

YOUTH REPORT

FALL 2017

Cheryl Deaton, Youth Chairman

Currently we have 466 youth members enrolled in our program, an increase of 10 members over last Spring. Of these, 279 are enrolled in our Classroom Iris Programs in Region 4, Region 14, and Region 18. The teachers and adults in charge are utilizing our resources such as the Coloring Contest, the Ackerman Essay Contest, and annual shows and training, to educate these young people in all things iris. Most of these CIPs have gardens at the schools so that the kids are able to care for and observe irises, make reports and utilize English, Science and Art in their curriculum. This is a wonderful acknowledgement of our programs.

We have 3 international youth members, 2 in Canada and 1 in Romania. I encourage any suggestions as to how we can expand our international membership. With the development of translation programs, we should be able to take advantage of these to reach out to young people worldwide.

I was able to stay within my budget for the year. Postage continues to be the largest expense overall. I recently purchased 500 Forever stamps in anticipation of a price increase in January 2018. Where possible, I use Flat Rate boxes for the CIPs which results in a huge savings.

Unfortunately, the youth members were not able to receive free irises from Des Moines, the first time in over a decade that AIS Youth did not get an iris, and there will not be enough irises in New Orleans next year for youth members to get irises. Also, The AIS Foundation voted to discontinue awarding irises to entrants in the Ackerman Essay Contest. I am actively approaching Louisiana garden owners for donations for the youth in 2018, and I have received volunteer gardens for other donations of iris for the youth members. If our Youth members do not have access for newer irises, how can they continue to grow our favorite flower, to learn and observe what is new out in the iris world? If you know of a garden owner who would

like to participate, please let me know. If I can get 5 or 6 gardens to participate, I can reimburse the postage with the youth general fund, if necessary, so that all youth members receive an iris. When we traveled to Vancouver, I received over 300 Louisiana irises from 2 gardens and I packed and mailed an iris to each youth member. I can do so again.

Thank you for your continued support of the AIS Youth Program.