



# NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1983

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

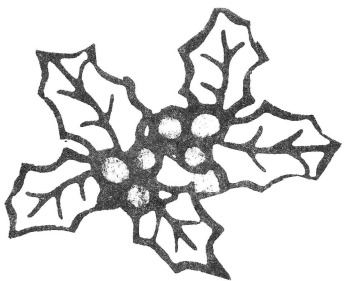
EDITOR: RAY THORNDIKE, NEWSLETTER MAIL ADDRESS: 3114 TROY AVE., LAKELAND 33803

PRESIDENT: PAUL RUBENSTEIN, CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 260363, TAMPA 33685

MEETINGS ARE HELD MONTHLY ON THE SECOND SUNDAY (EXCEPT MAY)

NEXT MEETING ..... SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1983 AT 1:00 PM

MEETING PLACE ..... THE HOME OF JANET CONARD,  
919 WEST HENRY AVENUE,  
TAMPA. PHONE 239-9246.



Take I-75/275 to the Hillsborough Ave.  
Exit (Exit 30). Go WEST to Florida,  
Highland, or Ola and then NORTH to  
Henry Ave. Go WEST on Henry to Janet's,  
which is between Kenneth Ave. and the  
river. Thus, simply, nine blocks west  
of Florida Ave. and four blocks north  
of Hillsborough Ave.

PROGRAM ..... COVERED-DISH LUNCHEON AT 1:00 PM.



The regular monthly meeting will  
follow the luncheon. No guest speaker.  
Instead, a Question and Answer Session  
featuring your questions and answers  
by our own resident "experts." Also,  
if you have unusual fruit or plants to  
bring, please do so for a "Show and Tell"  
period before the questions. The plant  
drawing will follow the meeting, featuring  
a plant bought at the October sale especially  
for the drawing. Janet plans to have Christ-  
mas decorations up so bring your covered-  
dish and enjoy the party!

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## NEW MEMBERS

Cyndy Van Sant, 7426 Alafia Drive, Riverview 33569

Linda A. Fullbright, 1503 Nance Avenue, Tampa 33606

Joe Crenshaw, 3911 Bay Court, Tampa 33611

## ADDRESS CHANGE

Day W. Boddorff, 2241 Ralmar Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94303

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Tom Economou presented his very interesting "Tropical Fruit Fiesta" program once again. He brought approximately 50 different fruits gathered in Miami and gave a short description of each. After the meeting, members sampled the edible specimens and gathered the available seeds for growing their own plants. After showing the fruit, Tom went on to give us a slide show of his tour of Peru. This included Iquitos on the upper Amazon and then to the Pacific coast and Lima, then on to Machu Pichu in the Andes. Finally, he showed Cuzco and the Nazca desert with its strange figures visible from the air. Our thanks to Tom for his effort in bringing us this very educational program. It is a chance for our members to see some fruits that can only be grown under glass this far north.

NOVEMBER EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Board members attending: Bob Heath, Bruce Beasor, Kay Netscher, Betty Dickson, Ray Thorndike.

Ray Thorndike reported on receiving two letters. First, one from President Jonathan A. Shaw of Bok Tower Gardens, Lake Wales. Mr. Shaw is considering a display of fruit trees at the gardens and would like to discuss his plans with us. The Board, by unanimous vote, authorized Ray to act as the chapter representative in this matter, but advised that little material help would be available for any project by the gardens.

Second, a letter from Mr. Art Van Hyning of the Botanical Council of Tampa Bay requesting our participation in their future activities. The Botanical Council is an association of several garden clubs in the area and they put on several group sales and displays in two of the area malls. The next event will be a "Display and Sale" at the University Square Mall, February 24, 25, 26. There will also be an African Violet judged show. The Mall provides space and tables for our use. We may sell plants to the public for our own profit. By unanimous vote, the Board directed Ray to reply to Mr. Van Hyning that we would indeed participate and send our representative(s) to the Botanical Council meeting on January 9th. At the December meeting we shall have to designate said representatives. Volunteers from the membership will be solicited to man our display for the three days in February. Members are encouraged to provide plants for the display and for sale to the public. Plants for sale will have to be labeled and priced by the contributing member. It is suggested that the member will keep 2/3 of the price, with 1/3 going to the chapter treasury. In other words, mark your plant up 50% above the amount you wish to keep. More details will be given at the December and January meetings and in the newsletter. Please volunteer your services and plants.

NOVEMBER MEETING REFRESHMENTS

Christine Prodanas made and served the following: Stewed Papaya (made with lemon, cinnamon and sugar), Pickled Green Papaya, and Holiday Fruited Yeast Bread. In addition, Jane Constantine provided an apple cake made with Granny Smith apples. Joe Constantine furnished orange juice to wash all these goodies down.

