

THE BURR

Volume 7, No. 2

Newsletter of the New York State Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation, Inc.

Fall/Winter 1997

/Winter 1997

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Embryos, Embryos, Embryos. The future of TACFNY's program rests in the collection of a few burs from every remaining producing American chestnut tree we can find in New York State. At present there are only 30 lines in our gene pool and we need a minimum of 100 lines in NYS. The more, the better to prevent inbreeding of our population. This means we must find more living trees. This is the single most important task we have while we wait for the results of the tests on the first transgenic trees.

The collecting of burs at the proper time next Spring after anthesis is critical. Collecting too soon doesn't work, and too late doesn't work. There is a one-week window available. Unfortunately, each group of trees—although only 30 to 40 miles apart—are not receptive at the same time. We know when to collect the burs and pollinate, but each group of trees can be as much as two or three weeks apart, causing problems for the pollinators and harvesters. It requires a great deal of study because each spring season is different and the trees react to temperatures which vary from year to year and tree to tree. You cannot rise the same dates each year.

Despite this, we have had more success than failures and Dr. Maynard and TACFNY Vice-President Stan Wirsig are working on a program to better insure getting the burs at the proper time.

Individual trees will have to be hand-pollinated, which is a large problem because of the need to find a mate tree nearby flowering at the same time. It is necessary to be able to reach the tops of the trees far back in the woods to pollinate them and then collect the burs later. It is a difficult

job that has to be done if our program is to progress. Tree climbers will be necessary. We will need volunteers in each district to accomplish this task.

The ESF Syracuse laboratory will have to be ready to receive and process the embryos in this short window of opportunity. We will have to raise funds to pay for the additional technicians to accomplish this. We must do it now!

CROSS YOUR "T's"

You may have wondered why the "T" suddenly appeared before the previously used acronyms ACF and ACFNY. Apparently the acronym ACF is owned by another organization, so we have now adopted a "T" for "the", making it TACF and TACFNY to avoid confusion.

RECORD NUMBER ATTEND ANNUAL MEETING IN OLEAN

It was a pretty fall weekend with plenty of fall colors remaining when TACFNY members descended upon the Southern Tier town of Olean, NY. Annual Meeting attendees came from all corners of the state with a good attendance from interested local people for a total of 83 attendees.

President Darling presided over the Saturday morning business meeting, clipping through various officers, District directors and Committee chairmen reports. Planting, research and education, the three main thrusts of TACFNY activities, were reported briefly as follows:

Planting: Each of the District directors, as well as the newly elected director Wayne Cooper, reported on planting activities. Combined, there are several thousand American chestnuts from 28 or more seed

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During the Annual Meeting in late October, the President's Award, in recognition of outstanding service, was presented to John Ellis and Jim Donowick [left] and Bill White (right) by President Herb Darling.



...nding service, Darling.

DISTRICT NEWS

DISTRICT 1: DR. JOHN POTENTE, DIRECTOR, HAUPPAUGE, L.I., (516) 232-1566.

Long Island is now on its way! After two years of searching, American chestnut trees that are well enough and able to grow flowers were located. With a commandeered group and the help of a tree service bucket truck. John was hoisted up thirty feet to the top of an isolated tree. Male flowers were clipped and raced in a waiting BMW 10 miles to the nearest suitable tree which was then cross-pollinated. Then the anxious wait until September.

After cracking open scores of empty burs, a fertile chestnut finally dropped out of one. This likely is the first American chestnut seed from Long Island in decades.

John reports that because of the growing effort in his Long Island district, the NY State Department of Parks has given an area for the first Long Island seed orchard.

In addition to seed procurement, John has concentrated on public awareness. He has made presentations at two universities and three prestigious conservation and arboriculturist societies as well as the NY Lumber Trade Assoc.

DISTRICT 2: MARGARET COLLINS, DIRECTOR, NEW YORK CITY, N.Y., (718) 445-6436, nychestnut@aol.com

We would like to congratulate our colleague John Potente the Long Island Director of the TACFNY on his informative lectures. Hopefully, we can convince John to come to our region soon and repeat his performance. We would also like to say a sad farewell to our former DEC NYC Urban Forester John Graham, wish him good luck in Cortland, NY, and welcome his successors, foresters Michael Curley and Jim McDonald.



Director Dr. John Potente was hoisted high in a tree-service bucket during District 1's program to pollinate isolated American chestnut trees on Long Island.

