



# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1999

**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 THE MONTH @ 2:00 PM.

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 14

MEETING PLACE: MEETING WILL BE HELD AT SAME LOCATION AS SEPT. MEETING AT THE UNIV. OF SOUTH FLORIDA. THIS WILL BE OUR MEETING PLACE FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT YEAR.

PROGRAM: DR. GROSSER, WHO HAS SPOKEN TO US ON TWO PREVIOUS OCCASIONS, WILL RETURN TO REPORT PROGRESS IN HIS HORTICULTURAL ENDEAVORS. DR. GROSSER IS A CELLULAR SCIENTIST WORKING FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA AT THE RESEARCH & EDUCATION CENTER IN LAKE ALFRED. HIS SPECIALTY IS NAKED CELL RESEARCH, IN WHICH CELLS FROM DIFFERENT VARIETIES OF PLANTS OF THE SAME FAMILY ARE ENTICED TO COMBINE AND PRODUCE NEW PLANTS WITH CHARACTERISTICS OF BOTH PARENTS. IT IS A COMPLEX DELICATE, STERILE PROCEDURE THAT IS VERY INTERESTING AND HAS GREAT POTENTIAL IN THE ENTIRE WORLD OF EDIBLE AND ORNAMENTAL PLANTS. IN ADDITION, WE WILL ENJOY OUR TASTING TABLE & RAFFLE. OUR TASTING TABLE IS CERTAINLY THE BEST AMONG ALL CLUBS IN THE AREA; THOSE WHO NEGLECT TO COME TO OUR MEETINGS MISS OUT ON GREAT FOOD. LIKEWISE, THE PLANTS AVAILABLE ON OUR RAFFLE TABLE EACH MONTH ARE EXCEPTIONAL AND PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS WITH A WEALTH OF VALUABLE FLORA. BE THERE!

## New Members

Pat Chuchian 1546 SE 43rd Terrace Ocala, FL 34471 (352)694-4197 pgardener1@aol.com

Dave & Geri Cotter 301 Andover Place S. Villa H101, Sun City Center, FL 33573 (813)633-9411

Kent Helmick & Ted Matthews 5855 Chaps Drive Lakeland, FL 33813 (941)619-7284

Sue Nassivera 2250 N.E. 70th Street Ocala, FL 34479 (352)351-1176 sportcopy@aol.com

Jocarol & Raoul Smith 417 St. Augustine Avenue Temple Terrace, FL 33617 (813)988-5412  
raoul-jocarol-smith@worldnet.att.net

Tom Solosky 2104 Haydon Court Brandon, FL 33511 (813)6432944 tsolosky@dcmde.dla.mil

Bonnie & Jack Ward 16522 Lake Heather Drive Tampa, FL 33618 (813)963-0024  
wards@tampabat.rr.com



## SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL

The University of South Florida Spring Plant Festival will be held April 10 & 11. We will participate. Further details will be presented at the March meeting and in the April newsletter. USF personnel will need some assistance in setting up tents and other facilities on April 9, starting at 12 noon. We will have a sign-up sheet at the March meeting for those who are willing to help. Our participation in the set-up is important if we are to maintain our partnership relationship with the USF Botanical Gardens. If you can, please make yourself available on April 9, 10 & 11.

From the President  
Charles Novak

I hope all of you visited our State Fair exhibit. I want to thank everyone who helped with the setting up, manning and removal of the display. A special "thank you" to Pat Patterson and Frank Burhenn for the great job they did in designing and setting up the display. While manning the display we had a lot of interest from the fair attendees and answered many questions concerning citrus and other fruits. We also received many favorable comments. I think members who have manned our display in the past have enjoyed meeting the public and talking about our club and what we are growing.

Sandie Mulrooney gave an interesting presentation about the planting of vegetable gardens in depressed neighborhoods. It seems that the common interest in planting seeds and plants tends to bring people together. If you have any extra tools, seeds, etc., that you would like to donate to the Weed and Feed Program, you can contact me and I'll pass the information on to Sandie.

We would like to plan another club activity in the near future (a field trip to ?, a picnic or some other fun activity). If you have a suggestion, I would like very much to hear it. Call me or tell me your ideas at the next club meeting.

If you are interested in growing Citrus you definitely will want to attend Dr Grosser's presentation at the March 14 meeting. He is involved with the development of new disease resistant and cold hardly Citrus. The following is a list of scheduled programs/speakers:

March 14	Dr Grosser - Growing Citrus Cultures
April	USF Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale
May 9	Gene Joyner

Lanny Brooks will begin scheduling speakers for our club meetings (beginning with the June meeting). If you know of someone who might present a program of interest to club members, please contact Lanny at (813) 926-9887.

