

Spring Plantings: 2,798; Total 3,906

DEDICATED TO THE RESTORATION OF THE MAJESTIC AMERICAN

Chestnut Tree

THE PA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT FOUNDATION



Volume 2 No. 4

June 1997

B₃ Plantings at Longwood One of Five

It was cold April 5 and there were snow drifts here and there when the chapter undertook its planting at the Longwood Gardens Nursery.

The B₃ (third backcross) nuts planted were the product of last year's pollinations by chapter members at six locations in the state. These locations included Somerset, Northumberland, two sites in York and two sites in Schuylkill counties.

The three-eighth nuts were planted in a randomized fashion in the planting site, isolated from other chestnut trees. As the trees grow,

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\$5,000 Donation

The PA Chapter has received a \$5,000 contribution from Mrs. Lamont duPont Copeland.

Mrs. Copeland was given an ACF membership in January by her sister, and she attended a seminar at Longwood Gardens given by the PA Chapter. The donation followed shortly after.

Mrs. Copeland founded Mt. Cuba Center in Greenville, DE, which is dedicated to the preservation, propagation and promotion of native plant species. That's exactly what the chestnut restoration movement is all about.



Penn State Joins Restoration. With the participation of the PA Game Commission the PA Forestry Association, and the ACF, Penn State has completed a major B₂F₂ chestnut planting. The 1600 nuts planted on gameland was the largest ever undertaken. From left to right are: Bob Summersgill; Henry Gerhold, PSU School of Forest Resources; Bob Leffel, chapter scientist; Jim Zaczek, PA School of Forestry instructor; and Ron Stanley, ACF director.

1600 B₃F₃ Nuts Planted

Penn State, Foresters Advance Restoration

Penn State University and the PA Game Commission are cooperating with ACF in a 1600 B₂F₂ chestnut planting this spring. The planting is a performance test to evaluate the progress of the breeding program by observing tree shape, growth characteristics, the onset of blight, the degree of blight infection, etc. Ten maternal lines are represented. B₃F₃ lines will be added when they are ready so the advances of the genera-

tions may be observed. It is a long term planting where natural attrition by blight will remove all blight susceptible trees in time and only the fully resistant will persist, leaving a block of trees with the potential of long and productive life.

The nuts were provided by ACF from Meadowview Research Farms. Henry Gerhold from Penn State, Roger Lehman from PA Game

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Longwood Gardens Joins

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Because of short notice on the exact date of planting, volunteers were hard to round up. There were four from Longwood and five from PA Chapter. Among the volunteers were Elizabeth Sullivan, public relations staff at Longwood. She arranged for press coverage. At one point the four reporters and a photographer outnumbered the planters. Al was prepared to enlist them. He also reports that germination of the nuts has begun. The trees are on their way.

Four Member Plantings

The remaining B3 nuts were planted in four locations by members. Additions were made to the plantings at Brogue (231) and Dornsife (225) by Leffel and Peifer number of breeding lines to at least 4 lines at each site. Tom Pugel at Central City began his first planting (160) and Lee Soufley of Hummelstown began a planting (75) with a different pollen source of resistance. These chapter plantings are once again at sites in isolation from other chestnuts so they may intercross freely and not be contaminated by other sources of pollen. The plantings belong to ACF but are maintained, cared for, and inoculated by members. The seeds produced in these nurseries will be centralized in a number of regional B3F2 nurseries, some for eventual seed production of the first release blight resistant American Chestnut Trees, others for performance tests. There are now seven maternal lines for Pennsylvania. The goal is 20.

PA Farm Show

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Many gave the locations of what they believed were American Chestnut Trees.

The volunteers (some new to our group), seemed to enjoy the event, and we also got to know each other better.

Education is Key To Chapter Success

PA Chapter members are hard at work presenting the ACF to the public. Education of the public is a major goal. Some of the presentations made in 1997:

Jan 11-16 — PA Farm Show Exhibit, Harrisburg.

Feb. 6 — Seminar at Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square.

March 18 — Lecture at Temple University, Ambler.

March 20 — Presentation to foresters SCNR - Forest Health '97 Symposium at Dubois.

March 25 — Southern York County Farm Women, Brogue.

April 13 — Susquehanna Fish and Game Club; Wrightsville

May 9 — Harvard, Princeton, Yale Alumni Club - Sportsmen, Pittsburgh.

May 17 — Bureau of State Parks - Environmental Education Workshops, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

May 22 — DCNR Forest Resource Management Meeting, State College.

And Tyler Too

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seven new maternal breeding lines for future breeding purposes and will provide for the observation of differences in growth rates and hardiness between the two types of shelters used.

The nuts were collected by chapter members Koenig, Floyd, Peifer, Pugel, Leffel, and Dougherty. This type of project is a great one for scouts to be involved in. They will be both benefactors and beneficiaries of this project.

Al Eelman coordinated this cooperative effort. Al also transported and set up the chapter's traveling exhibit first at Longwood Gardens for Arbor Day and then to Tyler Arboretum for a stay. Tyler is very enthusiastic about the exhibit and response to it.