Approximately half of the trees planted in Udall's Cove (Queens) have survived into their second year, thanks to the care given them by volunteers Bruce Stuart and Pat St. John. We are working to correct alkaline soil conditions (NYC—all that cement) and to jerryrig a more convenient watering system (luckily Bruce Stuart is a fireman, and there is a fire hydrant just outside the park...). We are also looking forward to additional joint ventures with Alley Pond Environmental Center and the City Parks Foundation.

Thanks to the City Parks Foundation, five additional chestnut trees have been planted in Prospect Park, Brooklyn (Ravine 2). Although this area is not open to the general public, if the trees thrive, we will have additional plantings in Prospect Park. Anyone who lives in the area or visits Prospect Park frequently should contact me if they are interested in inspecting and recording the condition of the trees on a periodic basis.

The remainder of the seedlings have been consolidated at the Native Plant Center in Staten Island, which is part of the Greenbelt and a truly interesting place to visit. Although we had to remove the potted seedlings from Van Corlandt Park, we intend to have plantings in both the Bronx and Manhattan in the spring, so none of the boroughs need feel left out.

Dr. Bryan Dutton has generously agreed to meet with us at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens on November 25, 1997, to share with us all of the information he has gathered about chestnut trees as part of the large NY Metropolitan Flora Project. Hopefully we will be able to merge the information contained in his databases with our own growing databases to get a comprehensive picture of the past and present location of the chestnut trees in NYC.

As always, we are seeking new ideas, new members, and new volunteers, and encourage anyone who has any questions, wishes to receive local announcements by e-mail, or wants to serve as a borough coordinator to contact Margaret Collins.

DISTRICT 3: FRANK MUNZER, DIRECTOR, CLINTON CORNERS, N.Y., (914) 266-5138.

The Lasdom Park Arboretum now has a total of 425 American chestnut trees. Some from the 1992 planting are now up to 12 feet tall with flower production anticipated in 1998. This seed orchard is maintained under the direction of Craig Hibben and Ted Kozlowski, County Forester, with the able help of summer intern Valari Holmes, a forestry student at SUNY Syracuse.

At the Weathersfield Farm the plantation managed by Kevin Malloy has a total of 140 trees of the 200 targeted for the area.

The Institute of Ecosystem Studies still allows the use of its greenhouse and lath shed for a protected seedling growth area. The DEC has seedlings in six locations and a large project in the Catskills is in the approval stage.

Craig Hibben, Lionel Roberg and Frank Munzer made public presentations six times in the past year.

DISTRICT 6: T. URLING WALKER, DIRECTOR, WATERTOWN, N. Y., (365) 782-3653.

Land for planting became available at the Forestry School at Wanakena. There, 70 to 80 American chestnut seeds have been planted with a forester's comment that if these seeds germinate and develop, they could probably survive anywhere because the area is supposed to be the coldest spot in northern New York State. This past spring, six good stock trees were moved from the Lowville experimental station to Thompson Park, with the idea of developing a demonstration area within the Conservancy for people to see the trees and read about the blight history. Land for a seed orchard may become available on Grindstone Island, an ideal area for growing American chestnuts. Negotiations are continuing. Walker reports two hardy stalks have survived the elements, deer and squirrels in his yard.

DISTRICT 7: ROY D. HOPKE, DIRECTOR, CHENANGO FORKS, N.Y., (607) 648-5512, snowhawke@juno.com

This past spring we planted an additional 125 trees in our plantation at the Ropers Environmental Center.

John Ellis and Jim Donowick were very active this year in seed and embryo collection. In fact, they collected over 6000 nuts. The areas they have collected have been timber harvested rather heavily in the recent past, leading to heavy regrowth of the chestnut component. This temporary opportunity will not last long and John and Jim capitalized on it well.

Ken Burdick collected from a number of trees in the Ithaca area, which are shriveling fast, collecting a hundred nuts or so — no small feat when the trees are giving few fertile nuts.

Deer are now eating our trees in the Sherburne plantation. Now we must find a way to frustrate them. This year would have been great for the trees in the plantation were it not for the deer. We are no longer sold on the tree tubes, with the exception of protection from mice and rabbits. The trees are too spindly when kept in the tubes too long. Also, wind action is causing the tubes to damage the tender bark on the young trees. This is a real disease factor which can and does introduce blight to the plantation.

