



# NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1986

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

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(INCLUDING RENEWALS)

MEETINGS ARE HELD AT 2:00 P.M. ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH.

NEXT MEETING . . . . . NOVEMBER 9 1986

MEETING PLACE . . . . . COMMUNITY ROOM UNDER WEST RAMP, TAMPA BAY  
CENTER SHOPPING MALL, BUFFALO & HIMES AVES.  
NEXT TO TAMPA STADIUM. (TAKE DALE MABRY TO  
BUFFALO AVE., AT STADIUM.)

PROGRAM . . . . . TOM ECONOMOU presenting an unusual table of  
delights sprinkled with flavorful verbal  
tidbits, fruitful anecdotes, and economou-cal  
growing tips to add spice to our November  
meeting.

## NEW MEMBERS

John & Doris Atherton, 7095 121st Way, Seminole FL 33542 393-6178  
John & Denise Cooper, 4096 40th St S, St Petersburg FL 33711 867-2480  
Robert & Donna Eliason, 6091 24th Ave N, St. Pete FL 33710 381-1591  
James & Joan Murrie, 755 Bay Esplanade, Clearwater FL 33515 442-9778  
Steven & Mary Nelson, 7966 9th Ave S, St. Pete FL 33707 345-3676  
Harry E. Zies, 1814 Butterfly Pl, Sun City Ctr, FL 33570 634-7719

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, it's hard to believe that another annual plant sale has come and gone, the club's 7th, Lillian's and my 5th. From all indications, it was an excellent sale! Perhaps it was one of our best, in spite of considerable competition from a home show at the Fairgrounds, another plant sale in the area, and especially the Hispanic Festival in Ybor City. We sold close to \$17,000.00 worth of plants, books and fruit.

I would like to thank each and every one of you who participated in making this event a success. We couldn't have done it without you. Members who worked on one or both days of the sale included: Louis C. Alarcon, Doris Atherton, Alice Beasor, Bruce Beasor, Joe Constantine, Helen Cornwell, Aubrey Dickson, Betty Dickson, Robert Eliason, Abe Freedman, Edith Freedman, Tom Goldsworthy, Nels Gullerud, Bob Heath, Theresa Heath, Al Hendry, Dora Henderson, Kay Hudak, Margaret Hughes, Thomas Hughes, Harry Klaus, Sandy Klaus, Doris Lee, Linda Lee, Ivan Leo, Vince Magaway, A. Mendez, F. Mendez, George Merrill, Glen Myrie,

Pearl Nelson, Kay Netscher & child, Gloria Obiena, Anthony Prodanas, Christine Prodanas, Bobbie Puls, George Riegler, Irene Rubenstein, Paul Rubenstein, Celso Gomez Sanchez, Bea Seekins, Harold Seekins, Lloyd Shipley, Lottice Shipley, Arnold Stark, Lillian Stark, Fran Stevens, Joe Stevens, Rome Vaccaro, Walter Vines, Elinor Wilson.

Of course, our sale could not have occurred without our excellent suppliers. Our hats go off to Ray Green, Leo Cetuk, Tom & Margaret Hughes, Earl Martin, Drew Smith and Harry & Carol Snyder for their beautiful plants, and Peggy Kenney, who shipped us beautiful fruit from Miami. The Hughes and Snyders are members of our club, and so deserve double thanks. Other members who sold plants included Bob & Terry Heath, Bruce & Alice Beasor, Ivan Leo, Armando Mendez, Kay Netscher, and Arnold & Lillian Stark. Many of our members also made donations to the club; these included plants from Albert Greenberg, Bob Heath, Bob Mayko, George Riegler, Harold & Bea Seekins, Abe & Edith Freedman, and Fran Stevens, and fruit from Bruce & Alice Beasor, John Bell, Tom & Margaret Hughes, and Armando & Felicia Mendez.

Numerous people are worthy of individual praise, for special jobs done. These include:

Betty Dickson, Bruce Beasor, Bill Ryland, Romagene Vaccaro, Will Unruh, Harold Seekins, Paul Rubenstein, Irene Rubenstein and Bob Heath for publicity.

Tom Hughes for procuring our plant labels.

Bill Heath for storing our shopping carts.

John Bell for procuring & repairing our shopping carts.

Irene Rubenstein, Tom Goldsworthy, Lillian Stark and John Bell for arranging and organizing the Armory.

Bob Heath and Arnold Stark for arranging plant and fruit suppliers.

Kay Netscher, Alice Beasor, Lillian Stark and Romagene Vaccaro for plant inventory.

Lillian Stark and Tom Goldsworthy for sales floor and traffic control organization.

Bob Heath, Al Hendry, John Bell, Celso Gomez Sanches & George Riegler for shopping cart transport

Christine Prodanas, Betty Dickson, Kay Netscher, Al Hendry, Abe & Edith Freedman and Lottice Shipley for fruit sales and display.

