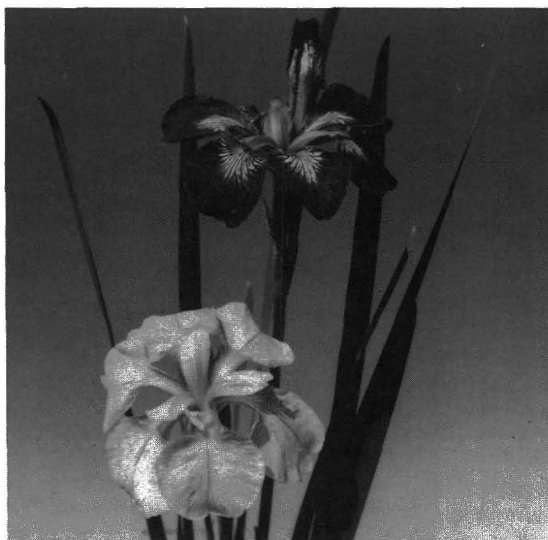
In the early part of the 1980's Ho Shidara did send several Siberian irises of his breeding. Among them were two six-falled varieties that we introduced for him in 1988: RIKUGI SAKURA and HELICOPTER. We registered these two in the A.I.S. registry; RIKUGI SAKURA came with the name attached but we had to come up with a name for the other. Because its six horizontally held petals reminded us of the blades on a helicopter we so dubbed it. But what, we wondered, would that turn out to be in Japanese? So we wrote a letter to find out. The answer came back - helicopter translated into Japanese was - HELICOPTER. THAT made it simple!

We exchanged named varieties for his seedlings a couple of more times. It was amazing to see the color variation since as far as we new his original Siberian irises which he used as parents, were not from the West. Here in his developments were all the shades of blue, violet, purple and white, plus yellow amoenas and true pink. The only "pink" one that we bloomed was RIKUGI SAKURA and since it had no standards we could hardly say it was a pink amoena. Not all of the plants survived so the "pink amoena" Ho mentions in his article may have been one of the ones lost.

Later on in the exchanges Ho sent two plants and the photographs to go with them. These were complete doubles wherein the styles and anthers had become petaloid. Neither of these plants lived or even started to grow for us and the replacements

sent later also did not live. I hope that the three that Ho sent for the Siberian convention turn out to be these doubles. They were very attractive in the photos.

California is not the easiest place to grow Siberian irises - not even in the less temperate Central valley. There are some varieties that do very well here, some that are "iffy" and other varieties that just won't make it (these may need more winter cold?). We should have been more generous and attempted to find someone in the colder areas to grow and introduce the Ho Shidara Siberians but we were too anxious to introduce for Ho.



HELICOPTER
(top)
RIKUGI
SAKURA
(bottom)
(Shidara
'88)

Photo:
Ben Hager

HELICOPTER grows and blooms well here, but RIKUGI SAKURA is vulnerable to the plague that attacks Siberian plants (and some other beardless irises) in our garden. It is a scorch-like disease*. Shortly after bloom the whole plant turns golden brown and is dead - the roots are shrivelled. We do not have scorch in the bearded irises (we did many years ago but it disappeared). So we hope that RIKUGI SAKURA has gotten established elsewhere.

*Soaking the plants in a Cygon solution seems to have eliminated this symptom through the first year's growth. No guarantees!

DEVELOPMENT OF SIBERIAN IRISES IN JAPAN

By Hiroshi Shimizu _____

The following are some of the varieties of Iris sanguinea in Japan:

<u>I. sanguinea</u> Hornemann	3 falls
<u>I. sanguinea</u> var. pumila Tomino	3 falls
var. albiflora Tomino	3 falls
cv. alba	3 falls
var. palidiflora Tuyama	3 falls
f. stellata	6 falls
f. albostellata	6 falls

No one has been a hybridizer of I. sanguinea in Japan until quite recently, so there has been little development here.

Forty years ago Mr. Shidara began to breed with I. sanguinea, but superior varieties were not bred by hybridization among old varieties of I. sanguinea which he had. He was given American cultivars by Dr. Hirao and he hybridized them with his own plants and this enabled him to breed good varieties. He sent his new varieties - six fall type and multipetalled type - to Dr. Hollingworth for the first convention by SSI.

