

# Canyon Watcher

## Castle Rock: Cultivating a Culture of Conservation

Go ask ten people on the street in Jasper, Tennessee if they know what the Tennessee River Gorge Trust is. You might get one, “Oh, yeah. I think I’ve heard of them...” Ask those same ten people if they know where Castle Rock is. You’ll get ten fingers pointing north toward Marion County’s most iconic view.

In reality, the majority of the Trust’s protected properties fall in the Marion County portion of the Tennessee River Gorge. Thus, while Castle Rock falls just outside the Trust’s typical viewshed, we celebrated when we were approached by Harvey Cameron and the Land Trust for Tennessee to partner in the protection of this renowned rock climbing venue. Our involvement would serve to protect this key piece of property for generations to come and also draw the attention of the Marion County community to the work the Trust is doing just upriver from their homes.

For those who are unfamiliar, Castle Rock sits atop the Cumberland Plateau in Marion County. The forested property contains nearly a half mile of bluff line, clearly visible from the valley below, which is popular among local and travelling rock climbers. The south-facing sandstone turret forming the bluff offers breathtaking views of the scenic Sequatchie Valley.

The Castle Rock property was joint-owned previously by Harvey Cameron, an attorney from Jasper, and the late Bud (Sam) Werner, an honored veteran and conservationist. Werner’s ownership was bequeathed to The Conservation Fund, a national organization dedicated to creating land and water protection strategies that balance environmental stewardship with economic vitality. Together

the Fund and Cameron donated all 35 acres of Castle Rock to the Tennessee River Gorge Trust.

While the legal language of the partnership took several months to parse, it shook out like this: The Tennessee River Gorge Trust owns the 35 acres of Castle Rock in fee simple terms; the Land Trust for Tennessee holds a conservation easement on the 35 acres; and the Southeastern Climbers Coalition now holds a lease agreement to manage the recreational use of the property, which they have done since 2005.

The Southeastern Climbers Coalition have worked diligently to mark and equip Castle Rock with nearly 100 sport and traditional climbing routes. The crag is known for having one of the hardest routes in Tennessee — Apes on Acid 5.13d — offering a challenge to even advanced climbers.



*Castle Rock, a renowned rock climbing venue, has been preserved through a unique conservation partnership.*

*Continues on page 3*



Our mission is to preserve the Tennessee River Gorge as a healthy and productive resource through land protection, education, community engagement and the promotion of good land stewardship.



Rick Huffines

**DIRECTOR'S NOTE** We have chosen to focus this newsletter on collaboration and partnerships. Why? Because conservation is a co-labor. It has to be: it is a responsibility shared by all of us, not just a few. Collaboration is also something to which the Trust is firmly committed; therefore, we have a responsibility to involve as many people, thoughts and ideas as we can into our processes. We want to share the collaborative work we have been doing and celebrate those we have partnered with. If you want to partner with us, please reach out. We're in this together.

- 1 Chattanooga Gas volunteer picking up trash near the Tennessee River
- 2 Rick took Austrian photographers Guenter, Petra and their daughter Sarah out to photograph a cave in the Gorge
- 3 Rick and Jeanie Nelson from Land Trust for Tennessee finalizing protection of Castle Rock
- 4 Crowd at Castle Rock Bash, celebration sponsored by The Crash Pad
- 5 Southeastern Climbers Coalition and The Access Fund cleaning out a cave in the Gorge



- 6 Southeast Conservation Corps finishing trail at Trust Bird Observatory
- 7 Lookout Mountain Conservancy interns helping to finish newly constructed cabins at Bird Observatory
- 8 Chattanooga Hiking Club maintaining trail at Pot Point
- 9 TRGT partnered with Outdoor Chattanooga to offer a kayaking trip to the Trust Bird Observatory



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## Castle Rock *Continued from page 1*

We've had a number of people ask why two land trusts needed to be involved in the protection of Castle Rock. "Why didn't you guys just do it alone?"

It wasn't about us. That's why. The Castle Rock project was about visibly aligning the conservation efforts in the Chattanooga region.

