



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1996

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, ARNOLD STARK, LILLIAN STARK

PRESIDENT: CHARLES NOVAK CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER FL 33584

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 2:00 pm. NEXT MEETING: OCT. 13, 1996

MEETING PLACE: RARE FRUIT COUNCIL CLUBHOUSE, 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER. Take I-4 to Exit 8 North, S.R. 579; go one mile to Pruett Road (see McDonald School sign). Turn right (east). Go one mile. See Clubhouse on left immediately past McDonald School.

PROGRAM: We are fortunate again to have our old friend Tom Economou come to our meeting and provide us with one of his most enjoyable talks. He never fails to bring a variety of rare fruit and plants for us to examine, taste and admire. For new members, this will be a delightful experience. For older members who have had the pleasure of meeting Tom Economou, this will be a welcome repeat performance. We also look forward to our usual generous contribution of good food to sample and interesting plants in the raffle.

USF BOTANICAL GARDEN PLANT FESTIVAL

Just a reminder that we will be participating in the Festival next Saturday, October 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Set-up will be Friday evening beginning at 3:00 and Saturday morning at sun-up. This is an important fund raiser and all members are invited to attend to sell plants, enjoy the camaraderie and visit other groups. We have re-stocked our inventory from Pine Island and look forward to a better than usual participation by the membership. Pray for good weather and join us Saturday, October 12, at the U.S.F. sale. For additional information, review last month's newsletter or call Bob Heath in the evening at 289-1068.

New Members:

Pat & Frank Woodruff 2262 Harbor View Drive Dunedin, FL 34698-2526 (813)733-7892

E-Mail: caladezi@gte.net

Teddy York 217 Canning Plant Road Seffner, FL 33583 (813)689-0155

Thank You Thank You Thank You

To long-time member Ernestine Curry Reuter, for recommending new members to the club. Ernestine sends word that even though she can't attend meetings, she enjoys the other member benefits our club offers. We appreciate hearing that Ernestine, and hope to see you at a meeting or event in the near future.

Remember:

Fruitarama is coming!

FRUIT & SPICE PARK by Chris Rollins

Chris began by reminding us how long it's been since he has been to one of our meetings and complimenting us on our clubhouse. He said it was like visiting Grandma's farm.

The Fruit & Spice Park in Homestead is a botanical garden dedicated to tropical fruits and spices, the same things to which our chapter is dedicated. The park is a Metro-Dade facility begun in 1944 and operated by the Road & Bridge Department. This makes the park some 52 years old. It was created with a very fine master plan which was never implemented because of two hurricanes in the early 40's that obliterated south Florida, including the Fruit & Spice Park. After that and long before Chris was involved, it was as if a chimpanzee had designed the entire gardens. There seemed to be no rhyme or reason. Things were just put haphazardly here and there. Still, it was very interesting because each tree had a history of its own. However, when Hurricane Andrew came, in a matter of six hours it gave them a chance to correct 50 years of bad planning. (Chris mentioned the fact that people in the area divide their lives into two parts, before the hurricane and after the hurricane. It's a demarcation point in most peoples' lives in the area.)

Chris showed us a slide of part of the gardens before the hurricane, a slide of the entrance to the park, August 22, 1992. Two small buildings were in evidence, one built out of local stone, limestone, a historical building built in 1912 used as a jelly factory, a post office, a citrus canker research lab and several other things, and is now the park's classroom. Having said this, we must assume the building is still there. The second building was a schoolhouse built in 1906, built of heart pine. Chris showed us a slide of what the area looked like the next day, which brought moans from the audience. It was damaged and he said there was no saving it. The entrance is where they started their restoration program.

Next, Chris showed us a slide of the palm collection. He said they lost 65 full grown palms to Andrew, a storm with

sustained winds of 160 miles an hour and gusts over 200. The trunks broke, either at the base or somewhere up the trunk. It was very interesting to access the damage caused by the high winds. Some trees had apparently made it through the storm without any great damage, only to have suffered damage internally and to decline afterwards. Even now, four years later, they see, every now and then, some delayed damage in a tree which appeared to be okay originally but was actually under stress.

Chris estimates they lost 750 trees; the entire park grounds were littered with branches and trunks of trees such that you could not walk through the park because of the debris. A lot of the trees left nothing but a hole in the ground; they never saw the trees again. But that was compensated for by trees they had never seen before laying in the park. Trees were tangled up with phone and power lines and other debris and peoples' personal possessions. Fortunately, they didn't find any people, although they were continually aware that they might. They did find an African antelope that had strayed 15 miles from the Metro Zoo. Fortunately, he was still alive and unhurt.