I have two multipetalled type flowers in my garden. One is a violet which was discovered at the farmer's garden in Kariya City by Dr. Tomino. The flower shape is very completed. As it has not been named, I call it "Kariya" after the place. Another one is a white multipetalled type and I bought it as a six-petal type flower in some nursery. I call it "Kiguruma" (yellow wheel) but it is not so beautiful with bad shape. I also sent this flower to the convention. I would guess these two plants are natural mutants.

Recently, a few nurseries started selling American varieties and Shidara's varieties in Japan. But few people are earnestly trying to develop this iris except Mr. Shidara.

One of the irises causing the greatest excitement at the 1991 J.I. Convention in Portland, Oregon was a 40 chromosome Sino-Siberian bred by Lorena Reid. John Coble touched on it briefly in his article "Forty Chromosome Siberians Live" (TSI Vol 7, No 4, Fall 1991, p.22). Here are a few more details from Lorena.

THE PEACHY FORTIES

By LORENA REID _____

From time to time in Sino-Siberian crossing (40 chromosome Siberians) an "albino" occurs (a plant whose flowers have a complete lack of anthocyanin pigments in the cell sap). This is not pure white - but clear pale yellow with a deeper center to golden orange...but no dark markings, flecks, spots, or lines AT ALL. Usually these are fairly spindly plants with narrow blooms and are discarded with other cull plants. BUT I saved one such "albino" because it was a strong grower and had fairly decent form. Naturally the obvious thing to do was to self it since I did not have another "albino" at the time to cross it with. My hope was to further enhance the form ...or select plants which were superior to the parent.

This was cross 8S23. There were 44 seeds in the pod, 22 of which grew. The ones that bloomed in 1990 were in no way remarkable and mostly discarded, but about half had their first bloom in 1991 (while the Japanese Convention was in progress). The orangy ones (yes, there were two - one, much paler, bloomed a few days after the convention) were a complete surprise as were the two or three which were lemony and almost greenish. I did not expect the variation in the clear color; the purpose of the cross was purely to select best form and strongest plants.

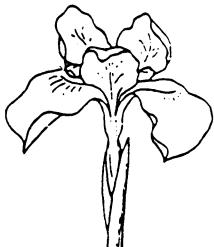
Unfortunately I got no takes in crossing last summer when I returned from the convention, but have plans for next year. I lined out half of each clump showing the orangy hues and plan to cross with the other half, which should bloom next summer in place. I hope they have good pollen! I also

have another of the "albinos" now (Sherriff/Ludlow #34), which Carla McGavran (now Lankow) sent me from the Seattle area. Its form is not quite as good, but its yellow color is more intense and darker and should provide access to outcrossing while keeping the "albinism".

Comments from Jean Witt

In Sino-Siberians as in bearded irises, anthocyanin colors in the cell sap are inherited independently from the yellows and oranges in the plastids. A flower which looks yellow to the human eye actually contains a group of Yellow/Orange pigments, each one just a little different. The flowers will be lemon yellow or orange yellow depending on the proportions of the various components. Lorena, by selfing, has either tipped the balance toward an already existing peachy pigment, or has uncovered a new mutation.

SIBERIAN IRISES Postpaid \$7.00



By Currier McEwen; illustrated with color plates, drawings and monochrome; includes glossary of terms; prepared with help from committee of advisors and contributors from The Society for Siberian Irises. Proceeds from sale of books will be used to support the work of SSI.

Send order to: Julius Wadekamper, 15980 Canby Avenue, Route 5, Faribault, MN 55021. Make check payable to Society for Siberian Irises.

IN MEMORIAM

HARLEY BRISCOE 1902-1992

We were sorry to hear of Harley's death on January 5th 1992 at the age of 89. Harley was a Siberian hybridizer of note, winning the Morgan-Wood Medal for his cultivar STEVE VARNER in 1987 (TSI, Fall '87). In addition to STEVE VARNER he had nine other Siberian introductions. He loved to name his irises for friends. His last Siberian introduction was ROY BOHRER in 1987 and his 1984 introduction ALICE MAE COX was awarded an HM in 1989. It was always a delight to visit Harley in his garden in Whitehills, Illinois. He was a generous man, sharing plants, information and pithy criticism equally. We will miss him.

RAY JOHN

Ray was chairman of the 1993 AIS Convention in Fort Worth, Texas and a life member of the Society for Siberian Irises. He was an enthusiastic advocate for all irises and had confidence that his Texas gardeners could handle any and all guests (including siberians) sent for the convention. Sad to lose an advocate for variety among the irises.

