



# Maryland Chapter

## Newsletter – August 2005

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### MD TACF Second Annual Meeting

### Saturday, September 17, 2005

### 10:30 am

#### Chapter Officers:

Ms. Essie Burnworth, President  
Mr. Harold F. Burnworth, Vice-President  
Ms. Barbara B. Knapp, Secretary  
Dr. James S. Coleman, Treasurer

#### Directors:

Dr. Douglas H. Boucher  
Dr. Gary P. Carver  
Mr. Stephen Dodge  
Mr. James Hill  
Ms. Kathleen Marmet  
Mr. Robert Strasser  
Mr. Richard S. Will,  
Mr. Bradley Yohe

**Please join us for a wonderful morning at Turner Farm on Sugarloaf Mountain:**

- **10:30 – Chapter Business**  
**Election of Officers and Board**

- **11:00 Guest Speaker: Mark Double**

### “Combating Chestnut Blight with Genetic Engineering – A New Approach to Hypovirulence”

**Mark Double is a Research Associate in Plant Pathology at West Virginia University who has been working with Dr. William MacDonald since 1977. He will bring us up to date on the latest research and answer questions from the audience.**

- **12:00 – Picnic – Hot dogs and chili with all the trimmings**

Please reply to [BBKnapp@slsoft.com](mailto:BBKnapp@slsoft.com) or [hburnworth@msn.com](mailto:hburnworth@msn.com) or call **Barbara Knapp at (301) 916-6133** or **Essie Burnworth at (301) 762-6715**, if you can come. Bring a folding chair, if you wish. Call or check our website in case of rain. [www.mdtaf.com](http://www.mdtaf.com)

### Directions to Turner Farm on Sugarloaf Mountain

Take I-270 to Exit 22 -- MD 109. There is a sign to Sugarloaf Mountain. At the end of the exit ramp, turn west on 109 and continue to MD 95, which is Comus Road, and turn right. The Comus Inn will be on your right at the corner. Follow Comus Road to the square with the entrance to Sugarloaf Mountain on your right. Proceed across the square and stay on Comus Road, which is the right fork. You will see a large pond on your left as you leave the square. This road leads past the Stronghold Mansion entrance and dead ends at the entrance to Turner Farm on Mount Ephraim Road.

### Bylaw Amendment Proposed

The Executive Board has proposed that Article III, Sections 1 & 2 of the Chapter Bylaws be Amended to read as follows:

Section 1. The Officers of this Chapter shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and hold office for one year **beginning November 1 of the year in which they are elected.**

Section 2. The Executive Board shall consist of at least nine (9) members, including the four (4) elected Officers. The term of office of a Director shall be three (3) years, **beginning November 1 of the year in which such Director is elected**, except that the nominating committee may recommend in selective cases a term of lesser or greater length, if such is deemed advisable to restore the principle of staggered terms.

Bold text is the proposed addition to current language for the purpose of clarifying terms of office. It is desirable for the President, who has represented the Chapter in activities of the national organization during the year, to continue in that role through the TACF Annual Meeting in October so that tasks undertaken during the year can be completed and reports presented.

Members will vote on the proposed Amendment at the Annual Meeting September 17<sup>th</sup>.

# CHAPTER NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to the Executive Board August 13, 2005

Committee Members: Jim Hill, Barbara Knapp, Kathy Marmet

## OFFICERS:

The Committee nominates the following candidates to serve as Officers of the Maryland Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation:

President:	Essie Burnworth
Vice President:	Burnie Burnworth
Secretary	Barbara Knapp
Treasurer	Tom Traver

All Officers are elected for one-year terms. The President and Vice President are limited to two terms of office. Candidates for President, Vice President and Secretary have each served a single one-year term since formation of the Chapter.

## DIRECTORS:

The Committee nominates the following candidates to serve as Directors with three-year terms to expire September 2008:

Jim Coleman  
Paul Eriksson  
Betty Garrand  
Ron Kuipers



Chapter volunteer Rob Marmet bags treetop American Chestnut flowers for later pollination with backcross pollen from TACF orchards in Meadowview, VA. Burs will be harvested in late September to provide seed for planting in backcross orchards next spring.

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Chapter currently has eight Directors, each with a term expiring in September 2007. If the proposed candidates are elected to the proposed terms, the number of Directors will increase to twelve. The Committee recommends to future Nominating Committees that when the terms of current Directors expire, half of their successors be nominated for two-year terms and half for three-year terms to create staggered terms.