DISTRICT 8: CHIP LEAVY, DIRECTOR, CHURCHVILLE, N.Y., (716) 293-2540

Six new dedicated sites were planted with 156 American chestnut seedlings. These were in Chili, Churchville, Livonia, Hector, Italy Valley and Sodus, N.Y.. 520 seedlings were supplied to Soil and Water Conservation Districts for inclusion into their seedling sales program. Seedling sales to members and individuals contacted at a variety of shows totaled 479. Chip and his team exhibited at five different shows, exposing the TACFNY story to over 100,000 people attending the events. They also exhibited at the Genesee County Field Days attended by 1200 fifth and sixth graders who were interested and knowledgeable. Chip also supplied 100 seedlings to the CESF research program this summer. Next year, Chip hopes to establish at least one Boy Scout and one Girl Scout seed orchard. Incidentally, Chip concluded his report by mentioning he knows a couple of good deer repellent recipes if anyone should want them.

DISTRICT 9: BILL SNYDER, DIRECTOR, BUFFALO, N.Y., (716) 839-5456.

The annual Arbor Day planting attracted over 70 persons to the Zoar plantation where new trees were planted and others replaced. DEC Forester Wayne Cooper reports that there are 813 trees in the seed orchard, some planted in 1991. District 9 members have participated in showing the TACFNY display and making presentations to various groups. An interview with the Jamestown newspaper resulted in an awareness building article.

O'CONNOR FOUNDATION LOSES AN OFFICER, TACFNY LOSES A FRIEND

Robert L. Bishop (1918-1997) was a good friend of TACFNY who is said to have had "a passion for the American chestnut." He encouraged TACFNY to request a research grant from the A. Lindsay and Olive B. O'Connor Foundation of which he was an officer. The grant has been repeated for several years, helping TACFNY meet its obligations to the blight-resistance research program. One of the requirements has been that TACFNY match the grant dollars. This was achieved successfully through member dues and donations.

NEW RENEWAL PLAN WILL AFFECT NYS CHAPTER INCOME

After January 1, 1998, the national office of the American Chestnut Foundation will be sending renewals for membership rather than the New York State Chapter as in the past. Renewals will be mailed monthly, timed to the annual anniversary date of your membership.

The big difference is that each membership level whether "Regular" at \$40 or any of the levels up to the \$1000 "Gold Leaf" will return \$15 only to the New York State Chapter. With this new arrangement, we estimate a significant reduction in our operating income.

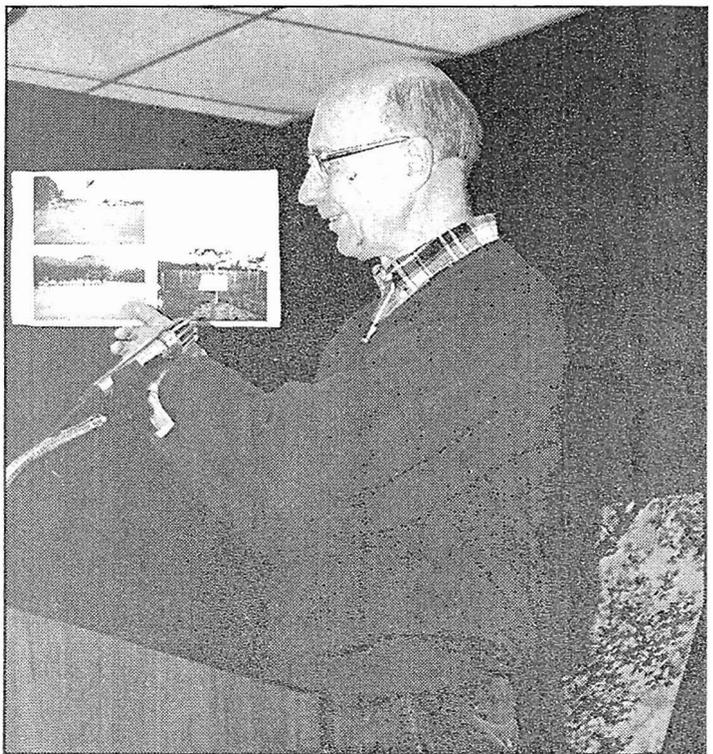
We continue to be very supportive of the national program. And your membership and non-designated contributions will continue to support their efforts, too.

However, the all-volunteer New York State Chapter conducts programs for planting, research and education that are one-of-a-kind. The operational costs to administer these programs, plus member expenses and funds for matching one of our research grants is budgeted well above the anticipated receipt of \$15 per member. So your donation designated for the New York State Chapter is vital to our continued operation.

