



# The Newscast

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## Celebrating New Members

## Rebloom Seeks Good Fortune

By

Mike Lockett

AIS Region 4 Rebloom Iris Chairman

Rebloom took its lumps in 2010. After fantastic fall flower in 2009, Central Virginia growing conditions were downright miserable for temperature-triggered remontants. The Richmond, VA area suffered its hottest summer on record and rainfall during this period was meager. Favorable conditions for fall flower did not materialize until early October. This scenario was consistent throughout Region 4 last year.

Central Virginia appeared to be heading down the same road for 2011. July was hot and dry. Unless supplemental watering was applied, weather sensitive rebloomers went into dormancy. By mid August, the script seemed to change. Cooler night temperatures materialized around Hurricane Irene. If excessive moisture and humidity had not occurred during September, early season rebloom could have made a better showing.

The late Dr. Lloyd Zurbrigg felt the next logical step for remontant development was fall flowering under any summer growing conditions. This trait would further expand rebloom's consistency in cooler climates beyond Hardiness Zone 6. If there is a silver lining to the dismal growing conditions confronting fall bloom over the past two seasons, some new and old varieties are indeed turning in stellar August and September performances. There is indeed light at the end of a sometimes very long tunnel!!

Fellow FAIS member Lois Rose and CVIS member Shirley Shelton reported August bloom on TB "Golden Encore" (Frank Jones, 1973). Rose has seen the vivid yellow tall bearded with a white blaze on the falls flower during the same period over the past three seasons. Wow!! Lois also found bloom during the

same period on Betty Wilkerson's exceptional TB "Just Call Me" (Wilkerson, 2008).



"Golden Encore" Photo by Kent Pfeiffer



"Just Call Me" Photo by Betty Wilkerson



## Rebloom Seeks Good Fortune (Cont'd)

A “Clarence” (Zurbrigg, 1991) child, early season rebloom has repeatedly shown up. As I write this report, I have ten stalks on two clumps in flower and Lois Rose has additional ones ready to bloom in her Partlow, VA garden. There is no longer any doubt this Kentucky bred remontant will become Betty’s signature rebloomer and progenitor for further early season remontants.

Tricia Taylor from FAIS saw bloom on recent Pennsylvania bred rebloomers. The current Region 4 Secretary found stalks on TB “Lunar Whitewash” (Innerst, 2003) and TB “Again & Again” (Innerst, 1999). A clean white self with lots of ruffling and modern flower form, Lunar Whitewash has been a consistent September performer for me with little pampering. Breeders have taken notice. We should expect some interesting future surprises from its offspring.

Lois Rose and I have seen September flowering on TB “Maryland Ho” (Hornstein, 2003). Even though this short violet plicata is slow to increase, its rich flower pattern is still a welcome sight in the fall garden. Two Locketell registered seedlings have performed well for Lois and Mitch Jameson from St. Joseph, Missouri. Bloomstalks have been found on BB “Double Dare” (Locketell, R2009) and TB “Soda Fountain Shuffle” (Locketell, R2009). “Double Dare” is a rich burgundy plicata out of TB “Northward Ho” (Zurbrigg, 1991) and “Rock Star” (Byers, 1991) and won Best Seedling in Show at the Region 4 Fall Meeting in Charlotte, NC, a few years ago. “Soda Fountain Shuffle” is a child of “Unchained” Melody (Mahan, 1999) and “Fautless” (Zurbrigg, 1995). Flowers are white. Falls however have a mimosa yellow overlay and a faint violet blaze down the center. Blooms have retained the Mahan rebloomer’s overpowering fragrance.



“Lunar Whitewash” Photo By Betty Jacobs



“Double Dare” Photo By Mike Locketell



“Soda Fountain Shuffle” Photo By Mike Locketell

## Rebloom Seeks Good Fortune (Cont'd)

Median rebloom has been seen on both old and new selections. June and John Rosini from CVIS found bloom on MTB “Lady Emma” (Frank Jones, 1986). A clump in a reblooming iris display bed at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Goochland, VA was coming into bloom on multiple stalks as of October 16th. Tricia Taylor had flowering on SDB “Jack Loving” (Spoon, 2006). The Rosinis also had flowering on IB “I Bless” (Zurbrigg, 1985). Lois Rose found late September rebloom on SDB “Smell the Roses” (Byers, 1988) and SDB “Senorita Frogg” (Spoon, 2002). The Spoon olive green SDB continues to rack up impressive fall bloom credentials. SDB “Sailboat Bay” (Zurbrigg, 2004) overlooked by judges for AIS awards during its years of eligibility has rebloomed in September on clumps at my Powhatan, VA garden and in Richmond. A pleasing white and baby blue bicolor, it is a fine testament to Lloyd Zurbrigg’s rebloom legacy. I will never tire of enjoying it.

FAIS and CVIS members also mentioned rebloom on TBs “Autumn Circus” (Hager, 1990), “Autumn Tryst” (Weiler, 1993), “Blatant” (Byers, 1990), “Bountiful Harvest” (Hager, 1991), “Coronation of David” (Bernice Miller by Niswonger, 2001) “Earl of Essex” (Zurbrigg, 1980) and “Immortality” (Zurbrigg, 1982). Early reporting this season is encouraging heading into late October. I appreciate contributions to this commentary. I however would ask in the future that respondents please try to furnish the originator and year introduced to the variety. I prepare these reports on my own time. It really helps me to avoid constant checks with the AIS Registration and Introductions and Reblooming Iris Checklist books. Likewise, please send reporting as varieties are flowering. Early season rebloom can therefore be mentioned before the Region 4 Fall Meeting. This valuable information can guide future purchases and is a boon for rebloom breeders. My best wishes for more bloom in your fall garden for the remainder of the season.



“Jack Loving”

Photo by A. Moran

“Smell the Roses” photo by Brock Heilman



“Senorita Frogg” Photo By Anita Moran

“Autumn Tryst”

Photo by A. Moran

Heilman



“Earl of Essex”

Photo by A. Moran

