

Canyon Watcher

Preserving the Gorge. Forever.

Recently I came across an old Bengali proverb that reads, “The sparrow is sorry for the peacock at the burden of its tail.” A funny thing about burdens: some of them are a blessing. It all comes down to how we look at our “burdens.” The peacock may not be able to fly high in the sky or sing a beautiful song like the sparrow; but, conversely, the peacock may be sorry for the sparrow at the burden of her unimpressive cover.

One of our original founders, Adele Hampton, understood this connection well. She recognized that preserving the view alone wasn't fulfilling our duty as conservationists. Adele was quoted to say, “The stewardship of the properties we acquire is our greatest responsibility to future generations.” Adele lived this belief by investing not only her energy, but also her monetary gifts into the fund that became the Trust's Stewardship Fund. This fund ensures that our lands will continue to be cared for into the future.

The stewardship of the properties we acquire is our greatest responsibility to future generations. – Adele Hampton, TRGT founder

Currently, we are focusing our land stewardship efforts on marking and patrolling our property boundaries.

In addition, we are working to expand our engagement with the community. We aim to cultivate a varied citizenry across generational and socioeconomic lines that is enthusiastic about the conservation needs of the Gorge. This spring, we will be launching a research survey of Neotropical migratory birds in the Gorge. We plan to hold citizen science events associated with this research to spark excitement within the community. Furthermore, we will continue to seek grants to fund a study on the vulnerabilities of our natural communities to climate change.

As I move into my second year as Executive Director, I want to thank my predecessors for their hard work of the past 33 years. At the Trust, we see our work of land acquisition, land stewardship, educational programming, and community engagement as a joy. We work every day to be holistic conservationists that protect the beauty of the Gorge and the complexity that drives it. We are blessed to do the “burdensome” work of preserving the Tennessee River Gorge. Forever.



Rick Huffines



There is beauty in the Gorge at all seasons. Photos courtesy of Kevin Livingood.

Sure, but what does a Bengali proverb have to do with conservation? I believe we have two wonderful burdens to bear in our guardianship of natural resources. One is to beauty and the

other to complexity. Our problem comes when we try to boil conservation down to a single purpose. What good is it to protect the artful views and beautiful vistas without understanding the incredible system that thrives beneath the canopy? What good is it to understand how the syrinx of the bird differs from the larynx of the human but to forget to listen to the beautiful songs they both can sing?

In deeming one – the art or the science – as the most important reason for conservation, we lose traction because neither is significant without the other. It is the amalgam, the mixing of the two, that makes our preservation efforts work. When we realize that, conservation becomes the most wonderful burden on earth. We have a responsibility to protect the art, but also an equally important responsibility to understand and protect the complexities of that art.



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.

Welcome to Hannah Shadrick, Office Manager!

This our first newsletter since Hannah Shadrick joined us as Office Manager, so we wanted to give her the opportunity to introduce herself.

Hello everyone! I'll start by thanking Sarah and Rick for the opportunity they extended to me back in May. They took a risk on an untried, recent liberal arts graduate with big ideas and little experience. Since then, my time at the Tennessee River Gorge Trust has been unbelievably rewarding. If I had dreamed Rick and Sarah from the ground up, I still couldn't have crafted two people who are more understanding, compassionate, knowledgeable, or encouraging. I love my job in large part because of my relationships with these people.



A bit on my background: I grew up in nearby Sequatchie Valley and graduated from Girls Preparatory School in 2008. After high school, I moved north to attend Smith College where I had received the Dora Windes Zollman scholarship. While there, I took advantage of the open curriculum and studied everything from astronomy to North Indian vocal music. After trying out many different subjects, I dove into the two areas that held my attention: philosophy and poetry. During my four years at Smith, I acted as a research assistant on projects varying from St. Augustine's notion of will to the relevance of Buddhist tenets in today's modern world. In the poetry vein, I served as Smith College's Poetry Center intern for two years and ended my senior year by completing a poetry chapbook manuscript entitled, "Telling the Body's Story."

