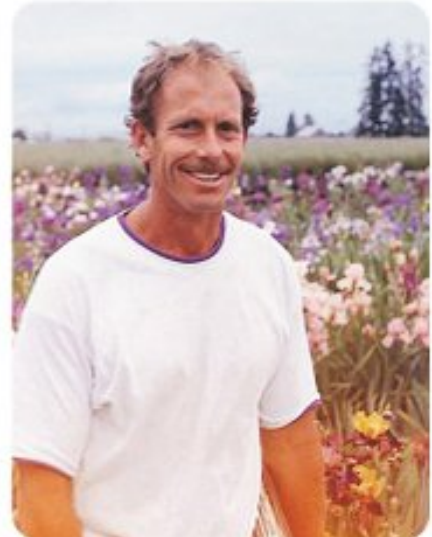


Locally Grown, Internationally Awarded



By Jeff Gustin

It's amazing how many plant breeders reside in Oregon. One internationally awarded local breeder is Ray Schreiner of Schreiner's Iris Gardens. Born and raised in Oregon, Ray has been a part of the third generation of Iris breeders and growers. Schreiner's Iris have won multiple awards. In fact, they have been awarded eleven Dyke Memorial Medals. This is the highest award in Iris breeding.



Ray's aptitude in breeding Iris isn't the only reason why we selected him for May's Hortie. Ray's personal 5 acre garden is like a walk through a botanical paradise, which he's been kind

enough to open on occasion to non-profit fundraising. Even Martha Stewart took some time to visit Ray's garden.

Ray gave us a few moments to learn a little bit more about his life and garden.

JG: *I know you come from a big family. How many brothers and sisters did you have?*

RS: *Eight, 3 brothers and 4 sisters*

JG: *Where do you fit in the family line up?*

RS: *I am the 5th sibling or kid!*

JG: *How many of your family members still work with Schreiner's Iris Gardens?*

RS: *My brother Steve and sister Liz and my cousin Dave and my cousin's husband Tom.*

JG: *Ok, enough about them, how old were you when you began working for your family's business?*

RS: *I grew up working here as a kid and I never left!*

JG: *When did you begin breeding Iris?*

RS: *I worked with my Dad and Uncle for 20 some years and took over the program after he died in 1982. Currently now I work with my Cousin Dave on the breeding program.*

JG: *If you could have just one Iris, what one could it be? Don't cheat! You can only pick one, and we want to know why?*

RS: *I can't do this, since I am the owner I can have any iris I want! I love too many of them. When I see a new color or a new seedling I love it, maybe more than the one I saw the day before! I could probably pick about 10 to 15 that are in production today that I love but I could never pick just one!*

JG: *Next to Iris, since we are assuming it's your favorite plant,*

what is your next "got to have it" plant in your garden?

RS: *I can't say that I like one plant, that is a problem for me. When I go to nurseries I love everything, I love trees, I love evergreens, I love perennials, annuals. I fill my yard with everything I love.*

JG: *You have an incredible garden. Gardening is much different than breeding plants. What is it about gardening that you enjoy?*

RS: *Quick rewards, when you weed and clean up an area, you see the results immediately and the garden doesn't talk back to you and give you guff! Being outside and the natural beauty too.*

JG: *Tell us more about your own private garden; I understand you've been nice enough to host a few nonprofit fundraisers. Who's been in your garden lately?*

RS: *Mike Darcy is a good friend of mine of KXL, Brian Jacobs from Monrovia, Roger Gossler of Gossler's Nursery, and of course a lot of other family and friends!*

JG: *Ok, last question. I know Kym Pokorny with the Oregonian has done a spread on your Magnolias. Martha Stewart has been out here. What would you consider your garden's or gardening style?*

RS: *I don't know if I have a style, I would guess eclectic. Plants are very forgiving, you can move stuff around if you decide you want it somewhere else. I never have really planned anything out, I buy something I like and find a spot for it.*