



# NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2005

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

EDITORS: BOB HEATH, PAULA HARDWICK, CHARLES NOVAK, LINDA NOVAK, JIM LEE, SALLY LEE

PRESIDENT: CHARLES NOVAK

WEBSITE: [www.rarefruit.org](http://www.rarefruit.org) (CHARLES NOVAK)

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

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 11

**PROGRAM: GROWING VEGETABLES BY MEMBER DEBBIE BUTTS.** A vegetable garden should be a great companion to growing fruiting trees. After all, this is what we are continually reminded of: eat plenty of fruit & vegetables. While many of our members are undoubtedly adept at vegetable gardening, some of us could use a few tips on growing vegetables. And remember, while growing fruiting trees may take years to produce results, vegetables are a relatively quick way to put food on the table, and what is more appetizing than creamed cauliflower or tasty red tomatoes? Debbie is certainly an authority on vegetable gardening and this should be an interesting and enlightening program. We will also have our tasting table, tree raffle and farmers market. The meeting will be @ USF West Side Conference center, same time, same place. See you there.



## Events of Interest:

September 25: Sarasota Fruit & Nut Society 17th Annual Tree Sale. Check the web site for location and other information. [www.sarasotafruitandnut.com](http://www.sarasotafruitandnut.com)

MASTER GARDENER SEMI-ANNUAL PLANT SALE OCTOBER 1, 2005 in LARGO. Pinellas County Master Gardener's popular semi-annual plant sale will be held Oct. 1 at Pinellas County Extension, 12175 - 125th St. N., Largo. The event opens to the public at 9:00 AM and runs till 2:00 PM. Early admission @ 8:00 AM for Florida Botanical Gardens members & Master Gardeners. For more information contact Extension Office @ 727-582-2599 or visit the website @ [www.pinellascounty.org/scripts/publish](http://www.pinellascounty.org/scripts/publish) then click on calendar/workshops.

**Membership Directories:** Copies of the new membership directory will be available at the September meeting. If unable to attend the meeting please contact Charles Novak (813) 754-1399 and a copy will be mailed to you.

**Grafting Knives, Parafilm and Grafting Kits:** The club has grafting knives, Parafilm and grafting kits 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.

**pH Soil testing at the September meeting.** If you would like your soil's pH tested, obtain soil samples from 6 to 8 sites within the area you want tested. Mix the soil together, put it into a plastic bag and bring to the next meeting. You will need at least 1 cup of soil for the test.

From the President  
Charles Novak

If you missed the August meeting then you missed a great presentation by Verna Dickey on the April trip to the Amazon. There were many wonderful photos and Verna's narration was interesting, informative and amusing. I enjoyed reminiscing about the trip-a real adventure!

The Fall USF Botanical Garden Plant Sale will be October 8 & 9. It's time to get your extra fruiting plants ready for the sale. (No club meeting in October). Please plan to help with the sale. More information on the sale will be in the October newsletter.

On Sunday, August 21, approximately 20 members of the Brevard RFCI toured the fruit plantings by Paul Zmoda, Jim Lee, and my place. We have enjoyed our past visits to Merritt Island and their visits with us. **Thanks** to our members who helped make the tours a success.

The club is sponsoring a second Photo Contest. The deadline for submitting photos for our Second Fruit Photo Contest is November 30. So get out those cameras and take some pictures of fruit, fruit flowers and fruit foliage! You could win a free membership in our Tampa Bay RFCI. Winners will be announced at the December Holiday Social. See Photo Contest rules in this newsletter.

The September program will be a presentation on growing vegetables by club member, Debbie Butts. **Note:** Beginning in January 2006 the Westside Conference Center will no longer be rented to organizations not associated with USF. Therefore, it has been necessary to arrange for a new meeting location. Our November 13 club meeting will be at the Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Blvd. It is a very nice facility and should fit our needs nicely. The club meeting will be a workshop: grafting, air layering, seeds germination, starting plant cuttings, setting up a Misting bed, insect and disease control, questions and answers and a tour of our new meeting location.

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. Please welcome guests and new members.

There will be a Board meeting after the regular meeting. Members are welcome to attend.