NOVEMBER PLANT DRAWING

<u>PLANT</u>	<u>DONOR</u>	<u>WINNER</u>
Variegated Lemon	Chapter	Doris Lee
Chaya Spinach Plant	Bob Heath	Al Roberts
Chaya Spinach Plant	Bob Heath	Albert Greenberg
Lemonquat	Bob Duke	Al Roberts
Lemonquat	Bob Duke	Janet Conard
Roselle	Bob Duke	Doris Lee
Roselle	Bob Duke	Rita Galatocky
Sugar Apple	Bob Duke	Ruth McClure
Sugar Apple	Bob Duke	Walter Vines
Cas (Costa Rican Guava)	Ray Thorndike	Celso Gomez Sanchez
Common Guava Seedling	Ray Thorndike	Abe Azar
Purple Fruited Fig	Ray Thorndike	Bob Heath
White Fig	Harold Seekins	Roland Williams
Sugar Cane	Glen Myrie	Bob Duke
Sugar Cane	Glen Myrie	Walter Vines
Pineapple	Glen Myrie	Pat Duke
Fried Egg Fruit	Bob Heath	Glen Myrie
Okinawa Peach and Papaya	Walter Vines	Louis Alarcon
Okinawa Peach and Papaya	Walter Vines	Lev Klempner
Okinawa Peach and Papaya	Walter Vines	Ruth McClure
Okinawa Peach and Papaya	Walter Vines	Bruce Beasor

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TISSUE CULTURE COMMITTEE REPORT

by Walter Vines, Chairman

The meeting of the Florida Tissue Culture Working Group held at Apopka on November 17-18 was a big success. Al Hendry, George Merrill and I represented the Tampa Bay Chapter. We made notes and tapes of the proceedings which were too long to cover here. I am sure the many learned speakers answered many questions in the minds of those attending. There were also question and answer periods after each speaker and most speakers asked questions of other experts in the audience.

We visited two nurseries and three laboratories. The nurseries have many acres under cover, mechanized and temperature-controlled. We were lucky to have Randy Strode as our guide in the tour of Oakdell Laboratories & Nurseries as he is very informal and made everything very simple. Instead of calling his laboratory a laboratory, he calls it his production center, and so his workers move faster. The lab reminded me of the big kitchens I have worked in in my younger days. They are turning to hotel & restaurant suppliers for lots of their needs. After all, who knows more about sterilizing than cooks?

The Group's next meeting is planned for Gainesville in June. At my suggestion, rare fruit will be included.

The program for the October meeting of the Miami Council (RFCI) entitled "Tissue Culture for Propagation and Crop Improvement" was given by Dr. Richard Litz. Dr. Litz is on the staff of the Homestead AREC Station and has been very cooperative with this committee.

GROWER'S REPORT - 11/14/83

Stanley & Priscilla Lachut  
 Holiday, FL - West Pasco County

As Master Gardeners with the Pasco County Extension Service, we helped put on a fruit seminar recently here in New Port Richey. We had a display table loaded with our own local grown fruits other than citrus. Represented were a nice bunch of Ladyfinger bananas (about 100), papayas, Surinam cherries, wild persimmon, pears and cereus cactus fruits, and even some nice carambolas, pecans, etc.

This is a little too far north for most tropical fruits, but with a little extra care we have good results with many of them. Our carambola tree is still under 5' tall; planted two years ago. It has six nice fruits this year. We also have trees of longan, macadamia, kei apple, peach, apple and pear. The kei apple (Dovyalis caffra) was planted two years ago and is doing well, but no fruit as yet. Also planted two years ago, the Flordabelle peach, 8' tall now, yielded  $\frac{1}{2}$  peck of nice fruit and the Flordagold peach, though doing well, gave two fruits this year. The Anna, Ein Schemer and Golden Dorsett apples are all doing fine, but no fruit as yet. The Pineapple pear, however, had Fire Blight and might not make it.

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Editor's comment: I am very pleased to be receiving reports such as the above. We heartily welcome them from our members or anyone else for that matter. Our readers enjoy them, so let's hear from more of you out there, please! (Besides, it's a work saver for me.)

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THE SILVERTHORNEleagnus pungens

by Erwin and Eugenie Fellows

This is not a bush for the small yard. To grow this plant for its edible fruit (and deliciously-scented blossoms) the standard, not the dwarf, should be planted. It should have an area of about 80 square feet per bush. Only the extra long canes should be pruned to keep in bounds.

The fruit is ripe when it shows rosy-pink with the tan color. It begins to ripen on our place (Zephyrhills) in late December. Fruits are damaged by hard freezes, as are the blossoms, but not the bush or its leaves. We feel that the flavor of ripe Silverthorn berries is similar to that of pie cherries and that's how we use it in cooking. When not yet ripe, it is puckery like choke cherries.