1991 AIS AWARDS

The following Siberian was accidentally omitted from the 1991 AIS awards list:

ISABELLE

(B. Warburton)

16 votes

A VARIEGATED SIBERIAN IRIS

By EDMUNDAS KONDRATAS, Kaunas, Lithuania _____

At the end of 1986 many seeds of Siberian and other irises were sent to Moscow for treatment with chemical mutagens. The idea belongs to a very enthusiastic Russian iris grower - the leader of all the Moscow iris growers - P.F. Gattenberger, who had good relations with the scientific institute where work of this kind with agricultural crops was established. The seeds were soaked in 0.5% nitro-ethyl-urea for 22 hours on the first of November, 1986 and rapidly returned to me. After that they were sown and grown on for some years until they flowered for the first time. Until now I have selected only two interesting forms. One of them has blue-violet flowers with very short standards; the bloom seems like a little Japanese iris. With this plant another feature attracted my attention: new leaves appear a very light green (but are not chlorotic), and later they become darker. The plant looks very interesting with darker/older and lighter/younger leaves. When the growth of new leaves finishes, all the leaves remain darker in color.

In the spring of 1991, while watching the growth of this plant, I took notice of the neighboring plant on which two fans from a side rhizome appeared with beautifully variegated leaves. The variegation was of yellowish coloring. I transplanted this part at that time, when moist weather helped it become established, and it seems that after transplanting, growth was normal.

The rhizome with variegated leaves sent up a spike with two dark blue-violet flowers. The first flower had four falls, the next was normal. I am sorry that I cannot tell exactly which variety the seeds were from because some plastic labels were stolen by crows (my garden is near a pine wood and the crows often do this), but from memory the seeds were from ANN DASCH.



VARIEGATED FOLIAGE
IN EDMUNDAS
KONDRATAS' GARDEN

Photo:
Edmundas Kondratas

ANOTHER VARIEGATED SIBERIAN

BY BOB HOLLINGWORTH

Since we have a strange lack of variegated Siberians, it seems worthwhile to mention a second recent example.

In the fall of 1990 while planting out seedlings we noticed a plant with variegated leaves. The variegation was not of the kind usually seen for one side of the leaf is yellow and the other side green. In the spring of 1991 several but not all of the new shoots showed the same variegation and were separated from the main plant and replanted. Although these seedlings were colchicine treated, I feel that the lack of chlorophyll is a spontaneous mutation and not likely to be due to the effects of

the colchicine, which we have used frequently without seeing any variegated forms.



**VARIEGATED FOLIAGE
IN THE HOLLINGWORTH
GARDEN**

**Photo:
Bob Hollingworth**

PUBLICATIONS

All back issues are \$2.50 each if available. We no longer have copies of some of the early issues. Judging Standards should be ordered from the AIS. Checks for all publications, payable to the Society for Siberian Irises should accompany orders. Send to the Publication Office, c/o Mrs. Ruth Wilder, 802, Camellia Rd., Anderson SC 29621.

FROM THE MAILBAG

ON CULTURE

Many people are mystified that for no obvious reason a particular Siberian plant "just didn't thrive" and eventually died. Here may be the answer -

From Dorothy Hamilton, Beverly Farms, MA.

I have found the trouble that a new grower finds with the Siberian iris lies with air pockets. I have never lost a transplant if I perched it on the top of a damp mound of earth, pressed the roots down firmly into the sides of the mounds and then firmly packed soil- watering as I filled around the plant.

Some years ago, a young hybridizer (now of note) wrote me that after moving he found that his large clumps of Siberians were dying for no apparent reason. After remembering my frequent caution to avoid air pockets (I always said that no self respecting Siberian would tolerate air under its derriere), he investigated a clump and found it suspended halfway down the hole he had prepared. He dug out the sides, mixed the soil at the base with water, dropped the Siberians back in, and all was well thereafter.

I mulch my Siberians each fall, as a heavy frost will snap the tiny feeder roots. The iris will come up lustily in the early spring but by June will have dwindled and may die from the air pockets left by frost heaves.

ON HERBICIDES

Several growers have been using the herbicide Poast (BASF Corp.) for a while. Last year was our first to try it. In case you are not conversant with the product and what it can do for your garden, here are some details.