**Scheduled Programs/Events:**

**September 11:** Growing Vegetables by member Debbie Butts  
**October 8 & 9:** Fall USF Botanical Garden Plant Festival  
**November 13:** Workshop and tour of our new meeting location

**TASTING TABLE AUGUST 2005**

S. Lee	Starfruit, fried wontons	B. Parker	Fruited jello
M. Kirby	Cassava & green banana salad	P. Mann	Fruit
F. Engelbrecht	Peanut soup with chicken	C. Coronel	Fried rice
M. Lohn	Choc. chip cookies, grapes	F. Basilio	Mango bread
A. Musgraves	Guava paste, cream cheese & crackers	M. Chavez	Pork & rice
R. Shigemura	White BBQ chicken, dome cake	S. Sawada	Chukasoba
M. Brandt	Mixed fruit salad	L. Walsh	Pistachio salad
P. McGauley	Galengal beef & field peas	J. Gibson	Peanut cookies
B. Heath	Kei apple squares	S. McAveety	Tomato salsa
N. McCormack	Peanut butter cookies	A. Jean	Loquats
M. Lamour	Pecan & raisin cake		
S. Walker	Baked beans w/ mango w/pineapple, mamey cornbread		
L. Novak	Mango cake, passion fruit bars, tropical cheese spread w/crackers, fresh fruit tray, juices		

Thanks to everyone who donated to the tasting table. It was *Fabulous* as always. Remember to ask Sally Lee for your free plant exchange ticket.

## AUGUST PLANT EXCHANGE

Plant	Donor	Winner
Otaheite Gooseberry	Heath	?
Red Passion Fruit	"	Fred Engelbrecht
Cabaluda	"	?
Carissa	"	Sharon Pilot
Loquat	"	?
Pineapple	"	Adam Zaidan
Surinam Cherry	"	?
Sugar Apple	"	?
Mulberry	"	Susan Reed
Rangoon Creeper	Heath	?
Plumeria Starts	Zmoda	Steve Brosh
"	"	Fred Engelbrecht
"	"	Susan Reed
Pineapple Tops	Lillian Smolensky	Walt Yoblonski
Cassava	Lee	?
Crepe Myrtle	"	Bill Marler
Longan	"	?
Roselle	Luva	Jim Davis
Apple Banana	Kirby	Judy Cimafranca
Avocado Plant	"	Susan Reed
Swiss Cheese	N. Lasso	?
Jaboticaba Seedling	M. Brandt	?
Lychee	"	?
Gizzard Plant	"	?
Fingerling Bananas	Ronald Watkins	?
Pineapple Slip	Thom Scott	?
"	"	?
Decor Pineapple	John Gibson	Nancy McCormack
Soursop	Karl Pericot	?
Turmeric	Pat McGauley	?
Culinary Ginger	"	?
Pink Ginger	"	?
Yellow Passion Fruit	"	S. Worsham
Red Tamarillo	"	S. Worsham
Long-Keeper Tomato	"	?
Cinnamon Basil	"	T. Scott
Cerreus Cactus	Jerry Walker	?
Mamey Americana	Judy Cimafranca	?
Loquat	"	?
Barbados Cherry	Sal Russo	?
Surinam Cherry	"	?
Mangosteen	Charles Novak	Bill Marler
"	"	Keith Kirby
"	"	S. Worsham
"	"	Zmoda
"	"	Charlie Loenichen
"	"	Ed. Musgrave
"	Charles Novak	?
Sweet Potato Cuttings	N. McCormack	?
Hidden Gingle	Sharon Pilot	"
"	"	?
"	"	?
"	"	?

## A TRIP TO THE AMAZON IN PERU

Verna Dickey is the narrator for the six members of our Club who went on this once-in-a-lifetime adventure. This is their story.

We flew from Tampa to Miami and then took a plane to Lima, Peru, where we were met by people from the lodge. Then we proceeded in a power boat 110 miles up the Amazon to the lodge. It was night time when we arrived and it was hot and humid. The lodge is a group of frame buildings up on stilts above the flood plain, connected by bridges and walkways. There are sleeping quarters, restrooms, dining facilities and meeting rooms.