Leffel Takes Position

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of Forestry, Pa Game Commission, PA arboretums, and other environmental organizations is essential for the success of our program. We have made some progress in this direction. ACF's policies of exclusivity; lack of direction, communication, and execution; distrust of private and public agencies; and reversals of policy on availability of germplasm and chapter activities (Jour. ACF 3(1):31-32, 1989 vs. current proposal.) are self destructive. ACF needs democratization urgently — and freedom from conflicts of interest. I have always advocated national and regional plant improvement programs — apparently, ACF doesn't know how they have been achieved. I will continue to support the Charles Burnham program to restore the American chestnut but the frustrations and constraints imposed upon our backcross program by ACF are intolerable. We are willing and capable of doing our part. We request the cooperation and trust of ACF as we pursue our goal.

John Herrington

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change in our day-to-day operations. The ACF will continue, with the help of staff and volunteers, to work toward the restoration of the American chestnut. Thanks to the continued support of our members, that day is not far off."

The PA Chapter wishes John Herrington the best in his future endeavors.

Reports are Needed

Many members received American Chestnut seeds from the chapter, spring of '95 so that you could have an opportunity to grow and observe the trees. We'd like to hear about your experiences — your successes, problems, failures — all a part of the learning process. Send us a brief report.

Chapter will Meet With Foresters September 26, 27

Once again the Pennsylvania Forest Association has invited the PA chapter to join with them at their annual meeting at Clarks Summit near Scranton. The meeting will be held at the Ramada Plaza on September 26 and 27.

Three locations demonstrating three aspects of forestry are usually included. The all-day tour is followed by a social hour and banquet with a guest speaker.

Saturday morning includes the PFA business meeting. PA-ACF will make a presentation at that meeting and then all are invited to join the chapter for a picnic lunch and afternoon activity.

John Marrunich is the new coordinator for Wyoming, Lackawana, Susquehanna, Pike and Warren Counties. He will coordinate the activity, provide the picnic lunch and arrange for a tour of a stand of native trees. Members in the NE counties will receive more specific information and registration by mail. Other members who are interested must contact PA headquarters (717-927-9557) to request registration and more detailed information.

Chapter's Annual Meeting is Oct. 18

PA Chapter third annual meeting will be held October 18 at the Montour Preserve near Danville. It is a beautiful setting for a colorful fall meeting. The harvest should be almost complete and this will provide an opportunity for nut collectors and nut producers to come together with their bounty.

A minimum of 20 nuts from each verified American tree is needed. The time to spot potential bearing trees is during spring bloom in June.



Planting in Somerset Co. — Tom Pugel (left) with brother Larry in front of their BC3 nursery. Tom reports 160 seeds went into the ground, with 134 BC3's being planted. The planting was the first week of April and Tom doesn't expect any germination before the middle of June. Why so long? The growing season is short at 2700 ft. elevation.

PA Chapter Meets With State Parks Environmentalists

The PA Turnpike attendant had a dismayed look on his face as he answered, "Not yet!" to the question, "Has spring come to Somerset?" It was windy, cold and wintry looking on May 17 as the group of environmental educators and interpreters for PA Department of State Parks gathered around an American Chestnut tree on the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown campus. The group was there for four days of lectures and workshops.

The PA Chapter was invited to participate. Lee Shaufley, Tom Pugel and Bob and Ann Leffel presented the two-hour chestnut workshop and distributed educational materials to the 35 present. Erin Shellhammer, from Tuscarora State Park was a coordinator of the workshops. She has worked with Eugene Dougherty, the chapter coordinator for Schuylkill County in a chestnut planting at the park.

There are about 50 trees planted there and another 50 will be

planted this year. These young folks can be of great help in extending the educational program throughout the state.

Chapter Appreciates Many Contributions

Thanks to Joe Zembas again for arranging for the donation of an IBM 386 computer, keyboard, and monitor from Proctor and Gamble. If you will recall, the first one was damaged in shipment. This time Joe made a personal delivery to assure safety.

Rich Pollini donated a new printer to complete the set. A separate telephone line was installed and a FAX machine is in place. The PA-ACF office is shaping up in the spare room at the Leffel's. Ann enrolled in a computer class and plans to practice in earnest after the first hay crop is harvested.

A modem and E-mail are in the plans in an effort to reduce mailing and telephone costs. Part-time help in manning the office is being sought. Any York County members interested?

Leffel Takes Position on Exclusivity

by Bob Leffel

I retired in June of 1994 after 412 years of service with USDA and University of Maryland, participating in regional and national research programs as plant breeder, Investigations Leader and Laboratory Chief, and National Program Staff Scientist. The trust and cooperation among the predominantly public researchers (state and federal) initially, and among public and private researchers subsequent to the Plant Variety Protection Act of 1974, was the most rewarding aspect of my career!

Upon retirement, I have studied the publications by Dr. Burnham on breeding blight-resistant chestnuts and find no evidence of proprietary rights on germplasm developed by ACF in his writings. Dr. Burnham's publications and my inquiries of his colleagues indicate that he disseminated hybrid chestnut seed and pollen to anyone he thought capable of furthering the restoration of the American Chestnut.

