



# NEWSLETTER APRIL 2004

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

EDITORS: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, CHARLES NOVAK, LINDA NOVAK, JIM LEE, SALLY LEE

PRESIDENT: JIM LEE

WEBSITE: [www.rarefruit.org](http://www.rarefruit.org) (Charles Novak)

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

NEXT MEETING: APRIL 10 & 11 @ USF (SEE BELOW)

PROGRAM: THE USF SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL is scheduled for April 10 & 11. Consequently, we will forego our usual monthly meeting which would be on the 2nd Sunday of the month, Apr 11, to participate in the USF Plant Festival. All members are invited to participate & bring plants to donate or sell. Parking is free but admission is \$3.00 for which the club will reimburse workers who participate in the Sale. This is an interesting affair & well worth the admission. Likewise it is a social event as well as a money maker for the club. We will have no tasting table or plant raffle. But we desperately need workers. Let's make this USF Sale our big one. Please join us!

## USF SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL

The RFCI will participate in the USF Plant Festival on Apr 10 & 11, 2004. This is an important fund raiser & all members are invited to attend, to assist in the Sale, to sell plants, to enjoy the camaraderie & to visit other groups.

Our participation will begin around 1:00 Friday afternoon, Apr 9, raising tents, setting up tables, arranging plants & posters, till about 6:00 pm.

On Saturday Apr 10, the Gardens will be open from 7:00 to 9:00 am for our final preparations.

The front gate will close at 8:30 am Saturday & Sunday, & participants will enter by the side south gate after the front gate closes, on foot, until 9:00. Public will be admitted @ 10:00 on both days. Admission price is \$3.00.

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

Parking for participants not bringing plants or supplies 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 & the RFCI, so mark your plants accordingly, remembering that you get 70% of the selling price, less taxes.

We have provided ID cards for RFCI workers. Only those with ID cards will be allowed in before the Sale begins. If you are refused admittance, someone from our group will vouch for you to gain admittance.

## DIRECTIONS TO USF SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL:

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

## MY FAVORITE FRUIT

by Ray Jones

Ray Jones began his talk with a short rundown on his background and qualifications. One day while living in Hollywood, FL in 1973, he saw an article in the newspaper that the Rare Fruit Council was having a plant sale in Miami at the Energy Auditorium. Ray's wife asked if he had ever heard of a durian or sugar apple or mangosteen. He said no, and she said, "Look at these strange fruit. Don't you think it would be interesting to go to the sale and take our children to it?" He agreed and they went to the plant sale. He has been hooked ever since. The membership is not that expensive and the knowledge shared and the camaraderie is wonderful. Just planting a tree and having it fruit is an experience in itself. He compares eating tropical fruit with going into outer space. The first time you've done it, it's out of this world and once you've done it, you want to keep on doing it. In 1985 he bought a house in Manatee County, and in 1986 he started the Manatee County Chapter of the RFCI and served as president for the first 2 years. Recently he was asked to come out of retirement by many of the club members and be president again, so he agreed to act as president for 1 more year.

He calls his program "The Top 10 Tropical Fruit for this Area" and he added that we can note that citrus is conspicuous by its absence, as well as fruit like durians and Malay apples that positively will not fruit here. His selection is a matter of choice, personal preference, and may not agree with everyone else's taste.

His first selection is the mango, which certainly is a favorite for almost everyone. One nice thing about the mango is that there are late and early varieties, and if you have the right selections, you can get fruit over an extended period of time. Today we even have what they call "condo mangos" which can be grown in a large pot on the patio. The one projected on the screen was called the Baileys Marvel. He got his tree from Bob Muray on Pine Island. It is a fast growing so owners

need to be judicious in their pruning. It will grow up to 60 ft. and what you get are flattened mangos when they fall. He likes to keep his trees heavily trimmed so he can control their size where the fruit are easy to pick and where they don't shade out other plants too badly. The Baileys Marvel seems to be more cold hardy than most other mangos. It is a very large fruit, almost round like a pumpkin, with a very small seed and absolutely no fiber, and is sweet and delicious.