The club's Board of Directors will be elected at the March meeting. The Board may consist of up to 15 members, and is responsible for the policies, finances and direction of the club.

There will be a Board meeting after the regular meeting, and Board officers will be elected.

## Weed & Seed

### by Sandie Mulrooney

Sandie Mulrooney is currently employed by the Hillsborough County Agricultural Extension Service as the Community Garden Program Coordinator. The Weed and Seed program is federally funded to help needy families become a little more self sufficient and better fed by providing the wherewithal to grow vegetables in a garden setting. The site donated for this particular weed and seed program was in a telephone line right-of-way which provided a very long and narrow site in what is commonly called suitcase city because of the transient nature of most of the inhabitants. This community garden is a 30' x 150' site on Livingston Avenue near Fletcher and Bruce B. Downs. It is not a very nice neighborhood; in fact, it is downright frightening. But with the help of a chain link fence and participation by local sheriff deputies, it became quite comfortable. The people in this neighborhood are, of course, the kind of people the program is designed for.

To prepare the site further required a shed for storing tools and a water supply for irrigation. Sandie and her volunteers divided the site up into 39 plots, 10' x 10' on a side. This is not enough space to feed a family, of course, which is not the purpose of the program exclusively, but rather to build confidence and to provide a variety of vegetables for their meals. A large pile of top soil and compost was also necessary. With all this activity the neighborhood denizens began to show an interest in the proceedings, especially among the children, who were particularly attracted by the pile of sand and other activities. However, it was much more difficult to convince the adults that this was a program from which they could benefit, that there would be physical results, not just words. It actually took 6 months to get the first gardeners to commit themselves.

Gradually, however, the adults began to overcome their distrust of authority and fear of their neighbors. As the distrust and fear began to melt away, they discovered that there were others concerned about the neighborhood. As they began to realize what the program offered, leaders began to emerge and people began to smile and greet one another. They discovered the benefits of working side by side with their neighbors for a common interest. The participants, of course, had little knowledge of farming but they learned fast from classes given by master gardeners and the experience gained by actually growing vegetables. Sandie was able to discover a source of horse manure and mulch for the garden and out of date seeds were donated by a garden seed company. Lumber and tools were also donated, as well as time and enthusiasm. The average gardener involved in this program may be mentally and financially challenged. The highest income of the participants was roughly \$800 a month. They could not afford a hobby such as gardening on their own and did not have their own transportation. Most were unemployed and did not feel good about themselves. Six months into the program nearly all developed much more self esteem and some actually went out and obtained jobs. Two eventually were actually able to purchase homes outside the area.

Sandie is getting the participants working on other projects such as wildlife habitats, planting bee plants for bees to act as pollinators, building compost bins, arranging for regular manure pickups and providing for gleaning some fruits and vegetables from commercial farms and groves for such agencies as Metropolitan Ministries. At this time the project seems to be self sustaining but Sandie still has an extensive wish list; she needs a greenhouse and trays for starting seeds; she wants to develop raised beds because many of the participants are elderly or disabled physically. She also needs some shredders and chippers for mulch and composting.

Any of our members interested in this type of activity should contact Sandie to offer their assistance as volunteers.

## Raffle: February 1999

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Banana	Heath	Nancy McCormack
Pineapple	Heath	Carol Propper
Papaya	Heath	Michael Oney
Passion Fruit	Heath	?
Celeste Fig	Heath	Susan McAveety
Rose Apple	Heath	Ron Shigemura
Carambolas	Heath	Paul Branesky
Carambolas	Heath	Angel Branesky
Carambolas (4)	Heath	????
Passion Fruit	Charles Novak	Sharon Pilot
Passion Fruit	Charles Novak	Susan McAveety
Passion Fruit	Charles Novak	Marys Lawson
Guava	Charles Novak	Jim Wood
Guava	Charles Novak	?
<i>Eugenia</i> sp.	Jan Conard	Penny Filtzmoyer
Avocado	Norwood Smith	Tom Solosky
Avocado	Norwood Smith	Art Hedstrand
Hawaiian Papayas & seed	Penny Filtzmoyer	R. Johnson
Brazilian Guava	Stark	Bob Heath
Brazilian Guava	Stark	Kent Helmick
Brazilian Guava	Stark	Alda Conceicao
Brazilian Guava	Stark	Myren Branesky
Brazilian Guava	Stark	Angel Branesky
White Spider Lily (Crinum)	Stark	Sally Lee
White Spider Lily (Crinum)	Stark	?
Ripe Papaya	Paul Branesky	Nancy McCormack

