

Silent Auction Report Fall 2016  
*Silent Auction Co-Chairs Debbie Strauss & Nick Stewart*

There were approximately 243 people registered for the New Jersey 2016 convention. We had 76 people place winning bids on 358 items including 71 donated new iris. Total money received from the silent auction was **\$4,634**. We raised \$832 from 8 AIS Region Raisin' Baskets donated by Regions 1, 2, 6, 9, 15, 17, 22, 23 also Region 18 donated \$100. During the silent auction we had many people come in just to see the baskets and learn about that region. One bidder said they are the reason she comes in every year. Still many regions and local affiliates do not know about the baskets, or don't understand them. I put articles in every issue of *Irises* and in *News and Notes*. And once again, I passed out flyers about the Region Baskets to the RVPs and the Affiliates at their meetings at the NJ Convention. In the spring I send a pdf of the information to the RVPs. ***But, one more time, could we please include the Raisin' Basket flyer in the mailings to the local affiliates with their show supplies? And could we please get the affiliates chair to send a pdf of the information to all the affiliates in the spring?***

We raised **\$1760** from **71** iris donated by **25** amazing hybridizers this spring. Please thank them by ordering their iris and recommending them to your friends: **Abbey Gardens** (Nancy Price & Dave Silverberg), **Adobe Iris** (Steve Kelley), **Bayview Gardens** (Joe Ghio), **Cascadia Iris Garden** (Rita Butler), **Jill & Jim Copeland**, **Historic Iris Preservation Society**, **Iris City Gardens** (Greg McCullough), **Joe Pye Weeds Garden** (Mary Schafer & Jan Sacks), **Keith Keppel Iris** (Keith Keppel), **Lauers Flowers** (Larry Lauer), **Mt Pleasant Iris** (Chad Harris & Roger Duncan), **Picacho Mountain Iris** (Howie Dash), **Salmon Creek Gardens** (Terry & Barbara Aitkens), **Schreiner's Iris Gardens**, **Snow Brook Gardens** (Mary Betts), **Superstition Iris Gardens** (Richard Tasco & Roger Duncan), **Sutton's Iris Garden** (Michael Sutton), **The Lab** (Tom Burseen), **Lee Walker**, **Winterberry Gardens** (Don & Ginny Spoon).

Nick and I want to thank everyone who donated so we could have such an awesome silent auction and for all who participated in the bidding process. We would also like to thank all the Regions who helped us out so much with the exceptional baskets. And lastly, we would like to give an enormous thank you to all the hybridizers who gave so freely of their lovely iris. It is, in a big way, because of them that we had such a successful silent auction.

Nick and I have done the silent auction for the past five years. Iowa will be our sixth Silent Auction! We implemented several changes and really spruced up and beautified the event. ***The AIS Iowa Convention will be our last one.*** The necessary changes to the length of the convention make it nearly impossible to run the Silent Auction in a way that will provide for the needs of the bidders who are our first consideration. For instance, we always come the same day the board members do and we spend two days getting the silent auction set up. In NJ that included 28 man hours on Monday and 32 man hours on Tuesday. Then the SA opens for Tuesday evening, Wednesday afternoon, 1 hour after the welcome banquet, and closes on Thursday evening, which is a total of 15 hours of bidding. The bid winners are announced on Friday morning buses and the winners pick up their items of Friday evening. In order to do all this in Iowa, we will be there the day before anyone else is, to get the SA set up (thank you Gary for our comped rooms). Needless to say, the type of SA will need to change to meet the shorter convention format, or the money we usually raise will be eaten up by expenses for Nick and I to come early. So this job needs some new fresh minds to figure out how to do it differently. It has been a very satisfying and rewarding experience for us. Nick and I will gladly be available to consult with the new chair or committee.

Something that would help tremendously when we collect the winning bid payments on Friday evening, would be a square reader. Currently we have the bidder fill out a paper charge card form with their information then we must check their cards and make sure all is correct. This makes check out quite a chore. The Square is a revolutionary service that will allow us to accept credit cards, using a reader that plugs into an iPod touch, iPhone, or iPad along with an easy-to-use app. There is no need for any complicated contracts, monthly fees, or merchant accounts. All you pay is a fee for each

transaction. And when we sign up for a **Square** they put it in the mail to us with no commitments and no hidden fees. (We can get \$10 back when the **Square** account is activated). It will process Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express at 2.75% per swipe. Or, if need be, the card information can be entered manually and the fee is 3.5% + 15¢ per transaction. The monies collected go directly into the AIS account. To set this up the treasurer provides the checking account information and everyone using a square tied to the AIS checking account is assigned a code for scanning cards. The silent auction monies would be easy to total from these receipts. A customer receipt can be sent to them digitally. **We ask that this SQUARE account be set up before Iowa please.**

One more time...board members please go through your treasures and see what you can part with and donate it to our 2017 silent auction. Fill up a box with your iris or plant books, nic nacs, art work or glassware and donate it to the AIS Silent Auction. Please spread the word to anyone you know who might be doing spring cleaning (or winter sorting) to consider donating to The American Iris Society. And of course when doing your estate planning, remember us as a way to get new loving homes for your treasures. I have already told my kids and husband; that AIS Silent Auction is to receive my archives of iris everything!!

As you "fill your box" for donating to the AIS Silent Auction, remember that we greatly appreciate everything you wish to share with us. Thank you in advance and see you in Iowa. For more info or questions contact: Nick Stewart nicolstew7@yahoo.com or Debbie Strauss debbie@loveirises.com.

**We have a place for mailing donations. Thank you Annie and Mary!**

**Mark the outside of your box—2017 AIS CONVENTION SILENT AUCTION DONATION.**

**Please send donations to:**

**AIS Silent Auction  
c/o Annie Ullman & Mary Poole  
4509 Flamingo Ct.  
Des Moines Iowa 50310**