In March of 1995, we reorganized the PA Society for the American Chestnut Foundation with primary goals of: (1) Education of our ACF members and society in general of ACF's program; and (2) backcross breeding to achieve PA's part of ACF's ultimate goal as stated by Burnham: "to establish breeding populations of blight resistant American chestnuts, each of which will be adapted to a different growth zone in the natural range".

We were advised initially that ACF at Meadowview is not capable of conducting regional backcross breeding programs. Both of our goals are in total support of ACF. I accepted the responsibility of coordinator of the P A backcross program. We received pollen in 1995 and 1996 under ACF's "agreement to receive and not to distribute hybrid chestnut genetic material". ACF now requires a new agreement: "The American Chestnut Foundation Germplasm

Agreement". Apparently this agreement has been adopted without ACF board approval and includes the statement: "No selection will be conducted within the germplasm" How does one conduct a backcross breeding program without selection among BC, BCF₂, and BCF₃ progeny?!

I find no sympathy for ACF proprietary rights among Dr. Burnham's associates that received ACF germplasm earlier, nor among current state forest tree breeders. In February I requested of the ACF Executive Committee: "Will you please advise me in writing of your specific concerns on our past and future breeding efforts before March 97". I have received no written response to this request and only a phone call from ACF-VP for Science on February 27. The ACF-VP stated that his views are widely accepted by the ACF Executive Committee and expressed concerns on: (1) "Locations"; (2) "A policy of giving away material"; (3) A "we want to work-but drain away resources" policy; (4) My interpretation of Brunham's vision; (5) "ACF is not just plant breeding"; and (6) the inadequateness of ACF's agreement on proprietary rights. He is sending me the new agreement which he does not expect public agencies to sign. I inquired about the backyard breeding programs by ACF members encouraged as recently as the last issue of the ACF Journal, and the reply was "Pollen will no longer be available to them".

We have obtained a total of 1154 BC₃ seed (seven lines), planted on private properties of four ACF members and prestigious Longwood Gardens. After much delay and mixed signals from ACF, we received sufficient BC₂F₂ seed to plant 1600 of them (10 lines) on PA Game Commission property at State College, in cooperation with PA State University. We selected our locations

on the basis of available sites and the abilities and willingness of cooperators. Our PA chestnut breeders, cooperators, and chapter board of directors are most capable of making such decisions. We are *not* "giving away material". We are not "draining away resources" — but we are contributing same to ACF. I disagree with ACF cabinet chairman's statement that ACF should pursue a research master plan including all avenues of research simultaneously — all on a budget to date that is only adequate to conduct a backcross program for the ACF - farms region. The two million dollar, 1995 funding for public chestnut and chestnut blight research, 10 times ACF's 1995 budget, supports my view. Let the competent scientists involved cover the water front! But ACF can contribute greatly by bringing all of the research into a cooperative effort.

ACF must realize that while it may have the most advance backcross breeding program to date, it does *not* have an exclusive to blight-resistant germplasm. Exclusivity will foster competition and eliminate cooperation. Burnham's correction of course has been known for 16 and more years, adequate time for several generations of backcrossing. No one knows how many generations of backcrossing will be required to provide regionally adapted, blight resistant American chestnuts. Our BC₃'s are only F₁'s for genes for local adaptation. There may be merit for a regional program to start with "Clapper" and "Graves" BC₁ pollen, available without constraints. How can ACF claim proprietary rights for sources of high resistance such as 'Nanking' and other Chinese accessions? BC₂ pollen is available from BC₂'s screened for resistance from sources other than ACF.

We are convinced that the cooperation of our private forest industries, PA State University, PA Bureau

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April Chapter Meeting Attracts 79



The recent PA Chapter meeting, with 79 attending, was lively, interesting and informative. At left, Tucker Hill demonstrates grafting; center, Chandis Klinger, workshop leader, conducts a very important clinic on identification of native chestnut trees; and, at right Garrett Smith participates in the identification workshop.

Chapter Auction Raises \$1300

The members came bearing gifts, chestnut teddy bears, an afghan, tree seedlings, chestnut walking sticks, beautifully turned chestnut bowls, boxes made of chestnut wood, pictures, vases, fertilizer, antique tools . . . the list goes on. All items were auctioned to increase chapter revenues. Although the auction was silent, the bidding was active.

The result was \$1300 for the treasury from the auction, and about \$150 more from T-shirt sales. It was a successful venture and a fun activity. Thanks to Chandis Klinger, Tracey Coulter and Dan Heacock for their help.

The science presentations were excellent, Larry Patchel kept the program running on time. Clyde Hunt led off with his summary of research accomplished on the use of tree shelters in protecting trees. Henry Gerhold and Jim Zaczek spoke of the chestnut plantings initiated by Penn State. Bob Leffel presented a brief introduc-

tion to the genetics of the backcross breeding program. Mark Double, WVU updated the progress of research in hypovirulence and Ann Leffel pointed to the direction of PA Chapter's future, goals and needs.

After a satisfying lunch provided by the Barnharts and Evelyn Koenig's special desserts, the 79 people in attendance split up for the workshop sessions.

