



# NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1983

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the  
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, Inc.

EDITOR: RAY THORNDIKE, NEWSLETTER MAIL ADDRESS: 3114 TROY AVE., LAKELAND 33803  
PRESIDENT: PAUL RUBENSTEIN, CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 260363, TAMPA 33685

MEETINGS ARE HELD AT 2:00 PM ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.

NEXT MEETING ..... SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 1983 AT 2:00 PM

MEETING PLACE ..... TOMMY HUGHES VINEYARD AND NURSERY, DOVER,  
EXIT 9 OFF I-4 AT McINTOSH ROAD. TURN LEFT  
JUST PAST CHEVRON STATION ON McINTOSH RD.

PROGRAM ..... No formal program. Following the business  
meeting there will be the monthly plant  
drawing. Then members will be free to  
visit the vineyard and purchase grapes.  
Muscadines will be in season.

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## NEW MEMBER

Marvin Aronovitz, P.O. Box 271663, Tampa 33688

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

COSTA RICA TRIP - September 17 thru 24 - 16 reservations available. \$510 includes air fare, hotel (Hotel Amstel in San Jose) and tours. Standard tours include Poas Volcano, Sarchi ox cart factory and San Jose city tour. Other trips are planned to Turrialba (fruit tree germ plasm collection of Central American nations), San Isidro General, Puerto Limon and Guanacaste Aranal Volcano. For information and reservations call Tom Economou at Pathfinder Tours, Inc., Miami. 1-800-432-7503 (toll free.) Outside Florida call toll free 1-800-327-4250. Or write to Suite 408, 42 N.W. 27 Ave., Miami, FL 33125.

FLORIDA STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY - 96th ANNUAL CONVENTION - DAYTONA BEACH  
The Plaza Hotel, 600 North Atlantic Ave., P.O. Box 5667, Daytona Beach 32018  
November 1 thru 3, 1983. Official program begins promptly at 9:00 AM, Wednesday, November 2, 1983. There will be a Welcome Cocktail and Social Hour, Tuesday Evening, November 1, and a "Get Acquainted Luncheon" for the ladies on November 3rd. The Annual Banquet closes the meeting Thursday Evening, November 3, 1983. The Plaza Hotel accommodations may be reserved at the following rates: \$34 single, \$38 double, \$4 per extra person, \$65 small suites, \$85 large suites.

## AUGUST MEETING

Please note that the August 14 meeting will be at Hughes Vineyard, Dover instead of at the Tampa Bay Center Community Room.

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

We are planning to hold the September 11 meeting at member Janet Conard's home in Tampa. There will be no formal program, just the usual business meeting and plant drawing. Of course, this will be the last meeting before the annual Plant Sale, so all final planning will be discussed. To make this more of a social meeting, we shall probably have a pot luck lunch preceding the business session. Details in next letter. Note that the Plant Sale preempts the October meeting.

JULY PLANT DRAWINGPLANT

Red Guava  
 Red Guava  
 Yellow Passionfruit  
 Roselle  
 Okinawa Peach  
 Okinawa Peach  
 Brewster Lychee  
 Stover Grape  
 Papaya  
 Winter Mexican Avocado  
 Dewberry  
 Carambola Seedling  
 White Guava  
 White Guava  
 White Guava  
 White Guava  
 Chayote  
 Dewberry  
 Cocona  
 Cherimoya Seedling  
 Etrog Citron  
 Tamarind  
 Abacca Pineapple  
 Feijoa  
 Costa Rican Guava (Cas)  
 Key Lime  
 Papaya  
 Lady Finger Banana  
 Plantain  
 Loquat  
 Celeste Fig  
 Carob

DONOR

Rome Vaccaro  
 Rome Vaccaro  
 Rome Vaccaro  
 Rome Vaccaro  
 Walter Vines  
 Walter Vines  
 Walter Vines  
 R. Williams  
 R. Williams  
 Tampa Bay Chapter  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Arnold & Lillian Stark  
 Arnold & Lillian Stark  
 Paul Rubenstein  
 Bob Heath  
 Bob Heath  
 Bob Heath  
 Armando Mendez  
 Armando Mendez  
 Armando Mendez  
 Armando Mendez  
 Rosalie Obregon  
 Rosalie Obregon  
 Rosalie Obregon

