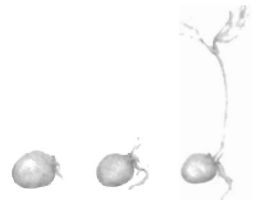




Chestnut Seedlings



Newsletter of the Massachusetts Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation
Spring 2004 Published semi-annually

The mission of the Massachusetts Chapter is to promote the preservation and restoration of the American chestnut species in the Commonwealth through the development and propagation of chestnut trees which are resistant to the chestnut blight.

TACF-MA Spring Update

Planting season is here

What better way to get in shape for spring and summer outdoor activities than to warm up with some invigorating, garden work—in our chapter's chestnut orchards!

Many of our orchard managers need your assistance, whether it be turning a shovel, fitting seeds into the soil, mulching, handing out refreshments or simply offering moral support.

Go to your phone or email and contact one of these dedicated orchard managers for a day that will give both our orchards and your spirit a head start into spring!



The **Hawley Orchard** owned by the Clark Family: contact Mike Novack, in Buckland 413-625-9741, stepbystepfarm@mtdata.com



James and Linda Donalds Orchard
Lunenburg: 978-582-5511
n1djb@yahoo.com



Lincoln Mass. Land Trust
contact John Emery,
orchard manager
508-358-5315
johnviolin7@aol.com



Paxton: Moore State Park
contact Denis Melican,
Park Supervisor
or Lois Breau, Park Interpreter
LoisBreau@aol.com
508-752-1809



"Planting" continued on page 2

...continued from page 1

Visit with us on April 25 at our upcoming quarterly program and board meetings. Learn more about our research and how you can participate. See the box at lower right for meeting site. Contact our office for information.



Foster, R.I. contact Jim Garland, orchard manager:
JGar820922@aol.com or
Yvonne Federowicz 401-354-5524,
Yvonne_Federowicz@brown.edu



North Grafton MA
contact Charlotte Zampini,
508-836-4108
cbzampini@aol.com

Sterling MA
contact Robert Dalessandro
978-534-5212

Conway MA
contact Gerry or Susan Cormier
413-789-0803
tacfma@att.net

Wrentham MA
contact Anne Myers
781-344-9836
ammyers@massmed.org



The orchard managers for the site locations on this page and the preceding page look forward to hearing from you!

Whether you have the time to assist, or just want to visit the site and observe orchard and the volunteers in action, contact the managers listed. This is your opportunity to participate in the historic restoration of the American chestnut.

CHESTNUT SEEDLINGS

is published by the
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TACF-MA Board Meetings are usually scheduled for the fourth Sunday of January, April, July and October. They are held at the Nat'l Grid/Mass Electric Building, 55 Bearfoot Road in Northboro. **The meetings are open to our Massachusetts supporters.** Please contact the Chapter office to confirm each date prior to the meeting.

### **TACF-MA Officers and Board of Directors**

President: Susan Cormier,  
Feeding Hills (Agawam)  
V. President: Mike Meixsell,  
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Richard Hoffman, Wilbraham  
Frank Howard, W. Newton  
Gary Jacob, Medway  
Mike Novack, Buckland  
Guy Shepard, Georgetown  
Brad Smith, Westboro  
Dave Uguccione, Three Rivers  
Rufin Van Bossuyt, Upton  
Charlotte Zampini, Westboro

## Science Update

### Federal Funding Request

TACF President and CEO, **Marshal Case** and Development Director, **Phil Pritchard** are working to secure a continuation of federal funding for American chestnut research in 2005 from the Department of the Interior. The 2004 Federal Budget included a \$250,000 grant for The American Chestnut Foundation.



Marshal Case and Phil Pritchard

As we go to press, **Marshal Case** and **Gerry Cormier**, Massachusetts Chapter member, are meeting with **Congressman John Olver** of the Western Mass District to advocate for continued funding by the U.S. House of Representatives. Congressman Olver is on the House Appropriations Committee and on the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, under which the Forestry budget falls. It is hoped that Marshal and Gerry's presentation to Congressman Olver about the American chestnut tree and the Foundation's accomplishments will encourage a positive decision in the 2005 Federal Budget deliberations.



Gerry Cormier, MA Chapter member

### Massachusetts DCR Meeting

State Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) officials met with state parks representatives and other conservation groups to discuss partnerships on February 26. **Denis and Lois Melican**, Moore State Park staff, along with **Frank Howard, Rufin Van Bossuyt and Gerry and Susan Cormier** spoke of the MA Chapter's need for cooperative research orchard programs.

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Sudden Oak Death (SOD)

The following excerpt is printed with permission from the San Francisco Chronicle, March 20, 2004 edition.