Bob Leffel led the field culture group to the site of last year's B2F2 planting to replace trees lost there over winter. The pollinating, grafting, identification and nut collection and storage workshops were led by Ann Leffel, Tucker Hill, Chandis Klinger and Blair Carbaugh and George Dickum respectively. Many new folks should be ready to begin participating in the breeding program this late spring.

Don Jones gave woodworking tips in turning used chestnut timbers and posts into beautiful vases, bowls, lamp bases and cattails.

Ron Stanley is to be congratulated for planning such an eventful and stimulating day.

Chapter will Elect Officers in October

The chapter will elect officers in October. All four officers will complete their terms, and three board members will complete their terms.

All chapter members willing to serve are encouraged to seek office. The board meets two to four times a year.

Committee members are also needed for memberships, fund raising, grants, programs, education, and breeding programs.

The next board meeting will be in July or August. Phone President Leffel 717-927-9557.

Speakers Added

Members Lee Sausley, Rich Pollini, Dan Heacock and Carl Wolgemuth have joined Bill Lord and Ann and Bob Leffel as speakers for the PA Chapter. To additional slide sets will be purchased and made available for speakers.

... So Does Penn State, Foresters

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Commission and Bob Leffel met March 21 at the state game lands near Penn State to lay out the planting site. Henry Gerhold from Penn State, School of Forest Resources is responsible for the planting and maintenance of the planting. Roger Lehman represented the Pennsylvania Game Commission who granted the use of the state game lands for the chestnut planting.

On April 27, a crew laid off the rows and flagged the planting blocks. Holes were dug using a modified chain saw with a four inch drilling bit. The drilling proceeded quickly on the harvested corn field and the first couple of hundred trees were planted. Friday morning the planting crew began to arrive and all worked with great vigor in an effort to stay warm. Snow showers peppered the area and the high winds



Joint Venture at PSU — The cornfield here is a big part of the story. The planting of 1600 seeds in a joint venture including the PA Chapter, the ACF, Penn State, PA Forestry Assn. and the PA Game Commission is a big story in itself, but other chestnut plantings will follow here with all five organizations participating in the chestnut restoration. Bob Leffel, chapter scientist, goes over the preliminaries prior to the large planting.



Reward of Pollinating — You peel back the bag used to protect the pollen and look what's staring back at you. It doesn't always happen this way, but mostly it does, and that's what makes it all worth-



Penn State Planting — Two who will make the Penn State planting work are Henry Gerhold (left) and Jim Zaczek. For more on them turn to Who's Who on Page 3.

urged planters to hurry. The nuts were carefully placed in Penn State seed protectors to keep rodents from eating the nuts. The ingenious little device is made from PVC pipe, duct tape and a nail. Tree shelters will not be used. The planting area will be fenced from deer. Funds are being sought for fencing.

This is the largest such performance test in the ACF breeding pro-

gram.

Ron Stanley, Tom Pugel, Bob Summersgill, Evelyn and Jim Koenig, Eugene Witmeyer, Ann and Bob Leffel and Henry Gerhold from PA Chapter, and Jim Zaczek and four Penn State students or staff members helped with the planting.

Henry reports that the shoots are beginning to show. Many had broken ground by May 11.

Longwood Gardens Joins Up



The Planting at Longwood — At left, Elizabeth Sullivan, Longwood staff in public relations, volunteered for the planting. So did Scott Miller (center), also a member of the Longwood staff. At right is Phil Gruszka, arborist and groundskeeper foreman at Longwood Gardens.

