

THE BUCK HILL CONSERVATION FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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THE BUCK HILL CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

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MISSION AND VISION OF THE FOUNDATION

Our Mission: To preserve and protect land in and around Buck Hill Falls, to promote the health of the local forest and watershed, and to foster appreciation of the area's natural beauty.

As a nationally accredited IRS 501 (c)(3) non-profit land trust organization based in Buck Hill Falls, PA, we are dedicated to preserving and protecting natural resources and wildlife habitats. We achieve the conservation goals of our mission through acquisition of property or conservation easements, forest management and habitat restoration, and environmental education programs. With a strong commitment to sustainability and community engagement, we play a vital role in preserving the natural beauty and ecological balance of Northeastern Pennsylvania.





Above see board members and staff gathered at our annual fundraiser.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Myron Manternach
President

Ed Post
Vice President

Rob Jeffries
Treasurer

Bob Bohner
Secretary

Christine Brogan

Mike Henry

Ethel Huff

Ale McNeil

Rick Mittereder

Emily Poler

Nadya Shmavonian

Peter Shriver

Jackie Speicher

Peter Temple

Matthew Walinchus

Tom Widing

EMPLOYEES

Joe Lear
Ranger

Hoshaiah Long
Director of Advancement



YEAR OVERVIEW

2023 was a very good year for the Foundation, as we have made great strides to modernize our functionality and standardize our practices to enable the expansion of the organization and our fundraising capabilities.

Our stewardship projects have been successful in improving forest health on many fronts; including Woolly Adelgid pest control to save old growth hemlocks, knotweed eradication to protect creek beds, plus forest restoration, reforestation, and invasive remediation to help improve regeneration of the forest and its wildlife habitat.

The Fundraising and Events committee has worked hard on various fundraising efforts and, of course, our dinner dance and auction. The committee has been successful in identifying grant opportunities and applying for grants that fund a portion of the Foundation's stewardship programs.



Accreditation

In early 2022, we submitted an application for the Foundation to become a nationally accredited land trust by the Land Trust Alliance, the leading representative of land trusts in the US. In February 2023, we were notified by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission that the Foundation had met its criteria to be an accredited land trust.



This accreditation signifies the Commission's confidence that the Foundation's properties and conservation easements will be protected in perpetuity. The accreditation validates our professional administration of the Foundation, and it makes the Foundation eligible to apply for a much larger pool of grants.

Since the accreditation was awarded, we have confirmed that the benefits have greatly exceeded the costs of preparing for accreditation, including the many volunteer hours of the year-long application process. We've capitalized on our accredited status by applying for and winning several grants, including those which support the pending Inn Site swap transaction. We plan to continue leveraging the Foundation's accreditation and pursuing grants to fund a significant portion of the Foundation's stewardship activities, with matching funds from our donors.



New Director of Advancement Hire

In November 2023 we hired Hoshaiyah Long as the Foundation's Director of Advancement. Hoshaiyah was born and raised in Portland, Oregon where she spent most of her time outdoors and immersed in the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. She attended her first year of college at The New School in Manhattan, New York before transferring to the University of Hawaii at Mānoa to study environmental science, oceanography, and environmental policy.

As the Foundation's Director of Advancement, Hoshaiyah is responsible for donor management as well as administrative operation of our website, social media, and all Foundation announcements. Additionally, she is actively involved with the Fundraising and Events Committee and Grants Committee alongside other board members.

She currently lives in Philadelphia and loves all that the city has to offer, but as a camper, kayaker, and enthusiastic environmentalist she is excited about spending quality time in the Poconos.

STEWARDSHIP



Hemlock Conservation

We've found over 40% of the hemlocks along the creek in Jenkins Woods to be in poor shape, and could die within several years, due to invasive Woolly Adelgid insects that suck the life out of the trees. To combat these pests, we began a multi-year project where we've tagged, measured and evaluated 1,075 hemlocks, and have created a database to prioritize treatment and chronicle their health. We've begun treating our largest trees with guidance from the PA Bureau of Forestry. Treating all trees will take 3 yrs. We're also applying for grants to help fund deer fencing to protect saplings.