Joel Houser, Southeast Regional Director for The Land Trust for Tennessee, posited, "Castle Rock provides a shining example of how conservation organizations can come together to protect our unique landscape, ensuring that future generations have the same opportunities to enjoy the land that we do."

Land trusts not only can come together to protect our open space, but we must. The future of conservation depends on pooling our resources and cultivating a culture of conservation, in which our

community remembers that habitat is defined as "food, water, shelter, and space."

By 2060, the population of the United States is projected to increase by 98 million. While all 98 million won't flock to the Tennessee River Gorge to build their homes, Chattanooga and the surrounding counties will see an upsurge of about 100,000 settling in our area during that same time according to projections from the THRIVE 2055 studies.

More people equals more pressure for the development of open space. Let's rally this community to secure what makes our home so great — trees, trails, and the furry and feathered taxa — while we still have the time.

## This Year's Grant Success!

**Benwood Foundation:** \$50,000 for bird research expenses

**Lyndhurst Foundation:** \$30,000 for Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

**Norcross Wildlife Foundation:** \$1,250 for binoculars for bird research and equipment for mounting the Trimble Yuma unit (a high-powered GPS unit used for boundary marking and research) in the Trust truck

**Tennessee American Water Company:** \$3,000 to partner with the Southeast Conservation Corps to install a filtration system and rainwater catchment system at the Bird Observatory and to cut a new trail with a footbridge at the Bird Observatory

**National Environmental Education Foundation:** \$3,195 to send Sarah to training on the Trust's Abila fundraising software and to send Hannah to the Nonprofit Technology Conference, both in Austin, Texas

**Tennessee Ornithological Society:** \$700 for radio telemetry equipment used to track Cerulean and Worm-eating Warblers in the Gorge

**Total: \$88,145**



*This baby box turtle was found by Trust Bird Researcher Holland Youngman near the Bird Observatory.*

## What's GOING ON TRGT?

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3** 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Tennessee River Rescue— *Volunteers needed!*

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7** 3 p.m.

*Fall Color Cruise on the River Gorge Explorer*

*Ride the Tennessee Aquarium's River Gorge Explorer with the staff of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust to learn more about the history, current events and research being conducted in the Gorge.*

*See 19 miles of Chattanooga's best river views including Williams Island, Pot Point, and the Tennessee Wall. Tickets: \$30*

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21**

PanGorge Trail Race – Paddle, Run, Bike!  
Visit [pangorge.com](http://pangorge.com) to learn more.

Register at [trgt.org/events](http://trgt.org/events) or **423.266.0314**.

**Looking for trail maps?  
[trgt.org/explore](http://trgt.org/explore)**

# Honorary & Memorial Gifts

A gift to the Trust is the perfect way to honor a friend, the birth of a child, a marriage or to remember someone who has passed on. Acknowledgements are sent to the recipient(s) of the gift as well as the donor. All gifts support future land protection, education and stewardship efforts of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust.

## IN MEMORY OF:

**Dr. J. Don Brock**

*Michael & Stormy McGauley*

**Helen Brody**

*Michael & Stormy McGauley*

**Esther Brown**

*Michael & Stormy McGauley*

**Wayne Brown**

*Jim & Nancy Ford*

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*Michael & Stormy McGauley*

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## IN HONOR OF:

**Joe & Rachel Decosimo**

*Michael & Stormy McGauley*

**Mike & Stormy McGauley**

*Mr. & Mrs. Gary Rudning*

**Donna Spiegel**

*Ms. Harriette LaVarre Spiegel*



*This shape-shifting dog charcoal drawing dated at approximately 700 years old is located in an unnamed cave in the Tennessee River Gorge. A cave salamander can be seen admiring the ancient artwork.*



Check out the Tennessee River Gorge Trust's new Bird Observatory logo! Designed by our Cerulean Warbler Researcher Holland Youngman, the logo features a Scarlet Tanager, a common nester in the Tennessee River Gorge.



With this logo, the Trust formally announces our new bird research facility as the "Tennessee River Gorge Trust Bird Observatory." This designation reflects our commitment to continuing bird-banding operations at the lab for the next



We expect to have our bird-banding overnight experiences available by Spring 2016.