Longwood Gardens

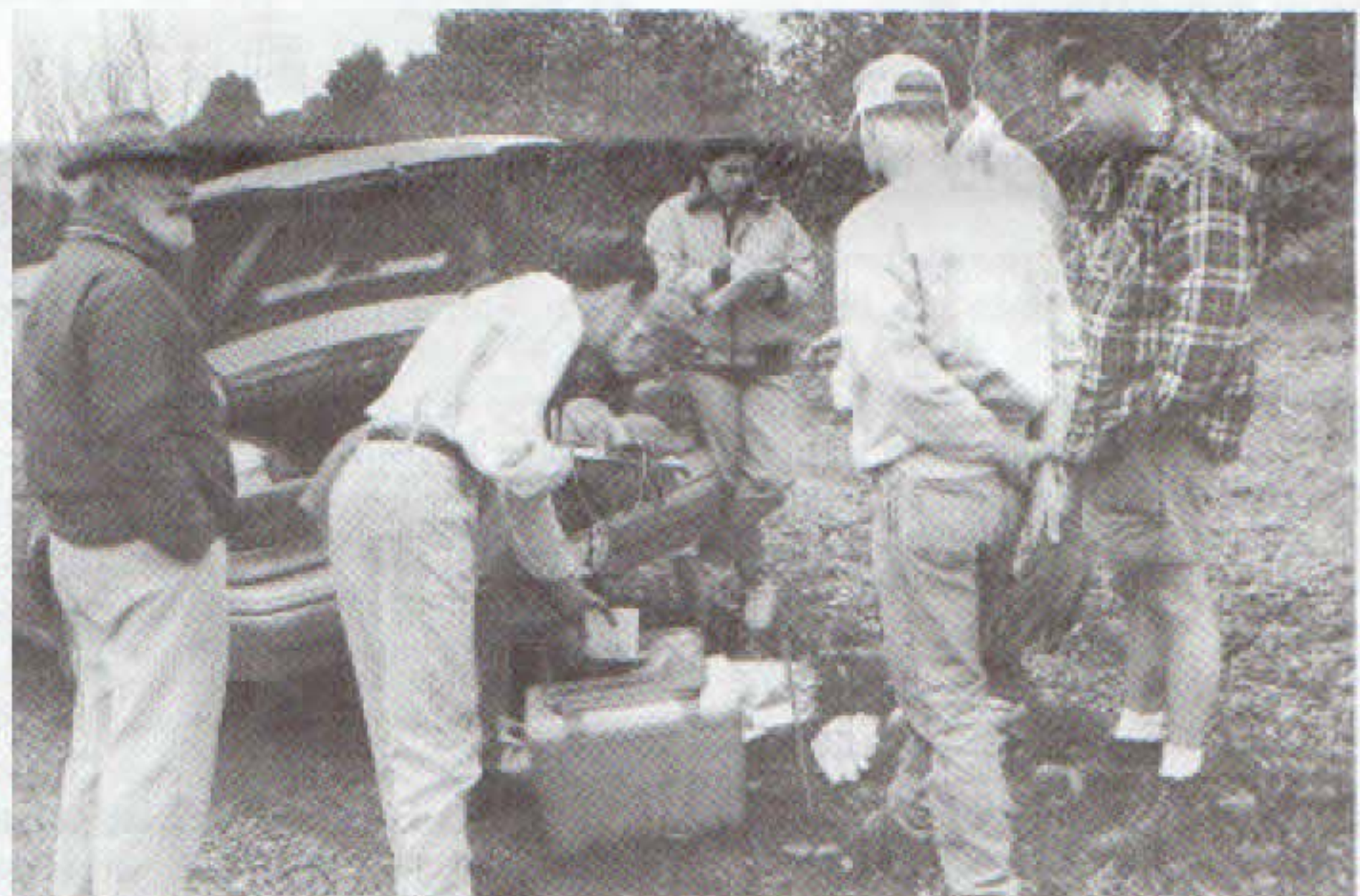
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selections will be made based on degree of resistance and American characteristics. The trees selected, when they reach flowering, will cross-pollinate (intercross) to produce nuts 1/16 th of which will produce 94% American and highly blight resistant trees.

Al Eelman, chapter board member, coordinated this cooperative effort. He and other chapter members will continue to work with Phil Gruszka of Longwood in the nurture and care of the new planting.

The nursery at Longwood is protected from deer by a 10' fence. Adequate water and sunlight, liquid fertilizer every two weeks for 10 weeks beginning in June, keeping area around trees free of grass and weed competition are essential to reaching our goal of trees of adequate size and bloom production for breeding purposes in just 5 years. Fertilizing 318 trees is a lot of work for one person. With six it can be done quickly and efficiently and it's a lot more fun. Call Al Eelman if you wish to help at 610-358-1077.

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Getting everything together before beginning planting is no easy job. Here the Longwood group gathers around for the distribution of the nuts.

• • • And Tyler, too

A second American Chestnut nursery was planted in April at Tyler Arboretum in Media, Delaware County, as an Eagle Scout project.

Bryan Guernate undertook this planting with the help of Gerry Laferriere, the groundskeeper at the arboretum. Seven American

parental lines from seven counties were planted in six blocks of 20 and one block of 10, each block a separate parent line. The seeds and potential trees are protected by 4' tree tubes half solid walled and half perforated on alternate trees.

The planting will provide

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3-Year Silviculture Study Is Begun at Penn State U.

James J. Zaczek, PhD began a three-year silviculture study this spring which will define guidelines for re-establishing the American chestnut in eastern hardwood forests.

Dr. Zaczek is senior research assistant at the School of Forest Resources, College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State.

It's one thing to develop an American Chestnut tree resistant to the chestnut blight. It's another to reintroduce the species to its former place in the forest.

In central and southern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Southern New England chestnuts formed almost half of the hardwood forest. Re-establishing American Chestnuts will fill a critical need in enriching the diversity and integrity of forested ecosystems in eastern United States.

The forest ecosystem has changed greatly since the onset of chestnut blight. It is known that the old stands of chestnut regenerated primarily by sprouts from stumps. The new blight resistant tree must be grown from seed until it is established.

The objective of Zaczek's study is to define the methods for planting chestnuts in the forest. He will com-

Scouts Plant 56 Chestnuts

by Ed Orme

In March, 56 American Chestnut seeds and two saplings were planted at Mill Grove in Audubon by Troop 369. The seed included some from Floyd, Koenig, Dornsife, and Pugel. Less than a half hour after we were done it rained, which wrked out well. Druing the planting we used 4' tubes.

pare the growth and survival performance of planted American Chestnuts using several stock types and planting methods in recently harvested mixed — oak shelterwood and clearcuts.