Knotweed Eradication

Our knotweed project protects habitat quality along the creeks for fish and wildlife. Our project began in 2015, when 20-acres of knotweed were reported along Buck Hill Creek affecting over 4,000 feet of the riparian corridor. We are now at 99% eradication and continue the fight since the root systems can lay dormant for years.



Dynamic Forest Restoration

Our Dynamic Forest Restoration project will improve tree age class diversity and forest health to enhance overall wildlife habitat. 60 acres have been completed on Shaffer's Knob, and we're about to begin working on another 70 acres on top of Chestnut Mountain.





Invasive Remediation

We are working to eradicate invasive plants that are taking over the understory to give new trees a chance to regenerate the forest. Over 150 acres have been remediated on Chestnut Mountain so far. After Chestnut Mountain work is complete, we will move on to Spruce Mountain and the new easement area.

Reforestation

Our reforestation project is giving desirable tree saplings a leg up. We've planted 90 protected saplings in 2023, and will plant over 100 more in 2024, including blight resistant chestnut. We are also creating deer barriers with slash piles and are applying for PA advanced deer control.



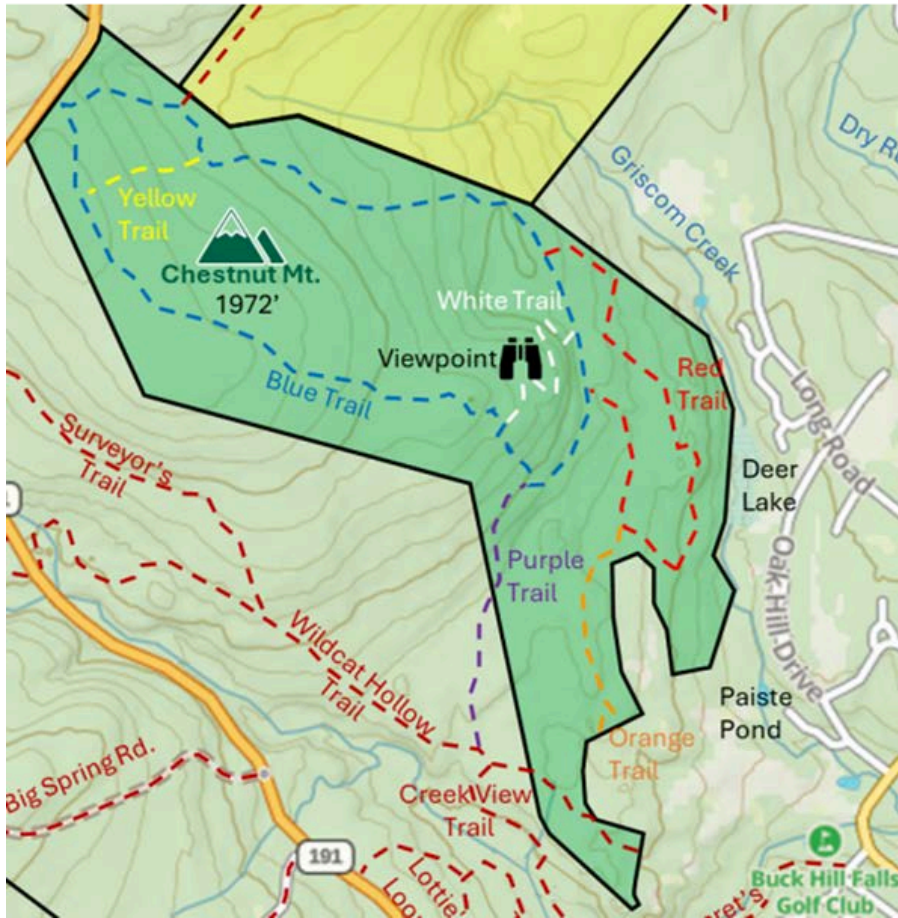
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Trail Gang



In June of 2023, Trail Gang maintained over 10 miles of trails in Jenkins Woods, and on Chestnut and Spruce Mountains. They also scoped out a new trail on Chestnut Mountain that would eventually lead to a new overlook, and they removed many of the invasive Tree of Heaven, which are the favorite food source of the destructive Spotted Lanternfly, along the Spruce Mountain power alley.

