



# ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

*North American Rockgarden Society*

## *Green Dragon Tales*

March 2004

### **Adirondack Chapter**

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### *Letter from the Chair*

Thanks to Craig and Robin for the presentations at our February meeting and to all other members and guests who also brought pictures or events to share.

With input from all attending Chapter members the board voted to invest over \$17,000 with the Tompkins County Community Fund. \$2,000 of this will be placed in a working fund to be awarded as grants to Chapter members. Requests for a grant might include:

#### Education

- attending a NARGS National or Winter Study Weekend
- becoming a Master Gardener
- attending a horticultural class

#### Community Outreach

- building a community garden
- sponsoring a horticultural workshop
- hiring a speaker for a public event

#### Benefit to Chapter Members

- investing in a seed exchange
- investing in a plant expedition
- arranging a chapter sponsored garden tour

If you, as a member, have other ideas, feel free to submit them to Jerry Yeager, the Awards Committee Chair for review and approval. So far, the only stipulations in place are that:

Chapter members who receive grants should report on their experience and share information gathered with the Chapter. This may be in the form of a brief presentation at a meeting, an article

*continued on page 4*

## Reflections on 2003 – Let's talk finances

There is good news on the financial front for the Adirondack Chapter. Overall we netted \$850+ in revenue over expenses. We accomplished this by 1) being prudent with our expenses; 2) continuing to look at new ways to generate income; and 3) great member participation in our plant sales – both as contributors and buyers. This year also reflects positive results for three consecutive years “in the black.”

Our plant-of-the-month sales, book sales (and other items for sale), and workshops – all of which we offer at slightly over cost – are becoming small but important income streams for us that can make the difference between a favorable or a deficit year. We should continue to be open to avenues for generating income (and your ideas are welcome).

Membership revenue was below average, which seems inconsistent with our increasing membership numbers. Here's the explanation: in any year we receive both current year dues and next year's dues. In 2003 it turns out we didn't get very many members paying ahead for 2004 in November and December. This correct itself as dues come in this year. Our plant sales generated 65% of our income, while membership contributed 17% of the total revenue of \$3,927.

As far as expenses, the most

notable is the savings in newsletter expenses. We spent \$440 as compared to an average annual cost of \$840. We realized instant savings when we switched to the electronic newsletter at mid-year. While some newsletters are still printed and sent by request, by far the majority is sent electronically.

One anticipated expense not reflected this year is the cost for producing the member handbook. We know this will initially cost more for the first printing since it will be distributed to everyone, then subsequently less as only new members will be receiving it. The current membership listing will be reprinted annually as an insert.

With total 2003 expenses of \$3,074, the largest portion - \$1,812 or 59% is spent on our programs. We had a number of guest speakers and workshop leaders. In addition, we offer small honorariums to members who host speakers or garden tours, or who present programs.

As we enter 2004, the Chapter has reserve operating funds of \$1,388 as well as an “endowment” fund balance of \$17,545 of which \$101 reflects interest earnings for the year. The funds have been held in a variable interest savings account, closing the year at .5% return. We have spent the most of 2003 discussing long-term investment options for these funds.

Our budget for 2004, in addition to reflecting costs for the member handbook has increased in two areas consistent with Chapter goals– for hospitality and awards. Both signify a focus on our members – attracting new members, retaining memberships and recognizing member contributions. Committing funds to these areas is intended to help us be more effective in achieving these goals.

For anyone wishing a complete financial income and expense statement, please place a request to Carol Eichler, Treasurer, 607-387-5823 or [cme24@cornell.edu](mailto:cme24@cornell.edu). This annual financial report is required by the Chapter by-laws.

*Carol Eichler*



## Website update

If you haven't visited our new website yet, please do. The address is [www.acnargs.org](http://www.acnargs.org).

I've added a new feature to the site: **Meeting follow-ups**. Here you'll find links to speakers' websites or other resources they recommended.

If you have any suggestions or problems with the site, please email me: [cdcramer@tweny.rr.com](mailto:cdcramer@tweny.rr.com).

continued from previous page

Many of you now receive your newsletter as an email attachment. They are also archived at the website, so **you can refer back to articles** even if you've misplaced your copy.

Some of you may be concerned about the safety of receiving your newsletter as a file attached to email. True, computer viruses can be spread by email attachments. But if you know the sender **and you are expecting the attachment**, the chances are slim that opening the attachment will cause a problem.