The next slide was the Keitt mango, which is the largest commercial variety. The Keitt is a marvelous mango, creamy and delicious. It does have quite a large seed and there is a little fiber. It is among the largest mangos.

The next fruit he showed us was the sapodilla. The sapodilla is very cold sensitive, only good down to about 30°, but recently a lot of new fruit have been brought in from the Honduras and Guatemala. These new varieties were brought in by Zills Nursery in Boynton Beach. He has made selections from those and talked to the people in those countries.

The first he showed us is called the Oxcutzcab. It is among the largest sapodillas available. Ray indicated that it was half the size of a football. There is only one seed and a very thin skin and the flavor is just out of this world. He compared the flavor to a stewed apple with brown sugar & cinnamon. Ray indicated they eat a lot of them and his grandson loves them and even the dog likes them. He doesn't know anyone who has an allergy to sappdillas, as with mangos. All sapodillas taste about the same. As the fruit approaches ripeness, the fuzz on the skin starts coming off and the skin becomes slick. When you see that happening, you need to check on them day by day as it won't help much if they fall to the ground and squash. If they start getting finger soft, pull them off and leave them on the counter top until they're well ripened. The sapodillas tree is where the chewing gum used to come from. It was produced from the sap of the tree, which is called

chicle. Another variety he recommends is the Hasya, which is quite large, as Ray showed us on the screen, almost the size of a 12 oz. drink can. The Hasya is also extremely heavy bearing. Ray also showed us the Marino, which he considers one of the best tasting sapodillas.

Another of his favorite fruit because it is so versatile and fruits so heavily, is the carambola or star fruit. One variety, the Fwang Tung, is a marvelous fruit, has a taste, Ray says, like a combination of an apple and a plum. The Fwang Tung was brought to the United States recently from Thailand and is very sweet and juicy compared to the tart varieties. One of the nice things about the carambola is that one can cook with it. The ripe fruit can be sliced after trimming 1/16" from the end of the wings and stir fried with peppers, onions and shrimp to produce an interesting and tasty dish. They also may be cut up ripe in salad with other salad ingredients and salad dressing. Ripe, they may be eaten out of hand as a dessert fruit or cooked with sugar and seasoning as a dessert. They may also be sliced up and frozen for future use. The juice makes an excellent white wine, tasting almost like a German Rhine - or may be fermented drier to taste more like a Chardonnay.

Ray next showed us a member of the Annona family, the cherimoya, which may very well be the best tasting of all the Annonas. It is an excellent fruit. Unfortunately, Florida is very flat and the cherimoya grows at higher altitudes and likes cooler nights in the summer than we get here. It doesn't do well here. Allan Smith in St. Petersburg says he has a cherimoya that fruits well and has delicious fruit. It looks and tastes like a cherimoya but Ray thinks there might be some hybridization in that tree with some other Annona. The sugar apple is another in the Annona family. The difference from the atemoya: the sugar apple is divided into individual segments which can be pulled apart and eaten individually. The nice thing about the sugar apple is that it fruits so profusely and has a great flavor and is as sweet as a cherimoya. Ray indicated that several

years ago in Miami a chance hybridization took place between the cherimoya and the sugar apple and produced what we call the atemoya, which has been worked on considerably since then to produce a variety of atemoyas that are available today. One produced at Zills Nursery is called the 4826. It is extremely prolific and produces fruit like there's no tomorrow (sounds like the carambola) and Ray says it tastes just out of this world, simply delicious. Some of the better atemoyas are the Geffner, the African Pride, the Mammoth, the Bradley and the Stermer. Another member of the Annona family is the Ilama, called the lowland cherimoya because it will grow here at sea level, but the problem with the Ilama is that it has to fall from the tree before you can eat it. But when the fruit is ripe and getting loose on the stem, you can bag it and catch it when it falls so it doesn't crush itself on the ground. If you harvest it before it's ready to fall, it will not ripen and is not edible.

