

2005 Chapter Activities Report (Submitted as President' Message from Fall 2005 Chestnut Mast Newsletter)

Greetings to all members and "should be members" of the Carolinas Chapter of TACF! This year has shown slow but steady progress as in previous years. At Meadowview in our central breeding program, the goal remains to develop a chestnut tree resistant to chestnut blight; but we want not just a single tree, but rather 30 large families of trees. The members of each family are to be kept unrelated to all the other families until the last generation when all families will be allowed to breed by open pollination. For the past three years Meadowview has completed yearly nut plantings in a B3F2 seed orchard using Clapper as the source of resistance. Last year, Fred Hebard began a Graves seed orchard also. Once the seed orchards are completed, there will be many thousands of seedlings. Having matured to their second or third year, they will be screened for *Cryphonectria* resistance and American characteristics. Only about 1 out of 150 will be selected to participate in nut production.

In the meantime, our chapter, under the guidance of Paul Sisco, has 17 completed lines with the goal being to have 20 lines. Also, unique to our chapter is our Phytophthora screening program. Using unscreened B2F2 nuts in years past, only 1 in 20 seedlings would be expected to survive to 4 years of age. But by use of test inoculations and vigorous selections, Steve Jeffers at Clemson University and I have seen survival improve to 95% for 1-year-old seedlings.

Our chapter breeding efforts this year resulted in 10 trees being pollinated with 327 bags being placed. One of those is a mating of two B2F2 trees, one parent is Phytophthora resistant and the other tree has survived in Alabama. This pairing will yield B2F3 nuts.

Membership presently is 500 members, which makes us the third largest chapter behind Pennsylvania and New York. When discussing membership with friends, point out that they can join online by visiting our excellent website, www.carolinas-tacf.org (maintained by Doug Gillis).

The Board met on August 13th at the home of Steve and Jane Motsinger in Elkin, NC. Several bylaws changes were proposed. One would extend the term of the officers to two years. The vice president would be elected every other year and he or she would be scheduled to assume the office of president when the "old" president rotates off. K.O. Summerville has been nominated to become the president during the next election cycle, having served the past two years as V.P. Finally, it was decided to switch the time of the annual Board meeting to the spring and have the general membership meeting in August or early September. The meeting for next year has been tentatively scheduled for the NC Arboretum in Asheville on Saturday, August 26, 2006. This timing will be more conducive to field trips (trees leafed out) and still not interfere with nut harvest.

We have been blessed with an excellent Board, some of whom have served since the first organizational meetings in 1997. If any of you, the membership, think you might want to serve as a Board member, contact me at s4e4j4@bellsouth.net or speak to any present Board member.

The finances of the chapter are still operating on the proverbial shoe string. We did receive a \$2000 gift from Will Reynolds which was much needed and appreciated. Also we received a matching grant from the National Forest Foundation for \$100,000. These grant monies are to be shared with KY, TN, NC, SC, and GA.

The Board also authorized the establishment of an endowment through the NC Forestry Foundation, Inc. This requires a minimum investment of \$15,000 to get started.

You will find more information about the matching donation on page 5. Three Board members have pledged to match any and all gifts up to \$2500. PLEASE, feel free to give any amount, just make sure you indicate on the bottom left of the check that it is for the "**CC-TACF Endowment Fund.**"

Finally, thank you for a great year! Can't you almost smell those "chestnuts roasting on an open fire?"

Respectfully yours,

Joe James, President, Carolinas Chapter-TACF