

SPRING 2008 AIS YOUTH REPORT

As of the last membership report there were 297 youth members. Of these, 108 will have expired by the time of this convention, leaving a total of 189. The majority of loss, 69, was from a large CIP in Tucson, Arizona that lost their adult leadership. I hope that with spring bloom, some of these youth members will decide to renew on their own. The rest of the losses are mostly from age. However, since the beginning of the year I have sent out 30 new youth member packets. With the start of spring exhibitions, I expect more new members to enroll at shows.

Like the parent portion of AIS, the youth portion is suffering from a declining enrollment. I believe this is due to the lack of adult encouragement at the club levels, overall decline in gardening as an activity, and the competition of other activities for youth. Our active youth members are enthusiastic and involved in not only their clubs but their communities as well. They are the future of AIS and we need to do our best to make sure we maintain their interest in irises. I am open to ideas and suggestions from everyone.

The results of the Clarke Cosgrove Memorial Award for Youth Achievement is as follows:

Overall winner: Gabriel Lockhart, member of the SEMO Iris Society Region 18

First runner-up: Allison Grzeskowiak, member of the Washington Iris Club in Region 18

Second runner-up: Sean Pennington, member of the Washington Iris Club in Region 18.

Gabriel will be attending his first convention and will be able to accept his award at the banquet on Saturday, April 19, 2008. I invite all of you to attend the youth reception and meet Gabriel and the other youth members at the convention.

The results of the Ackerman Essay Contest were not available at this time. The winners will be announced at the Awards banquet.

Cheryl Deaton, AIS Youth Chair