His slides showing the destruction of the park were not taken immediately after the storm, as is apparent because we can see grass, and Chris said there was not a blade of grass on the ground nor a leaf on the trees remaining after the storm. The storm had literally scoured the land. Every blade of grass, every leaf on the trees, everything was sand blasted away. It looked like World War 2 pictures of Guam after it had been fire bombed, just mile after mile of desert. Many of the trees were irretrievably damaged and Chris had many slides showing the damaged trees. It was really pathetic. However, he did indicate that they have resurrected 270 large trees. Some apparently have made complete recoveries but some of them still have continued to decline. They worked 12 hours a day seven days a week for three months. They had a 100 foot crane and two front end loaders.

They learned a lot about the bottoms of trees from looking at those that had up-rooted. Chris explained that their soil

is only 4 to 6 inches thick setting on the coral rock. To plant trees it is necessary to break a hole in the rock, which is a real chore, so most planting holes are small and the tree roots grow in the small layer of soil. The big trees planted in a tiny hole when they were small had all their roots on top of the rock, and when they blew over they looked like they had been setting on a table. More recently planted trees in three foot diameter holes popped out of the ground like champagne corks. They still haven't determined the best way to plant trees at this time but they're working on it.

A lot of the smaller trees they just threw into debris piles which were very common in the entire area. Some of the debris piles in the area were 150 feet high and 800 feet long and 400 or 500 feet wide. Not only trees were in these piles but entire houses which had been pulverized, furniture, appliances, timbers, shingles, windows and doors. Chris had a slide of his jeep; it had blown across the yard, the side mirrors, the windshield, the roof and much of the paint had been sandblasted away, and since there was no place to get it fixed locally, he drove around for four months without a top and with no windshield.

He also had slides of his own house. The roof was gone, all the windows and doors, both inside and out. It took all the ceiling fans off and most of the interior partitions were just bare studs. Of course the furniture was all gone, some of it they never saw again, part of the debris piles, no doubt. In Chris's pumelo grove, the bark was actually missing off the trees; it looked like somebody had taken a knife and peeled the bark off the trunk.

He had a slide of an avocado grove that was typical of the groves in the area; they were all blown over, but today they look beautiful. They set the trees back up and almost all of them survived. Now that they had the opportunity, they decided to rearrange the park by cultural and regional theme areas. They employed a landscape architect, a traffic planner and Chris himself. They got together and divided the park into regional areas,

tropical Asia, tropical America, the Mediterranean, Australia and the Pacific. After they decided exactly how they wanted to rearrange things, they looked at the park. There were a few trees they did not want to move so they tried to work them into the plan where it was appropriate. There were 116 trees they thought were very valuable, either for their botanical value or for landscaping. These they dug up and replanted where they belonged in their new plan. The new arrangement allows them to display the trees much better. Now they can show all of the trees from the Orient, for instance, how they are used, their histories and their practical commercial value. This seems to work so much better than the old arrangement. In addition, they divided each section into three subsections. The first is a plantation. In the Americas section, they chose bananas for their plantation and when you see it, you pretty well know what a banana plantation looks like. The next section beyond the plantation in each geographical area is the economic forest and this is more of a hodgepodge of trees. The final section is a rural traditional rustic farm.

Chris had several slides of the activities they went through in moving trees with bulldozers, front end loaders, forklifts, cranes, etc. It was obviously an awful lot of work and a very time consuming project. The planning area of the original park was about 20 acres with a 10 acre area in parking and other uses. They are now developing the 10 acres and they have installed an eight foot fence around the entire gardens.

Chris also had slides of their bamboo plantation and garden. They were able to obtain donations from a well known bamboo collector and now have one of the most extensive bamboo collections in the United States. They are planning a beautiful meditation garden in the center of the bamboos, an interesting little thing they are adding to the park.

There are two plants, two trees that Chris decided were such crowd pleasers; everybody loves them; they are fascinating to people and they are very strange to our northern tourists and Europeans that come to the park, that they put mass plantings in. They

have never been used that way as landscape plants. They selected the jaboticaba and the jakfruit as being spectacular fruits that catch peoples' attention. Dr. Richard Campbell at the Fairchild Garden Center supplied all the varieties of the jakfruit and they were able to obtain varieties from other sources as well. People will be fascinated walking through the grove and seeing the fruit hanging from the trees, the same, of course, will apply to the jaboticaba.

Chris showed us slides of the most important trees which they have moved from other locations, from Big Pine

Island, from Broward County and other locations. Rare specimens like the Bacari nut and members of the monkey pot nut trees and many other large and very rare tropical trees, some of which are almost non-existent elsewhere in the United States. They also have a palm area and a cactus area, edible fruiting palms and cactus, of course. They are back to their regular programs now; they offer classes every weekend; they offer workshops, special festivals like their summer agricultural fiesta. They also have tours down to the Keys and a lot of other interesting places as part of their program.

