

The American Chestnut Foundation®

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Members and Friends,

We began with a small group of passionate volunteers joining together to help return a species once thought lost forever to its native forests. The story of the American chestnut is both extraordinary and unique. The combination of hard work, persistence and generosity among members of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF®) and our partners got us to where we are today. That same recipe will take us to the top of the mountain; restoring the American chestnut.



Despite this year's tumultuous economy, TACF has been able to maintain our focus even in such an uncertain environment. We continue to achieve significant milestones in our programs. This past spring, TACF in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, the Southern Research Station, and the University of Tennessee, planted our first potentially blight-resistant seedlings on national forest land in three states in the Southeast. This was truly an historic event.

Not too far in the future, our chapter network will begin producing locally-adapted seed for planting within their individual states. This is a key element within the TACF program. We have a long way to go but we are making progress.

Our national office is now located in beautiful Asheville, NC which is within the heart of the American chestnut's range. This location gives us quick access to our Meadowview Research Farms, just a short drive away.

The year 2009 also marked the beginnings of making our latest line of chestnuts available to our longest-term members for testing and evaluation. For 26 years our members have waited for this day and we now have seeds our members can help us test and evaluate. These are exciting times for TACF.

I anticipate 2010 will bring us many new opportunities for both member and financial growth and a renewed grassroots effort to restore the American chestnut. Local efforts will help us reach new levels of success, bring new volunteers to help us achieve our mission and generate the resources needed to expand our programs.

We are all looking forward to the completion of our new Glenn C. Price Research Laboratory at our Meadowview Farms in spring, 2010. Thanks to the generosity of Mary Belle Price and her late husband Glenn, this new laboratory will help TACF take our science program to new levels.

The fact that our mission and structure still remain steadfast after 26 years is one of the strongest tributes to the vision and genius of our founders. The idea that the American chestnut could be restored was once considered folly, but with your help we are proving that restoring the chestnut is possible.

Empower passionate volunteers with a good mission, and they will do GREAT things.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Bryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryan J. Burhans
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Office Locations

TACF Headquarters
160 Zillicoa Street, Suite D
Asheville, NC 28801
(828) 281-0047

Meadowview Research Farms
14005 Glenbrook Avenue
Meadowview, VA 24361
(276) 944-4631

Northern Appalachian Regional Office
Pennsylvania State University
School of Forest Resources
206 Forest Resources Lab
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-7192

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705 Spear Street
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(802) 999-8706

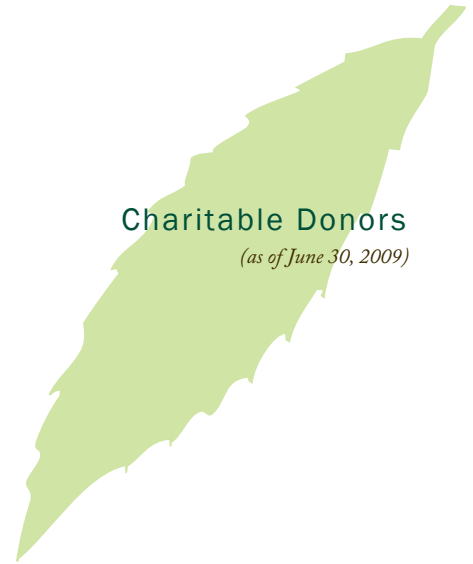
ARRI Partnership Office
Mountain State University
322 S. Kanawaha Street
Beckley, WV 25801
(276) 614-4777

Vermont Office
469 Main Street, Suite One
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Bennington, VT 05201
(802) 447-0110

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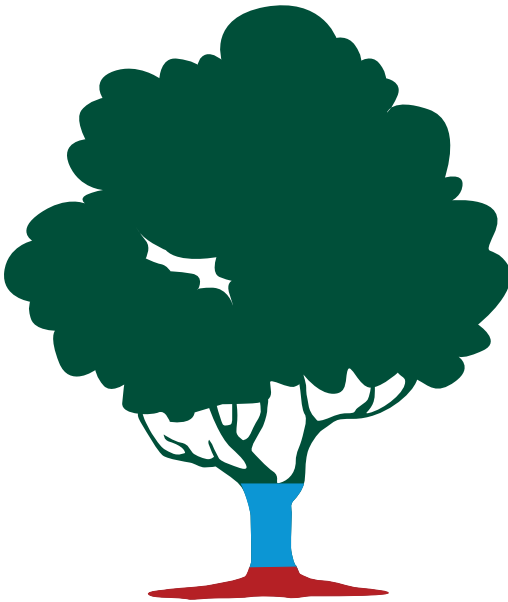
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 Richard S. Will

Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

*As of June 30, 2009, according to Cusack & Co.
Complete audited financials and TACF's 990 are available
at www.acf.org/annual.php or by calling (828) 281-0047.
Chart reflects expenditures for fiscal year ending June 30, 2008.*



