



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1999

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, CHARLES NOVAK, LINDA NOVAK, JIM LEE, SALLY LEE

PRESIDENT: CHARLES NOVAK

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH @ 2:00 PM.

NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 9 & 10, 1999 @ USF (SEE PROGRAM BELOW)

PROGRAM: THE USF PLANT FESTIVAL IS SCHEDULED FOR OUR REGULAR MEETING DATE, THE 9th & 10th of OCTOBER. Consequently, our scheduled program for October will be participation in the USF Spring Plant Festival. All members are invited to participate and bring plants to donate or sell. Parking is free but admission is \$1.00, for which the Club will reimburse workers and participants in the Sale. This is an interesting affair and well worth the \$1.00 admission. Likewise, it is a social event as well as a money maker for the Club. There will be no tasting table or plant raffle this month. But we desperately need workers. Let's make this USF Sale our big one. Please join us!

U.S.F. FALL PLANT FESTIVAL

The RFCI will be participating in the USF PLANT FESTIVAL on October 9 & 10, 1999. This is an important fund raiser and all members are invited to attend, to assist in the Sale, to sell plants, to enjoy the camaraderie and to visit other groups.

Our participation will begin around 1:00 Friday afternoon, October 8, raising tents, setting up tables, arranging plants and posters, til about 6:00 p.m.

On Saturday, Oct. 9, the Gardens will be open from 7:00 a.m. til 9:00 a.m. for our final preparations. Price for admission is \$1.00, reimbursed by the Club.

The front gate will close at 8:30 a.m. Saturday & Sunday, and participants will have to enter by the side south gate after the front gate closes, until 9:00.

From 7:00 a.m. til 9:00 a.m. on Saturday & Sunday, traffic will be one way, in the front gate and out the side gate. The Festival will end at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, and only after 4:15 and 3:15 p.m. respectively, will we be allowed to bring vehicles in to remove plants or re-supply.

Parking for participants not bringing supplies or plants is across the street from the front entrance to the Gardens.

The USF Botanical Gardens takes 10% of our gross sales; the remaining 90% will be split 70/20 between the participant and the RFCI, so mark your plants accordingly, remembering that you get 70% of the selling price, less taxes.

We have provided a list of RFCI workers to the Gardens. Only those on the list will be allowed in before the Sale begins. If you are refused admittance, someone from our group will vouch for you to gain your admittance.

DIRECTIONS TO THE USF SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL:

Enter the Gardens from Bruce B. Downs one block north of Fowler, turn East on Pine Street, and Left at Alumni Drive. Go one block to the Gardens entrance.

SEED SAVERS by Wae Nelson

Basically, Wae says the idea of the Seed Savers is to preserve our genetic heritage. We all have the facility we call eating and most of us enjoy it. But to do that we have to have the food crops and there is some concern that things are going on in the world today that may not provide the genetic diversity and the safety in our food crops that we have had in the past. Our species has been agricultural for about 4000 years and over that time we have developed from the wilds all the vegetative items that we eat. Corn is a good example, the corn they grow in the Midwest. It is not unusual to see ears of corn that are 12" or 14" long and almost 4" in diameter, all of which came from a plant in the wild with an ear of corn about the size of the first joint of your little finger. That is what our species has developed over some thousands of years. So you can see that the developments we have made in our food crop are very important.

Two factors concerning our food crop are of concern to a great number of people. One of these factors is the ever consolidating control of the seed of food crops. There are progressively less and less seed companies and as they become more and more concentrated, they become more and more powerful and less and less responsive to the market, at least to the market as we would like it. If you pay attention to your seed catalogs, you will see that more and more varieties are being dropped from the seed catalogs. The remaining items that are being offered in seed catalogs are mostly commercial varieties, except in more specialized seed companies. Those of us who garden kind of get the leftovers. The big growers in Zellwood, Ruskin and out in California are the ones that are buying the seed in large quantities and they are the ones who determine what the seed companies produce.

The second factor that is becoming a problem concerns the genetic manipulations that are underway. Wae doesn't see much that we can do about this problem except to develop our own beach heads.

