

***Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011***

***West Virginia's 4<sup>th</sup>  
Chestnut Festival***



*Baby Chestnut Burrs on RRC Hybrid American Chestnut Tree; Photo by Katie Wolfe-Orescanin*

**Honoring The Great American Chestnut Tree: “Exploring our Roots”**

**10:30am – 7:30pm**

*On the scenic, big bend of the Cheat River . . .*

Rowlesburg, West Virginia

## **Chestnuts in a Nutshell**

By Dr. N. Joseph Nassif

### ***A recipe for cooking delicious chestnuts:***

**Curing or Ripening Process:** Chestnuts taste better and sweeter when they are cured. Freshly harvested chestnuts **will cure in 3 to 10 days**, if left out at room temperature. As the water in the nut is lost, the starch is converted into a complex sugar. One can determine when the nuts are cured by squeezing the nut between the fingers – there should be a “little give.” The nut having lost water will shrink away from the inner shell.

**NOTE:** The **triangular shaped nuts**, versus the **semi-round nuts** will have a more nutty and delicious taste. I discovered this while watching **squirrels** “working-over” fallen chestnut hulls, each containing 3 nuts - they selected, first of all, the nut in the middle of the 3-nut hull, which is triangular shaped!

1. Pierce the chestnut shells and soak in water for 5 -10 minutes
2. Place in pre-heated oven at **325°F. for 20 minutes**
3. OR, place on top of stove under medium heat in a flat pan with a ¼ inch of water for 20 minutes, until water evaporates
4. OR boil them for 12 – 15 minutes
5. OR grill them on an open fire for 20 minutes **after piercing them** and soaking in water 5-10 minutes.

### ***How to store chestnuts:***

Chestnuts contain **50 -55% water**, so they will “**dry-out**” and become hard, if left unattended for more than **10 – 15 days**. Cured nuts contain about 30% water. Unattended chestnuts, piled on top of each other, will also **mildew**, especially if placed in a non-absorbable container, such as metal or plastic.

1. Place chestnuts in a plastic bag
2. Enclose a damp, **soaked paper towel** in the bag and seal the bag
3. Pierce and make 2 -3 millimeter holes, one inch apart, all around the plastic bag. A rounded Phillips screw driver works well for punching holes.
4. Place the bagged chestnuts on the **coldest shelf** of your refrigerator. Every two weeks, check to insure that the paper towel in the plastic bag has not dried out. Reason: Refrigerators generally only maintain a **humidity of 25 -30%**.
5. Chestnuts, thus stored, will be in good shape for November’s **Thanksgiving Day Turkey**, stuffed with chestnut dressing! Stored properly, the nuts will be good even in January and February.

## **Chestnuts are both Delicious and Nutritious**

*“Chestnuts are truly, one of nature’s finest health foods, and a top ten energy food”*

*Here are the facts: \**

1. Chestnuts are called nuts but they **do not have the characteristics of a nut**, since they are **low in oil content**.
2. The nuts are high in water content (52 – 58%) and low in oil content (1.5 grams per 100 grams).
3. Chestnuts have only **1/3 the calories of other nuts**.
4. They are high in **complex carbohydrates** (42 grams per 100 grams). They contain **no gluten**.
5. They have a **high quality type of complete protein** (3 grams per 100 grams), meaning they contain all of the essential amino acids for building body tissues. This is **comparable** to the high quality protein found in **eggs!**
6. Eggs contain cholesterol – **Chestnuts contain no cholesterol – a cardiologists dream**.
7. Chestnuts are extremely high in **dietary fiber** (5.7 – 6.3 grams per 100 grams), and is comparable to an equal weight of **bran flakes!** A meal high in chestnuts will lower your cholesterol level, as has been reported for oatmeal.
8. Chestnuts are rich in the **following vitamins: Vitamin C** (30 mg per 100 grams – 60 mg. is the Daily Value), Vitamin **B6** Niacin (0.6 grams per 100 grams), and **Vitamin B1**Thiamine, and **Vitamin B2** Riboflavin (both, 0.22 grams per 100 grams). Even in comparison to **apples**, chestnuts are higher in Vitamin C.
9. Chestnuts are rich in the **following minerals:** Calcium, Potassium, and Iron.
10. The chestnut has been called, **“a grain that grows on a tree.”**

\* Partially taken from: USDA 1964, Handbook No.



**Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee, Inc.**  
**PO Box 135**  
**Rowlesburg, WV 26425**  
**304 454-9232    [www.rowlesburg.org](http://www.rowlesburg.org)**

October 9, 2011

***Dear Chestnut Lovers and Friends of Rowlesburg,***

On behalf of the **Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee (RRC)**, I give a hardy welcome to all of those in attendance at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual West Virginia Chestnut Festival, October 9, 2011, as we gather to pay tribute to our former and resurgent heritage, the Great American Chestnut Tree – Exploring Our Roots. We are honored to have many distinguished guests in attendance including those representing **The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF)**:

*Bryan Burhans, President and CEO of TACF*  
*Dr. James Hill Craddock, University of Tennessee, Director, TACF*  
*Jimmy Jenkins, President, WV Chapter of TACF*  
*Dr. William MacDonald, Secretary, WV Chapter of TACF*  
*Professor Charles "Rick" Sypolt, Director, WV Chapter of TACF*  
*Dr. Don Kines, Member, WV Chapter of TACF*  
*Professor Mark Double, Biologist, WV University*

We especially welcome **Bryan Burhans**, TACF ([www.acf.org](http://www.acf.org)) CEO, a grass roots organization founded in 1983. The Mission of TACF is to restore the great American chestnut tree to its native range within the woodlands of the Appalachian Chain, using a scientific research and breeding program developed by its founders. It is expected that the resultant blight resistant, hard wood, American Chestnut tree will be of a pure nature or with a slight trace of a hybrid nature.