84% Program Services

13% Management & General Expenses

3% Fundraising

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Public Support and Revenue			
Contributions and foundation grants	\$1,166,247	\$160,000	\$1,326,247
Federal grants	552,325	-	552,325
Membership dues	281,538	-	281,538
Investment return	(218,148)	(67,566)	(285,714)
Merchandise sales (net cost of (40,914))		-	18,118
Donated services	265,500	-	265,500
Donated fixed assets and supplies	17,833	-	17,833
Donated stock	9,694	-	9,694
Other support and revenue	1,170	-	1,170
Total Public Support and Revenue	\$2,094,277	\$92,434	\$2,186,711
Expenses			
Program services	\$1,975,112	-	\$1,975,112
Management and general	291,839	-	291,839
Fundraising	73,211	-	73,211
Total Expenses	\$2,340,162	-	\$2,340,162
Change in net assets	(245,885)	92,434	(153,451)
Net assets beginning of year (as restated)	2,861,917	331,545	3,193,462
Net assets end of year	\$2,616,032	\$423,979	\$3,040,011

Legacy Tree Orchard

The dream of restoring the American chestnut is taking root in The American Chestnut Foundation's (TACF) first Legacy Tree orchard. Dr. Fred Hebard, TACF's lead scientist has selected two hundred of the most blight-resistant four-year-old trees from over 30,000 seedlings at our Meadowview Research Farms in Virginia. These special trees represent more than \$19 million and more than 25 years of scientific research. Seeds from the Legacy Tree orchard are now being planted throughout the former chestnut range. Lead the way at this historic turning point. Help us build a bridge to the future by sponsoring a Legacy Tree. As your tree matures, it will produce thousands of nuts that will jump-start the forests of the future, the basis for an ecosystem restoration and a dream come true.

Our Legacy Tree Sponsors

Anonymous in honor of Maine Chapter of TACF*
Stephen G. Banks in honor of Glenn Banks*
David and Annie Bingham
The Blackmore-Gott family*
Jonathan Butler in memory of Dr. John M. Butler*
Connecticut Chapter of TACF
Robert W. Cramer in honor of Lewis L. Cramer*
Linda & Michael Doochin & Family
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Georgia Chapter of TACF
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In memory of Robert C. Hempel*
The LaRoche Family, Ted, Gloria, Ashley & David, their spouses and children
Lewis & Kate Lobdell in honor of Kale Partners and The Chestnut Ridge, Pennsylvania Partners in Conservation*
Northern Virginia Community Foundation in memory of Henry B.R. Brown*
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Suzan and Stephen Zoukis in honor of Cashiers Village*

*honorees names appear on individual plaques located near each tree



about our donors

Mary Belle Price

When you mention Mary Belle Price, the talk quickly turns to the legacy she and her late husband Glenn have created at The American Chestnut Foundation over the last 20 years. Mary Belle and Glenn have invested in TACF in many ways and their gifts have positioned TACF for success well into the future.

"Glenn had visited the Meadowview Farms and was just so impressed with the work that was going on there. He told me

over and over again that he wanted to take care of TACF when he was gone, and I'm so proud to carry on his wishes and do whatever I can to help the cause," Mary Belle said. To honor this remarkable man, TACF recently broke ground on construction of the Glenn C. Price Laboratory at Meadowview and expects the building to be finished in early 2010.

Chestnut Legacy Society

What will be your legacy? How about a whole forest of mighty giants? By making a planned gift to TACF you will help move the restoration of the American chestnut from the impossible to the possible. Whether it is a straightforward cash gift, a bequest in your will or trust, or a gift of stock or real estate, your legacy will be one of hope. With your commitment to TACF, your children and grandchildren will be able to touch and see a tree that once dominated our eastern forests and all but disappeared before they were born. Chestnut Legacy Society members will receive special recognition and invitations in appreciation of their commitment to the future of the American chestnut tree. Please contact TACF to discuss how these and other opportunities can work for you.

Education

Today's generation has never seen a full-grown American chestnut tree. Most of the trees were gone by 1950 due to chestnut blight. TACF is working to educate this generation as well as future ones about the past, present and future of this iconic tree. Our Charlie Chestnut education program reaches all levels of students and explains in a simple way the science behind chestnut restoration. This year TACF has embarked on an ambitious program with the development of the American Chestnut Learning Box (ACLB). Using hands-on chestnut artifacts and activities, users will journey through a series of complex forest stewardship issues. Though a major goal of the ACLB will be to promote healthy forest stewardship, sustainability, and the preservation of native plants, the simple act of working to restore the American chestnut will help to increase awareness of what it really takes to bring back something that was almost completely lost.



Future generations will know the grandeur of the American chestnut tree thanks to TACF's restoration program.



