



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 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 (CHARLES NOVAK)

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

NEXT MEETING: NOV 13 @ TAMPA GARDEN CLUB (SEE BELOW)

PROGRAM: This month we'll be meeting at the Tampa Garden Club on Bayshore. See map on page 05-71. The program will be a workshop; classes on propagation, grafting, air layering, seed germination, starting plant cuttings, setting up a misting bed, insect & disease control and a question & answer session. If you need root stock or bud wood for the workshop, please contact Charles Novak @ 813-754-1399 or Bob Heath @ 813-289-1068. We will try to help. This is one of the benefits of being a member of the Rare Fruit Council: learning propagation methods. Come and enjoy our fabulous tasting table, plant raffle, the propagation classes and the camaraderie. We will also take a tour of the facilities to see if they suit our space and aesthetic needs.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Oct-Nov 2005

by PAUL ZMODA

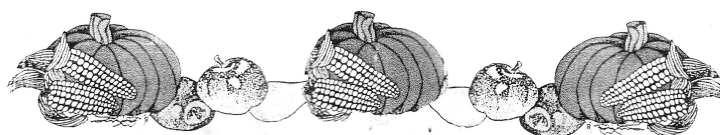
The Vietnamese gac vine has been flowering. These blossoms are much larger than I had imagined they'd be. They open in the morning after breaking out of their bizarre looking pod-like bracts. The pale, yellow flowers have 3 large petals, the insides showing several dark stripes, and 2 smaller petals with no dark stripes. Also, the vines are not setting any fruit.

I've been rejuvenating our vegetable gardens - removing spent summer plants such as okra and eggplant before weeding, loosening the soil and finally planting lots of fall/winter seeds such as bok choy, Chinese broccolis, Daikon radishes, chard, creasy greens, pak choi and raab. Seedling plants put in are: parsley, cilantro, broccolis and onions.

The cucumber vines and tomato plants are setting fruit nicely, but the pigeon peas, although huge and healthy looking, are not showing any evidence of flowering yet. They'd better hurry it up; I can hardly wait to try them prepared as edamame (green soybeans).

This has been a banner year for our bananas. Thanks to copious amounts of manure and fertilizers, we have witnessed most of our varieties flowering and setting large bunches of fruit. FHIA #18 is currently giving up its bounty. These bananas, from Ecuador, are long, thick and straight with a thick peel. The quality is excellent - sweet with a slightly fruity flavor somewhat like apples. When freshly peeled, they give off a delightful perfume - something extra.

New plantings: Dwarf pawpaws.



Ornamental lettuce growing in the shade, won't have the color that it would have if it were growing in the sun. He was also really impressed with the beautiful Swiss chard that's available, like Golden chard and Bright Lights, very pretty, colorful and ornamental. She puts chard in salads and her vegetarian spaghetti sauce, although she admits chard is not easy to grow, and Paul Zmoda noted that it was very difficult.

They've also grown eggplant for a number of years, a lot of different types. They practically lived on eggplant a couple ago, Chinese eggplants, many different kinds you don't have to peel, Indian varieties that are actually better for baking, like in a spaghetti sauce or something, and a great variety of others.

Debbie had pictures of luffas. The small young fruit are edible, although they are not too wild about the flavor; a mature dried fruit produces the luffa sponge which is an excellent sponge and can be given to people as Christmas presents. The sponge can be bleached with hydrogen peroxide to make it whiter. The real angled ones actually taste better; just scrape off the angles and fry them. The plant loves hot weather & will grow right through the summer.

Debbie grows a lot of beautiful pineapple plants up under the oak trees. She showed us a picture of one and said it was the only one she had left. She said you just plant them & let them grow. They don't need to be dusted with anything or need any special care. You can even plant them in 3 gallon containers, which is the way she prefers because they can control the moisture better. Home grown pineapples taste so much better than store bought or canned.

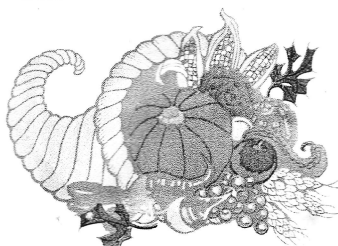
She indicated they are getting ready to install a solar electrical system which will be tied into the power company grid with TECO. They will sell power to TECO during the day & TECO will sell it back