Penn State seed protectors for protecting planted seeds from rodents and other seed predators, vented and unvented tree shelters, undercut and non-undercut seedlings are some of the treatments that will be tested. All will be protected from deer browsing damage by a fence.

This cooperative effort between PSU, PA Bureau of Forestry and American Chestnut Foundation will be partially financed through a grant by ACF.

Jim Zaczek will be consulting with Kim Steiner and Henry Gerhold of Penn State and with Alex Day and Jim Bailey of Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry. He has worked extensively with northern red oak, a species closely related to American Chestnut and has helped develop general and specific planting recommendations for this species. This research endeavor will prepare the way for restoration of the American Chestnut when the resistant seed is at hand.

Half of the tubes were perforated and the other half were the normal solid tubes. This was done to see wich type of tube should be used in the future. The solid tubes can act like a greenhouse and keep the tree warmer than it would normally be which causes the tree not to harden so much as it normally would. The perforated tubes let air flow through them.

I plan to fertilize this year's planting along with last year's trees. I'd like to thank the Lefffels and all the people who donated the seeds.

PA Farm Show Report is Given

by Dan Heacock

The January chestnut exhibit at the Farm Show in Harrisburg went great this year. Unlike the complications that the 1996 blizzard caused, this year the weather cooperated and attendance was estimated at 35% above previous records.

Sixteen chestnut foundation members volunteered 3 to 4 days to answer the countless questions about chestnuts. Woodworkers and sculpture people commented on how wonderful the wood is to work with and look at and were supportive of efforts to restore the chestnut.

Teachers and professors asked many technical questions about the genetics and scientific procedures that we're are using.

Foresters and woodland owners had good questions about our organization and expressed support. Older folks kept coming up to the booth and would share stories about how "it was the finest tree," or "it was the Redwood of the East," and we're grateful to see our efforts toward its return.

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Calendar

June & Early July

Pollinating

(see Meadowview Volunteers)

September 26 & 27, 1997

Joint Meeting

Pennsylvania Forestry Assn

and

PA Chapter ACF

Clarks Summit

October 18, 1997

The PA Chapter

Annual Meeting

Montour Reserve near Danville

Theme will be "Gathering of the Nuts"

Who's Who . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

making her job as easy as possible will be appreciated.

Henry D. Gerhold is professor of Forest Genetics at Penn State School of Forest Genetics. He's been on the faculty there since 1956. Originally from northern New Jersey, Henry attended PSU for his bachelors and masters degrees and completed his PhD in forest genetics at Yale University in 1959.

A large part of his work was directed at Christmas tree improvement, but he was also involved in improvement of the timber species including red oak, white pine, and black cherry.

He considered improvement of the American Chestnut Tree almost a lost cause because of the large amount of work involved and a suitable means for testing for resistance, which is now provided through the backcross method of breeding. His natural interest in insect and disease resistance in trees was piqued by the chapter presentation and the tour of Pat Chamberlain's chestnut nursery last year at the September PFA/PA-ACF meeting at Cambridge Springs.

In recent years Dr. Gerhold spends about half his time as an urban and community forest project leader. He sees a place for blight resistant American Chestnut Trees in community parks. A very useful and successful publication of his is "Street Tree Fact Sheets" — a compilation of 400 pages of color photos and descriptions of suitable trees for various uses in urban communities. It is available through the College of Agricultural Sciences at PSU for \$20.

Henry is responsible for arranging the cooperative B2F2 performance test planting near University Park. He contributed much time and effort in coordinating the planting and also bent his back to

the deed on the days of planting.

Ed Orme. He's tall, handsome, and young, and he has an interest in chestnut trees. Only one problem. When he completes school he wants to make his living in the maritime industry. Yes, he wants to pilot a ship. Ed Orme is a junior at Methacton High School in Audubon. As an Eagle Scout service project he worked with Alan Gehret of Mill Grove Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary to investigate, plan, organize and implement the plan for adding 50 new chestnut trees to the planting started at Mill Grove that year.

Ed was born in Philadelphia. His family moved to south New Jersey and returned to the Philadelphia area about five years ago. He joined the scouts at first opportunity as a cub scout and has worked his way through the ranks. The final challenge is the Eagle Scout award which requires the leadership of and responsibility for completing his service project in the community. He not only completed his planting project, he also replaced trees that failed in last year's planting. He additionally plans to volunteer time at Mill Grove to nurture the trees through the summer. Who knows, after caring for the trees through the summer, he may decide to become a forester or geneticist. Ed is also an avid sports fan. He moves through the school year on the soccer team, swim team, and track team where he jumps hurdles.

Steve Kemp is a writer for The Valley Log, a Huntingdon County newspaper. Steve attended a chapter presentation to the Huntingdon County Environmental District in the fall. The newspaper is committed to printing news about forestry and wildlife. Steve published a series of five articles about the American Chestnut Tree and the work of PA Chapter, ACF. He quoted, "Nobody around here is doing

more important work for our natural world than you folks."

