

AUGUST 1999
PREMIER ISSUE

CAROLINAS
CHAPTER
TACF

RECLAIM YOUR ROOTS
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FIRST GENERAL MEETING

The first general meeting was held on July 13th at 7:30 pm at the Unitarian Church in Asheville. The forerunner to that meeting was held Monday evening, June 14th. Called

the ad hoc volunteer steering committee, a small group of people began the process that will ultimately take the Carolinas Chapter to full recognition by TACF, The American Chestnut Foundation.

Forrest MacGregor graciously shared his office space at 46 Haywood Street, Asheville, to host a group bent on hammering out a nuts and bolts rough draft of concerns, events, tasks, and paperwork that will take the infant Carolinas Chapter into the next millenium!

The group wrestled with the organizational framework until they could determine Interim Officer Volunteers for the first official general meeting. A slate of officers will be brought before the membership at the second meeting for formal approval.

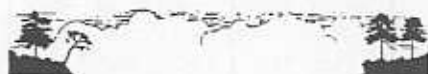
At the first general meeting called to order by Forrest MacGregor, Tom Hunnicut volunteered to be Membership Director. Dr. Sisco suggested the Carolinas Chapter be enlarged to include Georgia and Tennessee and be called the Southern Appalachian Chapter of TACF.

(continued on p. 2)

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
AT NC ARBORETUM
A SUCCESS

TACF members representing both North and South Carolina, and others interested in our ultimate goal of bringing back the American Chestnut, met on May 8th to discuss strategies. Dr. Paul Sisco outlined genetics and hybridization methods used at TACF's research farms in Meadowview, Virginia, explained current thinking about blight resistance, and spoke about recent farm projects. Marshal T. Case, Executive Director of TACF, presented timelines through 2006 when chestnuts that are 94% the product of the American Chestnut parent but still blight resistant are expected to be ready. As each one present spoke of his or her personal interest it became clear that "Mother Trees" from this area would need to be found. Pollen or nuts from trees growing in the Carolinas could provide the research program with regional characteristics needed to make a successful transition from the farms to Carolina forests. A provisional Carolinas Chapter was formed by general consent of all there.

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THE CHESTNUT CLARION
is the official newsletter of
the Carolinas Chapter of
The American Chestnut
Foundation

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BECOME A CHARTER MEMBER

For a one-time fee of \$60 over the usual \$40 membership fee, you may become a CHARTER MEMBER of the Carolinas Chapter. The additional money will help defray chapter startup & operating costs.



- Our new Charter Members
- Buck & Joan Blessing
 - Kim & Susan Carlyle
 - John Dainotto
 - Ray Daniel
 - Robert L. Doudrick
 - Sadhvi & Sakshi Gantenbien
 - Bill Gooch
 - Jackie Greenfield
 - Dexter Hayes
 - Hugh & Janice Irwin
 - Forrest MacGregor
 - Don Myers & Susan Wilson
 - Mark B. Rogers
 - Bob & Lynn Shields
 - Paul H. Sisco
 - James O. Sitton
 - Alma Spicer
 - Palmer Stacy
 - Bradford C. Stanback & Shelly Lodge Stanback
 - Kenneth & Pat Summerville
 - Donald R. Surette
 - Walter Whaley
 - Robert M. Wilson
 - Paul Dunn

(Organizational Mtg, Con't from p.1)

Robert Wilson volunteered to be the Chapter's Interim Chair until the full membership could vote on officers at our second meeting. The chapter must acquire two hundred new members to move from provisional to full status.

Folks volunteered for projects and offices in the burgeoning Carolinas Chapter and departed with a sense of excitement at what could be.