10+ years. The Trust places a high priority on participating in scientific conversations beyond our community. Once collected, our bird-banding data is submitted to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory where the data is made public to banders all around the globe. We not only want to understand how to better manage our own forests, but we also want to facilitate others in better managing their lands in order to improve habitat for bird species worldwide.

Next to the Bird Observatory itself, the Trust's stewardship interns have been hard at work this summer completing two primitive cabins and two camping pads. These cabins/pads will serve as housing for educational groups during field trips as well as for eco-tourists who wish to donate to the Bird Observatory in exchange for the opportunity to experience bird-banding firsthand in an overnight weekend adventure.



Birds banded at the Bird Observatory this year: 1- Connecticut Warbler, 2- Indigo Bunting, 3- Kentucky Warbler, 4- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
The whiteboard at the banding lab shows a list of 42 species banded between April and June of this year.



One of two primitive cabins near the Bird Observatory, that will serve as housing for educational field trips and eco-tourists.



All photos on this page by John Diener.

# Chattanooga is built on relationships

"We can't give you any money," Dustin lamented. "But we want to help."

While some would be discouraged at such an admission, we at the Trust welcome this kind of communication. It sparks our most creative collaborations.

The guy mentioned above is Dustin Choate, owner of Tremont Tavern and co-owner of the brand new FEED Co. Table

& Tavern restaurant that just opened on the Southside. Sarah Quattrochi, the Trust's Outreach & Development Director, connected with Dustin while having a burger one day at Tremont Tavern,

right around the corner from the Trust's office. Soon after, Dustin ended up at our office with his FEED Co. co-owner Miguel Morales.

"Well, how would you like to help?" Sarah asked of the pair.

In the hour that followed, Sarah, Dustin, Miguel, and Hannah schemed to find ways to accomplish the ideal we're all trying for: a vibrant and engaged Chattanooga.

"We're aiming at the same audience here," Miguel noted. In particular, we've found that supporters of the Trust often overlap with patrons of these local restaurants due to their concern for the health of Chattanooga, both in its natural spaces and in its local economy. Chattanooga who go out of their way to support local business oftentimes also support the local organizations that make our home so great.

This overlap is where

partnership flourishes: At the Trust, we're most concerned with creating reciprocal relationships with our partners where both sides see a benefit. Our conversation with Dustin and Miguel led, first, to their Cucumber Warbler cocktail being served at the Trust's Another Gorgeous Evening in May and, then, to the FEED Co. Table & Tavern Preview Party benefitting the Trust on August 3rd. With both events, the cross-promotion brought out Chattanooga who otherwise may not have supported the Trust or the FEED Co. for a fun night in Chattanooga in the name of conservation.

The Trust also has a mutually rewarding relationship with Rock/Creek. This spring the Trust received \$2500 from Rock/Creek's River Gorge Trail Race. We expect to receive another similarly-sized donation from Rock/Creek's famed StumpJump 50K race this October. With these funds, the Tennessee River Gorge Trust will team up with the Southeastern Conservation Corps to finish the Ritchie Hollow trail located

on the north side of the Tennessee River. This section of trail will run from the gravel parking lot at Pot Point Cabin up to the Prentice Cooper trail system. Rock/Creek will be able to use this trail in the future to promote further Gorge access.

The synergy of these partnerships has sparked an unanticipated energy for conservation and outdoor exploring in Chattanooga.

Participants and organizers alike have been rejuvenated by the outpouring of care for the wellbeing of Chattanooga. This energy and investment is one of the reasons we landed *Outside* magazine's title of "Best Town Ever."

Rick Huffines, Trust Executive Director, reflects, "Chattanooga is a place where all kinds of people come together when we need to. We're good at working in tandem

on a lot of things, like protecting the open space that surrounds our city. Are we perfect at all things? No, but we are imperfect together, which is what makes Chattanooga a great place."

We may not have it all right, but the Trust is proud to be working with you. Thank you for supporting us. Help us know you or your business so that we can partner to make Chattanooga a better place for everyone to live.