Chestnut Mountain



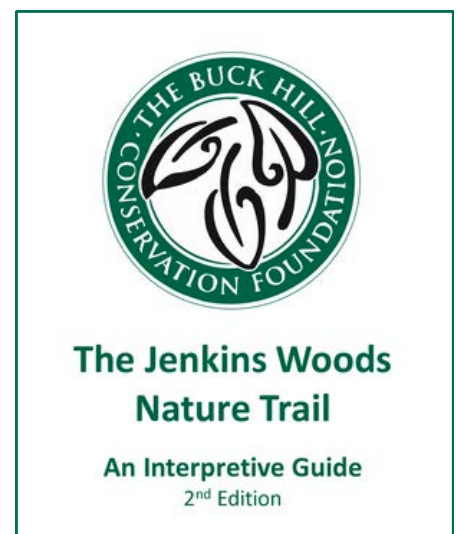
When Chestnut Mountain was acquired by the Foundation in 2012, there was an overlook that provided a narrow window to view the Delaware Water Gap. Over the course of a decade, this overlook naturally grew-in as the forest recovered from previous logging.

Understanding the allure of an overlook to encourage hiking, the Foundation found a new location that simply required taking down dead white ash trees, trimming branches and the grape vines that enveloped them. As a result, we now have a fabulous new overlook with a 180-degree birds-eye view of our surrounding community for all to enjoy.

Nature Trail Guidebook

LEARN MORE ABOUT NATURE:

- The Jenkins Woods Nature Trail guidebook has been updated with new maps, information, and color photos. Copies were distributed to all members.
- New trail markers were installed, with five additional stops along the way.
- The McNeil Trail boardwalk was rebuilt and extended to keep your feet dry, while protecting wildflowers.
- This nature trail is now being used for routine guided hikes.



Annual Meeting of Members



The Annual Members' Meeting held in May 2023 was well attended. Myron, President of our Board of Trustees, presented the treasurer's report and shared our recent improvements. The committee Chairs provided updates on Compensation & Governance, Fundraising & Events and Stewardship & Transactions.

The meeting also featured an interesting presentation by our guest speaker, Dr. Jeff Larkin from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and the American Bird Conservancy. His topic "Dynamic Forest Restoration: planning and implementing landscape scale forest management to meet the full breeding season needs of Appalachian Forest birds" highlighted the importance of the restoration work we have begun on Shaffer's Knob, which is paid for, in part, by a matching grant Jeff obtained from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.



Congratulations to Ed Post who received this year's Jack Dugan Award for his dedication to the Foundation and contributions to the Accreditation Team which obtained national accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance.

Hikes



Chestnut Mountain Hike

Since the clearing of the new Chestnut Mountain overlook in the fall of 2023, the hike up the mountain has been completed many times by participants eager to see the best view that Buck Hill Falls has to offer.



Jenkins Woods Nature Trail Hike

We led several hikes along the Jenkins Woods Nature Trail, which explores remote trails that many have never been before. Using our new guidebook to help appreciate the various components of this natural community, everyone is continually impressed by the natural beauty of Jenkins Woods and the work the Foundation is doing to preserve it.