You should **never open email attachments from senders you don't know**. And even email attachments from senders you do know can be risky. That's because some computer viruses pirate email addresses so that they look like they come from someone you know.

But if you receive an email from Art Trimble ([Atrimbl1@rochester.rr.com](mailto:Atrimbl1@rochester.rr.com)) with a .pdf file attached to it, you can rest assured that it's our newsletter and safe to open.

To protect your computer, you should run a virus-protection program, such as McAfee or Norton, and keep them updated. As an added measure of protection, you can save any attachments you want to open and scan them before opening.

Craig Cramer

## March Plants of the Month

For those of you who purchased the early blooming Cyclamen coum from Ellen Hornig's selection at the last meeting, the March plants of the month are also from her nursery. Check out her catalog for other selections [www.senecahill.com/](http://www.senecahill.com/) I have selected a variegated Carex that would do very well in a trough or as a companion to the Cyclamen and Iris

### Carex siderosticha 'Variegata' (B) 6.50

#### Cyperaceae

Z4 H: to 20cm/8in Shade/part shade; well-drained soil

One of those "default" plants you can use liberally in the shade garden, either as a ground cover or as an edger to "face down" taller plants. A broad-leaved sedge with outstanding variegation (cream and green striping), it enjoys the same conditions as our native *C. plantaginea*. Cut it back in fall to avoid damaging early-emerging spring growth.



### Iris cristata (B) 7.00

#### Iridaceae

Z4 H: 12-20cm/5-8in Shade/part shade; moist to average soil, well-drained

We have several selections of our southeastern US native Dwarf Crested Iris, an excellent little

woodland species which forms carpets of broad, arching leaves on the forest floor. Divide every few years to promote heavier bloom.

**I. cristata 'Abbey's Violet'** - very beautiful deep blue-purple flowers; relatively broad petals, and a large white patch surrounding the beard



**I. cristata 'Alba'** - exquisite white flowers

**I. cristata 'Eco Bluebird'** - medium blue-purple flowers; a nice typical selection of the species, and a compact, vigorous plant

**I. cristata 'Edgar Anderson'** - fairly light blue-violet flowers; not as large as the following, but flowers stand up better

**I. cristata 'Powder Blue Giant'** - a large-leaved, large-flowered selection with big light (not pale) blue flowers and a decidedly vigorous habit

**I. cristata 'Vein Mountain'** - relatively narrow pale blue petals, with a startling yellow patch surrounding the beard

This month's talk will be on *Iris Reticulata* which are favorites of George Erdman. Check out his website for excellent ideas concerning placement and companions.

[bingweb.Binghamton.edu/~gerdman/nargs/me.htm](http://bingweb.Binghamton.edu/~gerdman/nargs/me.htm)

Billie-Jean Isbell

## Upcoming Meetings

**March 20:** Alan McMurtrie of the Ontario Chapter will present a program on Reticulata Iris. You can check out his website at [www.reticulatas.com](http://www.reticulatas.com) for a preview.

**Whetzel Room, Plant Science Building, Cornell University.** Brown bag lunch at noon, program will start at 1 pm.

**April 17: Carlo Balistreri,** Curator of the Rock Garden at NYBG  
"Behind the Scenes in the Rock Garden at the New York Botanical Garden "



followed by the Annual Seedling Sale immediately after the talk.

Please join us at 12 pm for brown bag lunch followed by talk at 1 pm. Bring your extra seedlings to sell at the seedling sale.

This meeting will be held at Cornell Cooperative Extension, 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca, NY

(call me at 256-9308 or email [aebling@lightlink](mailto:aebling@lightlink))



**May 15: Spring Plant Sale, Ithaca High School**

*Continued from page 1*

written for the Newsletter, a photo journal, etc...

Chapter members may only receive one award per category in the lifetime of their membership(s)

As the program develops, additional "Rules" may be put in place. These funds are available immediately for disbursement.

As March snows melt I am anxious to see how my potted-up transplants survived in the holding area I created at my new house. I search each chance I get for the bright blooms of DRABA to appear through the snow, or the lovely felt-like foliage of the PULSATILLA I was able to dig up. If you have a spring joy that you anticipate in the garden I encourage you to write an article about it for the Newsletter. It doesn't have to be long, but it would be much appreciated.

Hope to see you all at the March meeting where we will be learning about fabulous forms of reticulated IRIS.

*Michelle*



*Thank you, George, for this lovely p-review of pleasures to come (soon, we hope!)*