WINNER

Al Lima  
 Henry M. Stewart, Sr.  
 Jean Wells  
 Maja Byvoet  
 Frank Galatocky  
 Doris Lee  
 Joan Friedman  
 Frank da Costa  
 Al Roberts  
 Al Roberts  
 Frank Galatocky  
 Maja Byvoet  
 Bob Heath  
 Doris Lee  
 Janet Conard  
 Jean da Costa  
 Daren Engel  
 Jean Wells  
 Maja Byvoet  
 Doris Lee  
 Marvin Aronovitz  
 Arnold & Lillian Stark  
 Rome Vaccaro  
 Rome Vaccaro  
 Rita Galatocky  
 Al Lima  
 Albert Greenberg  
 Gary Howland  
 Frank da Costa  
 Daren Engel  
 Rome Vaccaro  
 Jean da Costa

AUGUST PLANT DRAWING - Plants pledged for the next drawing:PLANT

Spanish Lime  
 Celeste Fig  
 Guatemalan Papaya  
 Plantain  
 Grumichama  
 Carambola Seedling  
 Mango Seedling

DONOR

Armando Mendez  
 Armando Mendez  
 Armando Mendez  
 Armando Mendez  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike  
 Ray Thorndike

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Sign-up sheets were available for members in attendance at the July meeting. These sheets will be available at the next several meetings. So far, the response has not been overwhelming. Expertise is not required, merely an interest in the specific plant or plants and a willingness to contribute some small effort to the group. The seed that we obtain from various internal and external sources should be distributed to the appropriate group. I have Annonaceae, Myrtaceae and Solanaceae plants and seed that need care and study and only one person signed up for any of these groups. If you cannot attend the meetings yet wish to participate, call or send me a postcard or letter.

Ray Thorndike

PAPAYA RELATIVES

by Ray Thorndike

In recent years, especially in California and New Zealand, much interest has been shown in the various relatives of the tropical Papaya (Carica papaya), particularly those species native to the higher elevations, because of their greater tolerance of cold. The Caricas (family Caricaceae) are all native to the Central and South American tropics and some are found at the 8000' to 9000' levels in Colombia and Ecuador.

The common Papaya, being a native of the lowland tropics, will begin to suffer damage at temperatures slightly below freezing. Blackening of leaves will occur with light frosts and severe damage may begin at 30 F. (-1 C.) The <sup>lower</sup> trunk of a mature Papaya may survive to 25 F. (-4 C.) or below if at least 8" to 10" caliper and in a semi-dormant state after exposure to temperatures below 50 to 55 F. (10 to 13 C.) Even when killed to the ground, shoots may rise from the roots when warm weather returns. Basically, temperatures below 28 F. (-2 C.) cause loss of the top, leaved portion of the trunk. Also, most or all fruit is lost due to direct damage or by freezing of the stems.

It should be noted that regrowth of a freeze damaged Papaya results in multiple branching and the fruiting capacity of the "tree" is increased by as much as 50%. Unless braced or the fruit thinned, heavily loaded branches may break off. Thus, the Papaya can be a perennial even in a normally inhospitable climate. Prior to an imminent freeze, the upper trunk can be cut off at the 2½' to 3' level and the remaining stump protected until warm weather returns.

In the California climates and soils there are other factors limiting success with the Papaya. Cold, wet winters coupled with soggy, poorly drained soils are a fatal combination for a plant that cannot tolerate wet feet. So, aside from container culture or building a tall greenhouse, perhaps there are solutions to the climate and soil problems among the more hardy Papaya relatives. One or more may serve as substitute or as rootstock.