We also welcome the West Virginia Chapter of TACF, and its President, **Jimmy Jenkins**, who are hosting their Fall professional meeting at our Festival, 1 – 3 p.m. Professor **Mark Double**, **WVU**, again is hosting our scientific program, featuring **Dr. Don Kines** and **Bryan Burhans**, 4 – 5 p.m. Both sessions will be informative and enlightening to all who attend.

Our **distinguished guest**, noted author, chestnut researcher, and after-dinner speaker is **Dr. James Hill Craddock**, from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Dept. of Biological and Environmental Sciences.

We hope you will enjoy the daily **Festival Activities in the scenic Rowlesburg Park**, including sampling delicious and nutritious chestnuts on-the-open-fire and the many vendors representing a chestnut venue, especially items made of wormy chestnut. **Gerald Whitmer** will demonstrate a [chestnut peeling machine](#).

Lastly, the **Chestnut Dinner Banquet**, will be a treat not to be missed, including Dr. James Hill Craddock as after dinner speaker, and the Crowning of Mr. Chestnut, Professor Rick Sypolt, and Mrs. Chestnut, Alice Sypolt.

***Best Regards to you from all members of the Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee (RRC).***

*N. Joseph Nassif*

*Shirley Cook Hartley*

*Crystal Ashenfelter Dean*

N. Joseph Nassif, DDS  
For RRC, Director & Chairman  
WV Chestnut Festival

Shirley Cook Hartley  
Festival Co-chairperson  
RRC Treasurer

Crystal Ashenfelter Dean, RRC Chairman  
Katie Wolfe Orescanin, past RRC Chairman  
Naomi Ellen Nesser

*Rowlesburg is an ON-TRAC Community since 2009*

# Welcome to the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual WV Chestnut Festival!

## SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

### Continental Breakfast

10:30am-Noon

River City Café

Szilagyi Center for the Arts

*Meet distinguished guest, Dr. James Hill Craddock,  
Noted Chestnut researcher, educator, and writer*

### Rowlesburg Park Activities

Noon – 5:00pm

Fire Roasted Chestnuts Sampling -- Chestnuts To-Go -- Chestnut Peeling Machine Demonstration  
History of the Great American Chestnut Displays (by Rowlesburg Middle School and West Virginia  
Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation – Prof. Charles Sypolt)  
Throwing Chestnuts-in-the-Well Contest, Prizes for children  
Live Music -- Food and Beverages

### At the Szilagyi Center for the Arts

Noon – 5:00pm

World War II Museum -- Preston County Sports Museum – *New!*  
B&O Museum Bridge Exhibit -- Preston County Arts Council Exhibit  
River City Café -- River City Emporium and Collectibles  
Community Quilters Room (handmade quilts for sale) -- Schedule a Ride to Historic Cannon Hill

### American Chestnut Foundation,

### West Virginia Chapter Meeting

1:00-3:00 pm

Szilagyi Center for the Arts, Second Floor

***Public is Welcome!***

### Chestnut Research Presentations

4:00pm-5:00pm

Szilagyi Center for the Arts, Second Floor

Mark Double and Dr. Joseph Nassif: Welcome

Dr. Don Kines: “Chestnut Breeding and Grafting Programs in Barbour County Orchards”

**Bryan Burhans, CEO of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF):** “Science Behind American  
and Asian Chestnut Backcross Breeding Programs in 16 State Chapters of TACF”

Thomas Harttung Nassif: “A Chestnut Documentary DVD”

### Vendors:

Chestnut Furniture and Other Items (by Charlie Wotring)

Allegheny Treenware – Stan Jennings

Jarred Honey with Chestnuts (by Bee Box)

Artisan Works (Eileen & Ed Tompson)

Blessed Cottage Creations

Joe E Layman, American Chestnut Trinket Boxes

Chestnut Tree Saplings (by Lynn Jennings)

