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What: American Chestnut Planting on the Allison-Deaver House grounds
When: October 13, 2011 from 10 to 11 am
Where: Brevard, NC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 5, 2011

Once nearly obliterated by blight, the American chestnut is returning to the Historic Allison-Deaver House in Brevard

On Thursday, October 13, 2011, the Transylvania County Historical Society will host a planting of three potentially blight-resistant American chestnut seedlings as part of their celebration of Transylvania County's 150th anniversary. In partnership with The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), the planting will take place at the historical Allison-Deaver House grounds at 200 Highway 280, Brevard, NC at 10 am.

Built in 1815, the Allison-Deaver House is the oldest existing frame house in western North Carolina and was partly built with American chestnut lumber. Don Surrette, a charter member of Carolinas Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation and member of the Transylvania County Historical Society will speak about the historical ties between the Allison-Deaver House, Transylvania County, and the American chestnut tree. After the planting, participants are invited to take a tour of the house and grounds.

Once the mighty giant of our eastern forests, American chestnuts stood up to 100-feet tall, and numbered in the billions. They were a vital part of the forest ecology, a key food source for wildlife and an essential component of the human economy. In 1904 a blight, accidentally imported from Asia, spread rapidly through the American chestnut population. By 1950 the blight fungus had killed virtually all the mature trees from Maine to Georgia. Several attempts to breed blight-resistant trees in the mid-1900s were unsuccessful.

Then in 1983, a dedicated group of scientists formed The American Chestnut Foundation and began a special breeding process, which in 2005 produced the first potentially blight-resistant trees called Restoration Chestnuts. Now assisted by nearly 6,000 members and

volunteers in 23 states, the organization is undertaking the planting of Restoration Chestnuts in select locations throughout the eastern US as part of the Foundation's early restoration and testing efforts.

The three seedlings planted at the Allison-Deavor house are part of TACF's restoration process. Now one-year old and several feet tall, the chestnut trees will be carefully monitored as they mature.

TACF, founded in 1983, is a 501 (c) 3 conservation organization headquartered in Asheville, NC. For more information on TACF and its national breeding program, visit www.acf.org.