



NEWSLETTER

MAY 1990

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH
THERESA HEATH
ARNOLD STARK
LILLIAN STARK

NEWSLETTER MAIL ADDRESS: ARNOLD & LILLIAN STARK
6305 EUREKA SPRINGS RD.
TAMPA FL 33610

PRESIDENT: JULES COHAN CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD., SEFFNER FL 33584
(INCLUDING RENEWALS)

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

NEXT MEETING MAY 13, 1990

MEETING PLACE. HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS CENTER.
(COUNTY AG. AGENTS' BUILDING, SEFFNER)
Take I-4 to Exit 8 South, S.R. 579, go past
traffic light at U.S. 92 intersection.
Building is less than 1/2 mile on left (east)
side of U.S. 92. Use parking lot. Meeting
room is in rear of building. Main door will
probably be locked. Walk around.

PROGRAM. GENE JOYNER'S talk is an annual tradition,
which we introduce with poetic rendition.
The topic for the day is fruit of Guatemala,
a subject on which he's a well known scholar.
The lore that he speaks is not written in tomes,
but practical knowledge of berries and pomes.
His slides are terrific, his talk is first rate.
So be sure to join us, and don't miss this date.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Louis Zoehrer and Jules Cohan for the article on the Spring Hill club which appeared in the Hernando County section of the Tampa Tribune. Included were some great photos of Louis with wonderful looking carambolas on his tree.

Plant Exchange:

A suggestion has been made that we occasionally hold a plant exchange in addition to our regular plant drawing. Participants would bring in any plants they would like to exchange, and receive one plant from the selection for each plant placed in the exchange. Plants would be categorized so fair exchanges would be made. If you are interested in holding such an exchange, let us know. We would need a volunteer to organize this effort.

THANK YOU...

Thanks to MIKE HEATH for pouring a concrete mailbox stand for our new site.

* * *

FRUIT POTPOURRI by Tom Economou

Tom brought an array of fruit which he collected in the Miami area to spread out on our tables for our enlightenment. Some of the fruit which he brought will not grow outdoors in central Florida and some which he would like to have brought, were not available because of the December freeze.

The first thing Tom showed us was a banana blossom and he recounted an occasion in Memphis, Tennessee, where he showed his audience a banana blossom and one of the audience, an Oriental woman, said, "When you finish your program, could I have that banana blossom?" Tom asked her, "Why do you want it?" and she replied, "So I can eat it." And that's when he learned that people eat the banana blossom. Not only do the Orientals eat the banana blossom, but you can also buy it in cans.

The next fruit that Tom showed us was the jackfruit, which is the largest fruit that grows on a tree, but unfortunately, the best specimen he could find was only 2" long. On various occasions, Tom has brought us jackfruit that weigh as much as 20 pounds, and in Southeast Asia, the jackfruit will go as much as 80 pounds. That's really a whopper! It is also one of the favorite fruits of Southeast Asia.

Tom showed us the leaf of the curry tree, which is used in cooking because the leaves greatly resemble the seasoning, curry. The leaf is used in soups and stews similar to a bay leaf or basil. The curry spice is a mixture of several different spices, but produces results in cooking very similar to the leaves of the curry tree.

Next Tom showed us the fruit of the pandanas tree which is about grapefruit size and when it's ripe, the center core can be eaten. It is reported to be very good. The dried leaves are used to make baskets and other woven items in Southeast Asia.

The cashew was the next fruit Tom commented on; however, in lieu of the fruit or nut, he had a bottle of wine made from the fruit of the cashew. The cashew is a very strange fruit in two respects; one, we eat both the seed and the fruit. What is even more strange is that the seeds grow outside of the fruit on the flower end opposite the stem. In addition to this, the nut is surrounded by a shell which encases a deadly poison liquid. To prepare the nut, it is necessary to remove the poison. The process of doing this is very effective because, I believe, there have been no reported deaths from eating cashew nuts. From the fruit they make preserves and a very good wine and a liqueur. Tom then showed us a bottle of the wine and gave it to the club for tasting at the next meeting, although he said it was a very expensive wine, costing him slightly less than \$1.00 American. That's certainly not too cheap in Costa Rica.

Tom also had a small pineapple. It was a pretty fruit but he indicated that it was an ornamental pineapple and not one that you would normally eat. He indicated that he got it from Chris Rollins at the "Fruit and Spice Park".