River City Café

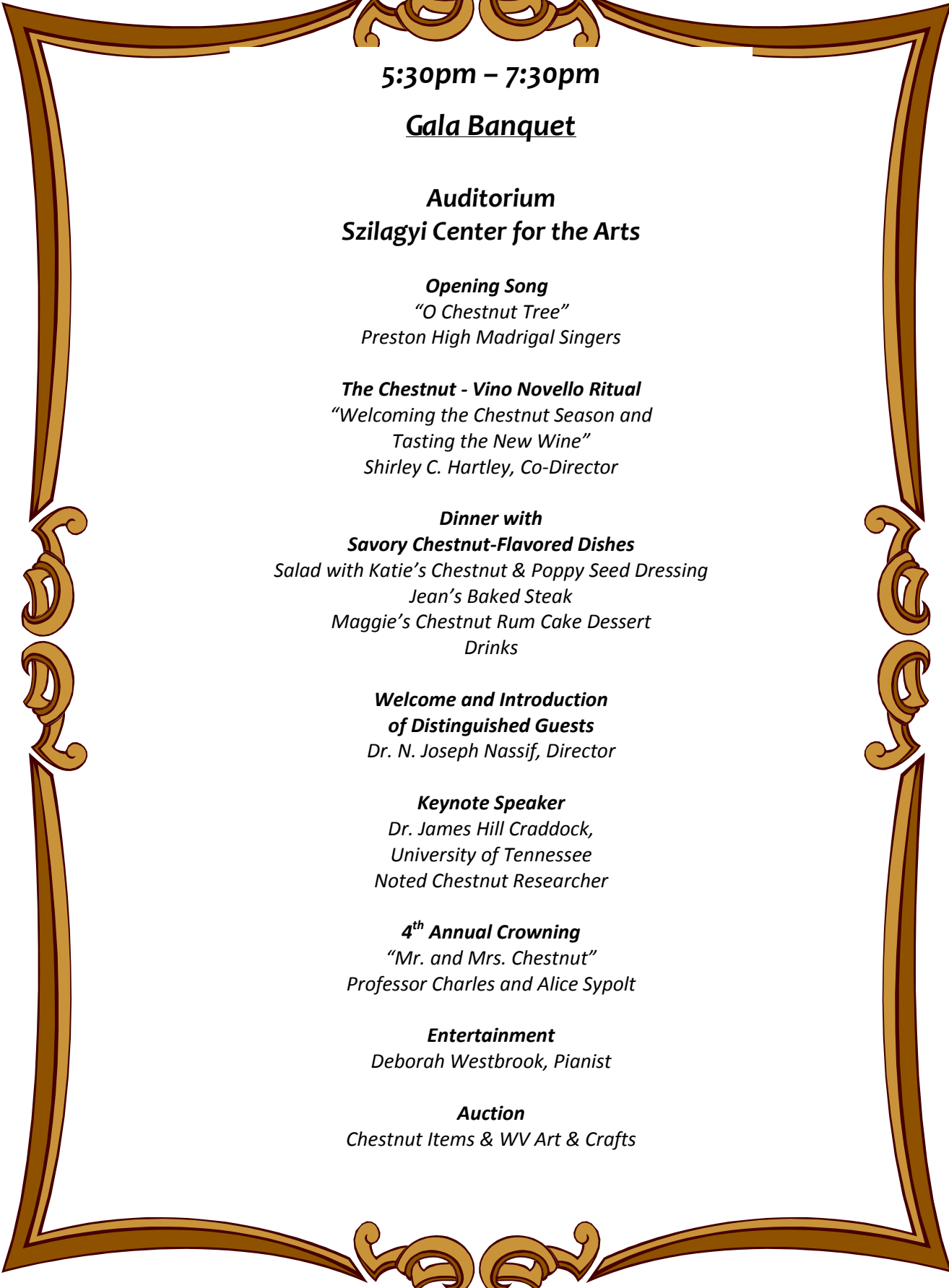
Face painting for children

Bath Works

Rowlesburg Park Concession

Tip to Toe (nail painting)

Sue’s Crafts



5:30pm – 7:30pm

**Gala Banquet**

**Auditorium  
Szilagyi Center for the Arts**

**Opening Song**

*“O Chestnut Tree”*

*Preston High Madrigal Singers*

**The Chestnut - Vino Novello Ritual**

*“Welcoming the Chestnut Season and  
Tasting the New Wine”*

*Shirley C. Hartley, Co-Director*

**Dinner with**

**Savory Chestnut-Flavored Dishes**

*Salad with Katie’s Chestnut & Poppy Seed Dressing*

*Jean’s Baked Steak*

*Maggie’s Chestnut Rum Cake Dessert*

*Drinks*

**Welcome and Introduction  
of Distinguished Guests**

*Dr. N. Joseph Nassif, Director*

**Keynote Speaker**

*Dr. James Hill Craddock,*

*University of Tennessee*

*Noted Chestnut Researcher*

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Crowning**

*“Mr. and Mrs. Chestnut”*

*Professor Charles and Alice Sypolt*

**Entertainment**

*Deborah Westbrook, Pianist*

**Auction**

*Chestnut Items & WV Art & Crafts*

## **2011 Chestnut Festival Committee**

Dr. N. Joseph Nassif, Director  
Shirley Cook Hartley, Co-Chair  
Anna R. Nassif  
George S. Nassif  
Doris Wolfe Rooks  
Kathleen Wolfe-Orescanin  
Margaret Schollar  
Maggie DeWeirdt  
Jean Wolfe  
Thomas H. Nassif  
Mark Double  
Burgess Lee Waybright  
Naomi Ellen Nesser

## **Rowlesburg Revitalization Board Members**

Crystal Ashenfelter Dean, Chairman  
Eric Bautista, Vice Chair  
Shirley Cook Hartley, Past Chairman and Treasurer  
Anna R. Nassif, Secretary  
Kathleen Wolfe-Orescanin, Past Chairman  
Catherine Burke  
Doris Wolfe Rooks  
Dr. N. Joseph Nassif  
Walter Burke  
Norma Blair Dowling  
Helen Edmunds  
Jennifer Goff  
Elma Leaman  
George Nassif, Past Chairman  
Jewell Reed  
Connie Sigley  
Margaret Schollar  
Jean H. Wolfe  
Mary Wotring  
Phil Wotring



**ROWLESBURG ON THE MOVE**

152 YEARS: 1858 – 2010



## *Chestnut Festival Distinguished Guest*

### **Dr. Don W. Kines**

*Member, WV Chapter of TACF*

Don Kines was born on April 29, 1964 in Philippi, WV. He graduated from Philip Barbour High School in 1982. While growing up in Philippi he was active in 4-H and helping out on the family farm where his parents raised Angus cattle.

He attended West Virginia University receiving a BS in Animal Science in 1986 and a DDS in 1990. It was during his undergraduate studies that he was introduced to the American Chestnut tree after reading an article 'Is This The Chestnut's Last Stand' in a National Wildlife Magazine. He planted his first American Chestnut tree in 1986 shortly after reading the magazine article. It was about this time that he joined the American Chestnut Foundation and served on the development committee for several years.

His experimental chestnut orchards are located in Barbour County and consist of over 300 trees. His emphasis has been on developing a blight resistant American type tree that would be suitable for timber or wildlife plantings in the northeast. His approach in breeding has been to combine the 2 different approaches used by the American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) and the American Chestnut Cooperators Foundation (ACCF). TACF is developing blight resistant American chestnut trees utilizing resistance from the Chinese chestnut tree. The ACCF is attempting to develop a resistant American utilizing resistance found in surviving American trees. Dr. Kines has found that by crossing American chestnut trees that have some low levels of blight resistance with highly resistant Chinese or Japanese chestnut trees that many of the seedlings have sufficient levels of blight resistance.