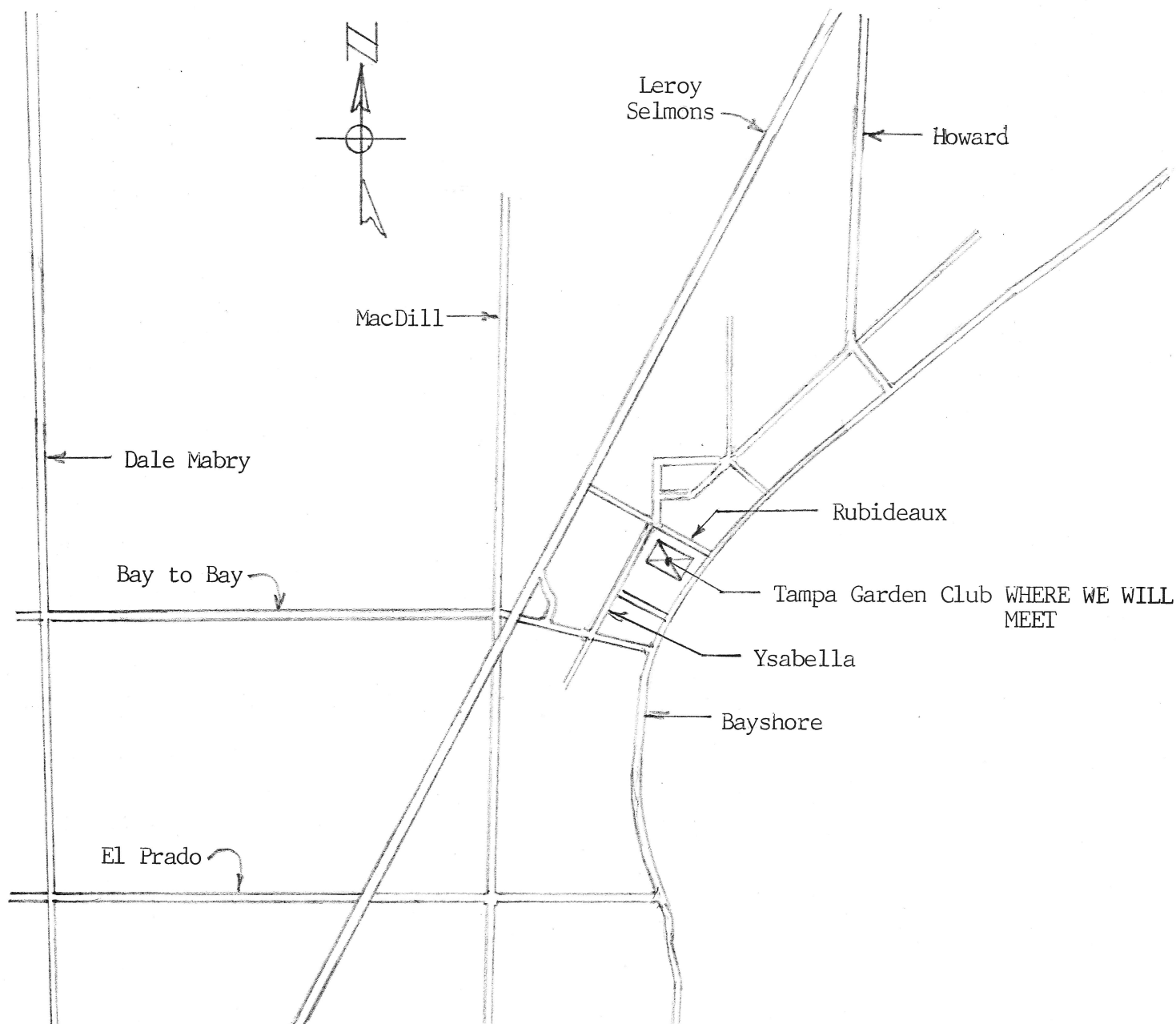
to them at night.

One more thing they really got into is sugar cane. John already had the big kettle laying around (people thought it would make a good fish pond). John found an antique sugar can mill. They buried it in the ground for anchorage and got all the machinery together to juice the cane. They had done it with a neighbor who had the whole setup for a couple of years but when he passed away last year, John and Debbie knew they had to do something quick because they had fields of sugar cane. She had pictures of them pressing the cane, going round & round in their golf cart which they use in lieu of a mule, for hours on end. She had pictures of the furnace, fireplace, whatever, under the kettle to boil the juice. It looks like quite a setup & apparently it works. They didn't realize how long it took so didn't get started early enough. They were out there boiling down the juice into the night. They had no lights out there & it was cold in the early winter. The kettle holds about 60 gallons of juice. It takes about 2 hours to squeeze it out & filter it through cheesecloth a couple of times to get all the crud out before it goes into the kettle. This year the new sugar cane looks great and they've got the process down pat so it should go pretty smoothly. All the time it's cooking, they're skimming the foam and stuff that floats to the top. You have to keep track of the temperature and when it reaches the right temperature, you have to quit the cooking so it doesn't get too thick. This means smothering the fire which they did with the wet sugar cane, which seemed to work ok. She had pictures of all the steps and procedures, including scooping it out and filtering it one moer time and bottling it.

Debbie finished up her talk with her experiences in making jellies; elderberry, which came out very good, guava, which she hasn't got down pat yet, and wild blackberry jelly.

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Directions to the Tampa Garden Club: 2629 Bayshore Blvd., Tampa

FROM NORTHEAST:

Take I-275 to Armenia Ave / Howard Ave exit (Exit 42).
 Take Armenia south to West Swann Ave (1.2 miles).
 Turn Left (east) on W. Swann Ave. Go 0.1 mile to first light (South Howard Ave).
 Turn Right (south) on S. Howard, go 0.8 mile to Bayshore Blvd.
 Turn Right (west) on Bayshore Blvd. Go 0.4 mile to the Tampa Garden Club.
 Parking is in the rear. PARKING DIRECTIONS: Turn Right (north) on West Rubideaux St., go one block to Ysabella Ave. Turn Left (west) on Ysabella. Enter parking lot at the second gate on left side of street.