Carica candamarcensis, the "Mountain Papaya", is found in the Colombian and Ecuadorian highlands (8000' to 9000') and was described by Popenoe (4) as being similar in appearance and growth habit to C. papaya, but smaller in all respects. The leaves, besides being smaller, are more deeply lobed and are pubescent (having soft, downy hairs) on the undersides. They are quite numerous and are dark green above and pale beneath. They are 15" across, rounded-heart-shaped, and 5-lobed to the center with pinnatifid lobes. The trunk is relatively stouter for its height and the tree may not exceed 8' to 10', sometimes reaching 12'. The small, pointed, 5-angled fruits, 3" to 4" long, have a pleasant, sweet/acid, aromatic flavor and are deep orange or golden yellow when fully ripe. The creamy flesh is less than ½" thick and surrounds a central cavity filled with many seeds embedded in a translucent, gelatinous, edible pulp. Peeled and cooked, the fruit is often used in the form of a conserve, jam or preserve. This is a very ornamental plant and said to be very popular in its native districts. Like other Carica species, it is normally dioecious, both male and female plants being required for fruit production. 28 F. (-2 C.) is said to cause only minimal damage and the plant is reputed to be hardy enough for the southern California climate.

C. chrysopetala, the "Higacho" or "Toronchi", may be found in many Ecuadorian gardens. This species is assumed to be indigenous to the Ecuadorian Andes, implying some degree of hardiness. Basically this plant resembles C. candamarcensis. The leaves are essentially glabrous (non-hairy) however, and the 5-sided, 8 ounce fruits are distinctively different, being "narrowly oblong, truncate at the base and acute at the apex, and commonly 4" to 6" in length (1). With greenish yellow to deep yellow skin color, this fruit has thin, strawberry-pineapple flavored flesh, more aromatic than C. candamarcensis, and mainly is cooked by Ecuadoreans to make a pleasing "dulce."

C. quercifolia receives little attention because it bears very small fruits, the size of a date, which are of no consequence as edibles. The leaves are shaped like those of the English Oak, palmately 3-lobed, and contain a greater percentage of the enzyme, papain, than the common Papaya (5). It is also said to be hardy in southern California and actually harder than C. candamarcensis. Its best possibilities are as a rootstock for Papaya in heavy wet soils.

C. gracilis has a growth habit the same as C. papaya, but is the most dwarfed of the species considered here, seldom reaching more than 6' and averaging a foot or two less. The trunk is smooth and slender, the leaves 5-fingered, the middle finger being 3-lobed. C. gracilis is a lowland species native to Brazil and is inferior to C. papaya in fruit quality. Perhaps the plant's dwarfed size, relative to the Papaya, could be imparted by its use as a rootstock. Shorter Papaya trees are easier to harvest and to protect.

C. stipulata, the "Chamburo", normally grows from 6' to 12' in height and is named for the small spine-like stipules on the trunk at the bases of the petioles (leaf stalks.) The leaves are palmate, 3-lobed and glabrous. The 10-ridged fruit is small, to 5 ounces, with firm, aromatic pulp and has 20 to 30 seeds in the central cavity. It is generally preferred peeled and cooked by the natives of its habitat.

C. goudotiana is a very ornamental species said to be a very vigorous grower and highly productive. The leaves are very deeply lobed. Ripe fruits are a glowing yellow or yellow with a red blush and may weigh 12 ounces. With the addition of a little sugar, they make a good-eating fresh fruit. When candied, they become transparent. C. goudotiana and C. stipulata both are dioecious and both are native to the cool highlands of Ecuador and Colombia.

C. pubescens, the "Papuela" or "Siglalon", sometimes confused with C. candamarcensis, is a large, heavy-trunked plant. It is semi-deciduous, shedding its leaves for a short time in the winter. The fruit, which ripens in spring and early summer, is sour but has a pleasant aromatic flavor when steamed with sugar. When ripe, the Siglalon has a very short shelf life.

Other species mentioned in the limited bibliography available to this author are:

C. monoica, a relatively hardy and very ornamental species, bears edible fruit which is enjoyed fresh with sugar. Its leaves are also edible and used like spinach.

C. microcarpa has a fruit that is merely cherry-sized.

C. pentandra is not described.

#### Bibliography

- (1) John M. Riley, The Papaya and its Relatives, 1976 Yearbook, Vol. 8, California Rare Fruit Growers
- (2) Joy C. Hofmann, The Babaco - Ecuadorian Fruit with Commercial Potential, 1981 Yearbook, Vol. 13, California Rare Fruit Growers
- (3) Dick J.W. Endt, The Babaco - A New Fruit in New Zealand to Reach Commercial Production, The Orchardist of New Zealand, March 1981
- (4) Wilson Popenoe, Manual of Tropical and Subtropical Fruits, MacMillan, N.Y. 1920
- (5) L.H. Bailey, Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture, MacMillan, N.Y. 1963

Next month I shall continue with a description of the "Babaco", C. pentagona (Syn. C. heilbornii), which is receiving much attention in New Zealand and California and should be tried in Florida.