The custard apple is another member of the Annona family & is also called the Bullocks Heart. It's the Annona reticulata. It is not as great tasting as some of the other Annonas, but it has the advantage of ripening at this time of year when the rest of the Annona family aren't even flowering yet.

The Rollinia is another genus within the Annona family. There are several different species of the Rollinia.

Another of Ray's favorite fruit is the guava. The plant he showed us is the Indonesian seedless. It is not only seedless but it produces its fruit from April to December. It has absolutely no seeds, is a dessert guava, not made for cooking but to eat out of hand. It has an unpleasant smell, a fragrance which will spread throughout the house if left on the counter. But it has an excellent flavor, it's delicious and is completely edible, skin and all; what a treat.

Another guava he recommends is Ruby Supreme. As the name suggests, it is brightly colored, deep pink or red, has few seeds and is good for jams, jellies & preserves.

Another delicious fruit is the lychee. The one Ray showed us is the Emperor lychee. The lychee makes a nice landscape plant, beautiful foliage and masses of flowers. The Emperor is a very large fruit, as large as the Brewster and very sweet and is a very heavy producer. The lychee is the number one fruit in China. The lychee has a thin skin that you can peel off very easily and inside is a white gelatinous pulp with one seed.

One of the top fruits in the world in the tropical regions is the papaya. The natives eat it fresh, they cook with it, they preserve it and it's used as a meat tenderizer. They eat it green as a vegetable and ripe as a dessert. In the mountainous areas of Thailand they have one that is purple, as distinct from the usual orange color. Hawaii has done a lot of work on papayas and Ray had slides of one called the Sunrise papaya, which is an excellent fruit of medium size and great flavor. Papayas don't like wet feet and frequently must be propped up in rainy weather to prevent them from collapsing. Most papayas are grown from seed.

The white sapote is an excellent fruit when you have a good one but is very poor if you get one that is not so good. There are two kinds of white sapote, the smooth leaf and the wooly leaf. The fruit is large, normally about the size of a baseball, light green in color when ripe, very custardy inside with large seeds and an excellent flavor. The white sapote is in the citrus family, is normally picked green and allowed to ripen on the counter.

Another fruit Ray recommends is the abiu which is probably more cold hardy than normally described. Ray's abiu tree is about 14 years old, a seedling, has excellent fruit, baseball size. He recommends heavy pruning to keep the tree in size for easy picking of the fruit. He recommends two different types, the Brazil or the Australian Graym although the Brazil seems to be more cold hardy. They are an excellent fruit eaten out of hand, with 1 or 2 seeds. They tend to be rather bland but a drop or two of citrus juice will provide the acid they lack, although Ray considers it one of his favorite fruit.

His next selection is the canistel or egg fruit. Charles showed us a fine example of a canistel, a beautiful yellow fruit about 4" long. There are several varieties in the United States that have been around for a long time. Most varieties are kind of small but the 9681 is very large. Ray has Fairchild No. 1 which he got at the Campong in Miami. It's an excellent fruit, small but juicy, in contrast to most canistels which are rather dry. Canistel pulp resembles a boiled egg yolk in texture and color but has a taste reminiscent of sweet potato pie. The smaller fruit usually has one seed, the biggest ones frequently have two. Ray indicated that the canistel is his wife's favorite fruit, the one she prefers most of all.



#### NEW MEMBERS:

Roger Broderick	Pinellas Park
Debbie Butts	Plant City
John Golden	St. Petersburg
Virginia & Alan Male	Brooksville
Gyula Nemeth	Land O'Lakes

Carol Nieman	Tampa
Billy & Mayrene Robertson	Bartow
Vicki Sinclair	Tampa
Simon & Maryhelen Zopfi	Lutz

#### Board of Directors:

Charles Novak-President  
 Bob Heath-V. President  
 Jimmy Lee-V. President  
 Jerry Amyot-V. President  
 Susan McAveety-Treasurer  
 Linda Novak-Secretary

Thom Scott  
 Sally Lee  
 Walt Yoblonski  
 Jerry Springer  
 Paul Branesky  
 Judith Cimafranca

Verna Dickey  
 Steve Brosh  
 Steve Lohn



## From the President

Charles Novak

I am honored to be serving as your president for the next year. I know we're all grateful to Jimmy Lee for his dedication to the club and for serving as our president for the past 3 years.