Community Garden

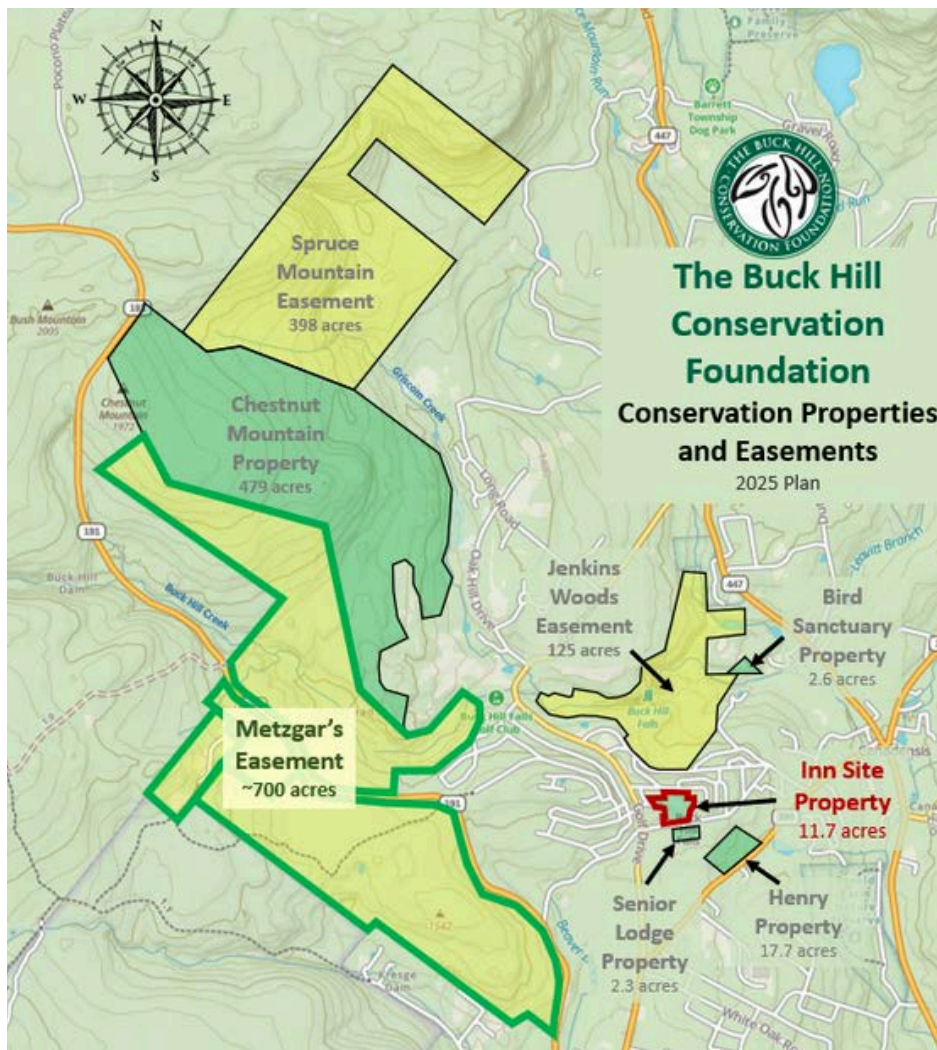
In September 2023 we hosted a garden party for Community Garden members. Attendees brought their own dishes and favorite recipes to share while exploring the garden. Dan and Jean McCoubrey won the award for Best Garden Plot.



TRANSACTIONS

Inn Site Land Swap

The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation is planning to increase the land we preserve and protect by two-thirds, by exchanging our current 11.7-acre Inn Site Property for a nearly 700-acre conservation easement on land owned by the Buck Hill Falls Company, including Metzgar's Farm, Lotties Patch, Maple Swamp and a portion of Wildcat Hollow.



What is a conservation easement?

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement to restrict certain land use rights, such as development, to protect and enhance the richness of biodiversity and natural habitat of the land.

- ✓ The Buck Hill Falls Company continues to own the property and will retain current passive recreational uses.
- ✓ The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation must uphold and defend the terms and conditions of the easement and can perform resource management activities in furtherance of the conservation objectives of the property.

The easement is granted in perpetuity and runs with the land, binding all future owners.

This new Metzgar's Easement will be the Foundation's third easement grant with the Buck Hill Falls Company, following Jenkins Woods in 1998 and Spruce Mountain in 2012.

When complete in 2025, this new easement will create a contiguous ~6,000-acre watershed conservation area by establishing a key link between Chestnut Mountain to the north and the State Game Lands to the south.

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

Grants

The Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generous grants that we have received over the past year from the following organizations. Their support has been instrumental in allowing us to continue our important work.