Ornamental plants in the largest nursery in California—a place that distributes flora around the country—have been infested with spores from the tree-killing disease known as sudden oak death. The discovery of *Phytophthora ramorum* in camellias at Monrovia Growers in Los Angeles County means that the highly contagious disease has been transported to other states and may have been introduced into highly susceptible oak forests in places like the southeastern United States. “[Monrovia] is a huge nursery with thousands of plants that went all over the place,” said Susan Frankel, a U.S. Forest Service plant pathologist who is working with the state Department of Food and Agriculture on the problem. “We’re very concerned for the forests of the United States.”

The news of yet another infestation was a major setback after two years of progress fighting the fungus-like scourge that has killed tens of thousands of California's majestic oaks. Steve Oak, a forest pathologist for the North Carolina office of the U.S. Forest Service, said a great many of Monrovia's plants are shipped to the southeast, including places near the southern Appalachian Mountains, where Northern red oak trees make

up 80 percent of the forest canopy in some places. “We have a pathway that was theoretical before, but is now likely. The threat is very real.” It is especially troubling in that region because the oaks replace the forests of **American chestnut trees** killed in one of the worst blights in world history. The chestnut blight killed some 3.5 billion trees in 50 years, essentially wiping out the entire species.

Meanwhile, at a recent SOD Task Force Task Force conference forest pathologists from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands outlined how *Phytophthora ramorum* has spread from nursery plants to forested areas. It seems to be especially deadly for beech and red oak trees in Europe. Curiously, the microbe in Europe—which was recently also found in the Pacific Northwest—is a different mating type from the one that dominates in the United States. Scientists are desperately trying to keep the two types apart for fear that they will mate and create an even more virulent form of sudden oak death.

Peter Fimrite, Chronicle Staff Writer

Phytophthora ramorum—what is it and where is it found?

P. ramorum is a serious fungal pathogen causing damage to trees and a range of ornamental and native plants in the USA and Europe. North American and European isolates represent two distinct populations that appear to have the same potential host range but have been found to differ in their aggressiveness to tree hosts. On trees, the pathogen can affect just the bark (e.g. beech), or both bark and leaves and shoots. Bark infections appear most typically as large cankers, that have brown to black discolored bark primarily occurring on lower portions of the trunk. Diseased areas may become colonized by bark beetles. When cankers girdle the trunk, sudden death of the tree occurs.

Source: Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (defra)

BRANCHING OUT - MA CHAPTER OUTREACH



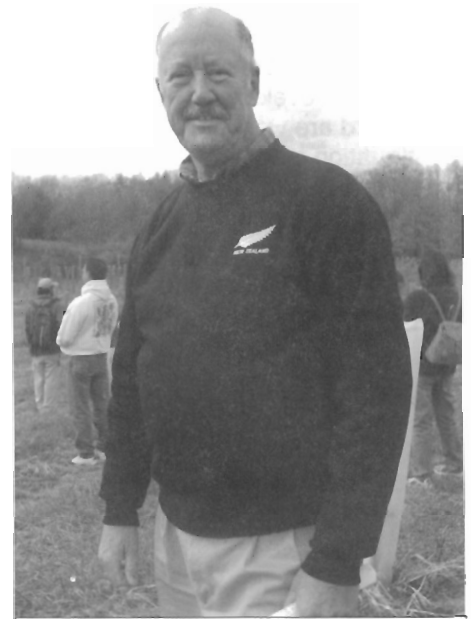
The Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) held its annual winter conference Saturday, January 24th. NOFA/Mass offers a variety of educational publications and programs—conferences, gardening projects, and garden tours.

Anne Myers spoke on *Hardwood Management: What it takes to grow chestnuts*. She covered the history of the blight, and current restoration efforts, along with orchard establishment and management practices.

On the evening of April 14, Anne will present a PowerPoint program to the Lincoln Conservation Group. Our thanks to **Diana Abrashkin** for arranging this event!

Rufin Van Bossuyt spoke to the New Bedford Regional Vocational High School classes on March 18. The students planted seed harvested from a chestnut tree on school property. They will be growing the seedlings in their school greenhouse prior to planting them outside after Memorial Day. To make room for additional school facilities, the tree has since been harvested, milled into lumber and is currently drying at the school. It will be used in their woodworking program in the future.

On March 30th, Rufin introduced the American chestnut tree research to a Cub Scout troop in Milton .



Rufin Van Bossuyt

Yvonne Federowicz presented chestnut programs in March to two groups: The Rhode Island Tree Council's Annual Conference in Newport, R.I, and the Appalachian Mountain Club winter tree identification seminar in Providence. Yvonne used the occasions to recruit folks interest in assisting with our spring plantings in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

On March 6th, **Gary Jacob and Frank Howard** hosted a chapter display at the annual MACC Environmental Conference at Holy Cross College. The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions is a coalition of the municipal Conservation Commissions throughout Massachusetts. The commissioners administer Mass Wetlands policies and also acquire and manage open space, including watershed lands, and important habitat areas.



