



# The Kentucky Railsplitter

Winter 2002

Newsletter of the Kentucky Chapter  
of the American Chestnut Foundation

*.....Working to Restore the American Chestnut*

## The Dentata Cantata

As I reflect back on our first year as a certified State Chapter, I am most impressed by the enthusiasm of you, the members of this organization. This enthusiasm is visible every time I talk to one of you. It was also visible at our first annual meeting at Natural Bridge. It is obvious that our mission, bringing back the Chestnut, inspires that enthusiasm in each of you. I thank you for your contributions over the past year, even if it was simply belonging to our Chapter.

This year we've had great success with our fledgling breeding program. With generous time and efforts of Billy Fudge of the Kentucky Division of Forestry, Fred Hebard of TACF's Meadowview farm, and Hill Craddock of University of Tennessee, Chatanooga we successfully pollinated and harvested nuts from what is probably Kentucky's largest living American Chestnut tree (see article below). We are currently making plans to pollinate a batch of trees during summer 2002 and to establish several breeding orchards. We're now scheduling field trips to search for chestnut trees we can pollinate next spring. Try to attend one of these field trips if you can (see below).

A special thanks goes to Boyd Caddell for his efforts with members from the Central and Western part of the state. Boyd, a senior in engineering at UK Paducah, has spearheaded a number of projects, including searching for mother trees in Central and Western Kentucky. It is a long distance across Kentucky, and thanks to Boyd we can now do a better job involving and communicating with members in the Western part of the state.



*Kentucky-ACF's first cohort of chestnut burs!!!*

Similar to many organizations supported by private donations, the events of September 11th, have impacted the membership of our Kentucky chapter. As we all look to the future, I ask each of you to try to recruit one new member to support the work of restoring the American chestnut to our forests. If any of you need membership brochures, give me a call. I'd love hear from you, if you'd like to share your thoughts or suggestions for our chapter.

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## Beginner's Luck! Kentucky ACF's first pollination Effort

Early last year Billy Fudge of the Campbellsville office of the Kentucky Division of Forestry contacted Rex Mann to notify him of a great opportunity for Kentucky's Mother Tree pollination program. This summer we were able to isolate receptive female flowers within paper bags and then apply pollen from backcross hybrid chestnut from TACF's Meadowview Farm. We kept our fingers crossed through the summer and started checking on our success as fall rolled around. On October 11th Billy and his crew harvested over 1000 burs from pollinated flowers. These burs yielded 400 well-developed seed will make up the first line of hybrid chestnut to be used in our state breeding program. We hope to repeat this process with about 20 Kentucky mother trees, so we need to really start to work in 2002!



\*\*\*\*\* Early Alert \*\*\*\*\*  
Second Annual KY Chapter Meeting--- May 17-18  
Pine Mountain State Park

## Bag those Flowers!

Ken Pyles, Glade Brosi, and Chelsea Buncher spent 2 days riding the Snorklelift in late June



## Dr. Hornback Named TACF Vice President

Dr. Ray Hornback, a charter member of TACF Kentucky chapter board of directors, was elected Vice President of TACF at the recent annual meeting in Chattanooga. Dr. Hornback will head the Development Cabinet with the primary focus on funding raising efforts for the 5,000-member organization. He succeeds Herb Darling, who was elected president of TACF. He is the second Kentuckian to serve on TACF national board, joining Kentucky chapter president Rex Mann.

“Ray brings great expertise to TACF,” said Marshal Case, TACF Executive Director, “as the result of his highly successful efforts as Vice President for University Relations at the University of Kentucky. We are delighted that he agreed to accept this important position with TACF.”

Dr. Hornback said, “While I did not actively seek the vice presidency, I am honored to be elected and will do all within my power to help further the objectives of this most worthy of organizations.” He added, “If there are those in our Kentucky membership who wish to help in the areas of fund raising and public relations, please call me at 859/299-5616.”



## Membership Notes.....

Nearly 200 Kentuckians are members of The American Chestnut Foundation Kentucky chapter, although there are a number of members who have not renewed their membership.

If you have not renewed your membership, please do so. And if you have friends who should belong to TACF, please contact Dr. Ray Hornback at 3629 Cayman Lane, Lexington, KY 40509, and he will send you an application form.