For those who would normally renew at above the \$40 level, please designate on your check a portion of your funds for the New York State Chapter. Or send a separate check. You must write on the left side of your check: "Restricted for NYS Chapter \$___."

Please note... your \$40 national membership will include the New York State Chapter newsletter The Bur and other New York State communications.

Your help will make a difference.



Frank Munzer, Director of TACFNY District 3, reports during the 1997 Annual Meeting on the planting progress in his District. Frank has enlisted many dedicated volunteers and together they have planted and maintained over 550 American chestnut trees in their plantations.

RESEARCH AND RESTORATION PROGRESS FOR 1997

by Chuck Maynard, Bill Powell, Zizhuo Xing, and Sharon Bickel

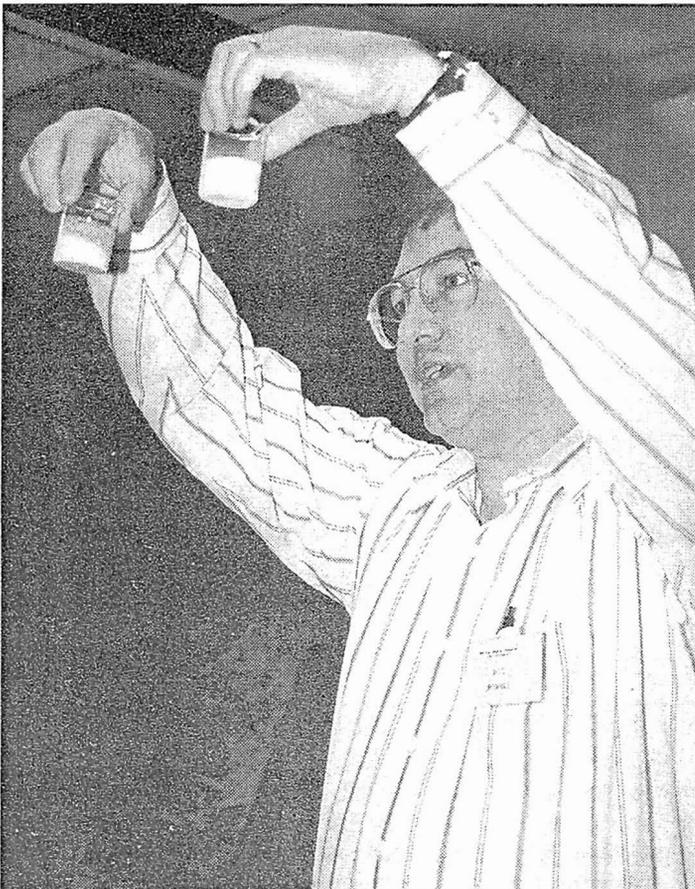
As we reported at the annual Chapter meeting in Olean, and the national meeting in Ashville, North Carolina, it has been an extremely fruitful year for the chestnut research and restoration project.

Acclimatization

For the first time, we have taken trees from the "test tube" and successfully established them back in the real world. In early June, two of these chestnuts were planted in a small clear-cut surrounded by woods with several other previously planted, well-established chestnuts, so we know it is a good chestnut site. Six more test tube chestnuts were planted at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Experiment Station in Syracuse. All the trees were carefully caged to prevent deer and mouse damage.

Both of the trees planted in Gowanda and five of the six planted in Syracuse survived the summer, and set what appear to be normal winter buds. Needless to say, we will be watching them carefully this winter and waiting for spring bud break with great anticipation!

These trees came originally from embryos provided to us in 1995 by Mr. John Ellis and Mr. James Donowick. We would like to thank them and all of the other cooperators who have worked so hard



Dr. Bill Powell stresses a scientific point as part of the Annual Meeting presentation by the research team from SUNY's College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse.

to provide us with burs and nuts which have been invaluable in our research.

Excited as we are about this first field test, these are not the resistant trees everyone is eagerly awaiting. The trees we planted last spring contain no new genes for blight resistance. They were produced to help us learn more about the complex process of hardening off or "acclimatizing" the tender plants to outside conditions. When these plants leave the lab they are about an inch tall with five or six thumbnail-size leaves. It takes about three months of careful attention in an environmentally controlled growth room to acclimatize the plants for safe field planting.