When we first got there, we felt like we went back in time. We had no air conditioning and it was very hot and humid. We also had no running water and we had to use an outhouse. The first couple of nights were very hot; we just lay there sweating. The lodge is just south of the equator so we had 12 hours of daylight; sun-up at 6, sundown at 6. And there were no lights. Some of our members had flashlights, but that just gives a beam. Charles had a battery powered lantern light which lit things up a whole lot better than a flashlight. We think the mosquitos are bad here, but you ain't seen nothin' yet... Charles had a mosquito net veil to keep them off of him. Jerry said Charles would walk along and a mass of mosquitos would be following right behind him because with a net he wasn't using mosquito repellent. Drinking water is trucked in to the lodge and is reserved for drinking and cooking. Water for showering and washing of all kinds is piped directly out of the river and they advised us to keep our mouths shut when showering. The food was very good. For meat they had a lot of fish; they also served some chicken and beef. Vegetables were local vegetables such as manioc, heart of palm & other local vegetables. It's so dark at night with no artificial lighting, that there were millions of stars lighting the sky; it was beautiful.

We visited a couple of the local villages where the women provided fruit they had collected and set out on tables for display; pineapples, papayas, bananas, some Eugenia species, other things we didn't recognize, palm seeds that were chopped up and we ate. Charles collected

seeds from a lot of the stuff and sent them back in packages but some never arrived here. We enjoyed it and the women seemed to enjoy it also. The directors had set up the affair just so we could collect the seeds & eat the fruit. They chose a round building where the villagers have meetings and a long building where they sell fruit. This was in the Chito village, which is a very large village. The villagers also showed us the method of using palm fronds to thatch their roofs, which they have to replace about every 4 years. We took pictures of the children and they really enjoyed seeing the pictures when we showed them on the camera. They all gathered around wanting to be in the pictures. Of course they all spoke Spanish so none of us could talk to them. We also saw a girl with a pet monkey. Apparently lots of people there have monkeys for pets.

We had several storms during our stay and made good use of our ponchos, but we still got wet. Judy & I went on a hike with our guides, George & Jocko, behind the lodge where we saw lots of different plants & animals, insects & caterpillars. [This is a slide of us walking through the jungle.] Who took that picture? The lodge gave us boots for hiking in the jungle because it was wet and muddy. We took pictures of some mushrooms which may be poisonous or hallucinogenic and we found a pine nut which Jocko cut open with his machete and we were able to taste. It tasted much like coconut.

We also went on another trip to the San Pedro Village where the school is, & met the teacher, Rudin, and some of the students, Al Hendry, Yucu & Charles sitting at the students' desks. Of course everyone was laughing about it.] The students did a welcome song for us in Spanish and danced, and they gave us each a bracelet. Then they put on their native costumes and did some native dances. They got all of their visitors dancing also. We had lots of school supplies which we handed out to the students; books & crayons, pencils & pens, which was really nice.



One evening when it was raining and we were unable to go into the forest, a woman came in from a nearby village to show how they make baskets. They are made of twisted palm fiber, woven and sewn with a needle and palm fiber in different colors to make patterns. We brought several baskets back to the U.S. [This is a little basket I had made.]

Next day we did a zip line up to the canopy, Judy & I did anyway. We were strapped into a harness and hauled up into the canopy of the trees, 100 feet up to the first platform, which was kind of scary. You can either pull yourself up or they will hoist you up, which is what Judy & I did, but it was fun & scary. The second platform is way up in the canopy of the forest. [Charles said he heard Verna holler.] Up there we saw orchids and bromeliads and could look over the top of some of the trees. Coming down we had to rappel ourselves down, they wouldn't lower us down; that was fun too.

We went on a fishing trip and everybody caught fish. Charles was the last one to bring one in and it was a kind of small catfish. I caught 2 piranha and 2 catfish. [Verna showed us a necklace that had piranha teeth on it.] We took the fish back to the lodge where the lodge people cleaned and cooked them. They were really good.

We then went to the Chito Village where all the people had fruit set up and had their crafts. We could go around and buy souvenirs, but they had to have new dollar bills to buy things. The ladies didn't want to take bills if they were wrinkled. They had quite an array of souvenirs laid out for us to see. [Verna showed us a necklace made of Inga seeds.] Charles said everything they saw was made right there in the village. Nothing had tags on it that said Made in China. [Verna showed us the souvenirs she

brought back; a purse, baskets, necklaces & bracelets, a little canoe model carved out of balsa wood with a paddle. She also had a carving of a crocodilia, which is called a cayman, & a carving of a pink dolphin which inhabits the river.]