My day-to-day in Chattanooga now consists of engaging with this incredible city. I trek around my neighborhood on M.L. King Boulevard. I meet my neighbors. I commute to work by bike. I volunteer at Crabtree Farms. I play volleyball in the YMCA Adult league. I take banjo lessons at the Folk School of Chattanooga. I'm learning about urban gardening in Fair Share's Urban Cultivators class.

Everyday this city becomes more and more my home. My work as the Trust's Office Manager complements and deepens my love for this city by showing me daily its incomparable beauty. Thank you for supporting me in doing the work to keep this place healthy and vibrant.

We thank Hannah for all she is doing to help fulfill the Trust's mission. Since arriving, Hannah has helped complete and maintain our new website and blog. Please take a minute to check us out at www.trgt.org.

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A New Home for TRGT



AFTER 10 YEARS ON CHESTNUT STREET, the Trust has moved to a new home in North Chattanooga! “Why move?” you might ask. “Why go to the trouble?” Our answer is that we are a community organization with a mission to serve. We need to be visible to the community and to be a part of Chattanooga’s day-to-day life.



Our new “home” on Dartmouth Street is quite visible in the heart of a vibrant North Chattanooga neighborhood.

Our new home at 1214 Dartmouth Street is located in the heart of North Chattanooga, just off Hixson Pike, and close to some of city’s most popular restaurants: Las Margarita’s, Tremont Tavern, and the new Farmer’s Daughter Restaurant and Copacetic Coffee. Since our move to this new location, we’ve had many people stop in to see us, welcome us, and offer to volunteer or to become a member of the organization. Some people come in just to ask who we are and what we do. And we absolutely LOVE this!

We hope that you will stop by to see us during one of our new Lunch n’ Learn sessions! Come see the beautiful photography that adorns our walls, courtesy of **Kevin Livingood**, our amazing new conference table crafted by **Matt Sears** of **Haskel Sears Design**, and meet the wonderful staff and volunteers who make land protection happen in the Tennessee River Gorge. We are so grateful to all those who helped make our move possible and to those who confirm this decision each day through your presence.

Thanks Flying Squirrel!

Max Poppel and Dan Rose, owners of the beautiful, LEED-certified Flying Squirrel Bar invited the Tennessee River Gorge Trust to bring out as many supporters as we could gather for an evening of good eats and drinks. At the end of the night, they donated 10% of their profits to the Trust. We send a big THANK YOU to these awesome business owners and supporters of conservation in our area, as well as to everyone who came out to support a good cause and help raise \$424. Thank you all!



What's GOING ON TRGT?

Join us for 'What's going on, TRGT?'

These Lunch n' Learn gatherings focus on the natural world that surrounds us and how the Trust is working to preserve it.

Thursday, February 20 at noon
Wednesday, March 12 at noon
Tuesday, April 15 at noon
Friday, May 16 at noon

Register online at www.trgt.org/lunch. Free parking can be found behind our office building or along Dartmouth Street.



THURSDAY, JUNE 5 5:30 P.M. TENNESSEE RIVERPLACE

Save the date for a night of great food, drink and music to continue the preservation of the Tennessee River Gorge. Visit www.trgt.org for more information or to reserve tickets.

HONORARY AND 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:

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Like to Ride Bikes? Enjoy working with teens? Then why not do both? The Southeast Youth Corps is recruiting volunteer Ride Mentors for our Trips for Kids mountain bike education and mentorship program in Chattanooga. Ride Mentors positively affect a youth's life through mountain biking, team building, and mentoring. Help make a difference and promote recreation access in Chattanooga. Ride days will be held on Thursdays and Saturdays starting in February. You must be at least 18 to apply. For more information visit www.southeastyc.org/volunteer-information.