Next he showed us a tamarind bean which is a legume that grows on a tree. It's a pod with seeds and the pulp around the seeds is what is eaten. The tamarind grows all around the world in the tropics and is a very important product of the Far East where it is used in a variety of ways. One product which is exceptionally well known throughout the world is worcestershire sauce. Next time you use worcestershire sauce, just read the label and you'll see "tamarind" as one of the ingredients. It is also used in sauces made in different countries throughout the world. Indians use it, the Phillippines use it, the Mexicans use it; it's a common ingredient of many different sauces. The pulp of the tamarind can be bought in supermarkets and specialty stores. The pulp added to water and with a little sugar added makes an excellent drink.

Another fruit which is really a glamour fruit is the mamey. The mamey Tom had, he estimated at two pounds, which would make it cost about \$10.00 in the market.

They are that expensive, about \$5.00 a pound. It's a fuzzy brown fruit, roughly the shape of a mango, and in order to tell if it's ripe, you scratch the brown surface with your fingernail, exposing the undersurface, which must be a nice orange red color to indicate that the fruit is ripe, and don't buy it if it's not.

Tom had some leaves of the *monstera deliciosa* plant which produces a very delicious fruit. He said he saw them for years but had to go to Costa Rica to find out that you could actually eat them. The fruit is 6" to 8" long and 1-1/2" in diameter, and ripens at a rate of about an inch a day so that you can eat it for seven or eight days, one inch at a time, as it ripens. The flavor is very sweet and delicious, a pineapple-banana type kind of taste. It has a beautiful leaf and is definitely an ornamental plant, as are many of the other fruiting trees. The advantage of a beautiful fruiting tree, of course, is that you not only get the beauty of the tree but also something to eat.

The next fruit Tom mentioned was the mangosteen, which is called by some the king of all fruit. Tom indicated it's a great fruit but he was not overly impressed with the flavor. He then showed us a *Garcinia tinctoria* which is a relative of the mangosteen, a good fruit but not comparable to the mangosteen. He also mentioned the rambutan and pulasan which are relatives of the lychee.

He had several specimens of the candlestick tree, which is a long, narrow fruit, looking actually like a candlestick and which has a flavor and texture somewhat like celery. The fruit grows right on the trunk of the tree and it presents a very weird appearance with the candlesticks hanging out from the trunk of the tree in all directions.

Another of Tom's favorite fruits is the wampee which comes from the Orient and is a relative of citrus. The wampee makes a bush rather than a big tree. The fruit are similar to lychees in texture and design, having a hard shell and a soft pulp inside surrounding one seed. They grow in racemes at the top of the branches.

The sapodilla is another favorite fruit of Tom's and is a native of Central America. It is a very tender tree but producing a very excellent fruit. The development of the sapodilla is accredited to the Mayas. The fruit is normally a couple of inches in diameter and maybe 3 inches long, elliptical in form. You'll find it in all the markets in Central and northern South America. The fruit is brown and somewhat fuzzy. The tree is the source of chiclet, from which chewing gum is made. Tom describes the taste as brown sugar, which is probably a fairly good description.

The velvet apple is about the size and color of a good red apple but it has a velvet skin. Unfortunately, Tom's sample was a small, immature sample which didn't do justice to the mature fruit. A beautiful fruit and very delicious with a kind of sweet, cheese/apple taste. The tree likewise is a very beautiful tree with a crimson cast to the leaves.

The soursop is a member of the *annonafamily*, and again, Tom's offering was very immature, only a little over an inch long, whereas the mature fruit may be five or six inches long. The soursop is a member of the *annonafamily* and is one of the world's best fruit for making custard, ice cream and drinks, a really delicious flavor.

The next fruit that Tom had on the table was the chocolate pudding fruit, or the black sapote. It is a member of the persimmon family and at maturity is about the size of a large persimmon, but is a bright green color with a thicker skin than the persimmon. Inside the ripe fruit is where the surprise comes because the pulp is a deep chocolate color with the consistency of chocolate custard or chocolate pudding. When the black sapote is dead ripe, it is soft and delicious, but like the persimmon, cannot be eaten until it is ripe. It grows wild in Central America, where the monkeys and food gatherers fight for the fruit.

Tom also had macadamia nuts, a mombin or spondias, and an egg fruit or canistel. In addition to this marvelous display of tropical fruits, Tom had several slides of the peach palm, the mombin or spondias, star apple or caimito, the naranjilla, cherimoya, the bread fruit, raspberries, the soursop, the rambutan, the Spanish lime, the cacao, and the abiu.

Tom has two trips planned for Guatemala in June, and is looking for adventurous types to join him on his safaris, from the 9th to the 16th and again from June 30 to July 7.

Tom ended his talk to remind us that on May 19 and 20 Fort Lauderdale is having their tree sale at the Flamingo Gardens in Fort Lauderdale. This is an exceptionally interesting sale and is well worth attending.