The slides Wae showed us were taken at the Seed Savers Exchange, an amateur organization based in Decorah, Iowa, with approximately 7000 members worldwide. They operate by saving, growing out and trading seeds of vegetable crops.

The foundation of Seed Savers goes back to Kent Whealy. Kent's father-in-law gave him a bag of bean seeds one day and said, "Kent, I want you to take care of these. My family brought them when they came over from Bavaria." When immigrants came to this country they brought the seeds with them. Seeds were life. They came in with seeds sewed into their clothing. We don't think much about all the vegetables that came into this country that way, where they came from, or where they're going for that matter. Kent just put the seeds up in the pantry without thinking too much about it, but about 3 months later his father-in-law died. Then Kent remembered the seeds and realized that they may be the only seeds of that kind in the world, and if they were to remain, it was up to him to keep them. For those who have never thought about it, you should be aware that seeds are living entities. They are not like a grain of sand or a piece of rock that you could put up and leave for 100 years or a million years for that matter. All stored seeds have a life span. Some may last a long time. Some bean seeds have been found viable after 3000 years. Bean seeds were found in the ancient tombs among the Incas, were planted and some grew out. Other seeds like onions and parsnips and many others may last a year and then they are gone. And of course as we know, some of the tropical fruit, if they show any drying, are passe'. As an example of this, Wae planted 500 lychee seeds; two sprouted. The rest were dead. So this is a problem we have with seeds. One cannot simply put them in storage and say when we need them we'll just go get them. There has to be a continuing involvement. And this is what the Seed Savers Exchange does. There are a lot of people involved in this; they're doing a lot of different things.

A kind of mascot of Seed Savers is the

Moon & Stars watermelon. When Kent first started the Seed Savers as a small organization in the Midwest, he came and spoke to a lot of different organizations, and one of the things he spoke about was the watermelon known as the Moon & Stars. It is called the Moon & Stars because it has a very dark rind and on the rind are lots of tiny spots, bright yellow spots, most of which are small like the stars, but usually with one or more the size of a quarter and so, the moon. Kent knew about this watermelon; he had read about it in the literature and it was very popular at the turn of the century, but he could not find it today. So he would talk about it; he'd use the Moon & Stars as an example of why it's so important to save seeds. After doing this for about three years, one afternoon he got a phone call from a gentleman in Missouri who said, "I've got your melon." Fortunately, that family had kept the Moon & Stars alive so that today it is available, even commercially. There are red meat Moon & Stars, yellow meat Moon & Stars and white meat Moon & Stars, black seed and brown seed types. An excellent melon, a fabulous melon and it was almost lost. There is a cantaloupe that was grown around Indiana years ago and was shipped into Chicago; it was so popular that they shipped it by trainloads. Today we have no idea what it tastes like; it's totally lost. That's what Seed Savers is trying to prevent.

Seed Savers has a camp-out every summer and Wae had slides of the activities. There are a lot of activities going on among the very dedicated people.

Carl Barnes is half Cherokee. Carl collected flint corn; he was also breeding flint corn and Wae had a slide showing us the varieties of flint corn that Carl has collected. We were able to see the amazing range of colors and variations. Carl was working toward the development of a green corn and he had nearly achieved it at the time

of his death. Although he had some corn that produced some green kernels, they were not consistent. Corn is originally from Mexico and in Mexico they have a depository. There is corn for instance, that will not grow below 4000 feet.

Wae also had slides of the bean collection, some of which trace their heritage back to the Incas. Beans, as we know, are a New World vegetable.

There is a national seed depository in Fort Collins, Colorado. Seeds can be stored for a longer period and remain viable if they are frozen. In Fort Collins they dry them and freeze them in liquid nitrogen. So they get a long period of storage but after a determinate period of time they thaw them and grow them out; then re-do the process. But after the years of storage only a certain number sprout and they found that the plants are changing. It seems that the seeds with the longest shelf life are different from those with a short shelf life and certain characteristics of long shelf life are being developed, so it appears they are not getting a true genetic preservation.

