

Spring Growers Meeting

Date: Saturday, March 28, 2015

Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

2 p.m. supply /nut distribution

Cost: \$10 at door for lunch

Location:

Fort Hunter Centennial Barn

5300 North Front Street

Harrisburg, PA 17110

Please RSVP by 3/23/15

mail@patacf.org or 814-863-7192



ABOUT FORT HUNTER

The location for our Spring Growers Meeting is the Fort Hunter Centennial Barn just North of Harrisburg on North Front Street along the Susquehanna. Built in 1876, this historical structure has been renovated to provide a modern meeting facility. It is situated in Fort Hunter Park which is part of the Dauphin County Parks and Recreation System and includes a large campus of historical buildings situated along the Susquehanna River.

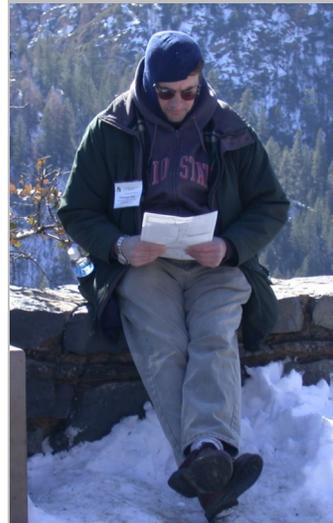
To learn more visit the Fort Hunter website at

<http://www.forthunter.org>



Speaker Program

Jose D. Fuentes, Professor of Meteorology will speak on the atmospheric impacts surrounding the loss and restoration of the American chestnut.



Thomas J. Hall, PhD. Plant Pathologist/Forest Pathologist / Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

An overview of Pennsylvania's Forest Health Program siting current activities with regard to a variety of insect and disease issues in Pennsylvania and the Northern Region. Special emphasis will be

placed on his work genetic conservation of butternut and American beech exhibiting beech scale resistance in an effort to reduce the impact of beech bark

Gary William Micsky Sustainable Agriculture/ Natural Resources Educator, Mercer County Extension

Introduction to best practices for growing Chestnuts. Followed by growers panel question and answers.



Learn * Share * Pick Up Supplies *Take Home Chestnuts

President's Corner

Since joining the effort to restore the American chestnut, I've been impressed by our chapter's organization and support for growers. Working with the volunteer group maintaining Tyler Arboretum's American chestnut orchard, I often found myself only a phone call away from answers to problems as they arose. In addition, I've also been impressed that the chapter's staff maintained its level of support without losing focus or breaking stride during two changes in the administrator's position in five years.



With Sara's support, Stephanie handled her responsibilities with such efficiency that her successor, Jean Najjar, was chosen and enabled to take on the administrator's role at our fall meeting in Fairhope. Fortunately, Jean had

worked in a similar position at PASA, the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) for several years. And as the serving president of the PA Native Plant Society, she shares our interests. For all Stephanie and Sara accomplished in this transition, we should feel grateful. Look forward to speaking to Jean by phone or meeting her at the spring meeting if you haven't already had the opportunity.

The one thing I like about the transition to a new role (and a new year) is the tradition of making commitments or resolutions. These help us to focus on what matters most.

In my role as president, I resolve to grow our Chapter membership, and make the goals and methods of PA-TACF (and The American Chestnut Foundation) better known; by expanding our outreach, especially in the urban and suburban areas. We can achieve this by:

- Actively seeking more speaking engagements and writing assignments for our knowledgeable volunteers and staff
- Raising funds to purchase duplicate table displays for more convenient use around the state and for long term installations at Nature Centers, museums, and public libraries
- Traveling to meet and network with the volunteers who maintain orchards, and conduct successful public branch events.
- And growing the number of alliances and partnerships we have with like-minded organizations.

I invite my fellow board members and all of you to join me in this resolution to grow our membership and spread the word about the work of our Chapter. Let us all start the 2015 growing season with a renewed commitment to the mission of restoring the American Chestnut.

Sincerely,
John Wenderoth

PA-TACF Board of Directors

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Wilmington, DE
jhwend@yahoo.com

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Jeff Krause (non-voting)

Leaf Sample Identification

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Tony Rosati (New Jersey)

PA-TACF Staff

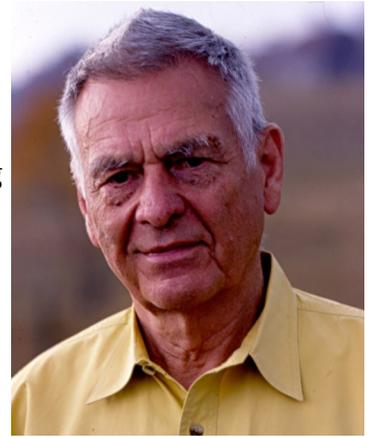
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Regional Science Coordinator
Sara Fitzsimmons
sff3@psu.edu