We are all familiar with the problems of weeds, particularly grasses growing in our flower beds. Hand weeding, and (if you are careful) Roundup, will take care of everything between the rows and around the plants, but what to do about those pesky

grasses that grow up in the middle of the Siberians clumps and are impossible to hand weed? Until now the only way to get rid of them has been to dig up, divide and replant the whole clump and even then some little rootlets will remain to generate more grass. Now there is Poast. Applied per label instructions it is a grass-specific herbicide which does not affect Siberians, in our and other people's experience. It is labeled for use on irises. Even so, I wouldn't advise spraying your most precious varieties without trying it out on something you are prepared to lose. Now we need something for the dandelions and other broadleaf weeds growing up through those matted Siberian clumps!

You will probably have to go to your local Farm Co-op to get hold of Poast as it is not generally available at garden centers. It is also rather expensive.

Ed. (I put this one in my own bag!)



SIBERIAN FOLIAGE STANDING TALL AMONG THE REMAINS OF POAST-TREATED GRASSES IN THE HOLLINGWORTH GARDEN

ON I. TYPHIFOLIA

From Jennifer Hewitt, England:

James Waddick's description of I. typhifolia in the Fall 1991 issue of TSI was of great interest. You may like to know that after Bob Wise successfully crossed it with DREAMING YELLOW (typhifolia was the pollen parent) he sent me some of the considerable quantity of seed he obtained. It germinated in spring 1991 - and how! 100%, I should think. There were so many seedlings that I couldn't keep them all and Bob said the same. It will be a while before I see the results. Three years is absolute minimum here and four is much more usual. The seedlings do appear to be extremely strong growers.

From Jim Waddick, Kansas:

Bob Wise told me that besides the good germination with I. typhifolia X DREAMING YELLOW, crossed with HARPSWELL HAPPINESS (tetraploid), I. typhifolia produced 4 seeds - no germination yet.

Typhifolia seed has been distributed around Great Britain through the Species Iris Group and seems well established there too.

Plants were offered commercially in the U.S. in the fall of 1991 by We-Du and Heronswood nurseries. Others may follow this spring, (e.g. Ensata Gardens)

I haven't started seeds yet (Jan. 31st), but hope to be lining out seedlings from my cross of typhifolia X FAIRY DAWN this fall - is that counting chickens?

Bob Bauer and John Coble bloomed I. typhifolia indoors this winter and have photos to prove it (see back cover)! And they, Bob Hollingworth and I'm sure others, treated seed of same with colchicine last year although no one has reported any obvious signs of tetraploidy in the seedlings.

SOUTHERN SIBERIANS

BY EARNEST YEARWOOD _____

There is a myth that you can't grow irises in the Deep South. Here in middle Georgia we have learned that certain irises do better than others, but that all the different types will grow with limited success. In 1973, the Oconee Valley Iris Club was started by a small group of friends who all enjoyed growing irises. We all started with the Tall Bearded, but as time passed, some of us began to grow different kinds.

I have more Siberians than anyone else in our area. Presently I am growing 30 different cultivars and one beautiful seedling. My soil is red clay base and small rocks, and takes a lot of work. I raise cows, so I have that wonderful "black gold" which I work into the soil in large quantities. In fact, in the last few years I have added so much black soil that you only find the red clay deep in the bottom of the bed.

Perhaps the most adverse condition we have is our wintertime weather; it just isn't cold enough long enough at a time! Generally it will get cold enough to frost in November and the plants will go dormant. Then, in a few weeks, the weather will warm up, then turn cold, then warm up again. All this change keeps the plants confused - they never seem to go completely to sleep. So far in the winter of 1991-92, we have had one real cold snap which lasted four days, and only one night has the temperature gotten down to 20 degrees F (-7° C) (It is early January as I write.) It only snows here on rare occasions but we have had one 4" snow. It snowed on Saturday night and then warmed up to 60° F (15° C). The next day all the snow was gone. We never have what is called a snow cover. Our temperature goes up very high in the summer, sometimes to nearly 100 degrees F (38° C), but that doesn't seem to bother the Siberians at all.

I have learned that the best time to move my Siberians is in the spring. I try to order new plants for spring shipment also. Once the bed is prepared with compost, then each fall I add a heavy

top dressing of compost, and in the spring a handful of high acid fertilizer - azalea-camelia type - around each plant. Except for adequate water throughout the growing season, that is the total story of my Siberian culture.

It takes at least two years and sometimes three for a plant to bloom adequately. Bloom on a first year plant is atypical and generally undersized. The second year gives some bloom but the good bloom comes during the third flowering season and from then on. People often get tired of waiting , but for me the reward is more than worth the wait.