National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Restoring Dynamic Forest Structure for Priority Birds in the Delaware River Watershed: Phase 5
For the Chestnut Mountain Dynamic Forest Restoration Project



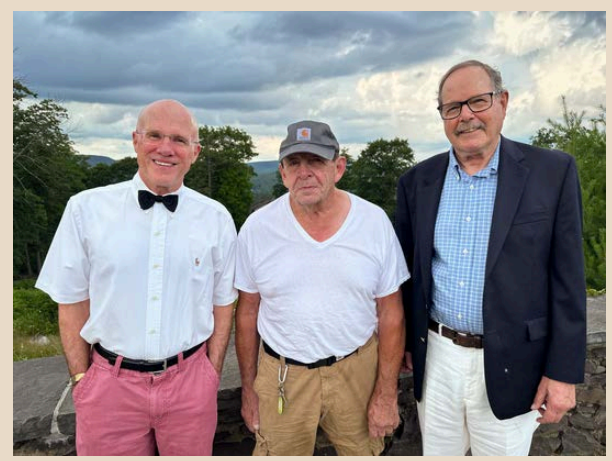
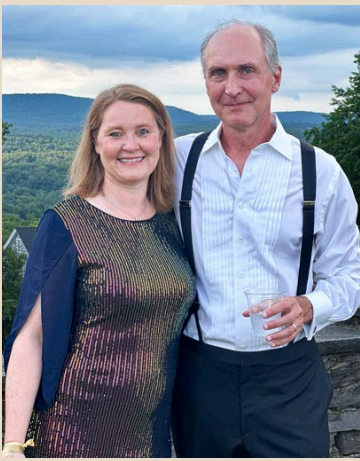
Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC)

Pocono Forests and Waters Conservation Landscape Mini Grant Program
For the Chestnut Mountain Invasive Remediation Project

Annual Fundraiser



A swell time was had by all at The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation's annual dinner dance on July 8, 2023, where the theme was 007 Casino Royale, and many of the attendees looked as if they were feeling lucky! This year's Fundraising & Events Committee went above and beyond to make the James Bond themed night special with casino games, a live band, dinner, drinks, dancing, a 50/50 raffle, a wine vault, and an auction.



Thank you to everyone who came out and participated in the evening. Net proceeds from the evening will be used to advance our mission to preserve and protect the land in and around Buck Hill Falls for your enjoyment and the enjoyment of our community and future generations.

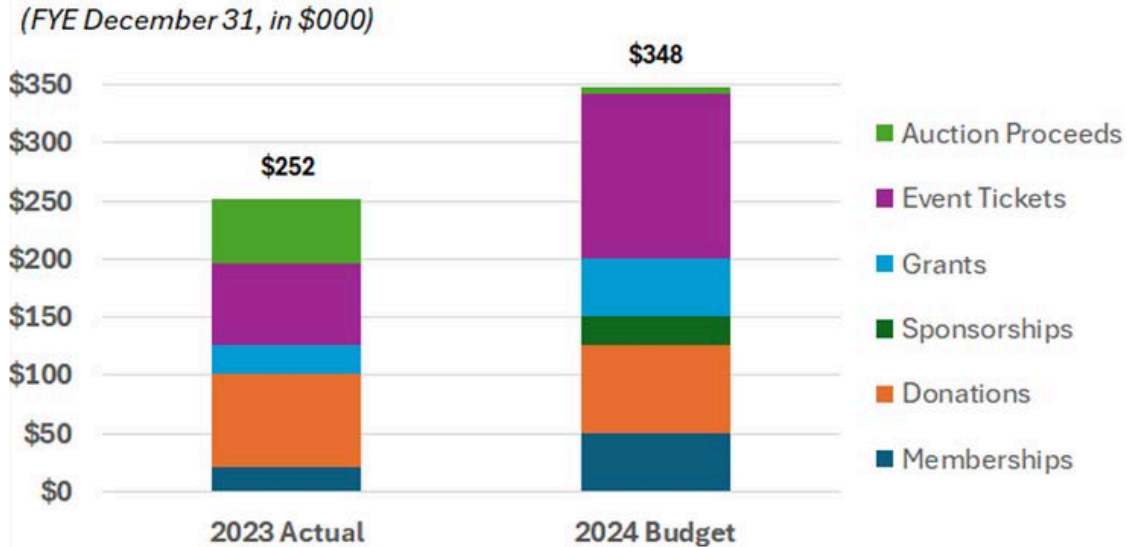
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Net Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023, in \$000	2023 Actual	
Cash and Short Term Investments	461	9.5%
Fixed Net Assets	4,339	89.7%
Other Net Assets	38	0.8%
Total Net Assets	\$ 4,838	100.0%