Sadly, during 2013, the Tennessee River Gorge Trust lost several loyal friends who served as amazing leaders, wonderful advocates and incredible supporters. In our next several newsletters, we will pay tribute to these dear souls. We will begin with one of our founding members.

ADELE HAMPTON, A QUIET LEADER

NOVEMBER 16, 1924 — JULY 28, 2013

Adele Hampton will always be remembered as a soft spoken, gracious woman who became fiercely determined and highly focused on the preservation of the Tennessee River Gorge. Her family had deep roots in the Chattanooga area with ties to William's Island, Elder Mountain and Lookout Mountain.

Her son, Bill Hampton, remembers how committed she was to the idea of land protection. "Even when she and my father bought their lot on Elder Mountain and then built their home in the 70s, Mom would not cut out big sections of trees, even though it would have opened her view of the river," Bill says. "She built her home overlooking an old grove of mountain laurel and was careful not to harm it during the construction of the house."

In response to a strip mining threat in the 1960s and 1970s, Adele participated in a series of community meetings to consider a natural resources plan for Southeast Tennessee. That larger conversation led to a specific discussion of how to preserve the Tennessee River Gorge. The idea caught fire and it was her living room where the original founding group talked about protecting the pristine woodlands and rocky cliffs that flank the Tennessee River.

"Adele and Lillian Dubke were the keys," says Jim Brown, one of the founding members. "Along with Hale Booth, Joe Guthrie, Paul Harris, Nancy Evans, Dudley Porter, Sam Powell, Ken Dubke and John Fullerton, we eventually pursued a biological inventory of the Gorge."

To fund that important research Adele led the group effort to raise money through partnerships with local foundations. Data was collected on the plants and animals native to the



Adele's smile was the genuine expression of a kind and generous soul.

Gorge including birds, reptiles, trees and flowers, many of whom are now protected species.

"She had a scientific background and understood the value of analyzing the Gorge for its assets, and not just because it looks pretty," Jim says.

"You couldn't say 'no' to Adele," Hale Booth says. "She wore tennis shoes and cotton dresses, was articulate, charming, determined and she didn't care who got the credit."

Hale remembers her as a mentor and key catalyst. She became the first chair of the Tennessee River Gorge Committee. When it was incorporated as an independent 501(c)(3) in 1986 she became the first president of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust. And she provided the foundation for financial sustainability that still exists today.

"She realized early on that protecting land would incur long term costs and made a lead gift," says Jim, former Executive Director of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust. "We established the Hampton Endowment Fund, named in her honor, which exists specifically to pay for land stewardship related costs."

The Trust later created the Adele Hampton Lifetime Achievement Award in 1995 which is given to people who exemplify the spirit of conservation and protection of natural resources.

We continue to acknowledge her significant contributions, her leadership, and her dedication to the Tennessee River Gorge Trust. Her passion has been passed on to the next generation as we work together to preserve the Gorge. Forever.

To mail or not to mail? To save money and strengthen the Trust's efforts as a leader in the environmental community, we will be moving away from a paper newsletter by 2015. However, if you prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, rather than electronically, please fill out and send this form to our office at 1214 Dartmouth St., Chattanooga, TN 37405. You can also e-mail sarahq@trgt.org and type "Please continue to mail my paper newsletter" in the subject line.

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If you are not yet on our e-mail list, but would like to receive our digital communications, register at www.trgt.org. Enter your e-mail address in the green box that reads "Sign up for our Newsletter."





Thank you to TVA! In September, TVA employees came out for the CFC Day of Caring to help us clean up a piece of property in Lookout Valley that is owned by the Trust. This wonderful crew cleaned gutters, trimmed bushes, used weed-eaters, and generally worked like maniacs! We appreciate their hard work and fun spirit.

TRANSFORMATION ON DARTMOUTH STREET!

This "before" photo shows the neglected shrubs that once obscured the front of the house. See page 3 for an "after" photo.