The oldest trees are now over 40 feet tall and display a wide range of characteristics. There are vigorous timber type trees while some are dwarf in stature. There are those that are 'spreading' chestnut trees, and others with a narrow growth habit. There are heavy producers and shy producers, large nuts versus small nuts. The bulk of the youngest trees are the result of crossing the best first generation hybrids back to somewhat resistant American parents. It is from this generation of 3/4 American hybrids that he hopes to select trees with high levels of blight resistance and American type growth and vigor. None of these trees are commercially available at this point, but he will graft selected trees for interested people.

Dr. Kines has been practicing dentistry in Davis, WV since 1991. He resides with his wife Sheryl who is a substitute teacher in Tucker County, and his 4 children aged 15, 11, 11, and 10. They enjoy hiking the many trails in the Canaan Valley and Blackwater Falls area when they can find spare time.



## James Hill Craddock

*Robert M. Davenport Professor in Biology  
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Department of Biological and  
Environmental Sciences, 615 McCallie Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37403*

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I was born in Louisville, Kentucky on 16 February 1960. I am married to Paola Zannini and we have one son, Emilio, who was born on 23 May 1994. I grew up in Woods Hole Massachusetts, on Cape Cod, son of a Marine Biologist father and an Emergency Room Nurse mother. I went to sea for the first time at age 16, working summers on commercial fishing boats. I have been a gardener since I can remember. I grew my first chestnut tree from a seed I planted when I was 15 and I am still a chestnut enthusiast. I moved to Italy in 1987 where Paola and I helped run her family's restaurant business. We moved to Tennessee in November of 1994.

### UNIVERSITA' DI TORINO

*Dottorato di Ricerca in Colture Arboree, 1992*

Thesis title: Indagini in *Corylus avellana* L. e *Castanea* spp. su: radicazione di talee tramite l'impiego di funghi ectomicorrizici; impollinazione e germoplasma di castagno (Investigations in *Corylus avellana* L. and *Castanea* spp. on: rooting of cuttings using ectomycorrhizal fungi, pollination and germplasm of chestnut).

### OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

*Master of Science in Horticulture, 1987*

Thesis title: Cryopreservation of pollen.

### INDIANA UNIVERSITY

*Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts and Biology, 1983*

Areas of concentration: Printmaking (etching and lithography) and Botany.

### UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA - DEPT. BIOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

*Robert M. Davenport Professor in Biology, July 2008 to Present.*

*Robert M. Davenport Associate Professor in Biology, August 2002 to July 2008.*

*Robert M. Davenport Assistant Professor in Biology, January 1999 to July 2002.*

*Assistant Professor, August 1996 to December 1998.*

**Teaching duties:** My teaching responsibilities include Fundamentals of Biology (BIOL 121 and BIOL 122), Economic Botany (BIOL/ESC 251), Mycology (BIOL 351), Dendrology (BIOL 499/501), and Cellular Biology (BIOL 428). **Research interests:** My current research is focused on the restoration of the American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) to the Appalachian hardwood forest ecosystem and the establishment of a commercial chestnut industry in Tennessee. Project areas include: breeding for blight resistance and gall wasp resistance, investigations on the physiology and ecology of hypovirulence, biological control of chestnut blight *Castanea* germplasm collection and characterization and chestnut cultivar evaluation. The chestnut research is supported in part by the Summerfield Johnston Endowment for the Restoration of the American Chestnut and the Robert M. Davenport Professorship of Biology.

### TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY - NURSERY CROPS RESEARCH STATION

*Postdoctoral Research Associate, December 1994 to August 1996.*



**Project areas:** Tree breeding, cultivar evaluations and germplasm collection. As a breeder, I was working on development of new *Cornus florida* cultivars with resistance to dogwood anthracnose disease. I used classical plant breeding techniques as part of a large, multidisciplinary team that includes molecular biologists, plant pathologists and geneticists. The cultivar evaluations included a state-wide chestnut variety trial to evaluate clones for nut production and quality. My responsibilities for the chestnut germplasm collection involved the introduction, propagation (by grafting) and maintenance of *Castanea* clonal germplasm (in collaboration with University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Dept. of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries).

UNIVERSITA' DI TORINO, DIPARTIMENTO DI COLTURE ARBOREE

*Postdoctoral Fellow, January 1993-December 1994*

**Teaching duties:** University extension course for chestnut growers "Valorizzazione della Castagna in Valle D'Aosta." I was part of a five-member teaching team. I gave classroom lectures and field demonstrations on chestnut propagation and grafting, and on the ecology of chestnut forest soils including the ectomycorrhizal symbionts of chestnut. **Research projects:** *Castanea* germplasm and chestnut mycorrhizae. The *Castanea* germplasm project involved collection and propagation of endangered chestnut cultivars, establishment of cultivar evaluation orchards and international exchange of chestnut germplasm. The ectomycorrhizal fungi associated with chestnut were studied in the field and in the laboratory. I accomplished in vitro isolation and mycelial cultures of several species. Nursery inoculation techniques using spores, mycelial cultures and mycorrhiza fragments were investigated.

LICEO LINGUISTICO JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

*Lettore di Madrelingua in Inglese, September 1991-June 1992*

**Teaching duties:** Conversational English, at the high school level. I taught six classes at all five grade levels (I had two senior classes).

UNIVERSITA' DI TORINO, ISTITUTO DI FRUTTICOLTURA INDUSTRIALE

*Graduate Research Assistant, October 1989-October 1992*

**Teaching duties:** University extension lectures and seminars.

**Research projects:** Rooting of chestnut and hazelnut cuttings facilitated by ectomycorrhizal inoculation of the rooting medium, international fruit and nut tree germplasm exchange, collection and propagation of endangered fruit and nut tree cultivars, breeding and selection of interspecific *Prunus* hybrids. The mycology work was done at the CENTRO DI STUDIO SULLA MICOLOGIA DEL TERRENO, C.N.R., which is located at the REALE ORTO BOTANICO DI TORINO.