Wae showed us a slide of the gardens at the Seed Savers Foundation. There are two things that go on at Seed Savers. One, they have gardens where they grow out things themselves. The second thing is that the membership, you might call them the amateurs, grow out things themselves. So the work at the Seed Savers Foundation is actually a small part of the total grow-out that is occurring in the entire organization to make sure seeds are not lost. The long rows that we were observing are not all one species. There may be six or eight different vegetables growing in one row. A huge variety of plants are being grown there. Of course, in this arrangement, there is a problem of undesirable cross-pollination. Some things, tomatoes and beans, will pretty well self-pollinate, but corn is a monster. Corn is air pollinated, so in order to certify that a particular corn is pure, you have to certify that no other corn was within a mile of the selected variety, unless efforts are made to isolate the tassel and silk.

(CONTINUED NEXT MONTH)

From the President
Charles Novak

I hope everyone enjoyed the September meeting and found it as informative as I did. Wae Nelson's program on Seed Savers stressed the importance of saving and planting seeds; also, how large corporations are altering the foods we eat through genetic engineering.

At the time of this writing Al Hendry, one of our past presidents (and long time club member), is in the hospital. He is making a steady recovery and should be home shortly.

Please help at the Fall Plant Festival at the University of South Florida Botanical Garden (October 9 & 10).

Friday – Help unload and setup after 1 P.M.

Saturday / Sunday – Help cashier, assist customers, give out club information and sign up new memberships, answer questions, assist where needed.

Sunday - load plants

Bring your extra fruiting plants to sell. It helps the club and helps you to defray the cost of growing the plants. The Plant Sales are a lot of fun; please join us at least one day.

Chris Rollins, the Director of the Fruit and Spice Park, will not be at the November meeting. He is now doing a radio show on Sundays in Homestead. I have scheduled Paul Carideo who will be doing a presentation on the decorative carving of fruits and the making of salsas using fruits. You may be inspired to create some interesting displays for your Thanksgiving table.

The following is a list of scheduled programs/speakers:

October 9 & 10	USF Fall Plant Sale
November 14	Paul Carideo Fruit usage.
December 12	Christmas/Hanukkah Social
January 15	Citrus Celebration
February 13	Tom Economou

As of yet no one has offered to have an open house for members to view his/her fruit tree plantings. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact me.

PLEASE POST THE FLYERS !!

(make extra copies if needed)

WHAT'S HAPPENING

SEP-OCT 1999

by Paul Zmoda

Our orchard is progressing quite nicely thanks to lots of sunlight, adequate water, a fertilizer regimen and lots of TLC. I did a summer pruning of peaches and apples several weeks back and these are branching very well and vigorously. You don't have to wait until winter to work on your crucial branching structure; you can prune lightly at midsummer. I've taken to shearing some Eugenias, such as Surinam cherries, to promote fuller shrubs.

We had a bountiful crop of lilly pillies. These shrubs looked like Christmas trees with many attractive decorations showing. The load of berries was lavender colored, crunchy and refreshing to eat. One passion fruit is flowering well now that days are getting shorter, and setting gobs of well sized fruit. These are yellow with touches of pink and are delicious. We are currently eating lots of sugar apples. We have green ones, raspberry red ones and the dusky, purple 'Kampong Mauve' to enjoy. I plant all of the seeds from the colored fruits.

Our largest soursop, or guanabana, has been blooming. This is the earliest in the year that I've ever seen a soursop flower. I'm hoping that this is the year we finally set some fruit. This has been my quest for many years. I attribute this early flowering and also on other, younger fruit trees to a fertilizer that I haven't ever used before.

This spring I acquired about a quarter ton of a then-unknown substance which I was fairly certain was some kind of fertilizer. I had it analyzed at Thornton Laboratories in Tampa. Their report showed it to be 0-46-0 or triple super phosphate. My research shows this to be the most useful form of phosphorus fertilizer. It is essential for healthy growth, strong roots, fruit development and resistance to diseases.

Now, whenever I mix up a batch of potting soil, I am sure to blend in some of this phosphate and it really does promote early flowering! Phosphorus moves slowly through the soil so placing it throughout the root zone is more effective than as a side dressing atop the soil.

