



**Carolinas' Chapter Report  
(October 2002 – July 2003)  
Prepared by: Ron Myers - President**

**Overview**

The Carolinas' Chapter is having yet another productive year promoting the mission of TACF, increasing membership and outreach, while advancing our local breeding program. We are still committed to focusing on membership and the American chestnut tree. We continue to support our Chapter's Mother Tree Program for future breeding work while building greater support for the regional adaptability program coordinated in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. We have been exploring ways to work together with our neighbors the Tennessee Chapter.

**Administrative**

Our current Chapter officers have agreed to serve another year and they include the following: Ron Myers – President, Joe James – Vice President, Paul Sisco – Treasurer, and Gene Spears – Secretary. We elected 4 new board members at our Annual meeting in April. The new board members include John Frampton, Louis Acker, Don Surette, Joe James, Jack Johnston, and Steve Barilovits III.

**Chapter Membership**

Our current membership is at an all time high of 563 members as of July 2003. Our renewed efforts to focus more on membership have been paying big dividends. We are gaining increased visibility due to the efforts of targeted mailings along with increased publicity and outreach. This past winter we sent out a membership mailing to local Christmas tree growers in NC and National helped to fund a mass membership mailing to the Audubon Society this spring.

**Accomplishments**

*Publicity & Outreach* – Our chapter continues to recognize the need to do a better job of reaching out to our current membership and holding more activities or meetings where more members can participate. We held a fall membership meeting in November 2002 that included presentations from TACF's Annual Meeting and trip to the West Salem stand along with a chestnut roasting activity.

We held our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Carolinas' Chapter meeting in May 2003 at Lees McCrae College in Banner Elk, NC. Dr. Fred Hebard from the Meadowview Research Farm was our keynote speaker to update us on TACF's breeding program and screening for resistance to the chestnut blight fungus. Presentations were made from our local growers and interested members.

Many of our Carolinas' Chapter members were in attendance to support TACF's Woodworkers exhibit in Asheville, NC held at the Grovewood Inn Gallery in March 2003. Our Chapter also had an exhibit at the "One NC Naturally Conference in Raleigh, NC during April 2003 and we had an exhibit at the Wilkes County Forester Landowners Field day in May 2003 where over 100 landowners were present.

*Newsletter Committee* - Our Harvest 2002 edition of our newsletter "Chestnut Mast" was sent out in October and the spring edition was published in March 2003. This publication continues to be a link to our members while providing updates on our pollination, breeding, administrative, and meeting happenings. Jane and John Frampton have agreed to become the new editors of our newsletter. We continue to update our web site to provide more detailed information on Carolinas' Chapter and chestnut activities found at [www.carolinas-TACF.org](http://www.carolinas-TACF.org).

The chapter also has an email address at Carolinas @ acf.org where we can communicate with members. This past year, we have had many people to send us emails with American chestnut tree information, locations, and requests for suitable planting sites or partnerships.

### **Mother Tree Program**

The fruits of our labor are beginning to pay off. Carolina Chapter families that we have made controlled crosses with since year 2000-2002 include 7 Clapper BC3 families (AB185, GL96, GL104, GL367, GL403, GR210, WV131), 3 Graves BC3 families (AB419, GL94, WV480), and 1 Mahogany BC2 family GR252. Last pollination season, we managed to get 535 BC3 nuts from the pollination work that our Chapter conducted. The previous year we got 267 BC3 nuts, so we doubled our production.

The seed from our 2002 pollination efforts were geographically distributed to interested growers who were also active members. A big planting was installed at the Long Branch Environmental Center in Canton, NC. Approximately 5 new BC3 plantings were established this past year in various locations. We also installed a pure American chestnut planting with all of our mother trees pollinated to date for future breeding efforts in the next few years. The Mountain Horticultural Research Center in Fletcher, NC has also been cooperating with our chapter to field grow many of our pure American collections to use for future mother trees when they begin to initiate flowering.

Efforts this spring have been very strong due to the help of 3 student interns that have been working with Regional coordinators and our Mother Tree Program Coordinator Paul Sisco. Special thanks to Forrest Edens, Steve Slacker, and Mallory Eils who have been very active in tree location, GPS documentation, and pollination assistance.

In our NW region of the state, we were able to pollinate 4 mother trees that include: the Jack Brown tree, Flannery tree, Bina road tree, and Louis Acker tree. In our SW region of the state, we were able to pollinate 3 mother trees around Goat bald and Wayah bald. We have also identified several pure American chestnut trees that we can utilize for seed collection this fall and pollination efforts next spring.

### **Finances**

Our Chapter started on January 01, 2003 with about \$12,774.00 in the treasury. Our annual income from memberships is approximately \$6,750 based on having 450 regular dues paying members. Donations to the Chapter will average between \$500-\$1,500. We have not generated much additional funds through grants or any outside fundraising efforts or Chapter projects. We hope to address this area with a few creative projects that involve our charter members and establishing an Endowment Fund for future donations or contributions from members.

Our biggest expenditures have gone to support field related activities for our Mother Tree Program (35%), costs for membership mailings & meetings (30%), administrative support to keep the chapter running (15%), publicity and outreach that includes our newsletter & member meetings (15%), and fundraising (5%). We are projected to spend approximately \$10,306.00 based on what was budgeted for each program area.

The Carolinas' Chapter is in good financial health and we continue to utilize our income for field-related activities & projects while reaching out to our general membership to educate & inform them about American chestnut restoration and TACF. We continue to look for ways to increase our fundraising capacity so that we can improve program delivery and accomplishments from the Carolinas' Chapter.