**Bryan J. Burhans, B.S., M.S.**

**President & CEO, The American Chestnut Foundation**

160 Zillicoa Street, Suite D

Asheville, NC 28801

[www.acf.org](http://www.acf.org) [bryan@acf.org](mailto:bryan@acf.org)

Bryan received an Associate of Science degree in Wildlife Technology and a B.S. degree in Wildlife Science from The Pennsylvania State University. Bryan received his M.S. degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from Frostburg State University working out of the University of Maryland's Appalachian Environmental Laboratory in Frostburg, MD. He worked as a Wildlife Biologist for the Virginia Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries for 2 years and, after receiving his M.S. degree, he served as Wildlife Biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for two years. Then, in 1997, he went to work for the National Wild Turkey Federation in Edgefield, SC, as the Director of Land Management Programs working throughout the US, Canada and Mexico. Bryan has experience working with a very large chapter-based organization and has developed extensive partnerships with corporations and state and federal agency partners. Bryan is a certified wildlife biologist through The Wildlife Society.

# Festival features ‘chestnuts roasting on an open fire ...’

Thursday, October 08, 2009

By Bob Batz Jr., Pittsburgh Post-Gazette



In her Rowlesburg, W. Va., garden in the fall, Bertha John Nassif would be seen rhythmically standing and bending, standing and bending. Some townspeople thought she was praying, but they were only close. She was picking up chestnuts.

Chestnut trees grew all around her property and a few other places in Rowlesburg, a tiny town on the Cheat River about 40 miles southeast of Morgantown. This was starting in the 1940s and '50s, after a blight had decimated the American chestnut trees that once covered most of the East. The species was a most important source of wood and food, for wildlife as well as people.

A former bank president had given Bertha's husband, Joseph, six Asian chestnut saplings, and the renowned gardener began raising the trees and giving them to his neighbors as part of the early, continuing effort to bring back the American chestnut.

The chestnut has remained a big part of the fabric of that family and the town, both of which are celebrating it with the fourth annual Chestnut Festival.

The event runs from noon to 7:30 p.m. Sunday in Rowlesburg, about 115 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. Ellie Nesser, one of Joseph Nassif's granddaughters who is helping to organize it, describes the town of about 300 as "a throwback to the 1950s" – rotary phones and a few open stores and churches – that's trying to come back, too.

Miss Nesser, executive director of Southpointe Center at California University of Pennsylvania in Canonsburg, has put together the program booklet for the festival, working with one of her Rowlesburg uncles. She vividly remembers how her grandfather Joseph used to pack chestnuts in a brown paper bag and wrap it with string with her mom's name written on it.

"We grew up on the delicacies of roasted chestnuts and chestnut stuffing," which her mom made for Thanksgiving every year until she died, she recalls.

The festival's theme is: "Honoring the Great American Chestnut Tree: Exploring Our Roots."

Activities include everything from a "throwing chestnuts in the well" contest for children to talks and displays on planting chestnut saplings, which will be for sale there, along with furniture and other items crafted from the wood. The American Chestnut Foundation ([acf.org](http://acf.org)) continues to work with other groups to crossbreed the American chestnut with Asian varieties that are resistant to the fungus, which still keeps surviving American chestnuts from reaching their former grandeur.

The fest also will celebrate the chestnut's culinary charms, by roasting them on the grill most of the day at Rowlesburg Park. Attendees also will be able to make a donation for bags of chestnuts – from the Empire Chestnut Co. of Carrollton, Ohio ([empirechestnut.com](http://empirechestnut.com)) – and even buy chestnuts in honey from The Bee Box in Aurora.

The River City Café in the former high school-turned-Szilagyi Center for the Arts will be serving Continental Breakfast from 10 AM until Noon and a special lunch menu.

And at the gala banquet that night, the menu will feature savory chestnut recipes, including baby green salad with roasted chestnuts, baked steak with mashed potatoes, and Chestnut Rum Cake.

The banquet's opening song, performed by the Preston High Madrigal Singers, will be "O Chestnut Tree." Visitors also can tour attractions including a World War II museum, a railroad bridges exhibit, and Cannon Hill, a Civil War battle site.

You can even view Bertha Nassif's garden, now called Our Lady of The Cheat Park, where chestnuts are all over the ground (volunteers try to pick them up before the deer do).

As the program book notes, the nuts themselves are healthy – low in oil, high in protein, complex carbs and fiber.

"We loved them raw," says Miss Nesser, who was reminded by some of her 10 siblings how they used to sit outside behind her grandparents' now closed bar, Joe's Place. It's still a gathering point for the family and this young festival.

She salutes the adrenaline and drive of her older relatives who are keeping the memories alive as part of the Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee, which the festival benefits (the group has won a Spirit of West Virginia Award). For more, visit [wvchestnutfestival.com](http://wvchestnutfestival.com); for banquet tickets, which are \$20, buy on-line at [www.rowlesburg.org/products2.html](http://www.rowlesburg.org/products2.html) or call Shirley Hartley at 1-304-329-1240; e-mail [shartley812@verizon.net](mailto:shartley812@verizon.net).

### **Joseph Nassif's Savory Chestnut Stuffing**

As remembered by his daughter Martha Nassif Nesser and son N. Joseph Nassif.

- ¾ cup peeled chestnuts
- ¾ cup diced celery
- ¾ cup diced onions
- ¾ cup butter
- ½ teaspoon sage
- ½ teaspoon basil leaves
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 1 loaf of white bread torn into pieces
- Turkey

**Saute** chestnuts, celery and onions in butter until glazed.

**Add** sage, basil and cinnamon. Add chicken broth and simmer for 5 minutes.

**Pour** mixture over bread and mix together until all ingredients are blended together.

**Stuff** turkey and roast until internal temperature reaches levels for food safety. Or bake stuffing mixture in casserole at 350 degrees until knife inserted in center comes out clean, approximately 35 minutes.