(First General Mtg. Con't from p.1)

Robert Eidus has volunteered for Treasurer, but there remain vacancies for nominations for the board including Secretary and Vice-President. MacGregor spoke of the need for a regional germplasm center. Dr. Sisco emphasized that having a breeding station in the Southern Appalachians would be helpful in creating a regionally adapted germplasm pool. He mentioned that Dollywood was interested in working on this project in exchange for publicity. Mark Rogers mentioned that former Champion Paper land, including some barns, might be part of a negotiation with The Nature Conservancy. The germplasm project does not presently have a coordinator. Projects at Meadowview include mudpacking blighted trees, renovating the house on the Wagner Farm, harvesting nuts in the fall, and rebuilding a damaged block wall. MacGregor mentioned that the TACF Asheville office is funding an internship for Rebecca Davis, a senior in history at UNC-A, who will be documenting chestnut lore and interviewing people as part of the Oral History Project. Don Myers & S. Wilson
(continued on p. 3)

**Meadowview
Monitor**

**NORTH CAROLINA
VOLUNTEERS ASSIST IN
POLLINATION PROJECT**

Saturday, June 19th, 1999, two Carolinas Chapter volunteers found out just how easy it is to get to Meadowview, Virginia. They took part in an all-day event that oriented them to the research farms and taught them pollination basics. Susan Wilson and Don Myers made the two-hour trip. Dr. Fred Hebard and Dr. Paul Sisco, TACF scientists, updated them on the progress made at the farm during this busy springtime season and set them to their tasks. They learned how to clip off male catkins and bag the female flowers, working from the ground and from an orchard ladder. However, the farm also uses a bucket truck for hard-to-reach treetops. Dr. Sisco pointed out the different characteristics of the American and Chinese varieties. They saw first hand what the blight did to trees, how the characteristic orange fungus produced spores. Dr. Sisco showed Don and Susan how the resistant trees wall off blight with a natural cancer.



REVIVE YOUR COMMUNITY

CAROLINAS PUBLICITY UPDATE

Members had success with getting press releases about the organizational meeting and Carolinas Chapter published in area newspapers including the May 26th issue of *Mountain Xpress*, the May 27th issue of *The Transylvania Times*, *Yancey Common Times Journal* on June 2, 1999, and the Summer 1999 issue of the *Diamond Brand Camping Center's Quarterly Newsletter*. An article also appeared in the *Charlotte Observer* in June titled "Nuts about Chestnuts."

The Chapter is looking for volunteers to show slides, and assist at display booths. We are searching for a suitable "donated" 20-30 acres suitable for a regional germplasm center. If you are willing to contribute in any of these ways, notify the Asheville office at (828) 281-0047.

RON AFIELD THE MOTHER TREE PROJECT

June and July, Ron Myers, forester, searched out "known" trees in Wilkes County. He also contacted Ashley Carter and Mark Rogers to see the trees they had identified. Ron sent pollen from the trees he found to the research farms at Meadowview. Although the pollen arrived too late to put on the best backcross trees, they used it to pollinate some American trees in the Mount Rogers Area which will result in seed with 50% North Carolina germplasm. Ron says it takes time and miles to collect good pollen and nuts. He had difficulty finding NC chestnuts that were flowering early enough to match with the orchard trees. He will need to rely heavily on the help of field scouts and people willing to hike into areas for observations, reports, tips, and collection. Ron may plan a field trip or tour to coincide with collecting chestnuts from some of the mother trees that were found.

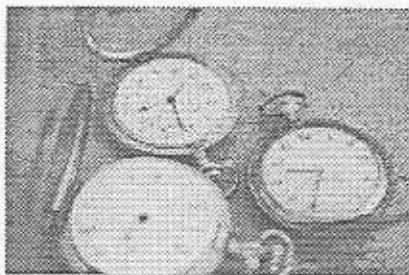
(First General Mtg. Con'd from p. 2)

your newsletter editors, showed the draft of this premier issue. Current plans are to send it USPS, to email it, and to post it to the website. Buck Blessing noted that his expertise was in marketing. He spoke about the need to repackage our message via graphics, posters, and a good pitch with powerful presentations to groups in the area. If our need is for members, Blessing says, then we must produce a compelling story. Shelli Lodge Stanback urged that the newsletter also be thought of as a marketing tool. Brad Stanback suggested that upcoming events and projects be previewed in the newsletter to generate interest. Rob Doudrick mentioned possible legal problems as an interstate group. Hunnicutt indicated he would consult a lawyer about this issue. Benemma Bailey, sitting in for Robert Eidus, said that Beth Israel synagogue will allow the Carolinas Chapter to meet in their rooms on Murdock Avenue at no charge when scheduling does not conflict with their activities. The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Ron Myers email is
ron_myers@mail.enr.state.nc.us

You can also contact him by phone at (919) 553-6178. Get in touch with Ron for finding trees in the fall and next spring.