The Walsh Family from Westfield recently attended the annual **Westfield River Water Symposium** at Westfield State College. Parents Tom and Marcia, Matt and Lindsay tend the backcross seedlings while Scott plans a construction project.



Gary Jacob (second from left) answers questions posed by visiting commissioners at the MACC Conference. Photo courtesy of Frank Howard

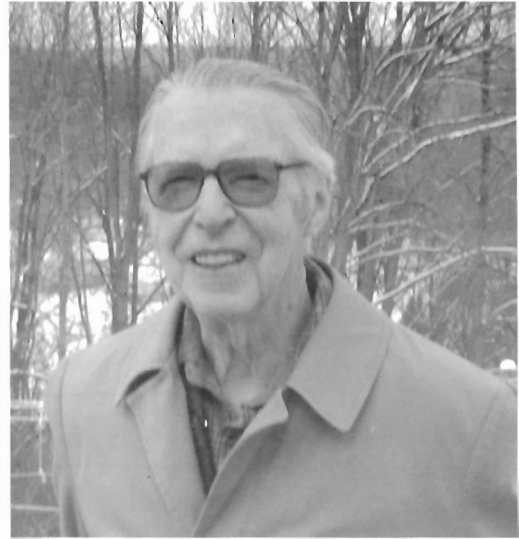
Chestnut Memories Rod Longley

This article is the fourth in our series of American chestnut recollections. It is somewhat of a departure from previous editions, in that it celebrates a TACF member's accomplishments in our sister-chapter, Connecticut.

If you ask Rod Longley about his interest in chestnut trees and restoration research, be prepared for an interesting account – followed by a sales pitch. Rod believes that recruiting new members follows closely on the “heels” of a chapter member’s primary charge – that of supporting backcross breeding within the state.

“Persistence,” Rod offers with a smile, “is the key to attracting new members.” So it’s not surprising that he

Rod grew up in the shadows of the Univ. of Conn. in Storrs, where his father was comptroller and owned property. Rod recalls seeing the trunks of dead chestnut trees, devoid of bark, colored a bright tan. He was eleven in 1930; the chestnut blight had raced through the state fifteen years earlier. Rod remembers his older brother harvesting and roasting chestnuts from lingering survivors – and then there were none...



Today, in addition to enjoying their five daughters and extended family, Rod and Joan are involved in the Conn. Horticultural Society, Goshen Garden Club, Canton Camera Club and Litchfield Hills Audubon Society. A visit to their home will treat you to a landscape artfully designed with annuals, perennials, vegetable and berry gardens and—chestnut trees.

As long-standing Conn. Chapter board members for TACF, Rod and Joan have helped initiate chestnut research plantings at White Memorial

“Persistence,” Rod offers with a smile, “is the key to attracting new members.”

Rod attended UConn in Storrs majoring in horticulture. While an undergraduate student, he assisted with a tree census following the '38 hurricane that ravaged the area. An interest in hydroponics led Rod to Rutgers for post-graduate studies. Then he was called to the European Theater during World War II. Returning to the States, Rod met and married Joan, the two finding mutual interests in horticulture and sports.

Conservation Center, Topsmead State Forest and Boyd’s Woods – all in the Litchfield area. In addition, they conduct chestnut presentations and set up TACF displays locally.

The couple, who call to mind the “true companions,” characterized in Marc Cohn’s song by the same title, plan to attend TACF’s annual meeting in Asheville this October. If you go, be sure to engage this energetic, delightful couple in a chat.

When asked about his expectations for the future of chestnut, Rod smiles and says “I’m not leaving... I’m not going up [to heaven] or down until we have a healthy chestnut. I’m going to stick around ‘til the blight issue is resolved.”

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Joan and Rod Longley beside one of several chestnut trees on their Litchfield, Connecticut property.



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Chestnut Foundation  
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*No one comes  
from the earth like grass.  
We come like trees;  
we all have roots.  
- Maya Angelou*

Yvonne Federowicz  
36 Hawthorne Street  
North Providence, RI 02904

02904X3&17 57



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## Join us!

Enclosed is my  
Membership support of:

- Gold Leaf, \$1,000
- Silver Leaf, \$500
- Bronze Leaf, \$250
- Green Leaf, \$100
- Regular, \$40
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## Membership Application

Enclosed is an additional contribution in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in support of the Massachusetts Chapter's activities.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

This is a gift membership from: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes subscriptions to **The Bark** and **The Journal of the American Chestnut Foundation** and enrollment in the **Massachusetts Chapter**. Please make check payable to The American Chestnut Foundation, P.O. Box 4044, Bennington, VT 05201-4044. TACF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Except for the member services part of your contribution (valued at \$15), your gift is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.