I'm sure everyone enjoyed Ray Jones' presentation last month. I have learned a lot about growing tropical fruits from Ray over the years. Our speaker in May will be Dr. Paul Beaver. His program will be on tropical fruits and other tropical nature of the Amazon. Paul arranges and leads tours to his ECO Retreat near the Amazon River. You will enjoy this program so please plan to attend the May 9 meeting.

We need your help at the USF Botanical Garden Spring Plant Festival (April 10 & 11). Even though this Sale falls on Easter weekend please be willing to help on at least one of the following days: Friday (3pm) Help unload plants and set up, Saturday (9am-4pm) and Sunday (9am-3pm) Help where needed during the sale and help load plants after the sale.

If you have not been to one of these plant festivals, you will be amazed at the many different plants and trees that will be available for purchase. You will enjoy talking with the public about the joys and rewards of growing rare and tropical fruits. Many of our new members join at the plant sales. Also, this is the perfect opportunity for you to sell your extra *fruiting* plants and to purchase new plants.

Again, thanks to everyone who helped with the Citrus Celebration at the State Fair. The amount taken in was \$940.30. Our expenses were \$172.02. The public really enjoyed the opportunity to taste so many varieties of citrus and we received many favorable comments.

I would like to thank the club members who donate plants for the plant exchange and contribute the delicious items to the tasting table. It is greatly appreciated.

If you know of someone who might present a program of interest to club members, please contact Sally Lee at (813) 982-9359. Also, if you have any suggestions concerning possible field trips, other activities, the newsletter, etc., please contact Bob Heath or me.

**Note:** If your membership expired in March and you haven't renewed yet, please do so soon. You wouldn't want to miss the interesting and informative programs and speakers, our newsletter or the fun times we have.

### Scheduled programs/speakers:

April 10 & 11: USF Botanical Garden Spring Plant Festival

May 9: Dr. Paul Beaver: Tropical Fruit and other nature of the Amazon



### Events of Interest:

April 24: Brevard Rare Fruit Council Tree Sale. Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd. Rain date-April 25 [www.brevardrarefruit.org](http://www.brevardrarefruit.org)

May 16: Manatee Rare Fruit Council Tree Sale. Convention Center in Palmetto, One Haben Blvd. [www.mrfc.org](http://www.mrfc.org)

July 2004: Chris Rollins, Manager of the Redland Fruit & Spice Park is planning a 28 day trip to SE Asia. For those interested in going he will be visiting Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand. The scope of the trip includes agriculture, research stations, local markets, the Mekong delta and searching for unusual fruits from the region. [rtropicals@aol.com](mailto:rtropicals@aol.com) or 305-247-5727