**ARE YOU A "?"** *Please...please...please print your name on the Plant Exchange List when you bring a plant and when you get a plant. It helps all of us know who is trying to grow what.*



## Tasting Table: February 1998

Novak: Guava Cookies, Fruit Juice, Baked Bananas in Lemon Sauce, Calamondin Muffins

Shigemura: Mango & Strawberry Agar-agar

Pat Jean: Cookies

Peg Mann: Coconut-orange Cookies

Musgraves: Cherry Cake

Sally Lee: Lemonade, Lemon Cake

Stark: Palestinian Sweet Limes

Janet Conard: Banana Cookies

Maryann: Sweet Rice, Papaya, Ube

Al Roberts: Calamondin Cake



WHAT'S HAPPENING  
Feb-Mar 1999  
by Paul Zmoda

Our new citrus orchard is looking good - new sprouts everywhere and lots of flower buds. The pumello trees that I grafted in 1997 are showing a few flowers already. These trees are less than 5 feet tall. I replaced a couple of trees that either died or were having problems due to trifoliate orange rootstock's incompatibility with our very moist soil. One was the Pidala pink grapefruit and the other was the citrus hybrid 'Chironja'. These I regrafted onto pumello roots.

I picked our first medlar fruit after the past frosty weather. This 'Nottingham' medlar is about one inch across and looks somewhat like a rusty crabapple. I allowed it to sit in the kitchen to "blet", that is, to over-ripen until becoming soft. It tasted rather bland, dryish and pasty. I suppose if you had enough of them, there is the potential to make some tasty desserts only because good things are added to them.

I gave all my trees a dose of citrus fertilizer (10-4-10 with micronutrients). After working with pawpaws recently, I decided to move one promising specimen from my old homestead to the new farm. This tree was in the sandy ground in full sun for 8 years and had only grown to about 7 inches tall since being planted bare-foot. It only really started to get taller in the last 2 years. Upon digging it up, I could see why: the large, fleshy root system was impressive to see. Apparently the pawpaw spends a long time putting new roots to work and only then will it begin to gain height. I hope I didn't set it back too much by moving it.

I grafted eight 'Guthrie' chickasaw plums onto chickasaw seedling rootstock using whip grafts. Most were 1/8 to 3/16 inch diameters.

After obtaining some new seeds of pawpaw, sorbs and capulin cherry, I soaked them for 24 hours in plain water. I then wrapped them in moist paper towels in plastic bags and placed them in the refrigerator. There they will stratify for 1 to 3 months before planting. Many temperate fruit seeds need this treatment to sprout.

#### ANNUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

At the March meeting, the members will elect a Board of Directors. The Board will then elect the executive officers to serve for the next 12 months. Directors must be willing and able to make a significant commitment of time and energy to the Club. All Board of Directors meetings are open to the entire membership and we encourage members to attend and participate in discussion of issues. The nominating committee has selected the following members for your consideration as the next Board of Directors. Additional nominations may be accepted from the floor at the March meeting. The maximum number of directors allowed by our Club's bylaws is 15. Salvatore Russo and any additional nominations may be allowed to serve as auxiliary board members.

Jerry Amyot  
Lanny Brooks  
Janet Conard  
Bob Heath

Art Hedstrand  
Al Jean  
Pat Jean  
James Lee

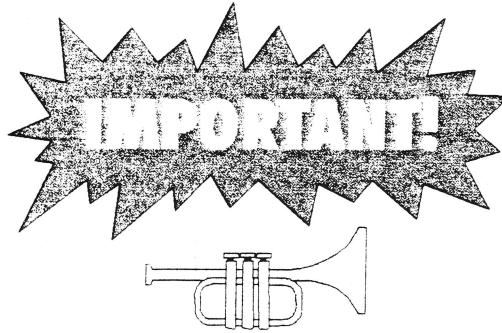
Sally Lee  
Susan McAveety  
Charles Novak  
Linda Novak

Arnold Stark  
Lillian Stark  
Paul Vranesky  
Salvatore Russo

#### AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS

As presently written, our by-laws allow the Board of Directors to disperse club funds in any amount at their discretion. We wish to amend the by-laws to require approval of a majority of the membership for all expenditures over \$5,000.00.

A vote will be taken at the March meeting concerning this amendment.



If there is a ***red*** mark on your mailing label  
***your*** Annual Membership Dues are Due in March  
 Please send \$18 to the club mailing address:  
 313 Pruett Road, Seffner, FL 33584  
 or pay at the March meeting

RFCI Tampa Bay Chapter  
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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