Harold Seekins for sign production.

Armando and Felicia Mendez for membership information.

Doris Lee and Gloria Obiena for book sales.

Lewis Maxwell for his author's table.

John Bell, Tom Goldsworthy, Bobbie Puls and Walter Vines for traffic control and security.

Lillian Stark and Harry & Sandy Klaus, Harold Seekins and Louis Alarcon for plant checkout.

Aubrey Dixon, John Atherton, Joe Stevens, Bea Seekins, Bruce & Alice Beasor, Paul Rubenstein, Irene Rubenstein, and Nonie Jaffer (Irene's guest) for check approval and cashiering.

John Atherton, Linda Lee and Nels Gullerud for being super-working new members.

John Bell, Bob Heath, Tom Goldsworthy, Arnold & Lillian Stark, Paul & Irene Rubenstein for closing up shop.

There are many other people who worked hard and long before, during and after the sale. To all of you, our heartfelt thanks. If your name was omitted from our special jobs list, I apologize for the omission. Let me know so I may mention it in next month's newsletter.

This year's sale was eventful for another reason: it was the first time (and hopefully the last) we had to evacuate our sale premises because of a bomb scare. Thank goodness it happened before the sale itself, rather than during it! Speculation as to the culprits responsible ranged from previous sale sites, because we deserted them for the Armory, certain concessionaires because of the hassle concerning fruit sales, to the potential customers arriving at 9 a.m. who left grumbling after being told the sale would not begin until 1 p.m. Actually, the threat was to the Armory, not RFCI. Seriously, we should be grateful this year's sale was not a bomb, in more ways than one. Again, thanks to all of you who helped, and I'll see you at the next meeting!

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## AN INTERESTING VISIT

by Bob Heath

I was honored last Monday, the day after our Tree Sale, to be invited to visit the home of one of our charter members who is no longer able to attend our meetings because he works Sunday. He is one who is familiar to our charter members and who is a very enthusiastic amateur horticulturist, Modesto Arencibia. His yard, a relatively small lot, is crowded with a wondrous array of exotic and common fruiting trees, most growing in the ground, but many in containers. The front of his home is almost hidden by an atemoya, a sugar apple and an Anna apple tree, all of which bore fruit well this past summer. In his front yard, sporting one nut, is a small black walnut tree. So if someone tells you the black walnut won't bear here, send them to see Modesto.

He has a bearing White Sapote and Black Sapote and one tropical apricot which, contrary to what I have been led to believe, fruited this spring without cross pollination. To prove this, he gave me a seedling from one of the fruit. He also has an Akee (which is not my favorite fruit), some wampees, a Mamey Sapote, three carobs presently blooming, two bearing lychees, a seedling longan, a bearing jaboticaba and several other fruiting trees, including common ones such as citrus, guavas, persimmons and figs. After touring his yard, we visited a neighbor and friend with the expressed purpose of admiring one tree. It is an atemoya on cherimoya root stock, only three years old but an estimated ten feet tall and twice as wide, planted close to the south side of his house.



The tree produced eight fruit the second year and over 100 fruit this summer. The fruit is of excellent quality, two to three pounds each, and very sweet. The fabulous growth of this tree was attributed to generous applications of rabbit fertilizer of which they have an abundance since they also raise rabbits in addition to numerous fruit trees.

All in all, it was an enlightening visit and I was infused with some of Medesto's enthusiasm.

Next month: A compilation of your favorite berry tales:

"Little Red Roselle Hood"

"The Three Little Figs"

"Jakfruit and the Bean Stalk"

"The Fox and the Muscadines"

"The Tortoise and the Pear"