## MARCH PLANT EXCHANGE

Plant	Donor	Winner
Pineapple	Heath	A Davis
Loquat	"	Betty Bruder
Beauty Berry	"	Bill Master
Loquat	"	?
Surinam Cherry	"	
Rangoon Creeper	"	Mel Rubin
Mulberry	"	Steve Brosh
Eugenia Confusa	"	Amyot
Rose Apple	"	Teri Worsham
Rangoon Creeper	Heath	Paul Branesky
Basket Fruit	Novak	Palis
Bag Blood Orange	"	Shane & Mayra Smith
Loquat Fruit	Walter Yoblonski	Robert Harris
Longan	Pat McGauley	Jim Davis
Longan	Lee	?
Yuca	"	?
Pawpaw	"	Jim Davis
Pawpaw	"	Mary Lohn
Orange Berry	"	Sandra Murray
Orange Berry	"	Robert Harris
Loquat	"	Steve Lohn
Java Plum	"	Alvin Davis
Banana	Lee	Sheldon Sumner
Yuca Stems	Zmoda	?
Cherry of the Rio Grande	Thom Scott	Joanne Kitchen
Loquat	"	?
Kei Apple	"	Jim Davis
Red Surinam Cherry	Thom Scott	A Davis
Chayote	Fred Engelbrecht	?
Loquat	Palis	Steve Brosh
Loquat	"	?
Loquat	"	?
Loquat Fruit	Palis	?
5 Gal Bucket	Steve Lohn	?
Yellow Firecracker Plant	S Reed	Ed Walsh
Yellow Firecracker Plant	"	"
Kival Mul	C Novak	?
Wampi	"	Ed Musgrave
Jack Fruit	"	Ron Watkins
Lychee	C Novak	Maryhelen - Simon Zopf
Pomelo	Judy Cimafranca	Dougal Kirby
Pomelo	"	?
Pomelo Seedling	"	?
Mangosteen	"	John Ritter
Mangosteen	Judy Cimafranca	?
Guava Plum	A Davis	?
Guava Plum	"	?
Guava Plum	David Eschebacher	?
Papaya	?	Sandra Worsham

**Grafting Knives and Grafting Kits:** The club has grafting knives, grafting kits and Parafilm available for purchase by members who would like to graft their own plants. Contact Charles Novak (813)754-1399.

**Tampa Bay RFCI Polo Shirts:** The club has polo shirts (dark green or blue) available for purchase by members. The cost is \$15 each. Contact Charles or Linda Novak.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Mar - Apr 2004

by PAUL ZMODA

I hiked around in our wooded acreage to see what was happening back in there. To my surprise, I found the two Malabar chestnut trees doing very well - one is over 12 feet tall. A jaboticaba is doing okay near a swampy area and best of all, two black sapotes are thriving on a wet stream bank - one up to 10 feet now. These and others all got a generous helping of 10-10-10 fertilizer.

Ever alert to invasive weeds, I noticed quite a few gaining footholds, such as: climbing fern, air potato, St Augustine grass, wedelia, philodendrons, sanseveria, clerodendrons, Brazilian pepper, Chinese tallow tree, sweet viburnum and others. I know my situation is not unique; all these imported exotics threaten to encroach and take over natural woods as well as cultivated planting areas. Bamboo is particularly insidious. Controlling these invaders, often so carelessly discarded, must begin as soon as they are found. Slash, chop, rip, saw, bury, hack, burn and spray with weedkillers or your land will be overrun. It's a constant battle, but an important one, on which we must gain an upper hand.

A disturbing find in the orchard: our Fuyu and Hana Fuyu persimmon trees suddenly succumbed to a disease for which I have no name. Apparently, something (a virus?, bacteria? or fungus?) attacked the live cambium tissues just beneath the bark. It manifests itself as large, grotesque blisters from the graft union on up into the canopy. The bark then sloughs away, leaving bare, black sapwood and a noticeably weakened tree. We were lucky to taste the Hana Fuyu fruit last season. This malady may be starting to affect the Suruga and Meader persimmons as well. I wish I knew what to do about it. It is heartbreaking to have to dig up a friend you've cared for, for 6 or seven years.

Our date palm, though really growing well, decided to throw a flower cluster. These were found to be staminate, or male, flowers. This indicated that the palm would never bear fruit. It was unceremoniously chopped out of the ground and discarded. Oh well, I've lost the lottery before, too.

New plantings: Chinese persimmon (*Diospyros rhombifolia*), watermelon, cucumbers, chayote, nasturtiums & okra.