Lee Saufley was born into Pennsylvania farming family near Hershey. He graduated from the University of Delaware in civil engineering. He retired after 30 year service in engineering management in the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Now living on the family farm, he pursues his true love — agriculture. Lee is particularly involved in tree farming, including Christmas trees, timber trees and now chestnut trees. Lee joined ACF two years ago. This spring he began a B3 nursery as part of the chapter breeding program. Lee is also speaker for the chapter. Lee and his wife Jean have two children and grandchildren.

Blair Carbaugh presented a copy of a photo showing an American Chestnut commercial nursery farm. The photo is mounted for display on our traveling exhibit.

Doris Goldman took the drawings she made for our coloring book and enlarged them for our traveling display. It's a colorful eye catcher. It is currently on display at Tyler Arboretum, after a one day exhibit at Longwood Gardens for Arbor Day.

Editor's Note

Sorry! Even though this edition is an extra four pages, it was impossible to include all of the material. There was a historical picture, a backcross update and a lot of other good stuff that just didn't make it. We're sorry about that, and we'll try to do better the next time.

Who's Who in Chestnuts . . .



Ron Stanley PhD, Clearville, Bedford Co., was recently elected to the ACF board of directors and now is an active member of the PA Chapter.

Ron's education includes a BS, Biology and chemistry minor; and MS, plant physiology and biochemistry minor from University of Arkansas. He earned his PhD in plant physiology with emphasis on ecology and a minor in zoology at Duke University in 1970.

He is teaching genetics at Frostburg (MD) State University. His wife, Mary, teaches at a vocational high school in Rockville MD.

Phil Gruszka lives in a house surrounded by 1064 acres of gardens, greenhouses, potting houses, nurseries, perimeter plantings, conservatories, and more! That's right! He lives at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square. Phil is the arborist and groundskeeper foreman for the world renowned Longwood Gardens.

Originally from Chicago, Phil graduated from the University of Illinois in forestry. In his first

forestry job he decided he was more interested in growing and caring for individual trees rather than forests. Thus he worked his way to Longwood Gardens sixteen years ago. Now, with a forest of individual trees representing hundreds of species, he still found time to serve as the Longwood coordinator for the cooperative planting of third back-cross chestnuts on April 5. On planting day he was right there with the volunteers bending knee and back to plant the 318 chestnut seeds in the Longwood nursery.

He also finds time for his family including two sons, 8 and 12, who keep him busy with their interests in sports and scouting.

John Hoffman of Broad Run, VA supplied 100 4' perforated shelters for test purposes this spring. Our library has grown as a result of Tracey Coulter. Tracey located and purchased the 1904, 1908, 1926 and 1937 U.S. Department of Agriculture Yearbooks which follow the progress of the Chestnut blight.



This is Tammy . . . Tammy Carpenter, membership director in the ACF office in Vermont. With John Herrington, executive director, leaving, Tammy will become acting executive, and a very busy gal she is going to be. Your cooperation in

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PA Chapter American Chestnut Foundation

April 1996- April 1997

Board of Directors

President, Ann Leffel; vice president, Dan Heacock; secretary, William Lord; treasurer, Tracey Coulter; directors, Robert Leffel, Chandis Klinger, Al Eelman, Tom Pugel, William Peifer and Rich Pollini

Sponsors

Charlotte Barnhart, H. A. "Barney" Barnhart

Committees

Membership, Charlotte Barnhart; co-editors of newsletter, "Barney" Barnhart and Ann Leffel; public relations and education, Dan Heacock, Tracey Coulter and Al Eelman; tree location, Chandis Klinger; breeding program, Bob Leffel, Tom Pugel, Bill Peifer and Chandis Klinger; grants, Bill Lord, and Larry Patchel

Area Coordinators

Rosina Coltellaro — 215-625-2482 — Phila., Delaware and Montgomery
 Eugene Dougherty — 717-467-2303 — Schuylkill, Luzerne, Carbon, Monroe
 Chandis Klinger — 717-837-0457 — Snyder, Union
 Pat Chamberlain — 814-756-3197 — Erie, Crawford, Warren
 Dan Heacock — 717-957-2733 — Perry and Dauphin
 Bill Lord — 412-793-0255 — Allegheny
 Tom Pugel — 610-346-6198 — Bucks, Somerset
 Tracey Coulter — 717-486-8935 — Cumberland
 Herb Gedmark — 717-774-7313 — York
 Rod Clapper — 814-842-3307 — Bedford
 Doris Goldman — 717-762-0755 — Franklin, Adams, Fulton
 Jim Koenig — 814-539-8632 — Cambria
 Eugene Witmeyer, — 717-665-4103 — Lancaster and Lebanon

President's Message

Ann Leffel

The December 1996 Chestnut Tree reviewed 1996 Chapter work. This issue focuses on the continuing achievements in 1997 and plans for the future.

It is late. Our editor, setter-upper, and printer, Barney and Charlotte Barnhart have had serious illnesses this winter. They are recovering nicely and Barney is back in the saddle raring to go. If you will recall our first issue, however, Barney would rather be playing golf. At 76 he is looking forward to a young editor to step forward.