FROM NORTHWEST OR SOUTH:

Take Dale Mabry or MacDill, turn East on Bay to Bay Blvd.
 Pass under Leroy Selmon Expressway.
 Turn Left (North) on Ysabella.
 Enter Tampa Garden Club after Barcelona, before Rubideaux St.

From the President
Charles Novak

What a great club we have! I want to **thank** all the members who gave up their time to help make the Fall USF Botanical Garden Plant Sale a success for the club. A special 'Thanks' to Rose Terenzi for the great job she does in telling people about the club. Due to her efforts we have 26 new memberships. Let's all welcome the new club members to our club.

Please remember we will no longer be meeting at the USF Westside Conference Center. Our November 13 club meeting will be at the Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Blvd. (see map and directions). This meeting will be a workshop. You can get your questions answered and learn more about grafting, air laying, seeds germination, starting plant cuttings, setting up a Misting bed, insect and disease control. If you need budwood or root stock please contact me at (813) 754-1399 or e-mail me at: c.novak@worldnet.att.net.

So far only one member has mailed in photos for the Photo Contest. The deadline for submitting photos for our Second Fruit Photo Contest is November 30. Take some pictures of fruit, fruit flowers and fruit foliage! The first place winner will receive a two-year free membership in the club.

More bad news for all of our citrus growers. Citrus greening has spread to 2 commercial citrus groves, including one of the state's largest growers. "We can't eradicate the disease at this point, in my opinion," Craig Meyer, Florida's deputy commissioner of agriculture, told The Ledger after a Friday [14 Oct 2005] meeting on efforts to control the bacterial disease that has spread to 5 counties in less than 2 months. "Our objective is to develop a set of best management practices for the industry to allow growers to control this disease." Citrus greening eventually kills a citrus tree, but before that, it retards fruit growth and gives the juice a salty, bitter taste. It's called "greening" because the bottom of the fruit remains green. As I am very fond of my citrus trees (and I'm sure all of you are, too) I hope a way to eradicate the disease will be found.

If you have extra fruiting plants please donate them to our Plant Exchange. The Plant Exchange and the free Seed Board are great ways to obtain new plants for your garden. Many of the plants I obtained from the Plant Exchange and plants I started from seeds obtained from the Seed Board are now fruiting.

There will be a board meeting after the regular meeting in November. Members are welcome and encouraged to attend the board meetings.

Scheduled Programs/Events:

November 13: Workshop and tour of our new meeting location
December 11: Holiday Social at the Creighton Farm in Lithia

Fall USF Botanical Garden Plant Sale:	Total Monies collected	\$7258.15
	(plants, memberships, books, patches, juices, jellies)	
	Total Expenses	- 5632.73
	(Vendors, USF, tables, juices, plants, misc.)	
	Profit	<u>\$1625.42</u>

A Huge **Thank You** to all the members who donated their time and effort to help with this Sale!

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

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



Tampa Bay RFCI Polo Shirts: The club has polo shirts (dark green or blue) and club patches available for purchase by members.

pH Soil testing at the November 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 meeting. You will need at least 1 cup of moist soil for the test.

A warm welcome to our New Members:

Mike Batista	Odessa	Valeria Parejo & Leonardo Souza	Tampa
Stanley & Lea Davis	Tampa	Stan Pué	Tampa
Luis Deya	Tampa	John & Barb Ritter	Temple Terrace
Ashok Dhond	Riverview	Josephine Roloff	Tampa
Peter & Angela Dixon	Temple Terrace	Barry Schwartz	Lutz
Kelly & Andy Dorsett	Valrico	Louise Sharpiro	Tampa
Maria Estolt	Brandon	Russell & Patricia Smeelink	Tampa
Jim Franklin	Lithia	Gloria Smith	Lutz
Rick Greenwasser	Tampa	Janet Sudbrink	St. Petersburg
Lily Iskandar	Palm Harbor	Babu & Sumathi Thomas	Tampa
Jamo Meden	Tampa	Chelsie Vandaveer	Largo
Clem & Roland Lazaro	Palm Harbor	Sandy Wall	Durant
John & Xenia Maye	Tampa	Eugenia Zambrano	Tampa

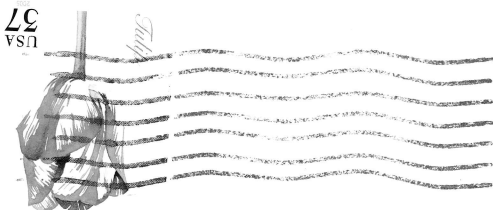
Event of Interest: FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN RAMBLE, Coral Gables, FL

A Garden Festival - will be held November 19-20, 2005. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. More information and map at: <http://www.fairchildgarden.org/>.

Happy Thanksgiving

FLORIDA NEWCOMBE
STADIUM PARK AVENUE
TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI
4109 DeLeon
Tampa FL 33609