What's Happening

September-October, 1996

by Paul Zmoda

Almost everything is growing well these days, thanks to our weather, but before you know it, fall will start cooling things off. Make your last pruning jobs now to just shape all trees. Wait until January or February to really do a thorough pruning session on **deciduous** trees and vines.

I am eagerly awaiting the arrival of gourmet Shiitake mushrooms-no, not a package from somewhere, but homegrown. Although I have never tasted those exotic treats yet, I am in the process of growing my own supply. These mushrooms originated in the Orient and are said to be delicious and nutritious as well as good for lowering cholesterol and boosting the immune system. They are quite expensive in stores (I have seen \$3.00 per ounce recently!!)

Shiitake and some other edible fungi are grown on hardwood logs which are inoculated and then placed in a shaded spot. They are kept somewhat moist until the mycelium within produces fruiting bodies-the umbrella shaped mushrooms.

I purchased the spawn in wooden plugs that contain the mycelia (fungus "roots", so to speak). Oak logs are best to use as a growing medium and are at their optimum when containing maximum tree sugars, in late fall through winter. Drill holes into these logs and then hammer home the plugs. You should then seal them over with melted wax. Colonization of the wood can take 6 to 18 months, followed by the appearance of the mushrooms. Several flushes, or crops, can occur before the logs are spent. Cropping may be induced by soaking the logs in water.

New seeds sprouting: Cashew, Tea, Red Sugar Apple, Tamarind and Rheedia. New plantings include Rollinias, Blue Lilly Pilly, Papaya, Starfruits, Red Plum 'Hollywood', Blackberry Jam Fruit, Bananas, a Guava collection, Coconut Palm, a Pomegranate collection, Cherimoya, Custard Apple, Sugar Apple 'Kampong Mauve', Litchi, Macadamia Nut, Tamarind, 'Fuyu' Persimmon, Queen Palms and 'Sharp' Blueberry.



From the President
Charles Novak

What a great program presented by Chris Rollins at our last meeting! Let's hope we never have a hurricane like Andrew! If someone would like to help set up a club trip to the Fruit and Spice Park next year, let me know and we will work out the details.

Our October speaker, Tom Economou, always gives an interesting program on places he has visited with his tour groups. He also brings some very interesting fruits. Many of the rare fruits I saw for the first time were fruits he exhibited at one of his programs.

November is fast approaching and I hope you are farther ahead than my family in getting your yard sale items together. Let's make the Fruitarama and Community Yard Sale a big success.

I hope to see many of you at the USF plant sale (October 12). Even if you do not bring plants, we would appreciate your help in answering questions from interested shoppers.

The following is a list of scheduled programs/speakers for the next 6 months.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| October: | Tom Economou |
| November: | Fruitarama and sale |
| December: | Second Annual Christmas party |
| January: | Dr. Ralph H. Sharpe, U of FL, Gainesville (Pineapple Guava) |
| February: | Don Chafin - Homestead (Bananas) |
| March: | Annual Plant Sale |

I have received some suggestions for speakers and I will try to schedule him/her some time next year. If you know someone who would present an interesting program, please let me know.

Your ideas and suggestions, and also your complaints, are necessary to improve the club. Call me at home or speak to me at the meeting.

There will be a board meeting after the October club meeting to discuss the following topics: Fruitarama and sale and our Christmas party.

FRUITARAMA GUIDELINES

(Or, how do I sell plants, get rid of junk, pocket change AND help out RFCI?)

Plants, baked goods and garage sale items are needed for next month's event. You may either donate or sell your goods or you may donate some items and sell other items. If you don't have "things" to sell or donate, come help us out-- **we need you all.**

Tasting Table

Your culinary donations will be appreciated so that they can be shared with our visitors. Those items featuring fruit will be best, but all goodies will be accepted. Baked goods wrapped in plastic or bagged or wrapped fruit may also be sold. Refer to "sales guidelines" below.

Donated Items

If convenient, each donated item should be priced by the donor. Please use a white sticker.

70/30 Split Sales Guidelines

Proceeds from any item sold will be split 70 percent (70%) to the vendor and 30 percent (30%) to RFCI.

1. Obtain a vendor number and vendor and price stickers from Frank Burhenn. Call him at 886-4337 or see him at the meeting on October 13.
2. Place a vendor sticker (yellow) on each item you plan to sell. This yellow vendor sticker should reflect your assigned vendor number.
3. Place a price sticker (white) on each item you plan to sell. This white sale sticker should reflect the amount the purchaser is expected to pay. For plants only (in lieu of the white sticker), the price may be indicated on the tag which bears the name of the plant.
4. A vendor who desires to do so may bargain to reach a sales price for his items only. If a price other than the originally-marked amount is agreed to, a new white sticker should be placed over the original one.