Chapter Administrator
Jean Najjar
Jmn173@psu.edu

Orchard Manager
Stephen Hoy
sdh177@psu.edu

Volunteer Spotlight—Dr. Bill Lord

Like many of our members Bill Lord is passionate about the restoration of the American chestnut. Born in 1921, Bill has lived long enough to have memories of the native tree from his boyhood. In our interview he recalled one striking memory of a lone chestnut on his uncle's farm in Canada, near Lake Erie. Working summers on that farm he saw over the course of several seasons the demise of a solitary chestnut, standing between two fields. About 50 feet tall, this tree wasn't fully mature but it was a landmark for the farm and provided shade and respite for animals and farmhands alike. One summer in the early 30s, Bill remembers noticing the first loss of leaves from a few branches. By the next summer the tree's decline had quickened and the following summer the tree was dead. They cut it down. He was sad for the loss of this tree but didn't understand the true impact until a decade later, working for the National Park Service.



As a young man, just returned from the war, Bill followed his dream to be a naturalist in the National Park Service. He took a job as a park ranger patrolling the Blue Ridge Parkway, and spent much of his time on a 40 mile stretch of the Blue Ridge Plateau where the remains of native chestnuts haunted the forest. During this time he came to understand the impact, the chestnut blight had on human communities in Appalachia: how for many families the chestnut had been a cash crop and now it was gone. This understanding stayed with him throughout his life, even after he moved on to a 40 year career as Veterinarian. And as he was reading a New York Times article in 1991 about the work being done by William McDonald in West Virginia — the timing was perfect! Bill was about to embark his next great adventure — retirement. Bill followed this lead and became an active volunteer for ACF. Spending numerous springs helping at the Meadowview orchard and supporting the development of the PA Chapter. Over two decades later, Bill continues his dedication to restore the American chestnut with thoughtful review of the scientific literature. Many thanks for all that you have done!

Changing Faces at PA-TACF

Farewell to Stephanie Bailey

Stephanie has been our Chapter Administrator since 2012. Stephanie stayed active through the end of the year helping to guide the staff transition finish up our new handouts. Her smile and warm presence will be missed by all of us here. Stephanie has moved to North Carolina with her husband to be closer to family and peruse the next exciting chapter of her life.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and everyone who has been touched by Stephanie's joyful demeanor and commitment to the work of ACF, we wish her all the best in her new adventures.



Welcome Jean Najjar : Our New Chapter Administrator

Jean joined us last October, in time for our Fall Meeting. Taking over for Stephanie, she will be managing the day to day operations of the chapter, such as office finances, member correspondence and coordination, answering phones and other general secretarial duties. Jean has a BS in Plant Science and an MLA from the University of Colorado. She lives in State College with her husband and three daughters. She is the President of the Pennsylvania Native Plant Society (PNPS) advocating for the use of natives in the landscape.

Highlights of the 2014 Fall Meeting



Above: Fall meeting attendees gathered outside the International Convention Center in Fairhope, PA for a group photo.



Outgoing President, Don McCann holds up a beautiful handcrafted sign made by Chris Ditlow. Sporting our new logo, Chris made this sign from salvaged American chestnut and donated for the Silent Auction.

Below: Volunteer Ethan Habrial fills crates helps with the Silent Auction.



Above: Board Member, Susan Smith signs in attendees

Left and below: Touring ICC by wagon.



Speaker Briefs

Phil Gruszka of Pittsburgh Park Conservation, covered a variety of topics concerning threats to Pennsylvania forests including Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt Disease; as well as scale and the Adelgid threat on Eastern Hemlock, Beech Bark Disease, and Walnut Canker Disease.

Dr. Katia Engelhardt, Research Associate at the Appalachian Laboratory at University of Maryland, shared the impact that volunteers can make as citizen scientists. Citizens Restoring American Chestnuts (CRAC) is a citizen science effort that directly engages residents of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and

West Virginia in chestnut research. This kind of public participation in research, occurs when the public engages in the research process by asking questions, collecting data, and interpreting results. Such efforts juggle both research and education goals and have been shown to be successful at both.

Dayton Baker of the International Conservation Center spoke passionately about the work of the Center to preserve the gene pool of endangered animals and relating that to the mission of ACF to restore the American chestnut. He presented a video that followed the story of how the first Elephants were brought to the center.