You've read in previous issues of the past heroic efforts of Pennsylvanians to eradicate the blight. Once again Pennsylvanians are engaged in a new effort to beat the blight. It is unique! A forest tree breeding program being undertaken by a volunteer organization. It's working!

The science is well established. The backcross method of breeding has been used to improve agronomic and horticultural crops for 75 years. The species so genetically improved have a good track record. The ACF breeding program has moved along like a perfect textbook example since its inception. Still there are many unknowns. What will this new tree look like? How will it perform? How many backcrosses are required for local adaptation? How can it be reintroduced to an ever changing

forest ecosystem using current forestry management practices? What will happen when it crosses with other chestnut trees in the forest? We think we know the answers to many of the questions. We don't know the answers to all. Only time will tell.

Pennsylvania is the first state to extend the ACF breeding program into a region of the range separated by many miles from the ACF Meadowview Farms in Virginia. The purpose? To provide diversity and local adaptation of American Chestnut for this region of its original range.

Try to imagine the scope of this volunteer effort. How many nuts does it take to plant a forest? For now the chapter is focused on developing 20-24 third backcross parental lines using native American trees in this region. We already have seven such lines planted. These will be grown, inoculated and selected again for blight resistance and American characteristics. The resulting trees will produce the first release of seed of blight resistant American Chestnut Trees. ACF is hoping to release these in 2004, Pennsylvania perhaps two years later. That is not the end. That is the beginning! Plant improvement is a continuing effort. Just as new improved varieties of corn and soybeans are released, so the breeders will seek to improve the chestnut until the degree of satisfaction is reached.

It is the continuing dedication of our members, the enthusiasm and generosity of our cooperators, and the support, encouragement, and cooperation of the ACF that will lead to the restoration of the majestic American Chestnut Tree. It's worth doing folks! For forest health, for forest industry, for future generations of timber users, for wildlife, and for those who just plain appreciate them.

John Herrington Leaving ACF as Executive Director

John Herrington is leaving as executive director of the ACF.

No announcement was made by the board. Some members of the board have known for months that John resigned, but no official reason was given for his departure.

The newsletter was given a copy of John's last column appearing in the ACF's *The Bark*. He said:

"My decision to leave the ACF has not been an easy one. I truly believe in the cause in which we are engaged, and the work before us would challenge anyone. However, after 25 years of non-profit work, I feel it's time to move on to "inward" work. Although I've been living simply in recent years, I'm continuing to lighten my load by giving away most of my material possessions, freeing myself to experience life at its fullest. My first stop on my inward journey will be a twelve-week course this fall at Genesis Farm, a spiritually-based earth literacy center in northwestern New Jersey. My next step? I don't know what form it will take, but it will be my creation, continuing my interest in protecting the earth's natural resources and living sustainably. The decision to leave the security of a job and a permanent roof over one's head can be full of fear. I have chosen to walk through that fear to the other side.

"Although I'll no longer be executive director, my heart will remain with the American chestnut. I've agreed to stay connected to the foundation by working on special projects that need attention. Our membership director, Tammy Carpenter, who currently wears many hats, will serve as acting director of the ACF while a search committee of the board works to hire a new director. This is a time of transition and adjustments, but little will

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CHESTNUT TREE

This issue of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation is dedicated to Charlotte and H. A. "Barney" Barnhart,, benefactors, willing workers, generous hosts and inspiring friends of the American Chestnut Foundation and the Pennsylvania Chapter.

Printing contributed by
News Printing Co., Inc.
P.O. Box 373
Claysburg, PA 16625

Chapter Volunteers Needed Again At Meadowview Farm

It's that time of year again. The pollinating season is here. PA Chapter has provided volunteers for ACF Meadowview Research Farms in Southwest Virginia each June to help during the labor intensive pollinating season.

Learn hybridization techniques. Meet Dr. Fred Hebard and Dr. Yan Shi who conduct the ACF breeding program. Meet new folks. Tour the farms. Enjoy the beauty of the drive down I-81, exit 24 east to farm in southwest Virginia and bag and pollinate chestnuts.

There are two ways to participate this year.

Select the days you wish to participate between June 9-14 and June 16-21. Notify Ann at chapter headquarters so everyone doesn't arrive

on same days (phone 717-927-9557).



Member Eugene Wilmeyer demonstrates the high art of pollinating. Season's here, so volunteer!

Possibly car pools can be arranged if you are interested. Provide for your own meals and lodging.

Local motels and campgrounds are:

Swiss Inn — 540-429-5191

Empire Motel — 540-628-7131

Alpine Motel — 540-628-3178

(Prices are \$40 - \$45)

The second option is June 22-28. Join fellow members and hostellers for a week of pollinating on the farms, field trips, and other educational and cultural activities in the area. Lodging and meals will be arranged through Elderhostel. Contact: Elderhostel, 75 Federal St., Boston, MA 02110, (phone 617-426-8055).

Chapter Has Fax

The chapter's FAX machine will be operable on June 10. The number is 717-927-8410.

Pennsylvania Society for the American Chestnut Foundation
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