Member's Corner

FOR SALE: 8 Horsepower Troybilt chipper/shredder with different particle screens and pushing tool. \$75.00. Fine condition. See Paul Zmoda.

FOR SALE: Two good kerosene heaters. \$50.00 for both. Charles Novak (813) 754-1399.

FOR SALE: Cast iron Franklin stove, complete, like new. \$75.00. Bob Heath (813) 289-1068.



RAFFLE: September 1999

PLANT NAME	DONOR	WINNER
Philippine Sage	Ted Matthews	N. Gasperment
" "	Kent Helmick	Polly Shewfelt
Watermelon	" "	
Lychee	George Riegler	Phil Brown
Red Papaya	Jim Stout	Steven Branesky
" "	" "	Pauline Chung
" "	" "	Dan Iglesias
Papaya	Shane Smith	Angel Branesky
Prickless Pear Cactus	" "	
Jakfruit	Myren Branesky	N. Gasperment
" "	Steven Branesky	Steven Anthony
Cavendish banana	T. Scott	
Mexican pineapple	" "	
Yucca root	Lee	Bob Heath
Yucca Sticks	" "	
Wonder of the World	" "	
Yesterday Today Tomorrow	" "	Elaine Sarrasen
" " "	" "	Jim Stout
Banana Red Iholene	Ricky Maseda	
Banana Super Dwarf	" "	
Banana Tall Brazilian	" "	
Thornless blackberry	Sharon Pilot	
Garcinia xanthrocymus	Charles Novak	Maryse J. Lawson
Tamarind	" "	Susan McAveety
Passion fruit	" "	Dan Iglesias
Sugar Apple	" "	Jon Young
" "	" "	T. Scott
Surinam cherry	" "	Tom Solosky
Cycad-Zamia	" "	
Flowering banana	" "	
Pomegranate	" "	
Carambola jelly	Jan Conard	Sal Russo
Papaya	Heath	Maripe
Pineapple	" "	Art Hedstrand
Red passion fruit	" "	Jim Davis
Banana	" "	Buster Keaton
Loquat	" "	T. Anthony
Jaboticaba	" "	Tom Solosky
Eugenia confusa	" "	Jan Conard
Cereus cactus	Zmoda	
Dwarf Cavendish	J. Murrie	
Loquat	Lanny	Shane Smith
" "	" "	Georganne Baker
" "	" "	Susan McAveety
" "	" "	Jerry Amyot
" "	" "	N. McCormack
Brazilian banana		Ted Mathews
Red banana	R. Maseda	N. McCormack

A VISIT WITH CHARLES and LINDA NOVAK

by Art Hedstrand

This man really has a collection! If I were to list all the varieties, this piece would only be a plant list. Charles and Linda's neighborhood has lots of houses but they're on large lots with a lot of trees so it conveys a 'country' feeling.

The front yard has a circular concrete drive and large oaks which are pruned up high to give an open airy feeling with lots of shade. Large oaks pretty much enclose the perimeters of the property. In the side yard an old grape arbor has Cowart, Fry, Triumph and a wild Muscadine. The wild has a massive trunk in contrast to the other vines. Linda's favorite fig is Brown Turkey; a Lemon fig has just so-so flavor, and there's a small nematode resistant fig from the University of Louisiana. Next to the grape arbor is a huge hedge of Surinam cherry in the 15 to 20 ft. height range. Charles says the secret to getting 18" annual growth in Jaboticaba is mulch, water and fertilizer.

In the southwest corner by the road is an attractive nuisance! - an Orinoco banana clump which has been raided numerous times; behind it a beautiful erect clump of huge timber bamboo. Kiwi, Hardy Kiwi, Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*), red and yellow Catley guava, common guava, Ceylon olive, grafted large-fruited jaboticaba are a few of the interesting items in the side yard.

The citrus collection includes thornless Key lime, Spanish and Persian lime; Thompson Pink and Duncan grapefruit; Valencia, variegated Valencia and Blood oranges; Ponderosa and Myers lemons; Honey murcott, Dancy tangerine; Orlando and Lee tangelo ("the best" proclaims Linda!); Praying Hand citron and pommelos: White, Thai Red and White, Siam Sweet, Bahama Star and Ray Jones "best" pommelo from Indonesia - pink, fine grained, juicy and thin skinned.