[We also saw slides of the inhabitants in the area and an old woman who was supposedly the oldest woman in the village, and one of a man sharpening a machete on a stone.] He used the machete to take us into the jungle looking for the hoetzen bird which we actually were able to finally see after looking many times: a big beautiful bird which is only found in this area of the world.

[Next we had slides of fruit, the Eugenia Stipitata, the camu camu fruit, of which they use for fish bait, and the Amazon grape, which we all ate in large quantities, since it was so good, a yellow lipstick plant, a native passion fruit which was very good, Charles said, and lots of pretty flowers and bromeliads.]

The orchids we found were disappointing in that they were small white flowers, but the bromeliads were beautiful and fantastic.

One night they had a dance with a 3 man band playing the music and everyone got out there dancing; our people and the natives all dancing together.

There was Charles waving goodbye to the kids on the bank as we left on the power boats they use for taking tourists around. Sometimes they use canoes and other times power boats. I think the distance has something to do with it.

[These are slides of the walkway going down to the boat at the river, some breadfruit trees along the walk and us waving goodbye to the kids.]

\*\*\*\*\*

JOKES...

What did the muskmellon say to the amorous honeydew? "Sorry honey, we cantaloupe!"

What was AL Jolson's favorite fruit? Mamey!

## FRUIT PHOTO CONTEST

The following are the rules for our second fruit photo contest:

In this second fruit photo contest, we are offering 2 prizes.

1st Place Prize: a two-year membership in the Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI

2nd Place Prize: a one-year membership in the Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI

The top 10 photos will be featured on our club board and on our web site.

### Judging Guidelines

Judges will look for images emphasizing composition, design and color esthetic images, as opposed to those that merely document or convey information. People, hands, rulers or other extraneous objects are undesirable unless they add esthetic value.

Pictures of fruit, flowers or foliage attached to a live plant are preferable to showing them cut and displayed artificially.

It is essential that the photo be in sharp focus. Unfocused images are discouraged except in unusual cases, for a desired effect.

Fruits, buds, flowers, roots or any vegetative plant parts are suitable subjects, but all plants or plant parts displayed should be recognizable as a source of produce edible by humans. Pictures of plants grown strictly as ornamentals or for aroma, wood, animal feed, soil conservation or general landscaping are inappropriate.

### General Rules

1. Any member of the Tampa Bay RFCI may enter.
2. No purchase is required.
3. All entries become Tampa Bay RFCI property and cannot be returned.
4. Only color prints will be accepted-no digital images for this contest.
5. By submitting each entry, the entrant warrants that he/she is the creator of the image and grants to the Tampa Bay RFCI the right to reproduce the image on our web site and elsewhere, with credit to the originator. The Tampa Bay RFCI will duly consider each image for the prizes listed above and, if it is judged a winner, will award a prize to the entrant.
6. Winners will be announced and winning photos displayed at the December Holiday Social.

### Print Rules

1. Only color photos (prints) will be accepted, and will not be returned. There is no limit to the number of prints that can be submitted.
2. Include your name and a brief description with each photo (identification of the subject is sufficient). Please do not write on the front of photos. Do not write directly on the back of the photos. Use self-stick labels.
3. All entries must be received by November 30, 2005 and should be hand delivered or mailed to:  
Charles Novak (2812 N. Wilder Road, Plant City, FL 33565) or  
Jimmy Lee (11911 Thonotosassa Road, Thonotosassa, FL 33592)  
Send questions to: c.novak@worldnet.att.net

\* \* \* \* \*

"Grape day in the morning!" exclaimed one Muscadine to another. "Have you read that purple prose by John Steinbeck, 'The Grapes of Wrath?'"

"I liked it," said the second Muscadine, "but it didn't have such a grape ending."

The first retorted, "Be grateful for small flavors and stop your wine-ing. The movie caused a grape ferment in Hollywood."