Embryogenesis

So that the gene pool never runs dry, we have also been working hard to establish cell lines from new trees each year. In 1995 we established five cell lines from two trees. In 1996 we established 11 cell lines from six different trees, and an additional three cell lines from three trees in 1997. The three cell lines established for 1997 are Nagel 1X2, 30031, and 30016. We are carefully watching three other cell lines (Degolyer I, cell lines 1, 2, 3) for possible embryogenesis. All the 20 cell lines established are still growing.

A video was produced to demonstrate the techniques of embryogenesis. It shows the steps from an actual ovule extraction from immature nuts to a field-ready plant. This informative video was shown at the annual Chapter meeting.

Gene Transfer

Gene transfer research continues in tissue culture lab. Almost a year and a half ago, we attempted to put new genes into growing cultures of chestnut embryos. Initially, many hundreds of embryos have been divided and the healthy ones transferred to fresh growth media. This gradual sorting process is starting to pay off. There are now seven different cell lines that we are nearly positive are transgenic. Work is in progress to regenerate whole plants from these cell lines.

Gene Design

The molecular genetics part of the project was also active this year. Dr. Powell has designed four gene constructs at SUNY-ESF, NY and made arrangements with other molecular biologists at Cornell University, NY and Texas Tech University, TX to use additional genes they developed. These genes, in various combinations, will be cloned into American chestnut embryo cultures: regenerated into whole plants, hardened off, and then tested for increased resistance to the chestnut blight. This is a slow process, but we have the first combination of these genes in embryo culture.

Disease Screening

Traditional field testing for resistance may take five years or more. We would like to identify trees with blight resistance sooner than that. Therefore, we began developing a disease inoculation procedure that could be conducted in a greenhouse on seedlings less than a foot high. Using American chestnut seedlings generously supplied by Chip and Crystal Leavy and Chinese chestnut seedlings provided by Greg Miller, we developed a micro inoculation test that can distinguish between the susceptible American chestnut

RESEARCH AND RESTORATION *(continued)*

seedlings (girdled stem within two to four weeks) and the resistant Chinese chestnut (callusing and nearly closed wound within two weeks). Once we produce hardened-off, transgenic trees, we will use this new test as our initial blight-resistant screen.

Future Research and Projects

Nuts from three trees (Tower #2, Taughannock and EW) with very little nut production were collected at the annual meeting in Olean. This spring, these trees will be sown and established into tissue culture, adding to our in-culture genepool.

Over 200 Val Ron III (7032) nuts were also collected at the meeting for a soil and fertilization experiment. This will look for the best out-of-culture environment for the plantlets to grow in during acclimatization.

Attempts are being made to modify and improve the immature bur collections. We are designing a shipment package and calculating a means to better pinpoint when to collect the immature burs. This work is a collaborative effort: we will need your cooperation. Updates on these modifications will be sent to you as developments occur.

Also in the planning stages is another video! This video will demonstrate the internal and external stages of the immature embryo development on the tree and will hopefully be filmed next harvesting season.

We look forward to working with you on these very exciting projects!



Vice-President Stan Wirsig is the TACFNY Science Committee Chairman. He has been our spearhead in coordinating the plans, field work and funding between TACFNY and SUNY's College of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse.

ANNUAL MEETING *(continued)*

sources growing in seed orchards throughout the state. Many of these are to be found in each site to promote diversity and protect the gene pool should blight attack.

Research: Vice-President Stan Wirsig reported that a new database is being set up for tree records and mapping of all known American chestnuts in New York State is being planned. TACFNY harvesters have contributed to the research at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse by seeking out and harvesting wild American chestnut juvenile embryos for their work. See the science report detailed elsewhere in *The Bur*.

Education: Chairman Glen Gelinis and Professor Don L. Bird reported that the teacher's manual was in the hands of some 45 teachers last spring for pilot testing. Over the summer, teachers' input was used to revise the manual for wider distribution during the current school season. The total teachers kit will include the Manual; two videotapes, leaves of the American and Chinese chestnuts as well as the Buckeye, burs, and seeds etc. The program targets the third through fifth grades. One of the teachers in the pilot program spoke enthusiastically at the Annual Meeting.

A Round Table Discussion was led by Doug Campbell with John Gordon giving his observation on weather as it affects fungus blight, and DEC's Russ Bliss addressing the topic of controlling deer damage.