The Committee discussed a number of possible changes in the Chapter Bylaws relating to election of Officers and Directors, and has recommended that the Executive Board study the Bylaws and consider proposing revised Bylaws for consideration by the Membership at the 2007 Annual Meeting.

## Chapter President Essie Burnworth Chairs National TACF Nominating Committee

At the April 2005 TACF Board meeting, the Executive Committee named our Chapter president, Essie Burnworth, as the Chairman of the Nominating Committee for the 2006 TACF Officers. She formed the Nominating Committee in accordance with the By-laws, choosing a member of the Science Cabinet, Rex Mann from Kentucky; a member of the Development Cabinet, Bill Lord of Pennsylvania; and the Chairman of the Board, Herb Darling to help her. The Committee has solicited nominations for the Officers from members throughout the Foundation, and will select a slate of nominees to present to the Board for election at the TACF Annual Meeting in Lexington, Kentucky, at the end of October.

## STAY IN TOUCH

This Newsletter and invitation to our Annual Meeting, is being mailed to all TACF members and volunteers. To save money and effort, news and invitations to smaller events during the year are sent out by e-mail and posted to our website, [www.mdtacf.com](http://www.mdtacf.com).

We will be happy to mail these items to anyone without e-mail who requests this service. Please call **Essie Burnworth at (301) 762-6715** or **Barbara Knapp at (301) 916-6133** to get on the Special Mailing List.

If you would like to receive Chapter news by email, please make sure we have your current address by sending an email message to [kathymarmet@hotmail.com](mailto:kathymarmet@hotmail.com).

**ARE YOU A MEMBER?** TACF Members are automatically members of the state chapter. If you have been a member, your membership expiration date is included on your mailing label.

## AMERICAN CHESTNUT SCHOLAR NEWS

The **Chestnut Jamboree** May 14 at **ThorpeWood** for the Carroll County American Chestnut Scholars and their families was a great success. Twenty-five Maryland Chapter volunteers helped with this daylong event that offered hands on learning about various aspects of the chestnut program. Five South Carroll High School students demonstrated their science research projects focused on aspects of chestnut blight.

The high school students who presented at the Jamboree have submitted a report of their **Student Projects** for publication in the fall issue of *The Journal of The American Chestnut Foundation*.

Carroll County science educators and Maryland Chapter representatives met with Dr. Donald Nuss at his lab at the **University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute (UMBI)** on June 7 to explore possibilities for continued partnership with Dr. Nuss and his research team. Dr. Nuss described his ideas for extending student projects that have included sampling cankers and determining vegetative compatibility, to include preparing hypovirulent fungal strains with which to treat cankers.

**Carroll County Public Schools** have applied for a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to develop a K-12 ecology curriculum. The American chestnut story would be a significant part of the curriculum. TACF and the Maryland Chapter have provided letters of support for the project.

The Global Ecology Project of **Poolesville High School** in Montgomery County has purchased an American Chestnut Scholars membership for 30 students for next year.



American chestnut bur

## American Chestnut Locator Committee

Gary Carver has collected and organized Chapter information on potential Maryland "Mother" trees in an Excel database. He has verified existing data and collected new data, including GPS coordinates. Gary led a group to Western Maryland to examine several candidate trees and to collect samples for verification. Following up on leads generated by local publicity and from volunteers affiliated with MD DNR, the Locator Committee has increased the list of confirmed American chestnut trees to at least fifteen. This comprehensive documentation of Maryland trees provides a solid basis for choosing "Mother" trees and developing Maryland lines in support of the TACF backcross breeding strategy.

## KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR MOTHER TREES

Identifying possible American chestnut "Mother" trees is important to the backcross-breeding program. You might notice the distinctive burs that mature in early fall. (See photo above.) If you see a possible "Mother" tree, you can help by filling out the locator form from the Chapter website: [www.mdtacf.com](http://www.mdtacf.com) (Look under "how do I help?") and forwarding it to one of the contacts listed on the web page.

## POLLINATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In anticipation of the controlled pollination season, Gary Carver hosted a meeting on May 27 to learn about the techniques of controlled pollination and to agree on a plan for breeding new Maryland lines this summer. Sara Fitzsimmons made an excellent presentation on the how-to's of bagging, pollinating, and drying pollen. Then we made a list of seven potential new lines we would try to develop this year.



Burnie Burnworth, Rob and Kathy Marmet use one of the Chapter's new extension ladders to bag flowers for controlled pollination at Sugarloaf.