APRIL PLANT DRAWING

<u>PLANT</u>	<u>DONOR</u>	<u>WINNER</u>
Loquat seedling	Frank Honeycutt	Jim Murrie
Plantain	" "	Gloria Obiena
Plantain	" "	Joy Griffin
Plantain	" "	??
Red Loquat	Lloyd Shipley	??
Lychee	" "	William Yedkois
Ladyfinger banana	" "	Laura Caradonna
Loquat seedling	John White	??
Queen Lily	George Riegler	Frank Tintera
Queen Lily	" "	Bob Heath
Oriental Guava	" "	Laura Caradonna
Gulf Queen Peaches	" "	??
Kiwi	Charles Novak	Joy Griffin
Mint	Marla Griffin	Lloyd Shipley
Orange Mint	" "	Louis Figueroa
Roselle	Jules Cohan	Louis Zoehrer
Roselle	" "	A & L Stark
Shoofly Plant	??	??
Surinam Cherry	Frank Tintera	Joy Griffin
Moringa	Fernando Galang	Bobbie Puls
Coffee	RFCI	Louis Zoehrer
Spondias	"	Charles Novak
Inga seedling	"	Walter Vines
Inga seedling	"	Charles Novak
Inga seedling	"	??
Inga seedling	"	??
Canistel seedling	"	Albert Jean
Canistel seedling	"	Lloyd Shipley
Canistel seedling	"	Jeana Griffin
Canistel seedling	"	John White
Canistel seedling	"	Jim Murrie
Canistel seedling	"	JoAnn Cimino
Canistel seedling	"	Louis Zoehrer
Canistel seedling	"	??
Pineapple Sage	Alice Burhenn	??
Hot Pepper	" "	Win Miller
Garden Mint	" "	" "
Garden Mint	" "	Theresa Heath
Garden Mint	" "	Walter Vines
Peach	Bob & Theresa Heath	Gloria Obiena
Peach	" " "	??
Yuca	" " "	Romagene Vaccaro
Pomegranate	" " "	Monica Brandies
Onion Sets	Lottice Shipley	Walter Vines
Horseradish	??	Walter Vines

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE sign the sheet (Print!!!) if you bring plants to, and/or win plants in the drawing!!!

RARE MINT PATCH MAKES IDEAL PICNIC SPOT

(from The Nature Conservancy, Florida Chapter)

Researchers have discovered a powerful, natural insect repellent within the leaves of an endangered mint plant in central Florida. Even a whiff of the substance sends ants and other insects fleeing, they report in the February "Chemoecology".

Thomas Eisner of Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, grew curious about the plant, *Diceranda frutescens*, while walking through a patch of it at the Archbold Biological Station in Lake Placid, Florida. Its intense scent, resembling that of peppermint oil, filled the air after the biologist's walk disturbed the plants. A look at the leaves showed they were "remarkably free of insect-inflicted injury," Eisner says.

His colleagues' chemical analysis of the leaves revealed a new mint oil, which they named trans pulegol. Moreover, the oil - along with a dozen other mint oils previously identified in the other plants - remains sealed in tiny capsules that act as chemical "grenades", exploding when insects chew the leaves. This allows the plant to economize its defense expenditures, releasing the compound only when needed, Eisner says. Trans pulegol is the major ingredient in the "grenades".

Confirming the repellent's potency, the researcher sent ants scurrying from a sugar-water feast by cutting through a nearby *D. frutescens* leaf. They have also identified a caterpillar that eats the mint leaves and regurgitates its stomach contents onto itself in an apparently successful attempt to repel natural enemies, including ants. The researchers are continuing these experiments with a synthetic version of the chemical they have produced in the laboratory.

April Hospitality Table

Alice Burnhenn.....	Fudge Nut Brownies
Laura Caradonna.....	Apple Bars
JoAnn Cimino.....	Pineapple Pecan Bars
Theresa Heath.....	Stuffed Dates
Al Hendry.....	Tropical Ice Creams
Pat Jean.....	Cranberry-Sourcream Bread
Nancy McCormack.....	Cinnamon Cake
Lottice Shipley.....	Apples & Cheese

Thanks to Edith Freedman for donating plastic forks and spoons

PLEASE PLAN ON PERIODICALLY PROVIDING PALATE PLEASERS SO PEOPLE WILL HAVE PLENTY OF WHICH TO PARTAKE.

Fruit Safaris:

Gene Joyner and Tom Economou are holding fruit safaris to Guatemala (June 9-16) and Costa Rica (August 18-25), respectively. For more information, call NATURE TRAIL, Inc., Box 450662, Miami, FL 33145, (305) 285-7173.

