

Maryland Chapter of TACF

Newsletter #8 -- October 29, 2003

Maryland Chapter Established

The Maryland Chapter of TACF was officially established at the recent TACF Annual Meeting at State College, PA. A chestnut plaque recognizing the occasion was presented to Dr. Doug Boucher at the awards banquet. We were assured of the vigor and health of the national organization with 5,000 members and sustained levels of contributions. One of our members, Richard Will, was named to the TACF Board of Directors.

It was a very interesting weekend with 10 Marylanders in the group of 120+ attendees. We had tours of the nearby orchards of the PA Chapter, heard reports from the Meadowview Research Farms, and listened to technical presentations on current research. One of our members, Dr. Donald Nuss from the University of Maryland, gave a fascinating presentation on his work with hypovirulence. Stephen Dodge described his educational work at ThorpeWood and with the Carroll County schools as part of the Member Sharing presentations.

Now that we are a full-fledged chapter, our Directors will be setting up the standing committees specified in our by-laws: American Chestnut Location, Research, Membership, Program, and Publications. Be thinking of how you want to help.

We Need You on Sunday, November 16

Our next working session will be Sunday, November 16, at Sugarloaf

Mountain in Frederick County. It is time to dig up the 753 American chestnut seedlings growing in the nursery there. Some will go to replace seedlings that died at the three Sugarloaf Mountain sites; some will go to local schools as part of an educational program; some will go to ThorpeWood and Fox Haven to expand their American chestnut plantings; and some will go to volunteers.

The plan is to gather at 10:00 am at Turner Farm where the nursery is located (directions follow). Teams of volunteers will dig up the seedlings, package them with ID tags for transport, record the distribution information, plant replacement seedlings at Sugarloaf, dismantle the electric fence at the nursery, and then share a picnic and brief meeting around the picnic tables at Turner Farm.

Bring your own sandwich -- drinks, chips, paper products and cookies will be provided.

Everyone is welcome and there are plenty of jobs to suit all energy levels. We always have fun as well as work to promote the welfare of the trees we all love.

Please reply to BBKnapp@slsoft.com or hburnworth@msn.com or call Barbara Knapp at (301) 916-6133 or Essie Burnworth at (301) 762-6715, if you can come. We need to know how many are coming for planning the work and for the picnic. Also, if there is a last minute change, we will know how to contact you.

Volunteers who come on the 16th will be rewarded with a t-shirt!

Controlled Pollination Results

On September 28, 13 volunteers harvested burs with 181 chestnuts, including 33 nuts from the controlled pollination of Barbara's American chestnut trees in Germantown, MD, with BC2 pollen from tree GL367 at TACF's Meadowview Farms. It was a wonderful day.

Fox Haven Signs TACF Germplasm Agreement

Fox Haven Center, Inc., a group dedicated to creating an environmental retreat and learning center near Jefferson, Maryland, is committed to participating in efforts to reestablish American chestnut forests in Maryland. With the signing of a Germplasm Agreement with TACF, Fox Haven is ready to expand its American chestnut orchards planted in the spring of 2003 with seeds and seedlings from Sugarloaf Mountain and other Maryland trees.

Directions to Turner Farm at Sugarloaf Mountain

Take I-270 North to Exit 22 -- MD 109. There is a sign to Sugarloaf Mountain. At the end of the exit ramp, turn right (west) on 109 and continue to MD 95, which is Comus Road, and turn right. The now-closed 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 in the road. 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.