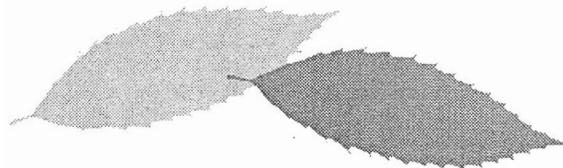
The new educational videotape titled "The Life and Times of Charlie Chestnut" was reviewed by an approving audience at lunch. It was followed by a through-the-microscope video on the "Preparation of Embryos for Tissue Culture" by Dr. Z. Xing of SUNY Syracuse and technician Sharon Bickel.

Also at the luncheon, Herb Darling presented the Presidents Award to Jim Donowick, Jim Ellis and Bill White for their hard work in the planting, nut gathering and embryo programs.

Although it was a threatening afternoon, a full complement of members visited a rustic cabin tucked into the rolling, treed hills near Olean. The complete structure was built of American chestnut wood from interior paneling to outdoor gutters and fencing. After viewing the cabin, there was a guided tour of an old-growth forest observing a variety of trees—some as old as 250 years. The cabin was owned by Mrs. Wendy Lawrence and the guide was Rick White, son of member Bill White.

Saturday closed on a high note with the Annual Dinner when Gregory McGee, a researcher at SUNY's Syracuse CESF, spoke on the subject of "The Ecological Role of Old-Growth Forests."

Bright and early Sunday morning the TACFNY Board of Directors met and discussed direction for the coming year. The changing membership dues and donation arrangements with national TACF were discussed (see separate article). The Board approved the sale of land donated by the mother of member John Gordon. The meeting was open to all members and several pertinent comments were received. The meeting concluded at 11:30 a.m.



FINAL EDUCATIONAL KIT NOW READY

As reported in *The Bur.* during last spring's school session some 45 grade 3-5 teachers pilot tested TACFNY's educational kit. Armed with the resulting comments, a teacher team headed by Dr. Donald L. Birdd, Professor of Science Education at Buffalo State College, revised the teacher's manual and supplementary materials into a finished package.

The production of a limited 200 manuals and the collection of materials for the kits is now in process timed for classroom use in Spring 1998. The modest numbers for the coming season will put our logistical capabilities to the test, for we must collect a long list of items such as burs, leaves and ample numbers of germinating seeds for each kit. As we gear up for future seasons, we will need broader participation for our collection needs.

One of our consulting teachers, Barbara Ann Newton of Springville, N.Y., recently attended the annual meeting of the Science Teachers Association of New York State. There, she led a before-breakfast seminar, aided by Ken Rogan, a fellow teacher, and Dr. Birdd, explaining the new TACFNY

program and reviewing the kit. Of the fifteen teachers who attended, representing all corners of the state, thirteen signed up to use the program next spring. One teacher would use it in an interesting inter-curricular crossover where one of a two teacher team would cover the subjects of pioneers and early New York State history and the other teacher, emphasizing science, would relate American chestnut to this period using the TACFNY kit.

The new kit contains a new 20 minute videotape produced for the third to fifth grade level, but enjoyed by all ages. It is titled "The Life and Times of Charlie Chestnut." "Charlie," a cartoon character, is a young chestnut seed who helps researchers develop genetic resistance to the blight. If you are interested in owning a videotape, it is available for \$20.

In Memoriam

HARRY SILVERSTEIN

HAROLD WEST

GETTING OUT THE WORD

The American chestnut is a great tree... and a great cause for tree lovers throughout New York State. There are many who can help to restore the American chestnut, but first: it is necessary to get out the word to inform what can be done... what are the best sources for nursery stock... what are the remedial actions to win against the scourge of chestnut blight.

You and all other tree lovers can help. Whether you have contacts with national TV, local radio stations, newspapers, magazines, service groups, church groups or the neighbors across the driveway, there are ways to spread the news about restoring the American chestnut. Become a spokesperson for the American chestnut. Hand out brochures whenever you get a chance. Make sure that your local conservation district offices are supplied with TACF brochures, and the same thing with the local service clubs, church groups, etc. if you become active in restoring this great tree, we can make a difference.

To get a good supply of brochures, or to become an ambassador for the American chestnut contact your District Director, or Herb Darling, c/o H.F. Darling Inc., 131 California Drive, Williamsville, N.Y. 14221, (716) 632-1125.



Glen Gelinas is TACFNY's Educational Chairman. He has coordinated all activities to bring the teacher's manual to its finished form such as teacher training and pilot testing. The program is ready for launching to a broader group this coming spring.