Also, if you would like to contribute a tax deductible gift to TACF, please do so by mailing your gift to: TACF 469 Main Street, PO Box 4044, Bennington, VT 05201.

## Annual Meeting Held in Chattanooga, TN

The annual meeting of TACF was held October, 26-28 in Chattanooga, TN with over 250 members in attendance.

Numerous scientific presentations were made with the keynote banquet held at the Tennessee Aquarium. Field trips to two neighboring farms were conducted on Saturday and Sunday.

Kentucky was represented by chapter president Rex Mann and membership chairman Dr. Ray Hornback.

Next year’s annual meeting will be held in Wisconsin.

## Looking for American Chestnuts in Western Kentucky

Over the next few years the Kentucky Chapter of the ACF will strive to locate, verify and pollinate a total of 20 Native American Chestnuts statewide to support our reintroduction program. The first, from Adair County, was pollinated this summer and the first seedlings will be coming up next spring! To maximize genetic diversity and regional adaptation, we want to use trees scattered over the entire state. As a member of the Kentucky Chapter of the ACF, I’m interested in finding mother trees here in Western Ky.

I plan to organize a group over the winter to begin working with trees of suitable size, here in the western end of the state. If you’re interested in helping out, please contact me.

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## Winter 2002 Chestnut Outings

Join us for a Saturday field trip to scout out chestnut mother trees for summer 2002 pollination activities. Trips will be guided by local foresters or wildlife biologists. Please bring hiking gear and lunch. Outings are subject to change due to weather. Get in touch with trip contacts if you plan to attend or for more information.

### February 9th Outings

Redbird Ranger District, Clay and Leslie Counties

Meeting Time: 10am

Meeting Place: USFS Redbird Ranger District  
Work Station

Contact: Howard Hann  
606 598-6364 (after 4:30)  
606 598-2192 (W)

Note: travel will be on rough county roads; high clearance vehicles or 4WD would be advisable

Red River Gorge, Powell and Wolfe Counties

Meeting Time: 10am

Meeting Place: USFS Stanton Ranger District

Contact: Johnny Faulkner  
606 663-0322 (after 4:30)  
606 663-2852 (W)

Northern Kentucky - Lewis County

Meeting Time: 10am

Meeting Place: BP Station AA Hwy + Rte 59  
Just south of Vanceburg

Contact: Scott Freidhoff  
606 652-3617 (after 4:30)



## Chestnuts Roasting on an Arson Fire

Two chestnut plantings established in March 2001 were recently destroyed by forest arsonists. The plantings were part of a 4-site collaboration between the University of Kentucky, the US Forest Service, the Kentucky Division of Forestry, and Berea College.

The fall 2001 fire season was the worst in about 15 years. It has been estimated that more than 150,000 acres were burned during the October and November and that arsonists were responsible for the vast majority of the ignitions.

This disappointing loss highlights a few important points. This is a reminder that there are many residents in Kentucky who accept forest arson as a reasonable land use practice. For those who hope to see chestnut returned to Kentucky's forests it is important to realize that overcoming chestnut blight is only the first step. If handled effectively, chestnut reintroduction activities may serve as an important avenue for increasing the value and insuring the protection of Kentucky's forest ecosystems.



## Get Active in Restoring the American Chestnut!

Restoration of the American Chestnut has depended on the long-term commitments of many members throughout the US. As our Kentucky chapter is getting underway you may be wondering how you can contribute your time, energy and creativity to the process. These are a few suggestions:

- Attend a mother tree spotting session this winter
- Help with flower bagging and pollination in June
- Watch pollinated trees and help with fall harvest
- Help plant and maintain breeding orchards
- Help with layout and mailing of newsletter
- Design a web site for the KY chapter
- Organize a KY ACF email list serve to keep members updated on state chapter activities
- Attend the state or national annual meeting
- Make a trip to Meadowview Farm in Virginia to volunteer a day or 2 with the national TACF breeding program

Second Annual Meeting of the  
Kentucky Chapter of the American  
Chestnut Foundation

May 17 and 18th, 2002  
Pine Mountain State Park

Location & Contact Information  
PINE MOUNTAIN STATE RESORT PARK  
1050 State Park Road  
Pineville, KY 40977  
(606) 337-3066



**KENTUCKY  
CHAPTER  
of the  
AMERICAN  
CHESTNUT  
FOUNDATION**