*The FEED Co. Table & Tavern held a Preview Party on August 3 to benefit the Trust.*



Chattanoogans who go out of their way to support local business oftentimes also support the local organizations that make our home so great. This overlap is where partnership flourishes.



# BECOME A MEMBER OF THE CIRCLE OF CONSERVATORS

The Tennessee River Gorge Trust receives no outside funding from the government and relies on the support of members. One way you can help ensure that our work continues is to name the Trust as a beneficiary in your will. To learn more, or to notify the us that you have named the Trust in your estate, call 423.266.0314.

*Our thanks to these individuals for supporting the lasting legacy of the Trust.*

MS. JEAN BIDDLE (deceased)  
 MR. ROBERT D. BROWN (deceased)  
 MS. ELISABETH BRYAN (deceased)  
 DR. AND MRS. CHARLES EVANS  
 MS. BETTY HALL (deceased)  
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 MR. RALPH SHUMACKER (deceased)  
 JAMES AND MARILEE STITES (deceased)  
 — and three anonymous donors



*This bobcat was seen near the Bird Observatory and photographed by Trust Bird Bander John Diener.*



*Quran Whately served as a Stewardship Intern this summer at the Trust. He started college at Chattanooga State Community College this August. Good luck with your next step, Quran!*



## Thank you for helping to preserve the Gorge.

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All gifts to the Tennessee River Gorge Trust are fully tax-deductible. The Trust does not share information with any other entities.

## *Revenues & Expenditures for the calendar years ending December 31, 2014 and 2013*

<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Contributions *	\$726,079	\$226,953
Rent & Royalties	\$118,115	\$127,326
Gains on Investments	\$141,129	\$489,635
Special Events	\$48,905	\$79,249
In-Kind and other	\$45	\$73,365
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,034,273</b>	<b>\$996,528</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Land Preservation **	\$127,139	\$500,491
Land Stewardship	\$298,121	\$249,455
Outreach & Education	\$101,997	\$94,132
Administrative	\$61,389	\$67,896
Fundraising	\$31,408	\$8,254
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$620,054</b>	<b>\$920,228</b>

## *Summary Combined Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2014 and 2013*

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Cash and investments	\$3,441,615	\$3,369,684
Receivables	\$33,210	\$50,194
Property & Equipment	\$8,421,761	\$7,989,801
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$11,896,586</b>	<b>\$11,409,679</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Liabilities	\$145,071	\$72,383
Net Assets	\$11,751,515	\$11,337,296
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$11,896,586</b>	<b>\$11,409,679</b>

\* Castle Rock in Jasper, Tennessee was donated to the Tennessee River Gorge Trust in 2014. This donation accounts for \$350,000 of 2014 contributions.

\*\* \$333,900 of 2013 land preservation expenditures were due to the donation of 55 acres of land on Stringer's Ridge to the City of Chattanooga. The Trust will continue to hold a conservation easement on this property.

Audited financial statements, prepared by Johnson, Murphy and Wright, P.C., are available at [www.trgt.org](http://www.trgt.org) or at the TRGT office by request.



***To mail or not to mail?*** To save money and strengthen the Trust's efforts as a leader in the environmental community, we have reduced the number of newsletters that we mail each year and rely more heavily on electronic communications through e-mail and social media. However, if you prefer to receive updates via mail rather than e-mail, please fill out and send this form to our office at 1214 Dartmouth Street, Chattanooga, TN 37405. You can also e-mail [sarahq@trgt.org](mailto:sarahq@trgt.org) and type "Please send my updates to my mailbox" in the subject line.

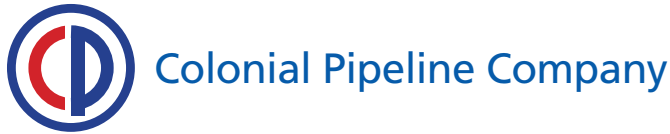
*If you are not yet on our e-mail list, but would like to receive our digital communications, register at [www.trgt.org](http://www.trgt.org). Enter your e-mail address in the box that reads "Sign up for e-updates."*

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# Another Gorgeous Evening

Once again, friends of the Trust gathered at Tennessee River Place for a GORGEOUS evening on the bank of the Tennessee River.