TACF partners with a strong network of like-minded organizations such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

about our donors

Dick Will

Dick Will may live in Texas but his heart remains in the Appalachian Mountains where the American chestnut once thrived. His generosity and commitment to restoring this "mighty giant" have helped TACF to continue to grow and to thrive after 26 years.

"Restoring the American chestnut was once only a dream, but I believe that giving to and volunteering at TACF have brought us to the point where this dream will soon become reality," said Dick. "As an organization, we have reached many milestones. But we have much work that lies ahead of us. We depend on our supporters to provide the funding needed to carry out the work TACF does every day so we can continue to fulfill our mission."

United States Forest Service

True partners are often hard to come by but the U.S. Forest Service has become an important ally and friend in the effort to restore the American chestnut. As the twenty-first century opened, TACF and the U.S. Forest Service formed a partnership that continues to this day. As part of this partnership, the first potentially blight-resistant chestnut seedlings were planted on federal forestland for testing this year.

"This project is truly a partnership—institutions working collaboratively, maximizing their expertise and resources for the greater good. Because we believe so strongly in the work of restoring this national icon, the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Health Protection Section has funded The American Chestnut Foundation for the past six years in support of the backcross breeding program," said Barb Crane of the U.S. Forest Service.

Northeast Utilities

2 tons of paper saved annually. 4,000 consumers taking part. \$20,000 in donations to The American Chestnut Foundation. These numbers have a story to tell. In 2006 Northeast (NU) Utilities in Connecticut saw an opportunity to enlist its shareholders to help support the restoration of the American chestnut, while also reducing costs, energy use and its overall environmental impact. For every shareholder who agreed to paperless delivery of their bill, NU proposed to make a one-time donation of \$5 to TACF to subsidize future chestnut tree plantings. "We saw a wonderful opportunity to promote the revival of a great American tree while also providing greater convenience for our shareholders and savings for the company," said Jeffrey R. Kotkin, NU's vice president for investor relations. Three years later, the partnership is still going strong and thousands of chestnut seedlings have been planted with the hope that the chestnut will once again thrive in its native eastern forests.



TACF has members and volunteers in all 50 states and in several other countries including Canada and Switzerland.

Partnerships in Action

TACF's mission is intertwined with those of its many partners. Healthy forests, sustainability, and conservation are keywords in describing what ties TACF to a diverse group of partners; Duke Energy, Davis-Garvin Insurance, Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. Each of these, to name just a few, plays an integral role in TACF's effort to restore the American chestnut. This year, TACF created a new partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers by planting American chestnuts on land in Virginia. Our relationship with the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) continues to grow and it included a planting on Governors Island, New York. And, under an agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation, TACF has begun plantings in every county in New York State to recognize the bicentennial of Cornell University founder Ezra Cornell.

Local Adaptability and our State Chapter Network

We want everyone to know the beauty of the American chestnut. That's why our national network of state chapters is the foundation of TACF's efforts. From Maine to Georgia and west across the Ohio River Valley, our members are working to restore the tree in a variety of landscapes. Last year, our members planted trees at Monticello in Virginia, Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace in Kentucky, and Governor's Island in New York. Chapter members plant, pollinate, inoculate and harvest American chestnuts throughout the year to preserve the regional adaptability of TACF's trees. With the addition of West Virginia, TACF's network has grown to 17 chapters in 19 states. We have members in all 50 states and internationally and each one of them has played a part in bringing back this iconic tree.





Dr. Larry Brasher of Alabama explores a forest filled with the remains of American chestnut trees.

Mother Tree Program

Our Mother Tree Program helps to guarantee that the genetic background of pure American chestnut trees currently living in our forests will be conserved for future generations. By conserving genetic stock, the trees can also be used for future breeding and increasing the diversity of future blight-resistant stock.

Another benefit of planting Mother Tree orchards is to help TACF compare diversity among populations from throughout the range of the American chestnut. TACF can eventually determine the ability for chestnut material to move from one area to another, evaluate the amount of range-wide diversity, and examine whether some of the tree's physical traits follow a geographic path throughout the range.

These types of orchards can also be great for training growers on how to plant and maintain American chestnut trees. Once blight-resistant chestnuts are available, you will have already tested your property for suitability of chestnuts, and learned how to grow them. Although chestnuts are a hardy tree, there are some lessons that can be learned and practiced with our native stock.



TACF scientists and volunteers spend much of the fall harvesting more than 50,000 chestnuts that are grown at Meadowview Research Farms in Virginia.

about our donors

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

Members of The American Chestnut Foundation are helping to restore a way of life. That means a lot to those of us who appreciate the immense value of our forests. The American chestnut is a magnificent tree. It is an important food source for wildlife and livestock. And it is probably America's best commercial hardwood – it once was the economic anchor of rural communities across the eastern United States. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program welcomes the opportunity to work with The American Chestnut Foundation. After all, we share a common goal– to work with others who share our passion for well-managed, healthy and diverse forests across North America.