-- *Ellie Nesser*

### **Joseph Nassif's Roasted Chestnuts**

**Score** an X in the flat side of each chestnut with a sharp paring knife.

**Toss** chestnuts on a baking sheet and roast for 15 to 25 minutes at 375 degrees. Peel while hot.

-- *Ellie Nesser*

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**Mr. and Mrs. Chestnut 2011**

***Professor Charles and Alice Sypolt***



**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**Charles R. Sypolt**

Department of Land Resources  
Glenville State College

**Education**

1964		High School Diploma	Rowlesburg High School
1975	A.S.	Land Surveying	Glenville State College, Glenville, West Virginia.
1970	B.S.	Forest Management	West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.
1971	M.S.	Forest Hydrology	West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Completed 39 hours of additional academic work after the Masters Degree; worked with Dr. Bill MacDonald on chestnut blight research for three summers.

### **Licensure**

Professional Surveyor #529 (1975)

Registered Forester #360

### **Teaching Experience**

Taught classes in Forestry and Land Surveying from 1973 to the present at Glenville State College in Glenville, West Virginia and attained the rank of professor. Classes taught include Forest Ecology, Silviculture, Tree and Wood Identification, Forest Management, Timber Harvesting Techniques, Introduction to Land Surveying, Forest Surveying, Measurements and Computations I, Computer Assisted Mapping, Geographic Information Systems, Retracement Surveys, Hydrology and Drainage, Energy Resource Surveying, and Professional Decisions.

Served as Department Chairman on three occasions with the latest being from August 2006 thru the present.

### **Professional Experience**

**Forestry** - completed several timber cruises, advertised the sales, and monitored the harvesting operations. Operated a Christmas tree farm for over 30 years and grown several different species of trees. Own and manage approximately 300 acres of forest land in central West Virginia. Helped develop a spreadsheet for timber cruising. We started two chestnut orchards with the cooperation of the American Chestnut Foundation at GSC in the spring of 2009.

**Surveying** - worked for several summers for Smith Land Surveying in Glenville, WV and consulted on several projects with Echard Surveying. These projects have involved retracement, topographic and hydrology and subdivision design surveys. Have served on the complaint committee for the Board of Examiners of Land Surveyors and have done investigative work for them.

### **Professional Memberships**

West Virginia Society of Professional Surveyors

West Virginia Forestry Association

Society of American Foresters

American Chestnut Foundation

## **Alice Lee Friend Sypolt**

Alice earned her High School Diploma from Morgantown High School in Monongalia County West Virginia where she also attended Morgantown Business School.

I worked several years for West Virginia University in the Journalism School as a clerk typist; several years for the Morgantown Post/Dominion News as a receptionist; eleven years as a receptionist/telephone operator/part time secretary and payroll clerk for Glenville State College in Glenville, WV; eight years as secretary for Trinity United Methodist Church and First Baptist Church in Glenville. I am presently serving as treasurer for Sand Fork Baptist Church in Sand Fork, WV.

I served on a number of church committees during the past forty years and have enjoyed singing in many church and community choirs. I am a member of Sand Fork Baptist Church and presently serving as treasurer. Throughout the years I have crocheted a number of afghans for friends and family as keepsakes. I enjoy spending time listening, reading, and sharing life with my extended family.

I have been married to Charles (Rick) Sypolt for thirty-nine blessed year. We are the parents of Senator Dave Sypolt of Kingwood, and Grandparents of Joshua Sypolt and his wife, Kristen, stationed in Misawa, Japan; Tara Groves and her husband, Chad, in Morgantown; Uriah Sypolt in Morgantown; and Great-Grandparents of Analise Jane Sypolt in Minot, ND.

## **Glenville State College Part of Effort to Restore the American Chestnut Tree**

Glenville, WV— With the planting of over one hundred trees in two separate orchards, Glenville State College has joined the fight to restore the majestic American chestnut tree to West Virginia forests.

Once dominant in eastern forests, the American chestnut, which accounted for up to twenty-five percent of all hardwood trees, was pushed to the brink of extinction by perhaps the deadliest plant blight ever. The blight which attacked and destroyed the American chestnut was brought in from Asia on imported species of trees. First discovered in 1904, the blight spread quickly through forests from Maine to Florida. By 1950 the mature American chestnut forest was all but dead. Individual trees, and a few stands are all that remain.

Today there are promising prospects for the restoration of the American chestnut due in a major part to the efforts of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF). Established in 1983, this non-profit organization is breeding and planting blight resistant strains of chestnut trees. The Asian species of chestnuts are resistant to the blight. By cross-breeding these species with American chestnuts, TACF hopes to develop an American chestnut that will be resistant to the blight.

On Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> faculty members from the Glenville State College Land Resources Department were joined by Dr. Bob Paris, a plant geneticist with The American Chestnut Foundation, for the planting of the first chestnut orchard in West Virginia. Over one hundred seedlings donated by TACF were planted in a field on property used by the GSC Land Resources Department. The orchard includes a variety of chestnut strains including: 100% American chestnut, 75% American chestnut and 25% Chinese chestnut, 87.5 % American chestnut and 12.5% Chinese Chestnut, 15/16 American chestnut and 1/16 Chinese chestnut. “This orchard at Glenville State College is our first in West Virginia. It will be used for testing and research of The American Chestnut Foundation’s breeding program. We hope it will help increase public awareness of the effort to restore the American chestnut,” said Dr. Bob Paris. TACF will be developing similar orchards in other locations including reclaimed surface mine sites.

A second orchard with ten chestnut seedlings was planted next to the GSC greenhouse near Eberle Hall. This orchard will be utilized as a breeding orchard for making crosses that will be adapted to this region and be blight resistant.