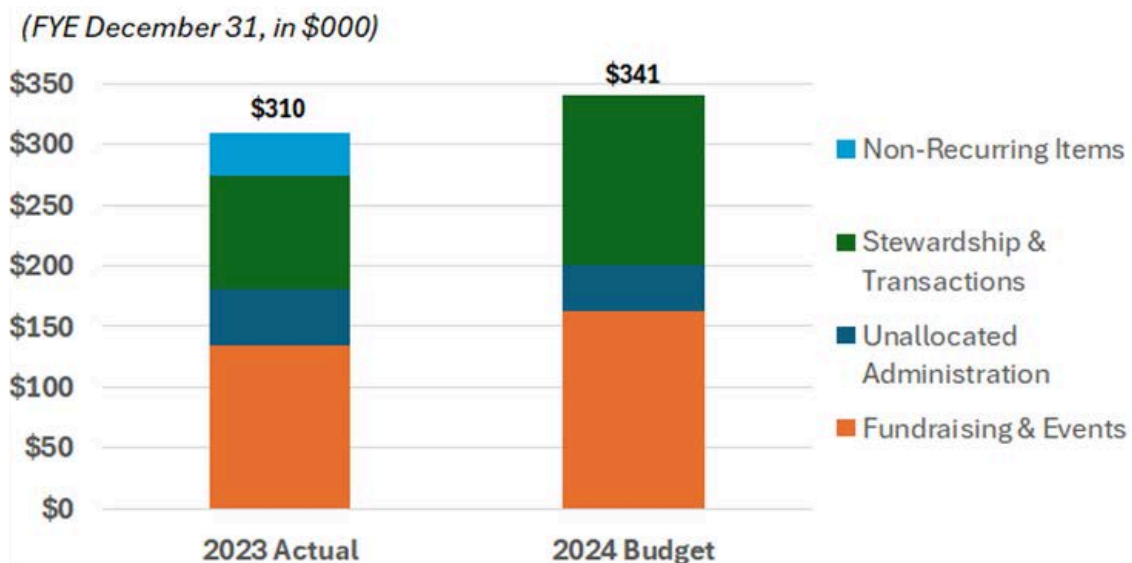
As of December 31, 2023, the Foundation held cash and short-term investments sufficient to cover 1.5 times its budgeted expenses in 2024. The Foundation's short-term investments are held primarily in mutual funds.

Revenues



The Foundation generated total cash revenue of \$252K in 2023. Cash donations (excluding membership purchases) fell 57% from FY2022 and were 50% below the budget for 2023. In December 2023, the Board of Trustees approved an annual budget that estimates total revenue of \$348K in 2024. The 2024 budget implies a 38% increase in total revenue, driven primarily by our work to increase event ticket sales, grant awards, sponsorships and memberships.

Expenditures



In 2023, the Foundation incurred total cash expenditures of \$310K, including \$36K of non-recurring expenditures. Total cash expenditures fell 13% from FY2022 and were 14% below the 2023 budget. The 2024 budget provided for \$341K of total expenditures, including certain items that were contingent on achieving budgeted revenue increases. The 2024 budget did not provide for expenditures related to the Inn Site Land Swap because an agreement for the transaction was not yet signed.

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank You to Our Donors!