This article illustrates the value of having an active special interest group devoted to the study and trial of the Caricaceae. So far, no one has signed up for this group. This is unfortunate since I have plants and seeds of some of the above, sent from California, which need attention and observation as to their adaptability to various Florida conditions.



April 10, 1983 Program: THE MYRTACEAE FAMILY

by Gene Joyner

SURINAM CHERRY (Eugenia uniflora)

Nearly one out of four homes in south Florida have Surinam Cherry hedges since they are dense, attractive and problem free. The fruit is attacked, however, by the Carib Fly. This plant will reach 15' plus, especially when trained into a specimen tree. The cherry-sized fruits range from orange to red to purplish in color. Their shape may be prominently ribbed or smooth. These variations are the result of propagation by seed which is the easiest method since they may bear fruit in 18 months or less (usually 3 years or more in central Florida - Ed.) The fruit quality is also highly variable from one seedling to the next, some being quite delicious, while others have a very pronounced medicinal after-taste. Seeds from the purplish fruits (which tend to have the best flavor - Ed.) often produce red fruited plants due to cross pollination, red being dominant and purple being recessive. The Surinam Cherry may bear multiple crops over a very extensive season, especially if given adequate water. Some may bear all year under ideal conditions. The heaviest crops occur in spring, early summer and late fall.

GRUMICHAMA (Eugenia dombeyi)

The Grumichama is also a good hedge plant but generally is used as a specimen. As a tree it is very upright in habit, growing to 20' to 25' in height. The leaves are a very attractive glossy dark green. It bears a large number of fruit which have the appearance of the northern Bing Cherry. The flavor resembles cherries, also. They bloom and fruit between March and June, sometimes bearing multiple crops during this period. Generally delicious, this fruit may be preferred to the Surinam Cherry. Propagated from seed they usually take three to four years to begin fruit production. The fruit is glossy, purplish-black, 1" to 1½" in diameter, and like the Surinam Cherry, generally has only a single seed. Also, like the Surinam Cherry, its only problem is the Carib Fly. Delicious jam, jelly, pie, etc. are made from this fruit.

CHERRY OF THE RIO GRANDE (Eugenia aggregata)

The Cherry of the Rio Grande is from Brazil and makes a very beautiful tree to 30' (usually less in central Florida - Ed.) It also blooms and fruits from March to June. The fruit is about 1" to 1½" long, purplish-red when mature, and usually has a single seed. The flavor is very close to that of the Grumichama and this fruit is attractive to birds. The plant may be used as a hedge but plants are not readily available in quantity unless you propagate your own. Seedlings may bear in four years (usually 8 to 10 years or more in central Florida - Ed.) and the plants are quite cold hardy.

PITOMBA (Eugenia luschnathiana)

The Pitomba is another that can be used as a hedge or as a specimen tree. They fruit in May and June. The foliage is a lighter green than the others mentioned so far. The fruit is larger, sometimes golf ball size, and a brilliant yellow. It has very tasty flesh, somewhat resembling apricot in flavor and makes a preserve very similar to apricot preserve. Propagation is also by seed which occur one or two per fruit. Seedlings take about 3 years to bear fruit. This plant is a bit more sensitive to cold but recovers quickly when frozen.

WAX JAMBU (Syzygium javanicum)

The Wax Jambu is not recommended for central Florida because of its tropical nature, not being likely to survive our winters outdoors. It makes a dense pyramid shaped tree. It bears beautiful white or creamy yellow flowers in April followed by waxy pink, white or white with a pink blush fruit having an unreal appearance. They are pear shaped, 2½" to 3" long, almost the size of a Bartlett Pear, usually with one seed, a crisp watery flesh tasting like a watered-down Rose Apple. Being such a bland fruit, its use is mainly ornamental. It will grow in only the most protected locations, since temperatures of 30 to 32 F. will cause severe injury. Seedlings probably take 4 or more years to fruit. The tree will air-layer readily, however.