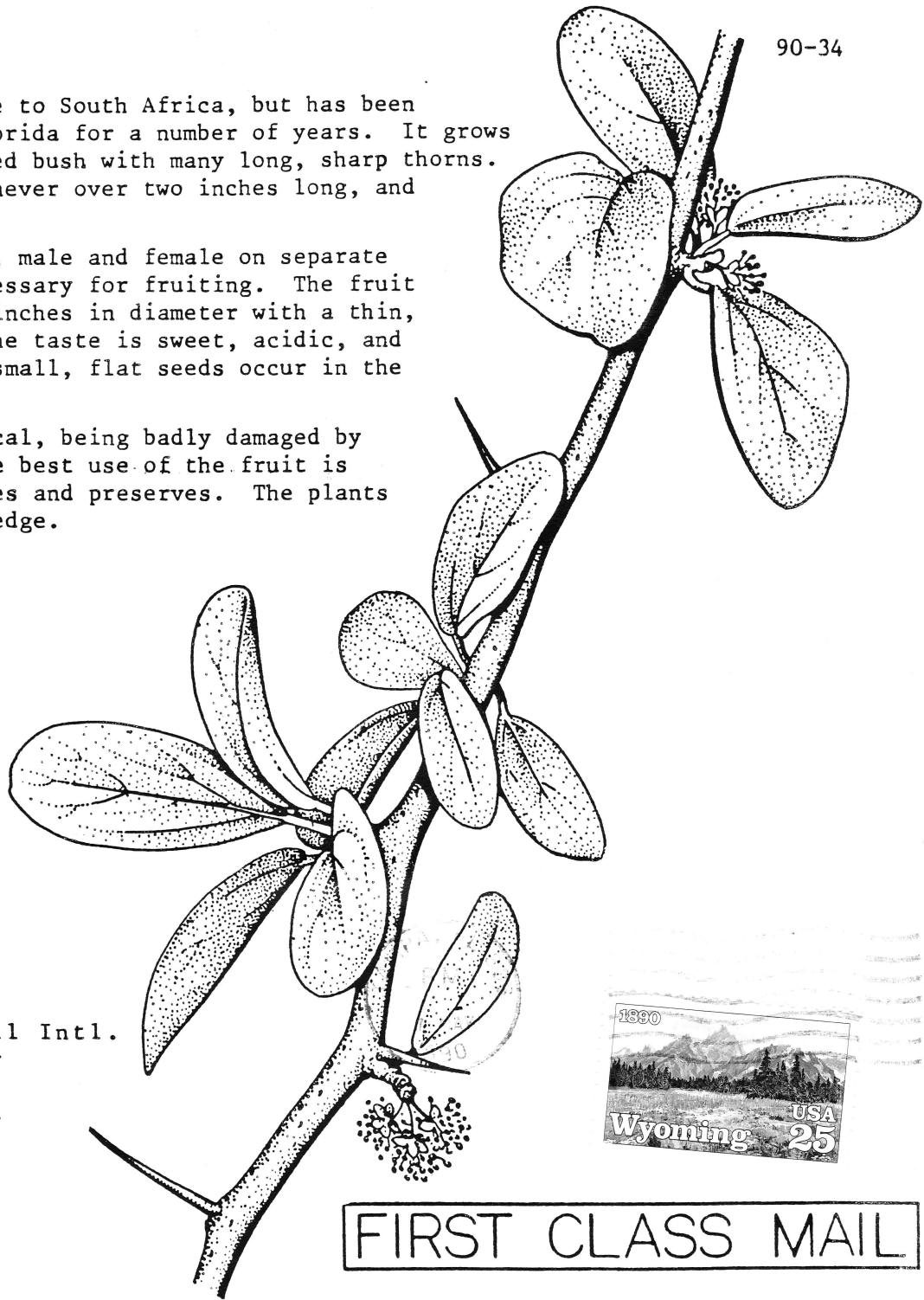
THE KEI APPLE

90-34

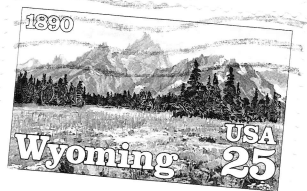
The kei apple is native to South Africa, but has been cultivated in south Florida for a number of years. It grows as a dense much branched bush with many long, sharp thorns. The leaves are small, never over two inches long, and ovate in form.

The flowers are yellow, male and female on separate plants so both are necessary for fruiting. The fruit is spherical up to two inches in diameter with a thin, smooth yellow skin. The taste is sweet, acidic, and aromatic. Two to ten small, flat seeds occur in the core.

The kei apple is tropical, being badly damaged by 25° temperatures. The best use of the fruit is in the making of jellies and preserves. The plants make an impenetrable hedge.



Rare Fruit Council Intl.
Tampa Bay Chapter
313 Pruett Rd.
Seffner FL 33584



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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