## Tasting Table March 2004

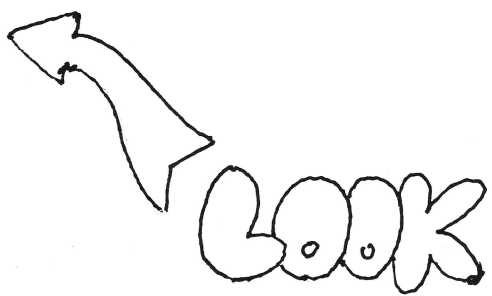
Coronel	Guava cream cheese rolls	McGauley	Grav lox
Palis	Blueberry angel squares	Singer	Fruit compote
Newcombe	Carambola, yogurt & coconut	Watkins	Baked beans
Engelbrecht	Sliced barbecue pork	Ritter	Blackeyed peas
Saceda-Bigelow	7-up cake, Kalola seeds	Parker	Grapefruit juice
Branesky	Philippine jellio with fruit	Kirby	Friendship cake
Terenzi	3 cheese veggie brunch bake	T. Scott	Cole slaw
S. Murray	Loquat kuchen, Honey oat loaf	Cascio	Cookies
Mann	Lemon Meringue Pie	Pilot	Brownies
Smoleny	Lemon Squares with coconut & walnuts	Walsh	Cookies
Springer	Green beans & potatoes	McAveety	Papaya
Lee	Sausage pilaf, brownies, pound cake with strawberries, chocolate cookies		
Novak	Fresh fruit platter, tropical fruit cheese spread with crackers, tangy fruit salad, Pineapple-mango upside down cake, fruit juices		

## Membership Renewals

If your mailing label has a red mark on it your membership expired March 31. Please renew at the April 10-11 Plant Sale or mail your membership renewal check (\$18) to:

Charles Novak  
2812 N Wilder Rd  
Plant City FL 33565-2669

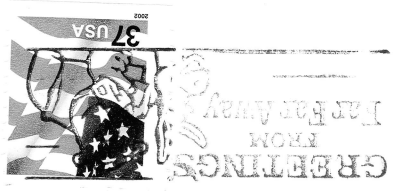
Make check payable to Tampa Bay RFCI



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TAMPA BAY CHAPTER RFCI  
4109 DeLeon St  
Tampa FL 33609



# Botanical Gardens at USF and

**Rare Fruit Council  
PRESENT**



**The Botanical Gardens at USF**

# 2004 Spring

# Plant Festival

**April 10 & 11**

**Saturday 10:00-4:00**

**Sunday 10:00-3:00**

**\$3 admission; children under 12 & USF  
Botanical Garden members are admitted free.**

## Spring into Gardening!

**Each year this event gets bigger & better.**

**Don't miss the fun and plants galore!**

**Find orchids, begonias, bonsai,**

**cactus, aroids, succulents, butterfly plants,**

**camellias, bamboo, tropical fruit, citrus, gingers,**

**plumeria, palms, bromeliads, carnivorous plants,**

**African violets, heirloom plants, herbs, roses, ferns,**

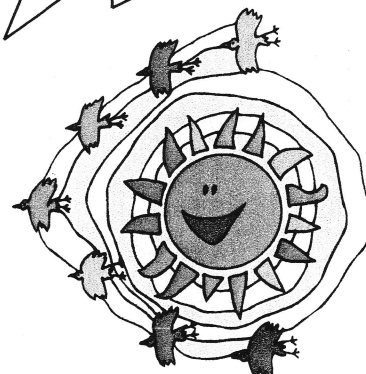
The USF Botanical Garden is located on the Tampa campus of USF at the corner of Pine & Alumni Drive. Take Fowler to Bruce B Downs, go north on Bruce B Downs and take first right at light, which is Pine. Follow Pine around to the left and the Garden entrance is on the left.

**Tampa Bay Area's  
Largest Plant  
Happening**

**Bulbs for  
Florida! Lecture at 1:00  
Saturday**

**Micro  
Irrigation Lecture  
11 am on Saturday**

**Advice from  
the  
Experts**



**Botanical Gardens  
At USF**

USF Botanical Gardens  
4202 E. Fowler Ave  
SCA 238  
Tampa, FL 33620-5150  
Website: [www.cas.usf.edu/garden](http://www.cas.usf.edu/garden)

Phone: 813-974-2329  
E-mail: [khutton@chumal.cas.usf.edu](mailto:khutton@chumal.cas.usf.edu)