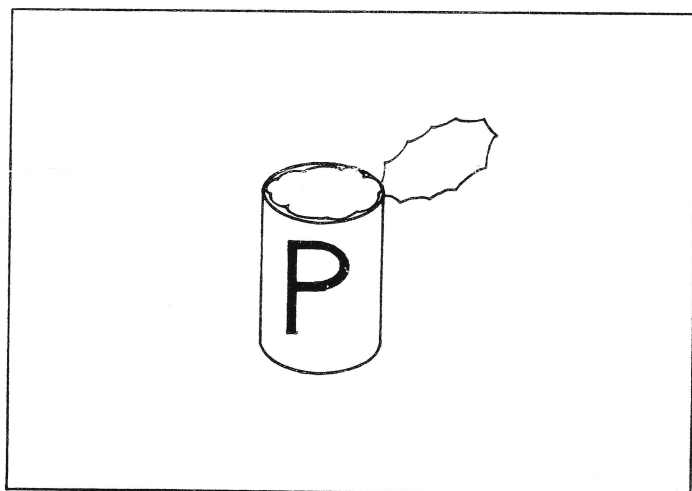
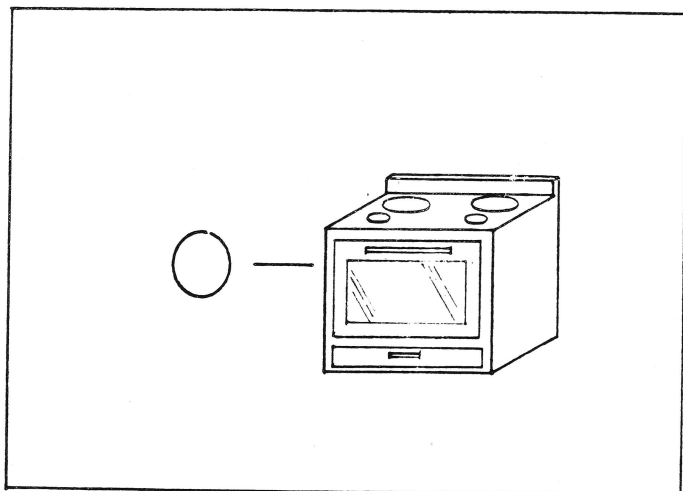
"Pumpkinstiltskin"

"Little Black Sapote"

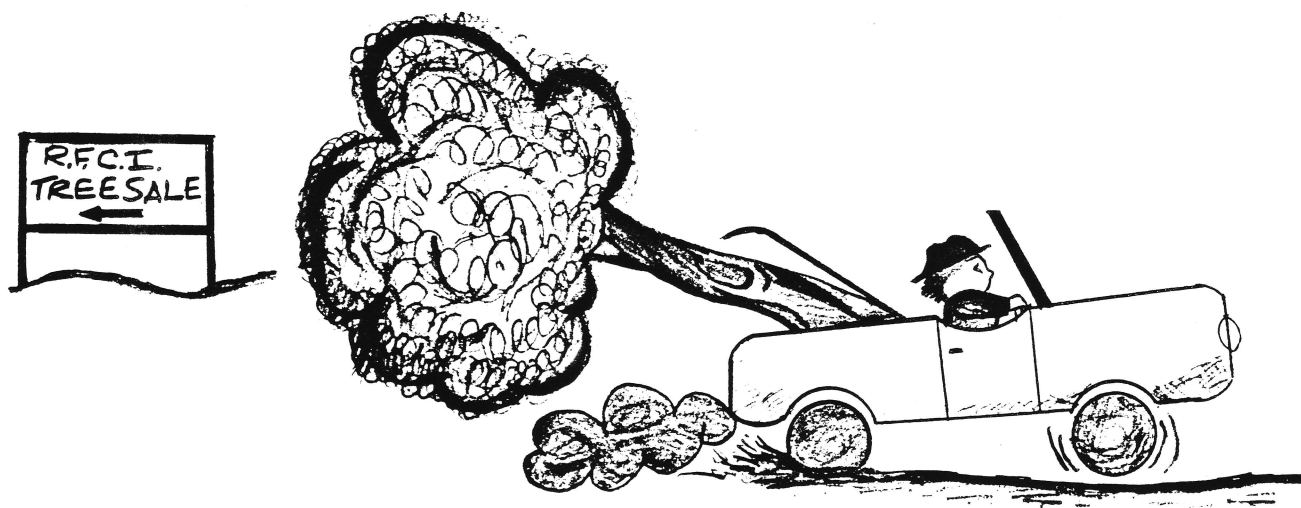
"The Prince and the Paw Paw"

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More Rebuses. . .



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STRANGE FRUITS WITH FANCY FLAVORS  
MAY BECOME EVERYDAY GROCERY ITEMS

(taken from Florida Market Bulletin 10/15/86)

Exotic fruits with names like mamey, carambola, and lychee may someday become everyday items in your neighborhood grocer's produce section, thanks to agricultural research scientists at Miami.

Indeed, who could resist a fruit like the carambola, a member of the wood sorrel family, whose sides are so deeply indented that it slices into sections resembling five-pointed stars? Besides its eye-catching shape and mild flavor, the carambola is attractive for nutritional reasons: It's a good source of vitamins A and C.

Agricultural Research Service Horticulturist Robert J. Knight believes it has a bright future with consumers. He says, "I can see carambola really catching on in this country because it's tasty and fairly adaptable to our climate, so it's easy to grow here."

In fact, growers in Florida are devoting more and more of their land to carambola orchards. "Right now, we probably have about three times more acreage in carambola than we had just a few years ago," says Knight. "Plus, there are a great many areas in Florida which have just been planted, and those trees should begin to produce within 3 to 5 years."

Unlike most fruits, which have only one season, the carambola produces fruit twice a year and sometimes three times in a single year.