Thank you to Chattanooga Gas who sent an amazing group of volunteers during the United Way Day of Caring to remove the old shrubbery in front of our new office in order to make room for the new plants that were brought in by...

Mountain City Landscaping Thanks to this great company for donating their time and resources to landscape the grounds at our new office on Dartmouth Street. The results are just beautiful!



Chattanooga Gas sent a well-equipped crew to help improve the yard at the new Trust office.

Thank you to our 2013 Gorge Partners

These generous businesses help make the conservation of the Tennessee River Gorge possible. We greatly appreciate them and we hope that you do, too.

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Stringer's Ridge Park Opens, 'Friends of Stringer's Ridge' Starts Strong

The long-awaited Stringer's Ridge Park opened on September 7 with more than 300 enthusiastic citizens on hand to show their support. Mayor Andy Berke and Lyndhurst Foundation President, Bruz Clark, were among the key speakers who thanked The Trust for Public Land, Tennessee River Gorge Trust and Chattanooga Parks and Recreation for working together on this wonderful public-private partnership.



The Friends of Stringer's Ridge (FOSR) launched as a volunteer committee of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust in early 2012 to help staff trail construction efforts. During the last 18 months, several hundred people have volunteered more than 2,000 hours to build and maintain trails, pick up trash and debris and improve the landscape on Stringer's Ridge. We are truly grateful for all their hard work.

The trails are now open, featuring signage and an observation deck overlooking downtown completed by The Trust for Public Land. The Tennessee River Gorge Trust holds the conservation easement on the 92-acre park, which is owned and operated by the City of Chattanooga. We are currently assisting the Friends of Stringer's Ridge as they become an independent nonprofit group.

In November more than fifty volunteers gathered at Outdoor Chattanooga for a re-launch meeting. Volunteer leaders were identified to assist in forming special interest groups that will include:

- Trail Maintenance and Operations
- Invasive and Native Plants
- Promotions and Technology
- Programs
- Fundraising, Community Partnerships
- Legal and Financial
- Volunteers and Communications

Since that meeting, these groups have hit the ground running. The FOSR's first fundraiser welcomed more than 300 guests and raised more than \$3,000 that will be used to purchase trail maintenance tools and equipment. Special thanks to the Gear Closet for providing a venue, and to sponsors: Bike Tours Direct, Tremont Tavern, and Double Cola. Thanks as well to local companies who donated loot for door prizes!

Stringer's Ridge Park is open from dawn to dusk. The primary trail heads can be found at the end of Spears Avenue in the Hill City neighborhood and behind Nikki's Restaurant off of Cherokee Blvd. Trail maps can be found at www.trgt.org/explore. Please be cautious as vehicle break-ins have occurred at trailheads. Don't leave valuables in your car while hiking or biking.

The Friends of Stringer's Ridge loves volunteers! To learn more, e-mail sarahq@trgt.org, or call 423.266.0314.



Thank you for giving a gift that will keep on giving for generations to come!

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF GIVING:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Member: \$25 – \$99 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor: \$750 – \$1,249 | <input type="checkbox"/> Charter: \$2,500 – \$4,999 |
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To pay my membership/annual gift, I would like to make a

- one time gift of \$ _____
- monthly gift of \$ _____

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All gifts to the TRGT are fully tax-deductible. Monthly gifts are charged on the first business day of each month via debit/credit card.

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Family Day at Pot Point!
Saturday, Feb. 22
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Bring the kids and enjoy a guided hike from 11:00 a.m. to noon, face painting, crafts and snacks.
 Learn more or RSVP at www.trgt.org/events

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

- CONSERVATION EASEMENT: legal agreement between land owner and the Trust, restricting future activities to protect conservation values
- FEE SIMPLE: Full, unconditional ownership, with right to use, sell during owner's lifetime, then pass on to heirs
- LEASE: contract to convey real estate, equipment or facilities for a specified term and specified rent
- MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: agreement to cooperate toward certain goals, less binding than more formal agreements