2015 TACF Annual Meeting October 23—October 24

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the upcoming TACF Annual Meeting, "Workshop on Integrating Genomics Tools in American Chestnut Restoration". This

will be a special, one-time event showcasing the work on chestnut sequencing, genomics, and other biotechnology tools.

Because the event will be sponsored by the Schatz Tree Genetics Colloquium, it will also be one of the cheapest TACF Annual Meetings on record.

For only \$100, you will receive registration for over 20 seminars, keynote talks, and hands-on workshops, in addition to meals and snacks for the two days.

Of particular interest to members is a special workshop where all attendees will be extract DNA from Pennsylvania-native American chestnut seeds. Let's have a great showing from the PA/NJ Chapter! For more information, please see call the Leffel Center, and/or visit this website: <http://www.acf.org/AM2015.php>



Direct Seeding Study

For those of you that have planted any large quantities of chestnuts, you know how difficult it can be. The difficulty of our task is compounded by the need to have as many seeds/trees planted survive as possible. In the real world, however, trees don't have such constraints, and in fact produce hundreds if not thousands of "sacrificial" seeds knowing that only a few will survive.

Eventually, as TACF increases seed stocks of its blight-resistant American chestnut stock, our cooperators will also have such a

Figure 1. Planting design for direct-seeding study at SGL 205.



luxury. In the meantime, while we don't have surpluses of valuable blight-resistant or breeding stock, there is plenty of "unselected" and "expendable" material available for TACF scientists and cooperators to examine novel methods of establishment and care.

This fall, with help from faculty and students from Moravian College, as well as staff from State Gamelands 205, over 30,000 chestnuts seeds were planted with 30,000 acorns as part of a study to determine densities required for overcoming seed predation pressure at that location. The planting design shown in Figure 1 describes the three replications of five different treatment densities of acorns and chestnuts.

In the early summer, Moravian students will again join SGL 205 and TACF staff to evaluate germination in the different treatments. And because predation pressure can vary significantly from year-to-year, we hope to repeat the study in similar fashion with fall sowing in both 2015 and 2016. Keep your eyes out of results as they come in!

Electronic Resources

Do we have your updated e-mail address? Are you on our listserv? Do you receive copies of TACF's electronic journal, the *eSprout*? Don't miss out!

Chapter Listserv: GMO Poll

This winter, we had 5% of PA/NJ Chapter members weigh in with their thoughts on how TACF should work with GMO technology. We'd love to hear more! Visit the Research portion of the Chapter website to vote and let us hear your thoughts: <http://www.patacf.org/about/research/biotechnology/genetic-transformation/poll/>

eSprout: Outcrossing of TACF Restoration Chesnuts

TACF's online journal, the *eSprout*, has been published for two years. This past January was the most read issue in those two years, thanks in part to an article that works to answer the question: "What will happen when TACF's blight-resistant American chestnuts come into contact with wild American and/or planted hybrid/exotic chestnuts?"

To find out more, visit the article at:

<http://acf.org/newsletter1.31.15Outcrossing.php>

If you didn't receive your copy, call our office to make sure we have you're e-mail address and that it's correct. If you aren't on-line, call our office and we can send you a copy of this article.

Chapter News

PA-TACF at the 2015 PA Farm Show



PA-TACF Volunteers Rock at the 2015 PA Farm Show!

Dave Armstrong
Mary Ayres
Tim Eck
John Civitts
Sue Ellen Dennison
Chris Ditlow
Lake Edward Graboski
Fred Heagy
Jack Kerr
Juliet Lane
Peter Lane
Don McCann
Ray Najjar
Jay Ressler
Martha Ressler
Susan Smith
Larry Yozwiak

Consider volunteering at one of our upcoming events like PSU Ag Progress Days — August 18th to 20th. **Phone Jean at (814) 863-7192**

New Display Highlights the American Chestnut Story

PA-TACF had a stand out presence at the PA Farm Show. As part of the Pennsylvania Hardwood display we shared a wonderful space with the PA Department of Agriculture's WoodMobile, which was newly renovated with much help from our loyal friend Chris Ditlow. Our location provide high visibility and great foot traffic. The beautiful craftsmanship of PA woodworkers was on display in this area — helping to draw peoples attention and setting the stage for our volunteers to share the story of the American chestnut.

Our staff and volunteers sold over \$400 in merchandise, spoke to hundreds of attendees, and garnered significant interest among the public. It was a great event and we look forward to making an even bigger impact at the 100th Annual PA Farm Show in 2016.

Election Results Tallied:

There were 120 ballots cast in our 2014 Board of Director's Election. The ballots have been counted and tallied. All of the nominees have been duly elected into office.