Knight attributes the growing popularity of some subtropical and tropical fruit partially to an increase in the immigrant population; for example, Southeast Asians in California and Latin Americans in Florida. Tropical fruit is often an important and familiar part of their traditional cuisine. Mamey, for instance, a large ruddy fruit which tastes somewhat like sweet potato, is considered the national fruit of Cuba. And the lychee, a bright red sweet fruit about the size of a plum, has long been popular with the Chinese.

These are but a few of the many subtropical and tropical fruit crops studied by Knight and other scientists at the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/ARS Subtropical Horticulture Research Station.

The first step in finding a new fruit crop is finding and importing the germplasm. Germplasm is the living cellular material containing the genetic blueprint or chromosomes for that particular plant. Knight's germplasm samples may be bits of plant tissue, seeds or whatever is available.

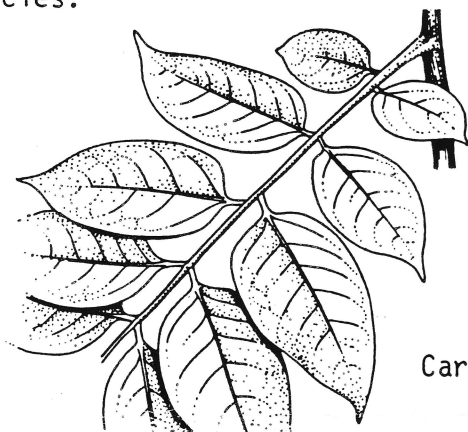
When considering a new fruit, Knight asks: Is this fruit any better than the varieties we now have? Does it produce fruit well and regularly? Is it nutritious? Can it be economically grown here? Candidates for U.S. crops are first evaluated for their ability to adapt to the southern United States. They are exposed to freezing temperatures, insects and disease, and adverse soil conditions. Knight next grows a large seedling population using the hardiest samples and then crossbreeds among these plants to develop new varieties. Says Knight, "One thing we must always keep in mind: horticulture is a matter of working with the environment. Plants are genetically programmed to respond to certain environmental conditions, and they must have those conditions for the most favorable growth. The best that we can hope for is to modify some plants so that they can be grown over a larger area - however this certainly does not work with every plant."

Often, a fruit can be improved by crossing two members of the same family. A classic example is the atemoya. In 1907, P.J. Wester of USDA, who was stationed in Miami for many years, was working on improving the cherimoya, a fruit usually grown in Peru, Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador. The cherimoya, one member of the family collectively called the "custard apple", and related to the American paw paw, is a large green fruit with sweet, aromatic pulp and smooth, dark seeds. Since the cherimoya would

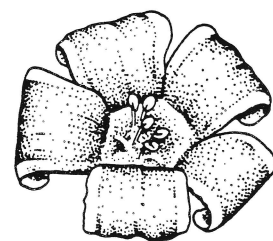
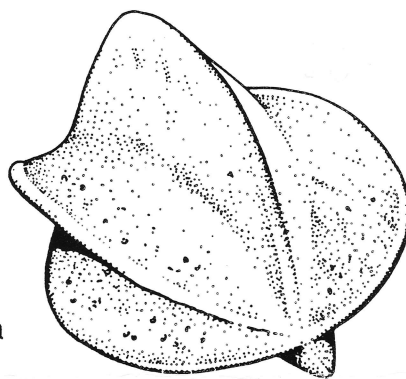
ordinarily be grown in the mountains, it wasn't too successfully produced in Florida. Its poor relation, the sugar apple, or anon, was better adapted to warm, sea-level conditions but was smaller and not as pleasantly aromatic. So Wester crossed the cherimoya with the sugar apple and came up with the atemoya, which grows very well at sea level, has a lot of vigor and produces delicious fruit.

Wester's atemoya was the first of its kind; since then, even better varieties of the hybrid have been developed. Many improved fruits have been developed at the Subtropical Horticultural Research Station since Wester's atemoya. Some are still in the testing stage, such as a new passion fruit which is a cross between the yellow and purple variety from Brazil and a subtropical variety from Maryland. "The hybrids we produced are more resistant to cold - a characteristic they get from the Maryland species - because of their ability to form new shoots from underground roots or rhizomes. But they still lack the superior fruit of the Brazilian species," says Knight.

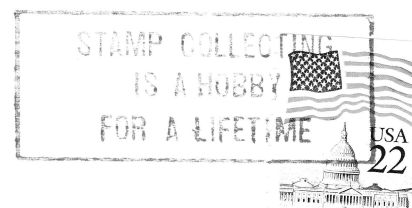
"We're hoping to produce a passion fruit which can be grown as far north as Virginia or Maryland and still have the high quality and flavor of the Brazilian species."



Carambola



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