To make "Mock Cherry Pie," cook ripe Silverthorn berries until soft, in water to cover. Mash in strainer to separate seeds from juice and add sugar to taste. Add required amount of preferred thickener as listed for fruit juice and cook until thickened. Then add a few drops of almond flavoring and a little red coloring if a redder shade is desired. Pour into either a baked pie shell (one crust pie) or an unbaked bottom crust and cover with unbaked top crust and bake until crusts are done, for a two-crust pie. Both are delicious topped with vanilla ice cream or other desired topping.

For maximum flowers and fruit full sun is best. The bush seems to do well in both dry and rather wet situations. The plants we have, and those in nurseries, seem not to have any thorns in spite of its name.



THE CHINESE JUJUBEZizyphus jujuba

by Marjia Bahr

(Taken from Flower and Garden, Aug-Sep, 1981)

The Jujube is one of the five principal fruits of China and has been cultivated there for at least 4,000 years. It was introduced into America in 1837. There is a tree on the grounds of the National Guard Armory in Cairo, Illinois, that was planted in the 1840's by homesick Chinese working the flatboats on the Mississippi River between St. Louis and New Orleans. The tree is a beauty, still producing huge crops of fruit each year.

The Jujube, or Chinese Date, (Zizyphus jujuba) belongs to the Buckthorn family, the Rhamnaceae. Most varieties have thorns, but not all. It can be grown as a shrub, but usually it's pruned into a single-stem tree. It reaches 25 to 30 feet in about 15 years. Most of the trees resemble a pecan tree in shape, with open, spreading branches. A few have pendulous limbs which bend low when laden with fruit. The branches of all varieties are supple, densely covered with bright green foliage reminiscent of citrus. The color and sheen of the leaves is one of the most striking things about the Jujube.

Flowering begins in April or May, depending on climate (and extends late into the summer in Florida). The greenish-white flowers are borne by the hundreds up and down the branches, and although small, they give a charming overall effect. Most Jujubes are scentless, but 'Lang' and a few other Asian selections have a faint cinnamon fragrance. All are loved by bees and yield fine honey.

Fruits ripen from mid-September to early October. They resemble large olives and have a seed like that of a date. Fruit size varies widely, but the choice Chinese kinds are usually  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches long, and 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick. Fruit color ranges from very dark red, through brown, to almost black. Eaten fresh from the tree, Jujubes are sweet, with a creamy flesh like an apple. They make delicious jam and preserves. When dried, they look and taste much like a date.

The Chinese Jujube thrives in alkaline soils, but will grow anywhere if it has good drainage and full sun. Neither insects nor diseases seem to bother it, and good crops can be had without spraying. It tolerates a wide range of temperatures, and is hardy where winter cold doesn't drop below minus 20 degrees. It can take hot summers that wither many other fruits.

Plant either in spring or fall, depending on climate. (Cold areas should plant in spring.) The nursery supplying your tree will ship it at the proper planting time for your area. Jujubes have exceptionally large, heavy root systems. This big root system helps the tree survive drought. It's best to prepare a 3' X 3' planting hole in autumn, working in compost and well-rotted manure. Although the trees will grow in poor ground, fruit quality improves on trees given more favorable soil conditions.

Some varieties are self-unfruitful and need another nearby variety to set fruit. Check catalog descriptions on this point.

Feed young trees in late winter before the buds begin to swell. Use a balanced fertilizer (but do not put any in the planting hole nor use any for several months after planting.) If your soil tends to be acid, apply lime (dolomitic limestone) occasionally to help provide the high pH that Jujubes prefer. Expect a few flowers and fruits the year after planting. Fruit production and size of fruits will increase as the tree ages. Mature trees are capable of ripening tremendous crops.

Plant the tree anywhere you want a medium-sized ornamental tree. It is excellent for the lawn; it lives for many years, and its lacy foliage doesn't shade out grass. Do not place it beside a patio, because the fruit fall can stain bricks and concrete.

When buying Jujubes, insist on Chinese varieties grafted onto common rootstock. The fruit from the Indian, Arabian and European species never reaches the size and perfection of the choice Chinese selections. One mail-order source of trees is:

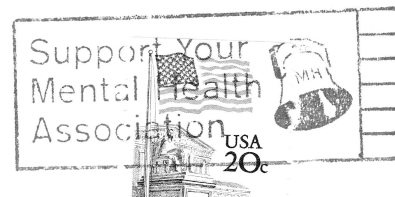
Armstrong Nurseries  
P.O. Box 4060  
Ontario, California 91761

(Thanks to Eric Golby for clipping this article, which took me two years to get around to using. It was not stressed in the article that this is a deciduous tree, in fact it has the strange habit of dropping its small branches as well, in the fall. So it is not a year around ornamental. It is a very tough tree and mine has withstood three very rough transplantings, even in the midst of the growing season without so much as wilting. I do not know what it would take to put it into shock. - Editor.)

Ray Thorndike: Newsletter Editor

Robert & Doris Lee, George Merrill, Walter Vines: Newsletter Production Staff

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