**2015 net profit = \$46,801.80!**



*The Dismembered Tennesseans had everyone tapping their toes!*



*Guests enjoyed watching artists painting "en plein air."*



*Watching the river roll by.*

Mark your calendar for  
next year: May 12, 2016



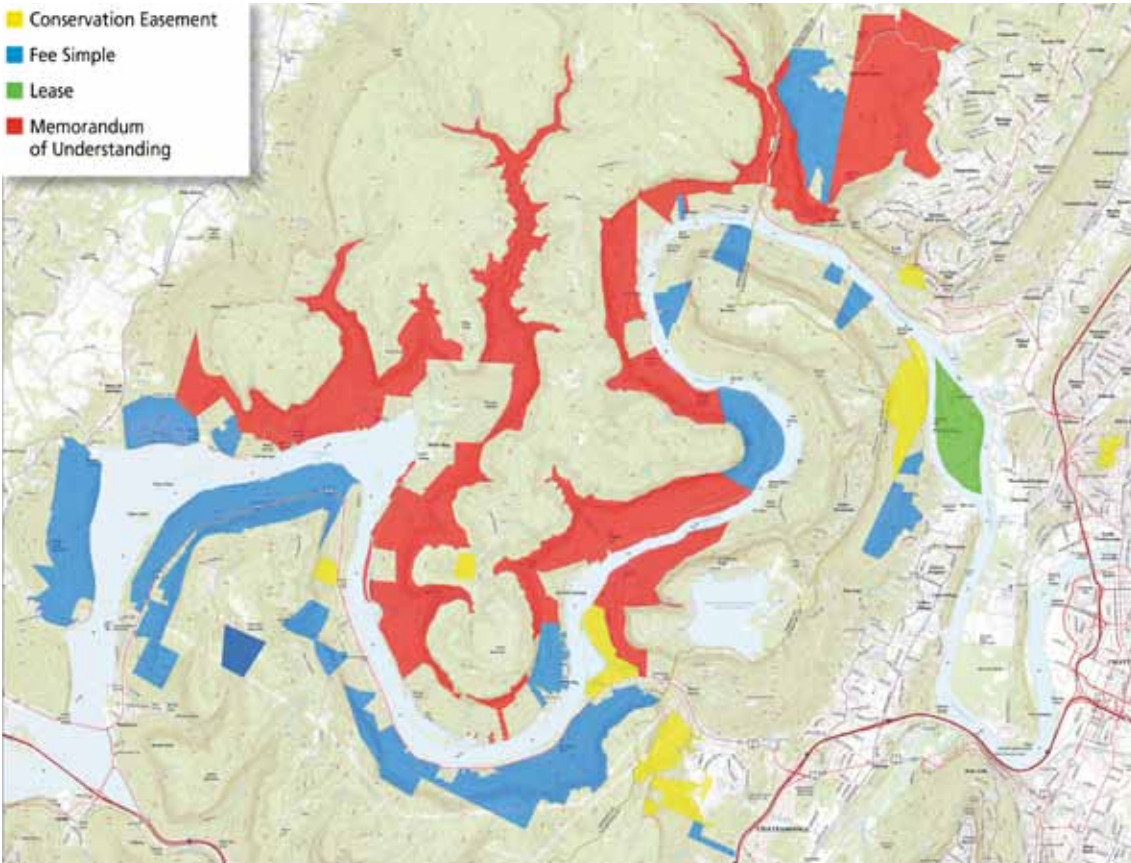
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# This is worth saving! *Protected lands of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust*



- **CONSERVATION EASEMENT**  
 A legal agreement between the land owner and the Trust, restricting future activities to protect conservation values
- **FEE SIMPLE**  
 Full ownership
- **LEASE**  
 A contract to convey real estate, equipment or facilities for a specified term and specified rent
- **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
 An agreement to cooperate toward certain goals, less binding than more formal agreements