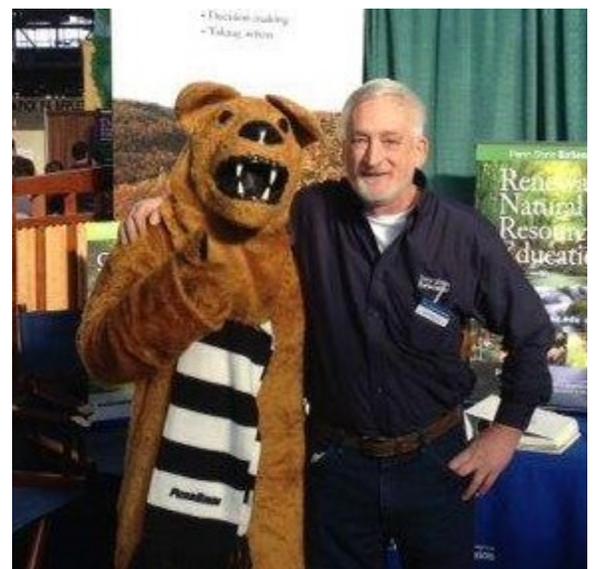
**Kenneth Allshouse
Tim Eck
Susan Smith
Jim Walizer
Clark Beebe**

***We thank them for their
Dedicated service!***

Fall Fundraising Goals Exceeded!

Members showed their support in 2014 with generous contributions to our End of Year Fundraiser. The goal was to raise \$2,000 for the purchase of two additional sets of our new Outreach Display, and a new iPad or similar tablet with a 3 year service.

**Drum roll please: We
raised \$3,640!
Thank you to all of our
generous donors!**



Gary Micsky and the PSU Nittany Lion at the Farm Show.

Membership Renewal

Renew your membership support for the American Chestnut Foundation.

Please return to:

**The American Chestnut Foundation
50 North Merrimon, Suite 115
Asheville, NC 28804**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Additional gift to the PA Chapter: \$ _____

City: _____ State: _____

To renew online visit: www.acf.org/join.php

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Check your address label on this newsletter to check your expiration date. Circle your membership level.

Membership Levels:

Individual Membership -- \$40.00

Receive all TACF publications and car decal

Organizational Membership -- \$100.00

Annual Sponsor Memberships

Includes Restoration Chestnuts 1.0

CHESTNUT (\$300 and above)

All membership benefits PLUS 4 Restoration 1.0 seeds

BRONZE LEAF (\$500 and above)

All membership benefits PLUS 6 Restoration 1.0 seeds

SILVER LEAF (\$1,000 and above)

Let's Grow Our Chapter Membership In 2016

Every member get a member! Please help us spread the word about our work to restore the American chestnut. We want to grow our membership in 2016 to a new high and you can help. If you know someone who may be interested in the restoration of the American chestnut, send them a personal invitation to consider joining. You might even consider purchasing a gift membership to help get someone hooked. Or invite them to our Spring Growers Meeting so they can see for themselves. Now is the time to grow!

Chapter Milestones



Above: Bob Leffel examines chestnut leaves at Codorus Orchard in 2009. Right: Ann Leffel plants chestnut.

20th Anniversary

This summer will mark the 20th anniversary of the first Pennsylvania Chapter Backcross Pollinations — led by Ann and Bob Leffel. Just one year after the formation of the Chapter they led the work to cross 273 BC# nuts from Ort x CL287.



Let us mark this anniversary with thank you the Leffels and all of the wonderful volunteers who helped start this chapter and lead the early initiatives of Pennsylvania's Back Breeding Program. At the same time let u rededication to the work of restoring our "mighty giant". **There is more work to do!**



Ann and Bob 2009



Nonprofit
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State College, PA
Permit No. 234

Pennsylvania Chapter
The American Chestnut Foundation

206 Forest Resources Lab
University Park, PA 16802
mail@patacf.org
Phone: 814-863-7192

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

March 28 — Spring Growers Meeting /Fort Hunt/ Harrisburg

April 22 — Earth Day Look for ways to share the story of the American chestnut in your community.

June 4-7 — Native Plants in the Landscape Conference / Millersville, PA

July 25 — Ned Smith Center Nature & Arts Festival / Millersville, PA

August 18-20 — Penn State Ag Progress Days / Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center (Volunteers Needed)

October 23-25 — TACF Annual Meeting and Fall Chapter Meeting combined / State College PA.

Stay tuned into PA-TACF happenings!
Visit: patacf.org
Like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/patacf)



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Get Involved! Our volunteers enjoy what they do; whether it's leading a tour, planting an orchard, representing us at events or speaking to a group. No experience necessary! We'll help get you started!
Call Jean Najjar at (814) 349-9856 or email her at mail@patacf.org