Payouts

No inventory sheets will be required as the cashiers will log each sale by vendor number. The logs will be the basis on which the 70/30 split will be made. Payment for items sold can be expected within the week following Fruitarama.



Raffle: September 1996

| Plant Name | Donor | Winner |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Orange Berry | Heath | Pat Woodruff |
| Surinam Cherry | Heath | ? |
| Chaya | Heath | Oliver Moore |
| Fig | Heath | M.M. Court |
| Papaya | Heath | Bryan Frink |
| Pineapple | Heath | Nancy McCormack |
| Tree Basil | Heath | Ricky Maseda |
| <i>Eugenia confusa</i> | Heath | ? |
| Egg Fruit (Canistel) | Tony Ferreira | Zmoda |
| Fig | Tony Ferreira | Pat Jean |
| Swamp Bay Tree | Roy Gear | Ricky Maseda |
| Grafting tape | Roy Gear | Nancy McCormack |
| Grafting tape | Roy Gear | Walter Vines |
| Cavendish Banana | Jules Cohan | P. Cherundolo |
| Monstera | Modesto Arencibia | M.M. Court |
| Monstera | Modesto Arencibia | Beth Reddicliffe |
| Lingaro | Modesto Arencibia | ? |
| Persimmon fruit | Modesto Arencibia | ? |
| Black Sapote | C. Novak | Glen Myrie |
| Black Sapote | C. Novak | ? |
| Coffee | C. Novak | Pat Jean |
| Ceylon Gooseberry | C. Novak | J. Bell |
| Lychee | C. Novak | E. Musgrave |
| Canistel | C. Novak | Frank Woodruff |
| Java Plum | Al Roberts | Yollie Steele |
| Pineapple | Burhenn | ? |
| Surinam Cherry (2) | J. Conard | ?? |
| Java Plum | J. Conard | Kimberly Hunt |
| Mulberry | J. Conard | Helen Drwinga |
| Ginseng | Yuku Tanaka | Jules Cohan |
| Ginseng | Yuku Tanaka | ? |
| Pomegranate | Zmoda | Polly Shewfelt |
| Pomegranate | Zmoda | Kass |
| Pomegranate | Zmoda | ? |
| Red Leaf Philodendron | Ed Musgrave | ? |
| Loquat (3) | Ed Musgrave | Pat Cherundolo |
| Loquat | Ed Musgrave | ? |
| <i>Dioscorea alata</i> | Ed Musgrave | Nancy McCormack |
| <i>Dioscorea alata</i> | Ed Musgrave | ? |
| Arbrovida | Ed Musgrave | Buster Keaton |
| Arbrovida | Ed Musgrave | ? |
| Lychee | Wells & MacNabb | Pat Woodruff |
| Avocado | E. Freedman | Lillian Smoleny |
| Brazilian Banana | S. Baker | ? |
| Jamaican Red Banana | S. Baker | Elaine Sarrasin |
| <i>Musa orunata</i> | S. Baker | Buster Keaton |
| Apple Banana | B. Reddicliffe | Nydia Maurer |
| Spinach Plant | B. Reddicliffe | Kass |
| Loquat | Sam Ramirez | ? |
| Papaya | Sam Ramirez | Frank Woodruff |
| Grape | Gale Hoffman | ? |
| Chaya | Ricky Maseda | ? |
| Curry Leaf | Oliver Moore | Ed Musgrave |
| 1000 Finger Banana | Oliver Moore | ? |

Tasting Table: September 1996

Novak: Persimmon Cookies, Muscadine Nut Squares, Muscadine Grapes

Janet Conard: Pear-Cherry-Walnut Up-Side Down Cake

Lillian Smoleny: Coconut Walnut Lemon Squares

Kass: Strawberry Lemonade & Homemade Soda

B. Reddicliffe: Chocolate Chip Cookies

Modesto Arencibia: Siago Persimmons

Dolores Canter: Crackers & Cheese

Kimberly Hunt: Tuna Sandwiches

George Riegler: Pomegranates

Marjaori Simkins: Fruit Salad

Nancy McCormack: Muffins

Stark: Limeade

Pat Jean: Grapes

Roets: Guava Roll

Sherry Baker: Fudge

Al Roberts: Papaya Juice

Musgraves: Pineapple Pie

Helen Drwinga: Apple Cake

Dedicated to Roy Gear...

*There once was a sweet young wampii
That lived all its life in a swampy
It's roots were all rotten
It was lost and forgotten
Til a hungry gator went chompy!*

Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI
313 Pruett Rd
Seffner FL 33584



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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