To: Members, Tampa Bay Chapter, RFCI *Tom Goldsworthy* Friday 22 July 83  
 From: Bob Heath & Tom Goldsworthy, Plant Sale Co-Chairmen  
 Re: 4th Plant Sale Progress & Planning Report # 04

22. Countdown. After the August Meeting, there is only one month remaining before our sale on Sunday 9 October 83.
23. Think for a minute about why it is important that you help make this annual sale a success for the club by volunteering your time:
- A. It raises an awareness in the whole Tampa Bay Metropolitan community to the existence of our organization and its activities, through the publicity generated about the plant sale.
  - B. It is an important source of new members for our club.
  - C. It helps fulfill our Council's mission to disseminate plants and fruits throughout this area.
  - D. It pays for our monthly meeting site rental costs.
  - E. It pays for our newsletter publication & postage costs.
  - F. It pays for our library's acquisition program.
  - G. It pays for newsletter exchange program costs.
  - H. It pays for our speaker honorariums and travel expenses.
  - I. It pays for some of our monthly meeting refreshment costs.
  - J. It pays for Board of Directors' expenses.
  - K. It paid for the bridge, grape arbor, and nature trail at the Seffner Extension Center planting project.
  - L. As a labor intensive undertaking, it throws us together in work situations so that we cannot help but come out knowing some of our fellow club members better.
  - M. It assures that we can continue to do whatever we want to do as a club, in a first class manner.
  - N. It gives us an opportunity to obtain the best quality rare fruits and plants, at minimum cost.

Isn't all this worth one week-end of your time once a year ?

24. WHO'S JOB IS IT ? This is a story about four people named EVERYBODY, SOMEBODY, ANYBODY, and NOBODY. There was an important job to be done and EVERYBODY was sure SOMEBODY would do it. ANYBODY could have done it, but NOBODY did it. SOMEBODY got angry about that, because it was EVERYBODY'S job. EVERYBODY thought ANYBODY could do it but NOBODY realized that EVERYBODY wouldn't do it. It ended up that EVERYBODY blamed SOMEBODY when NOBODY did what ANYBODY could have done. So... WHO'S JOB IS IT ???

24. Committee Names. If you are puzzled or confused by our references to committees such as " C-403 ", please go back and reread your copy of the May, 1983 newsletter. The May issue gives a complete explanation of how our work tasks are divided into 4 time frames (A,B,C, & D). Giving things numbers just makes it easier to keep track of them, so we are sure that they get done.

We'd like you to sign up on committee # C- 403, but if you would rather sign up on the "General Help Volunteers (Wherever needed) on Sunday" committee... that's OK with us !

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ROSE APPLE (*Syzygium jambos*)

The Rose Apple is a very showy tree in flower. The flowers resemble a yellow Powder Puff, being about of the same size. It will bloom and fruit from late February until early summer. The yellow fruit are 2" to 2½" in diameter and will drop when ripe. They are hollow and have one or more seeds. The crisp watery flesh has a distinct rose flavor. They are eaten fresh, stewed, preserved and made into a very distinctive jelly. The fruit is severely attacked by the Carib Fly. The tree will reach 30' to 35' in height and has a weeping growth habit. New growth is a very attractive wine red color. It is propagated by seed, seedlings bearing in about 4 years. It will also air-layer and fruit may be obtained in 2 years by this method.

JAMBOLAN PLUM (*Syzygium cumini*)

The Jambolan or Java Plum is closely related to the Rose Apple. It is a large tree, to 60', with a smooth whitish bark. Blooming in May and June, the fruit are then ripe in July. They are purplish and quite variable in size and shape, round to elongated, a large tree bearing many thousands as they tend to overproduce. The fruit is very astringent until fully ripe, like the persimmon. To eat them, one must wait until they are almost ready to drop in order to be sure that they are edible. Having one large seed, they are good eaten out of hand, make good jelly, jam, ice cream and are reputed to make an excellent wine. It is a very messy tree, mulching the ground several inches deep with dropped fruit, so it should not be planted near walkways or driveways. It is readily propagated by seed, growing as much as 4' to 5' per year, bearing fruit in the third or fourth year.