Dr. Don L. Birdd, shown reporting at the Annual Meeting, headed the team of teachers that created the teacher's manual and kit for the TACFNY educational program. He is a Professor of Science Education at Buffalo State College.

ACFNY BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

Board of Directors

Class of 1998, one-year term

Lewis Decker
 Thomas Deacon
 Jim Donowick
 John Ellis
 Adrien Gaudreau
 Craig Hibben
 Ted Kozlowski
 Chip Leavy *
 Dr. John Potente
 T. Urling Walker
 Bill White

Class of 1997, 1998, two-year term

Margaret Collins
 Wayne Cooper
 Roy Hopke
 Frank Munzer *
 Dr. Leonard Pepkowitz
 Dr. Eric Randall
 William Snyder *
 Dr. Richard Zander

Class of 1998, 1999, and 2000, 3-year term

Douglas Campbell *
 Herb Darling Jr. * - President
 John Gordon *
 Jack Mansfield *
 John Spagnoli *
 Arlene Wirsig * - Treasurer & Secretary
 Stanley Wirsig * - Vice-President
 Dr. John Kelley - Honorary Member,

* Members of the Executive Committee

MARSHAL T. CASE - MEW TACF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The president of the national TACF, Bud Coulter, announced the hiring of Marshal T. Case as Executive Director. He arrived to take over his new duties on October 20 in Bennington, Vermont.

He graduated from Cornell University in 1964 with a BS in Wildlife Biology and Science Education. He spent many years with the National Audubon Society, leaving them as a Senior Vice-President.

We welcomed him when he attended the TACFNY Annual Meeting, October 25-26.

PLANTING TIME SOON!

TACFNY members will receive a discount when ordering seedling packages.

C&C Nursery of Churchville, N.Y., is offering a planting package including American chestnut seedlings, a minimum of 12" tall, with 3'-tall shelters and stakes.

(As with all American chestnuts, they are subject to the fungus disease but you may not necessarily get the blight.)

Member pricing is as follows:

Quantity	Each	Total
2	\$7.50	\$ 15.00
10	\$6.00	\$ 60.00
25	\$5.00	\$125.00
100	\$4.75	\$475.00

Prices do not include delivery or applicable sales tax. Please write or phone C&C Nursery, 457 Palmer Road, Churchville, N.Y. 14428, (716) 293-2540.

RETIRED WOODWORKER NOW MAKES CRAFT ITEMS FROM AMERICAN CHESTNUT.

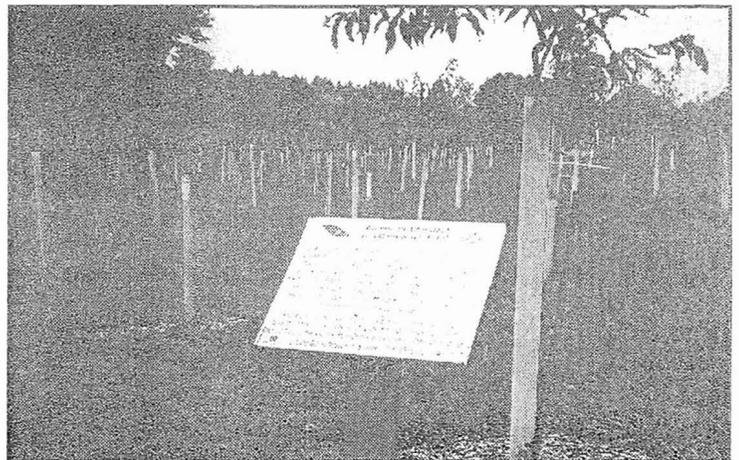
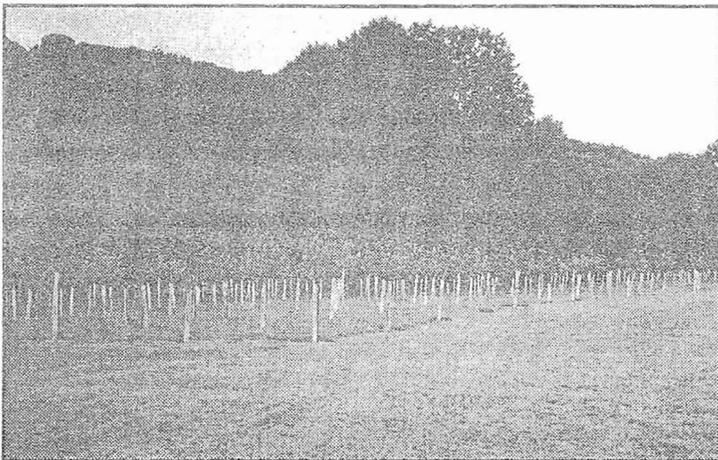
TACFNY member, John Barra began his woodworking career at the early age of 14. He became fascinated with the stories he heard about the attributes of American chestnut, but none was to be found in his Hudson Valley home area, ravaged by the blight early in this century.