“These orchards will provide our GSC students with hands-on experience in tree genetics, greenhouse work, pruning, and propagation. It will also serve as a valuable community service project and help to build a better appreciation of the American chestnut,” said Rick Sypolt, GSC Professor of Forestry and Land Surveying and Chair of the Department of Land Resources.

To learn more about the American chestnut visit [www.chestnut@acf.org](http://www.chestnut@acf.org). For more information about the GSC chestnut orchards contact Rick Sypolt at (304) 462 -7361 ext.6371.

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## A Chestnut Harvest

Dallas D. Wolfe related the story to his children of growing up on a farm in Barbour County where the fields and hills were alive with chestnut trees. Life wasn't easy in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but his family of twelve always had good shelter, plenty of fresh food for summer and home preserved vegetables and meat for harsh winters.

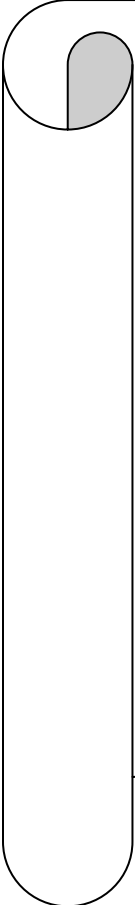
Every year in October the chestnut trees dropped their fruit to the ground which had to be quickly picked up before the squirrels and deer could gobble up the entire crop. When he was a boy of twelve years he and his brothers gathered up heavy feed bags and set out to harvest the beautiful and delectable chestnuts. This operation was carried out over several days and when the harvest was finished, the full to overflowing bags were loaded onto a horse drawn wagon for transport to the B & O Railroad Station in Grafton, twenty miles away.

The trip to Grafton took the better part of half a day so his mother packed food to sustain them for the roundtrip journey. Besides, if they needed a snack, all they had to do was reach into the wagon for a tasty handful of fresh chestnuts.

Upon arrival at the station in Grafton, the bags of nuts were weighed and tossed into a boxcar for shipment all over the U-nited States. When the wagon was emptied out and the weight tallied, they were paid a handsome sum for their labors.