My wife and I have truly gone out on a limb by agreeing to have our garden on tour for this year's National Iris Convention. The convention is being hosted by the Georgia Iris Society of Atlanta, but three gardens here in Milledgeville are included as tour gardens. All three of them have Siberians featured along with Louisianas, Spurias, Species, and of course the Tall Beardeds. We are located 100 miles south of Atlanta in the center of the state and our bloom season is at least one week earlier than the Atlanta area. As everyone knows, the Siberians bloom a little later than the Tall Beardeds so we are hoping that more Siberians will be in bloom here than would be in Atlanta. Now if someone knows how to make the weather cooperate .

Of the Siberians in my yard - some guests and some of my own from many of the leading Siberian hybridizers - those flowers that were outstanding in 1991 include: HUBBARD, ANN DASCH, CIRCLE ROUND, TIFFANY LASS, GENTEEL GRAYCE, PINK SPARKLE, VISUAL TREAT, PIRATE PRINCE, LADY VANNESSA, RUFFLED VELVET, EWEN, SHIRLEY POPE AND TEALWOOD. There are also a number of Hollingworth and Miller seedlings under number that are outstanding. As you can see from this list many of these are older, more proven varieties, but old or not they are still beautiful here in Milledgeville.

Who knows what this spring holds in the way of surprises. Often a flower does well here one year and poorly the next and vice versa. Come join us in April and May and see for yourself, we would love to have you visit the deep south. My wife, Juanita and I can't guarantee every flower will be in peak bloom, but you can be assured of good southern hospitality, great food and beautiful countryside. Come on down to God's country!

NEW MEMBERS

A note in the Spring 1981 issue of T.S.I. notes that printing costs were higher as the number of copies printed was up from 250 to 300. Our printing for Fall 1991 was 650 copies! Not a bad increase over a decade. Can we do the same - or better - between 1991 and 2001?

We are delighted to welcome our new members who have joined us since the fall.

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 Traxler Robert, PO Box 27425, Panama City, FL 32411
 Wenburg Elizabeth A., 3221 Shyleen St., Gig Harbor,
 WA 98335

1991 BOOK SALES REPORT

From Julius Wadekamper _____

Total Sales for 1991\$744.50
 (6 retail, 295 wholesale)

We have 258 books left. By past indications we will
 run out of books in 1992. Buy now!

Year	Books Sold	Income
1986	155	\$ 605.70
1987	129	400.79
1988	232	611.11
1989	348	1,004.34
1990	453	1,368.64
1991	301	744.40

(These figures may vary slightly from those of the
 treasurer due to the fact that some payments were
 made directly to him and postage has been refunded
 to me in some cases.)

LAST WORD

March borrowed from April
Three days and they were ill
The first of them was wind and weat
The second it is snow and sleet
The third of them was sic a freese
It froze the birds nebs to the trees.

This old English rhyme certainly describes the week just past here in Michigan. For a week or more we had spring-like temperatures in the 50's culminating in a 62° F. day on March 9th - then it happened! Over six inches of snow and for five nights temperatures were between 0 and 10°F. We were sure that 1992 was going to be yet another early spring. Crocuses and *I. danfordiae* were in bloom, branches of pussy willow and buds of early daffodils had been cut and brought into the house before this onslaught. Fortunately the Siberians, wiser than their cousins, were not tempted to push up their new green shoots and they now are tucked in under a fluffy blanket of snow until more seasonable weather arrives.

You will find your "Favorite 15" ballot in this issue. Please fill it out and send it to Dorothy Hamilton who will be responsible for tabulating the results - for which I am very grateful. Please feel free to write a few comments on the reverse of the ballot (you might mention special favorites, strong multipliers, drought-resistant cultivars, nice effects with companion plants, varieties which did well in your shows, special ways of presenting Siberians at shows). Let us know what is going on out there! We can then share it with the rest of our membership.

We will have details in the fall issue of TSI. regarding registration for our Great Siberian Convention. But mark your calendar now for June 10th through the 12th, 1993.

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ENSATA GARDENS, Bob Bauer/ John Coble
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A source list for Siberians is printed in each spring issue of TSI at a cost of \$5.00 per listing. Please send your check to the editorial office by February 15th.

Other rates:

FULL PAGE COLOR 4" x 7"\$100.00
(color separation to be provided by advertiser)

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MI 48895

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