His first encounter was while working on a ham. Knowing John's desire to own a piece of chestnut, the farmer found a chestnut board on the barn and gave it to John. Undaunted by the manure encrusting the board, John put it underwater in a local creek weighted by stones. After a week it came out clean as a whistle, all its beautiful grain coming to light.

As John grew in the business, acquiring a woodworking shop and sawmill, he kept his eyes open for American chestnut wood. In the 60's he found and bought a truckload from a lumber dealer friend in Kentucky who warned him, "I don't think you'll ever get any more." And he didn't — nothing but odds and ends.

At the time John used this beautiful wood for fine work such as hand-made cabinets. Now, with the inventory almost depleted and John retired, he and his wife Janet, craft smaller gilt items such as lazy susans, picture frames, and delicate bird feather pins. The Barras contributed a picture frame with a copy of a 1905 chestnut picture for a successful raffle at the October Annual Meeting.

If you would like information on the Barra's craft work, write or phone: 100 Sawmill Road, Catskill, N.Y. 12414. (518) 678-2222.



These trees are a portion of the 425 American chestnut trees planted in the Lasdom Park Arboretum. Some planted in 1992 are 12 feet high with flower production anticipated in 1998. The seed orchard is in District 3.

The Bur
New York State Chapter
American Chestnut Foundation Inc.
c/o Buffalo Museum of Science
1020 Humboldt Parkway
Buffalo, NY 14211

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Permit No. 2964

TACFNY 1998 GOALS

GOAL I

MONITOR MEMBERSHIP UNDER NEW RENEWAL PROCEDURE

- A. Review membership situation June 1998. Develop an approach for a new membership drive and implement before October 1998 Annual Meeting.
- B. Promote Spread-the-Word Project.
Members in each District adopt at least two Literature Racks and monitor. Report at Annual Meeting 1998.
- C. Develop and support District Person-to-Person membership drives.

GOAL II

DEVELOP A NEW AND INCREASED FUND RAISING EFFORT

- A. Implement the Special Appeals Fund.
Develop special projects for the year by February 1998 to cover program commitments.
- B. Support research programs with funding by December 1998.

GOAL III

VERIFY TWO OR MORE SEED PLANTATIONS IN EACH DISTRICT BY OCTOBER 1998.

- A. Map all New York planting sites and wild tree locations by October 1998 and record on topographic maps. Display at Annual Meeting.
- B. Increase personal working relationships between TACFNY District Directors and DEC Foresters in each district. Report at Annual Meeting.

TACF NATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING

The first session of the TACF Annual Meeting was held at the fabulous Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina on November 1, 1997. There were 175 attendees with guests from the National Geographic Society who were also meeting at that time. They also joined members in planting American chestnut backcrossed seedlings in a demonstration plot on the estate.

After a picnic lunch on the sunny hill by the plantings, workshops followed at the beautiful North Carolina Arboretum, and then back again to the estate for dinner and a candlelight tour of the Vanderbilt house—250 rooms! (No, we didn't go to all of them.)

On Sunday, November 2 the business meeting was held with reports of TACF year's work, and member sharing. Dr. John Potente, TACF-NY District I Director, told of his pollinating experience riding in a cherry picker bucket. NY members Don Ross, Mr. and Mrs. Darryl Rippeteau, and Mr. and Mrs. John Laidig also were greeted at the meeting.

Prior to the meeting, TACF-NY officers Herb Darling, Stan Wirsig and Arlene Wirsig attended the Science Cabinet, Development Cabinet and Board meetings. On October 30, scientists Dr. Charles Maynard and Dr. William Powell were invited to a joint Science and Development Cabinet meeting, and gave a presentation of the genetic engineering research being done at ESF Syracuse on developing a blight-resistant American chestnut. The NY chapter provides seed money for this work.

"The annual meetings are getting better and better," said TACF Board Member Jim Wilson — and everyone agreed. Watch for the BARK for details.