"But," raisined the second, "not too many of our kind were in it because we don't like to hang around in bunches. Still I'll agree it was a vintage film with some seedy scenes as well as a tendril love story. Nevertheless, the hull thing leaves much to be desired. Proper pruning would have made it a Triumph."

The first one jelled, "Oh, quit your graping - you're being unraisinable!"

(The above discussion was heard over the grape vine by the editors.)

## FRUIT TREES FOR CENTRAL FLORIDA

### THE FEIJOA (*feijoa sellowiana*)

The feijoa is also called the pineapple guava because of its growth habits and suggestion of pineapple flavor in taste to some people. The tree shape varies considerably with different varieties, being compact and spreading or tall, open and straggling in habit. The leaves are 2" long by 1" wide. The upper surface of the oval leaves is dark glossy green, the lower silver grey. The flowers which come in the spring are 1 to 1-1/2 inch across, beautiful and have the unusual quality of being quite tasty. Each flower has four cupped petals, white on the outside and purple within and the long stamens make a red tuft in the center. The mature fruit is oblong or round in shape, 1 to 3 inches long, green with a thick light colored bloom. The skin is thin like a guava with a layer of somewhat granular flesh overlying a core of jelly like pulp in which many minute seeds are embedded when the fruit is mature, it will fall from the tree and when properly ripened, is very sweet with a delightful aroma.

The feijoa grows wild on the plains of southern Brazil and northern Argentina. They may be grown from seed, preferably from a tree of better quality fruit and may bear in the fourth or fifth year. In some cases the plants are self-sterile and must be pollinated from the pollen of other plants. In other cases the plants are self-fertile and produce abundant fruit without cross fertilization. Grafted or layered plants from self-fertile varieties begin bearing in two or three years.

The tree is relatively cold hardy, able to endure 15°F with no damage under most conditions. It is very drought resistant but should be irrigated liberally for best results at time of fruiting. A sand loam, with plenty of humus, is considered to be ideal. The plant has few insect pests other than the Caribbean fruit fly. Black scale seems to be the principal enemy of the plant.

We are not presently propagating named varieties of feijoa in central Florida, but are making an effort to produce better fruit by selection. The seeds, if kept dry, should retain their viability for up to a year or more. They are small and delicate and should not be planted in heavy soils. The seeds should be sown in flats covered to a depth of 1/4 to 1/8 inch with a light sandy loam. Germination should occur within three weeks. As soon as the plants have produced their second leaves, they should be transplanted to three inch pots, from which they may later be transplanted into the ground or larger pots.

Feijoas may be layered by bending branches to the ground and covering with soil. No further care is required except to keep the soil moist until roots form, which may be size months or longer.

Cuttings of young wood from the end of branches or the young sprouts from the base of the plant will form roots with some difficulty. The cuttings should be kept under mist or covered with glass and provided with bottom heat.

Whip grafting is probably the best method of propagating the feijoa. The stock should be about the size of a lead pencil, the scion the same size or slightly smaller and of mature wood.



Feijoa foliage, flowers & fruits

\* from William Popenoe's Manual of Tropical & Subtropical Fruits.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Aug-Sep 2005

by PAUL ZMODA

I had grafted a wild Chickasaw plum onto a Ceylon red peach rootstock 8 years ago. This productive tree is definitely dwarfed, standing 5 feet tall. Seedlings of other Chickasaw plums nearby are over 8 feet tall in only 4 years. Something to think about if planting space is at a premium.

We have 6 varieties of bananas fruiting lately. One we got to try recently is Mona Lisa (FHIA #2). It was worth waiting for; a joy to eat. It is a short, stocky plant, so heavy winds don't seem to bother it. Remember to feed your bananas and they will feed you.

We were a few days away from harvesting maybe 100 pounds of our new grape. All wine making supplies were procured and ready, the chemical analysis of test samples indicated it was time to pick, so off we went. When we arrived at the vineyard, I noticed, to my horror, ALL THE GRAPES WERE GONE!! One whole year of work and waiting for this day. Everyone felt so bad. I determined that crows were most likely the culprits. I have seen, first hand, how quickly they can strip cherry trees of fruit. Very disappointed, we returned home. Fortunately, a vine I had growing elsewhere gave us 22 pounds to work with. The wine from that small harvest is happily fermenting along. Just wait until next year.

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