External Grants Program

The American Chestnut Foundation provides the seeds for research by offering grants to scientists as a valuable tool in stimulating research on chestnut trees. These grants, while modest in size, have provided seed money for preliminary research that, in turn, has attracted more substantial grants from both government and private agencies. Last year, TACF funded nearly \$50,000 in research studies across the country. Dozens of research programs have been funded by TACF in recent years, and their results have benefited our efforts to restore the American chestnut tree to the forests of eastern North America in countless ways. Last year's dollars funded the following:

CHINA RESEARCH. Chinese and American scientists will work together over the next three years to enhance the American chestnut breeding program by better understanding the blight-resistant Chinese chestnut species in their native ranges. TACF's staff pathologist Dr. Fred Hebard, and Northern Appalachian Science Coordinator Sara Fitzsimmons will help lead the American team of scientists. They will work with Chinese scientists to find blight-resistant material that will be incorporated into TACF's national science program to breed blight-resistant American chestnut trees. TACF scientists will work with scientists from Peking University and Beijing Forestry University to understand the ecology of the Chinese chestnut species. The groups will also initiate an exchange of genetic materials and test blight resistance of TACF's trees that are the product of its breeding program.

SHADE TOLERANCE STUDY. This study compares the shade tolerance of American chestnut trees, Chinese chestnut and their hybrids. This study will help land managers in planning reintroduction trials of blight-resistant chestnuts by learning how low sunlight could affect their establishment and early growth.



APPALACHIAN TRAIL MEGA-TRANSECT PROJECT.

The year-long project will use volunteer citizen scientists to identify American chestnut survivors along segments of the Appalachian Trail and to better understand the ecology and pattern of surviving American chestnut trees. Using spatial analysis, scientists will create maps that will aid collectors in the field, and, as a result, give TACF better data from which it can extract important geographic traits that affect chestnut presence and density.

OZARK CHINQUAPIN STUDY. TACF will study the Ozark chinquapin, a close relative of American chestnut. Scientists will use tree cores and sections of dead wood to create an outline of stand history in the northwest Arkansas vicinity. They will also work to identify and characterize all living and dead chinquapin logs and sprouts on the study site.

MAINTENANCE OF BACKCROSS ORCHARD PLANTING.

Maintenance of a backcross orchard planting will help assess the level of blight-resistance. The main goal of the project is to evaluate the enhanced control of chestnut blight that results when trees with various levels of blight resistance are combined with diminished virulence of the blight from hypovirus infection.

OPTIMIZING AMERICAN CHESTNUT SEEDLING ROOT MORPHOLOGY.

Scientists will determine the optimal handling of American chestnut nuts to produce seedlings with well-developed root systems. With properly developed root systems, the seedlings will be able to maximize their survival and growth following their out-planting. The study also includes a comparison of chestnuts planted in the spring versus those planted in the fall.

T AFC Sponsors and Partners

Educational Partners

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Ohio University
Pennsylvania State University
Purdue University
University of Cincinnati
University of Kentucky
University of Maryland
University of Tennessee
University of Vermont
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Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
West Virginia University

Government Agencies

Abraham Lincoln's National Historic Birthplace
Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI)
Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
MD Dept. of Natural Resources
MD State Highway Administration
National Science Foundation
NC Department of Transportation
NH Division of Forests and Lands
OH Dept. of Natural Resources
PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources
Smithsonian Institution
U.S. Dept. of the Interior Office of Surface Mining
U.S. Forest Service
VA Dept. of Forestry

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Appalachian Trail Conservancy
The Carter Center
Ceres Foundation
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George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens
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about our donors

Davis-Garvin Insurance

In 2009, The American Chestnut Foundation and the Davis-Garvin Agency in Columbia, SC launched a strategic alliance designed to help the organization's membership. The partnership combines Davis-Garvin's knowledge of insurance with the need that TACF members have to protect themselves from liability concerns as they work to re-establish the American chestnut across its natural range. For the first time, TACF members have access to affordable timberland and hunt club liability coverage, prescribed burn coverage and standing timber insurance. TACF staff and members have the ability to attract new supporters through Davis-Garvin's insurance programs.

"Davis-Garvin is committed to partnering with best-in-class organizations to help solve important member issues," said Tim Lowrimore, account executive of Davis-Garvin. "By partnering with a leading conservation organization like TACF, we bring together Davis-Garvin's strength in providing innovative insurance solutions with TACF's expertise in offering leading-edge membership services. We are excited about the potential this partnership possesses for the future."

Since 1981, Davis-Garvin has been a leader and innovator for the forest industry, landowner and wood products industry.



THE

AMERICAN

CHESTNUT

FOUNDATION