JABOTICABA (*Myrciaria cauliflora*)

The Jaboticaba is another native of Brazil and from areas subject to flooding due to rising rivers. So it will do well in a low spot and will tolerate wet feet. It is an extremely slow growing tree with a small leaf, very distinctive peeling bark, much like the Guava. When old enough to fruit, it draws a lot of attention since the blossoms appear right on the trunk from the ground up and also on the main branches. Then it bears one of the quickest maturing fruits, taking only 21 to 24 days to be ready for harvest. They are like a good quality Muscadine Grape and may be used in all ways that grapes are used. In size they get to 1" to 1½" in diameter and occasionally to the size of ping-pong balls. Typically they bear three to four crops per year, but may bear more if conditions are suitable. They tend to bear very heavily. Propagated by seed, because of their extremely slow growth, they take 6 to 8 or more years to come into bearing. They seldom exceed 20' in height and often are much smaller. They do well in containers.

There is also a yellow fruited variety which will bear in three years from seed. The fruit bears a fuzz which rubs off, is smaller, typically ¾" to 1" in diameter, and has a large seed. The flavor is more like the Longan than like the purple Jaboticaba. They produce 2 or 3 crops per year and are not as productive as the purple variety. They are much faster growing and are more cold sensitive than the purple Jaboticaba.

GUAVA (*Psidium guajava*)

The Guava is a rapidly growing tree with an open straggly form to 25' in height. It has naturalized in southern Florida, being spread by birds and animals. There are many propagated named varieties. They will bloom and fruit from early spring until late fall, until cold weather. Fruits range from golf ball size to the size of a small grapefruit. Mature fruit has a thin, easily damaged, usually yellow skin. Flesh color is quite variable, the most common varieties being pink. Others having white flesh are usually more acid and have a thicker peel. The varieties having thick peel are used as guava shells. Some have many seeds, others very few. Seedlings grow very quickly and should bear fruit in the second year. Named varieties are propagated by cuttings and air-layers. Often damaged by freezing temperatures, the Guava will recover very rapidly.

CATTLEY GUAVA (*Psidium cattleianum*)

The Cattley Guava is more often used as an ornamental rather than for a fruiting plant. The leaves are smaller than the common Guava and are waxy looking. The fruit may get to be golf ball size. There are two varieties, one bearing red fruit and called Strawberry Guava, and the other bearing yellow fruit (variety lucidum). There is little difference in the plants themselves (except that the Strawberry Guava is more upright in growth - Ed.) The fruits have many seeds but are very tasty. Seedlings will bear in two years. Cattley Guavas will withstand much more cold than the common Guava, well down into the low twenties.

DOWNY ROSEMYRTLE (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*)

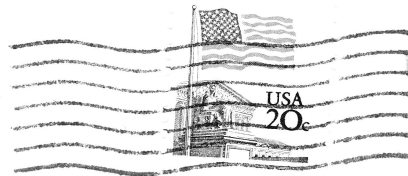
The Downy Rosemyrtle has very beautiful pink flowers in spring and early summer. The fruit is small, about 1" long, purplish or dark purplish-red, having many tiny seeds, but a fairly pleasant flavor. Typically grown as a hedge, it can be trained into a specimen tree to 15' or 18' in height. It has naturalized in some areas and has very few pest problems. It tolerates wet conditions (flooding) very well.

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FOR SALE

Grafted plants: "Dade" White Sapote & "Winter Mexican" Avocado. Very limited quantities.  
Seedlings: Grumichama, Carambola, "Black" Surinam Cherry. Ray Thorndike, Lakeland 646-2137.

Tampa Bay Chapter Newsletter  
Rare Fruit Council International, Inc.  
3114 Troy Avenue  
Lakeland, Florida 33803



P. JUDSON NEWCOMBE  
314 DEER PARK  
TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617

PLEASE NOTE THE AUGUST 14  
MEETING PLACE !!  
HUGHES VINEYARD, EXIT 9 OFF  
I-4 AT McINTOSH ROAD, DOVER