Thanks to the hard work of several dedicated volunteers, we have bagged and pollinated more than 500 flowers on trees with the potential to create six backcross lines. The Chapter bought two Werner extension trestle ladders and another safety harness, which has put many flowers within reach. Robert Strasser has taken the lead in planning and carrying out the controlled pollination.



## **SAVE THE DATE NOVEMBER 12 AMERICAN CHESTNUT SCHOLAR VIDEO AND ORCHARD TOUR**

Plan to bring a sandwich to ThorpeWood November 12, as we gather for lunch and a heart-warming movie. Carroll County students and educators have created a fabulous video documenting the exciting learning and research on the American chestnut, chestnut blight and hypovirulence that has been happening in the Carroll County Public Schools.

We will gather for lunch at 12:30, followed by the video and an opportunity to tour the American chestnut backcross-breeding orchard at ThorpeWood.

## **HOOD COLLEGE AMERICAN CHESTNUT RESEARCH ASSOCIATE POSITION ESTABLISHED**

*Donations from the Thorpe Foundation and two Chapter members affiliated with Fox Haven helped establish an American chestnut Research Associate position under the supervision of Dr. Douglas Boucher, Hood College Associate Professor of Biology. Robert Strasser began work as the new Research Associate in March. Robert has an MA in environmental biology from Hood College, and has played a major role in establishment and care of ThorpeWood and Fox Haven orchards. Additional donors are being sought to fund this half time position beyond the end of current funding this fall.*

*The following is taken from Robert Strasser's mid season report on his work as a research associate in the Hood College biology department:*

My primary focus has been management of the Thorpe Foundation and Fox Haven orchards, while furthering the activities of Maryland's chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation in various ways. Although I frequent the office regularly to catch up on email and other related tasks, my time has primarily been in the field.

From late May until early July was a period very busy with the various steps of controlled pollination. I feel a deep sense of relief, and more than a little bit of fatigue, now that this season is past. Between 550 and 600 flowers were pollinated in six locations, including 5 new backcross 3 and 4 lines with the Clapper pollen sent from Meadowview, large surviving American intra-specific crosses, F1s, and our first backcross 2 line on inoculated Musick trees at the Thorpe Foundation. In all cases except one, a Maryland chestnut tree served as one of the parents. The exception was an American collected in York County, PA, but grown in Maryland. This was a great accomplishment toward the chapter's objective of incorporating Maryland genetic material into TACF's backcross breeding program.

Major events of this year included planning and planting the new backcross orchards at Fox Haven and Joe Dickey's, a successful Chestnut Scholars Day at ThorpeWood, and an unprecedented pollination effort for our chapter made possible in large part because of a few hard working volunteers. Dr. Dennis Fulbright's symposium and visit to Sugarloaf Mountain as well as the Carroll County Public Schools television program were both important elements of educational outreach for the Maryland chapter. We also have gone through the preliminaries of establishing a future orchard site on DNR land near the Monocacy River west of Sugarloaf. It's been a busy year to date, and there is much promise of future growth in our state's chestnut orchards to show for all of the effort.

When growing chestnuts for breeding and restoration, generations can be measured at a minimum of 6 years. And while the intercross orchards now in their fourth year at Meadowview and the Pennsylvania State Arboretum should be producing true breeding, disease resistant nuts for field trials and reforestation in 5-10

years, the work of breeding for disease resistance will most likely continue for decades. The more we succeed at growing our state chapter's trees and develop new sources of disease resistance, the longer the time frame in which our commitment to caring for them must also be measured. The road does really go ever on and on.

I feel grateful to know that trees planted at ThorpeWood in 1999 now measure over 25 feet in height and are serving as parents for the next generation. A select few of those planted this year will in turn become parents in another 6 or 8 year's time. Whatever changes the future may hold for me and my work as research associate, it has been a productive time for the Maryland ACF chapter in its efforts toward chestnut restoration.



**THE CUPRIT.** Joe Dickey captured this raccoon with a taste for chestnuts after it visited the Chapter's newly planted backcross orchard on his farm near Annapolis.

## **JOIN IN THE FUN**

If you'd like to become more actively involved and learn more about the work of the Maryland Chapter, please contact Kathy Marmet, Membership Chair at [kathymarmet@hotmail.com](mailto:kathymarmet@hotmail.com) or in person at our annual meeting. With nearly 300 Chapter members, we are struggling with the challenge of connecting with those who want to be actively involved. Please let us know of your interests, availability and skills!

## **PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

Regular membership is \$40. Donations of any size are welcome. Our new MD Chapter membership form is at [www.mdtacf.com](http://www.mdtacf.com)