Plums include native Chickasaw and another big wild one (their massive white show of blossoms herald spring while winter is still here), one from Bemis Gordon, purple and red from Ron Lambert - the latter "good fruit" - Charles. Some pears: from Bemis and a soft-when-ripe pineapple type. There is a huge Anna which produces well and a Golden Dorset apple. Persimmons are represented by Suruga, Tamopan, Tanenashi and Fuyu.

A large golden giant loquat, a smaller fruited yellow loquat of good flavor, a Redlands white sapote and Macadamia complete the larger trees in the side yard. After viewing the young paw paw patch we go to the greenhouse. What surprised me about it was how well the trees look. It's a jungle with probably 3/4 in the ground, the rest in large pots. Julie, Carrie, Bailey's Marvel, Nam Doc Mai mangoes, wampi, ambarella, Cape Chestnut, atemoya, sugar apple, custard apple, ilama, pitomba, cashew, Garcinia-mangosteen graft, green mamey sapote, Fairchild mamey sapote, canistel, jakfruit, tamarind, olive, allspice, bigney and so on - you name it, it's in there!

This is a great collection and so nicely done. With a full time job, this is truly a credit to Charles' perseverance. Thanks, Charles and Linda.

* * * *

I am in need of a yard to visit for my write-up in the next newsletter. Please contact Art Hedstrand, 33456 Cortez Blvd, Ridge Manor FL 33523

PLEASE POST THE FLYERS !!

(make extra copies if needed)

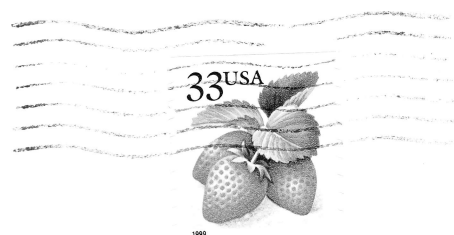
Tasting Table: September 1999**Novak:** Muscadine upside down cake, Apple cake, Downy Myrtle jam & jelly, fruit juice**Lee:** Carambola cookies & bread, Pecan pralines, Persimmon pudding, Lemonade**Ted Matthews & Kent Helmick:** Lime cookies, Chocolate Chip cookies**Musgraves:** Cherry angel cake**Al Roberts:** Calamondin cake, Orange juice**Jan Elliot:** Toasted pita with poha spread**Paul Branesky:** Mango Salsa**Elaine Sarrasin:** Tropical fruit salad**Pat McGrauley:** Guava snack**Pat Jean:** Sugar cookies**Jud Newcombe:** Carambola**Londa Amyot:** Fruit filled wontons**Bonnie Ward:** Hawaiian sweet bread, grapes**Tess & Deven Anthony:** FL Key lime pies**Nancy McCormack:** Fancy toast

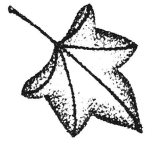
And other delicious contributions that were not listed on the sign-up sheet.

Thanks!

Please POST THE FLYERS.

(make extra copies if necessary)

RFCI, TAMPA BAY CHAPTER
313 PRUETT RD
SEFFNER FL 33584**FIRST CLASS MAIL**P. JUDSON NEWCOMBE
314 DEER PARK AVE.
TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617



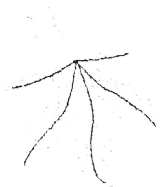
Rare Fruit Council International



*invites you to join us
at*

*The University of South Florida
Botanical Garden*

1999 Fall Plant Festival



Saturday, October 9th from 10 am - 4 pm

Sunday, October 10th from 10 am - 3 pm

Thousands of plants for sale at the
LARGEST PLANT SALE in the bay area.
Come join the fun!

Antique Roses

Aroids

Bamboo

Bananas

Begonias

Bromeliads

Butterfly Plants

Cactus & Succulents

Citrus

Ferns

Herbs

Hibiscus

Hoyas

Native Plants-

Palms

Orchids

Camellias

And more!!!

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