REMEMBER THE PAST



REINVENT THE FUTURE

Rebecca's Corner

Rebecca Davis is a history student at UNCA whose senior research project will be on the economic impact of the loss of the chestnut in this area of Appalachia. Over the summer Rebecca has been conducting oral interviews with Jay Rogers, whom you may remember from the organizational meeting, her grandfather, and others, as part of her research. Current plans are for her to continue to collect oral histories and do research under a TACF internship with UNCA in the Fall. Rebecca is eager for more interviews, so if you know of anyone with a "chestnut story" please contact her via the Asheville office at (828) 281-0047. Leave a message if Leah is not there. Rebecca's email is:
rdavis@asheville.cc.nc.us
Rebecca will be keeping us posted on her progress in this column of the newsletter.



A special thanks to Little Joe Brown for letting Susan Wilson say a few words about our work with chestnuts on his radio program Sunday morning, July 25, 1999, on WFGW 1010.

IS THERE A BOTANIST IN THE HOUSE?

Those of you who received *The Journal of The American Chestnut Foundation* may have seen the article featuring John and William Bartram. The USPS has also honored these American botanists with a new 33 cent stamp. Don't miss *Natural History, The Flower Issue*, May 1999. In "What's so Special about Flowers," it features botanical illustrations of the Tulip Tree, a plant mentioned in *The Journal's* Bartram article.

CALENDAR

Wednesday, September 15
Nut-Gathering Workshop by Ron
Myers, Forester. 7-9pm. Botanical
Gardens of Asheville (adjoining
the UNC-A campus). **Join us!**

General Meeting and Grand Event
coming this Fall! Look for details
in the next issue.

The next Newsletter is coming
out in October. Deadline for articles
or announcements is 1 October.

Send to
swilson@buncombe.main.nc.us
or

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Please notify the editors if you
do NOT wish to receive future
paper copies of the newsletter.
Remember to share your copy
of the newsletter with a friend.
Not only will it conserve our re-
sources, it will encourage their
participation in an adventure of
a lifetime, restoration of the
American Chestnut.

GET INVOLVED VOLUNTEER

We need people
to ground check trees for "Mother
tree" research and nut collection. No
experience needed. Contact Ron
Myers at (919) 553-6178,
ron_myers@mail.enr.state.nc.us

IMPORTANT!
IF YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL
ADDRESS, PLEASE SEND IT TO
LEAH AT: asheville@acf.org

CAROLINAS MEMBERSHIP & FISCAL REPORT

As of July 22, 1999, there were
approximately 251 members in
the Carolinas with 21 charter
members. We have \$2400 in the
Chapter coffers. Membership in
other states is as follows:

Georgia	80
Alabama	39
Tennessee	125

TREES "DISCOVERED" IN BIG SANDY MUSH

On Saturday, July 24, 1999, Dr.
Paul Sisco took Don Myers and
Susan Wilson up on their offer for
him to visit their mountain retreat
in Big Sandy Mush. They located
many old chestnut stumps, 6 with
sprouts up to 6 feet tall. A couple
of these showed signs of blight, and
one, gall wasps in the leaf nodes.
On Monday, July 26, Luke Hudgins
invited Susan to walk his mountain
at the end of Clark Branch Rd. in
Big Sandy. Little Joe Brown, Luke's
regular walking partner, pointed out
7 healthy chestnuts, about four
times the height of those seen on
Saturday, one with burs. Joe also
pointed out three dead trees, two
about the same height as those liv-
ing.

NAME THAT NEWSLETTER!

"The Clarion" is just one possible
name for your newsletter. Others
that have been
suggested are:

The Contact
The Connection
The Champion
The Chirrup
The Chorus
The Castanet
Chestnut Chronicles
Nut News
The American Chestnut Speaks
Carolinas Chestnut Journal

Now it's your turn to add to the
list! Get those creative juices
flowing and let us know your
suggestions.

**THE MISSION OF TACF IS
SIMPLE: TO RESTORE THE
AMERICAN CHESTNUT AS
AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE
EASTERN FOREST
ECOSYSTEM
THROUGH COOPERATIVE
RESEARCH AND A
SCIENTIFIC BREEDING
PROGRAM.**

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