I don't recall the amount they were paid per bag, but the total was enough to buy a new pair of shoes for each one in the family.

~~~by Kathleen Wolfe-Orescanin



*The Chestnut Festival and RRC Committee  
Members would like to extend our gratitude and  
sincere appreciation  
to*

***The Town of Rowlesburg***

***The Rowlesburg Park Commission***

***Tourism Commission of Rowlesburg, WV***

***Our Numerous Dedicated Volunteers***

# *Tribute to the 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia Chestnut Festival*

Sun., Oct. 12, 2008 in Rowlesburg, West Virginia

## ***“A Smashing Success”***

Written by Dr. N. Joseph Nassif, Director, RRC Chestnut Festival Task Force

***How and Why*** did Rowlesburg have the honor to host the State’s first chestnut festival? To quote Shirley Cook Hartley, *“It began four years ago when Joe and the members of the **Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee (RRC)**, discussed the idea of hosting a Chestnut Festival. This hoped for dream has come true and it has added to Rowlesburg’s cultural heritage and to the State’s heritage. “*

The credit for the excellent success for this Inaugural event was due to two years of planning, dedication and hard work of members of RRC, together with the Sesquicentennial Committee’s chair, Kathleen Wolfe. A listing of the four Festival events held on October 12 are as follows: **(1) Rowlesburg Park Festivities, noon-5 p.m.; (2) Inaugural planting of an hybrid American Chestnut Tree, 4 p.m.; (3) Sit-down banquet dinner, 5 p.m.; (4) Karaoke in-the-Park, 7:30 p.m.**

Two major hurdles to overcome for the planned Festival were having **bona fide vendors** and **prominent speakers**. We were successful on both parts. The speakers and distinguished guests present were: (1) **Dr. William MacDonald** and Mark Double, plant pathologists, WVU; (2) Robert Strasser, Chestnut Restoration Biologist, Hood College; (3) Professor Charles “Rick” Sypolt, Biologist, Glenville State College; (4) Kathy Marmet, VP for Education, and Deborah Fialka, Secretary, Virginia Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF); (5) Michelle Figaretti, Representative for Governor Manchin; (6) Sandy Burk, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Shepherdstown, WV.

**Park Activities.** Crowds of spectators were constantly mingling in the **Park** with the 12 various Vendors who had either interesting displays or chestnut items to sell. First, everyone was standing in line to sample or purchase the delicious roasted chestnuts-on-the-grill. Chestnuts-in-Honey (in jars) for sale were also a big hit, provided by The **Bee Box’s** John and Martha Slawter. Some attendees came to purchase Chestnut saplings. More than 50 saplings were sold (funds donated to RRC) by Lynn and Rhonda Jennings. Chestnut furniture and items were on display and some for sale by various vendors, Charlie Wotring, Jasper Sanders and Sam Sanders.

The well-known **Treenware Company** was represented by Stan and Sue Jennings, and their wares for sale included **collector items** made of wormy chestnut. Kathy Marmet, Deborah Fialka, and Robert Strasser manned display booths of **The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF)**. Besides selling signature items they answered questions pertaining to the heritage of the American Chestnut Tree. For the children, Rob Morrell’s booth, **“Throwing Chestnuts-in-the-Well,”** was exciting and a big hit with the children, as each child was presented with a prize. The Park Commission and especially Commissioner James Wagner are to be complimented for their untiring efforts, including the set-up of the chestnut grill area, tables for vendor display, tents, and bleachers.

**Former Rowlesburg School.** Many attendees visited the Rowlesburg Middle School Student **Composition and Drawing Contest**, which was displayed in the former Rowlesburg School building. The theme was, “Era of the American Chestnut Tree.” The middle school sponsors were science teacher James Davis and Jennifer Loughry. Four contestant winners were announced at the 4 p.m. ceremony and cash prizes were awarded. Also on exhibit across the school hallway were the world renown 10 model-to-scale railroad bridges on loan from the B & O Museum in Baltimore, last exhibited during the 1927 World’s Fair of the Iron Horse.” The perfect fall weather was especially enjoyed by those taking the Historical Society’s trips to **Cannon Hill** for breathtaking views, as Mother Nature exhibited her talent with autumn glory colors of fall.



**Tree Planting.** The Inaugural planting of a 5<sup>th</sup> generation hybrid American Chestnut Tree by Robert Strasser and Lynn Jennings, near the old Rowlesburg School, was extremely well attended. We owe thanks to Robert Strasser and to Dr. Hill Craddock, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga for donating the two hybrid trees. One of the highlights was the performance of the Preston High Madrigal Singers, directed by Deborah Westbrook, especially for the inspirational song, “O Chestnut Tree,” sung eloquently to the tune of “O Tannenbaum.” Michelle Figaretti spoke of behalf of Governor Manchin who was unable to attend. Kathy Marmet and Deborah Fialka also gave speeches on the background of the American Chestnut Tree.

**Sit-down Banquet Dinner.** The banquet dinner in the VFW building, featuring Chestnut flavored dishes, was enjoyed by all in attendance. Shirley did a superb job in arranging the dinner menu with Monroe Restaurant’s chef, Jim Maier. Unfortunately, many were turned away as the banquet was sold out. There were many highlights of the evening, including the crowning ceremonies of “**Mr. and Mrs. Chestnut**” (Walter and Betty Snider Shaver). The magnificent crowns themselves were embellished with gold-sprayed chestnuts. Following, there was a drawing for the winner of an imposing **four-foot tall eagle**, carved in chestnut wood by Walter Shaver. The winners were Hugh and Helen Mae Felton. The evening also included a spontaneous auction, of a **ceramic chestnut leaf bowl**, designed by Robert Strasser. Ron Brown, as an inspired auctioneer, was able to obtain a spirited bid of \$400 from Tom Brown, which was subsequently donated back to RRC. The three after dinner speakers, the distinguished **Dr. William MacDonald**, Robert Strasser, and a DVD presentation by Thomas H. Nassif, were well received, and a fitting end to the banquet festivities.

**Channel 12 TV-WBOY**, Clarksburg, videotaped part of the Park Festivities and it appeared on the same day evening news. Among others, Cynthia McCloud, news reporter from Charleston attended the all-day event. Cynthia reports that an article will be forthcoming in the **Corridor Trade Magazine**, published in Charleston.

**Summary.** The **success of the Chestnut Festival** could be summed up by **quotes** from three of our distinguished guests. **Dr. William MacDonald** in a letter stated, *“The Chestnut Festival was a grand affair and I was very impressed by your accomplishments. **Positive things happen in our state** when great people and their communities take charge like you all did. Your Festival helped provide impetus for a West Virginia Chapter of TACF and I hope that you are planning a Chestnut Festival for next year. Perhaps the WV Chapter and/or my students could be involved in your Festival.”* **Kathy Marmet** sent the following e-mail, *“Deborah Fialka and I thoroughly enjoyed the Festival experience, from a Belgian waffle breakfast... to the very moving young voices of high school madrigal singers ... to the older residents and their stories of the Chestnut blight ... to the sweetness of their story telling ... to the middle school student exhibits ... to the magnificent banquet dinner... to the informative educational Chestnut DVD film created by Thomas H. Nassif. **Rowlesburg is truly in the heart of the home of the by-gone American Chestnut Tree!**”*

**Robert Strasser** telephoned us after the Festival and remarked, *“The event was a huge success. You attracted not only a depth of experts, but also a diverse community of people from all walks. I enjoyed the many anecdotal stories told to me including the story related by Walter Shaver, who to escape the rain while walking to school, hid with his sister in a large cut-out of an American Chestnut Tree not yet felled by an ax. **The Rowlesburg Festival is truly an integral part of a larger story of our great American Heritage.** I encourage you and RRC to make this an annual Festival as it brings together a diversified group of individuals not only those dedicated aficionados, but those who keenly want to become a part of the heritage of the Great American Chestnut Tree, “The Redwood of the East.”*

*We hope you will come back in **2012**  
and join us for another exciting year of events in  
Rowlesburg, West Virginia!*

**2012 Calendar of Festivals & Events**  
**Rowlesburg, West Virginia**

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual River City Festival**

Jazz, Opera, Country Music, Choral Music, Art and Photography Exhibits,  
Patriotic Dinner, Poetry, Theater

**Memorial Day Weekend**

Friday, Saturday, Sunday  
May 25, 26 & 27, 2012

**WWII Living History Weekend**

World War II Reenactment, Fashion Show, Dance, Bobby Menear's Orchestra  
Saturday & Sunday  
June 30 & July 1, 2012

**OX Roast**

**Labor Day Weekend**

Fireman's Parade, Railroad Day, Pedal and Paddle Day, Ox-Roast  
Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday  
August 31, September 1, 2 & 3, 2012

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual West Virginia Chestnut Festival**

Continental Breakfast, Vendors in the Park, Speakers, Banquet

**Columbus Day Weekend**

Sunday  
October 7, 2012

**Christmas Market**

Saturday  
December 8, 2012

\*Events subject to change

Rowlesburg ON-TRAC Community Since 2009  
Spirit of the Mountains and Town of Festivals and Flowers

For more information about Rowlesburg, please visit our websites at  
[www.rowlesburg.org](http://www.rowlesburg.org) [www.rowlesburg.info](http://www.rowlesburg.info) [www.rowlesburgguide.com](http://www.rowlesburgguide.com) [www.wvchestnutfestival.com](http://www.wvchestnutfestival.com)

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