The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation acknowledges the significant tax-deductible contributions by our donors from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

Benefactor (\$5,000+)

Alison Gerstell and David Smith
Anonymous
Anthony and Susan Mainwaring Roberts
Charles and Susan Rusbasan
Chester County Community Foundation
Chris and Jeannine Robbins
David and Marina Ottaway
Gerald and Regina Griffin
Jennifer McNeil
Kaitlyn Ward

Patron (\$2,500+)

Bruce and Betsy Finley
Gary and Helenanne Lasher
Jock and Kay Miller
John A. Robbins and Christopher Gaillard
John and Claire Rodgers
Michael and Karen Gregorich
Mike and Kelly List Henry
Skyland Farms
Tom and Sarah McCabe

Sustainer (\$1,000+)

Chuck Hood and Marianne Zychal
Corey and Jonne Smith
Dan and Jean McCoubrey
Ed and Margaret Post
Geoff and Beth Goldwater
Geoffrey Whelan and Lisa Neary
Marc and Angie Banziger
Peter and Susan Temple
Richard and Denise Boyle

Richard and Larisa Leist
Robert and Leslie Bohner
Trip and Eileen Ruvane
Tyler and Alejandra McNeil

Supporter (\$500+)

Adam Schwarz
Anonymous
Anthony Kyriakakis and Aleni Pappas
Barbara Herkner
Blake Callaway, Aaron Krach and Helen Walters
Brad and Sarah Sablosky
Brock and Amy Peabody
Buck Hill Falls Corporation
Charles and Kathryn Shenk
Dr. Rick Mittereder and Virginia Clark
Elizabeth Strode
Jake and Ali Marshall
Jennifer and Dave Mittereder
John Dixon Hunt and Emily Cooperman
Ken Schurman
Lucy Stone
Myron Manternach and Tabitha Oman
Richard and Susan Huffman
Robin and Audra Ottaway
Rosemarie L. Helmbrecht
Teale Dvornik
Thomas and Paige LeGrand
Tim and Susie O'Mara
Tom and Robin Widing
Tyler and Katie Miller

Family Membership (\$250+)

Adam and Kyeong-ah Leven
Amy and Jerry Fritz
Andrew and Francesca Dickson
Barbara Lott
Barry and Ann Ridings
Bill and Linda Potter
Christine Brogan and Tim Paulson
Clifford and Elizabeth Press
Colin Gardner and Erika Faust
Dana Strode-Tritle
Daryl and Jackie Speicher
David and Virginia Toomey
Douglas McWilliams and Melinda Braithwaite
Drew and Addie Snyder
Ed Paul and Cathryn Hathaway
Frank and Ginny May
Frank and Molly Viall
George and Marsha Kivowitz
Henry and Karen Keating
John Bugos and Karen McConomy
Kathy Legg and David Seifman
Kelly Davis and Jeffery Hayes
Leonard Ciriello and Kimberly Bishop
Lynn Hahn
Matt and Carolyn Carroccio
Michael and Amanda Wilson
Nadya Shmavonian and Robert Woodward
Nancy Smith Hayden
Raoul Bhavnani and Savitha Reddy
Robert and Colleen Jeffries
Robert and Lois Walinchus

Donors continued...

Saeed and Mitra Savar
Steve and Becky Vosburgh
Stewart and Cindy Gerson
Tom and Ethel Huff

Individual Membership (\$100+)

Andrew and Julie Sniffin
Bill and Nancy Hopkins
Bill and Sally Dordelman
Chris Goodchild
Craig M. Harrison
Erica Pettis and Jerome Wallace
Harold Rubin and Karen Walden
Jeff and Kim Kenny
Joan and Michael Taylor
John and Susan Frehse

John Folsom
Karen Chase
Leila Gordon
Linda Rooney
Mark Neirick and Jennifer Babsin
Mary Lowengard
Matt and Katie Glowski
Michael and Carol Klatt
Patricia Berckman
Paul and Elizabeth Mandry
Paul and Lois Grunder
Peter Blume
Peter Heffernan and
Maureen Walsh
Scott and Connie Houseknecht
Seamus and Lauren Robins

Tom and Elisabeth Parker

Up to \$99+

Andre Roob
Cecille Gulgowski
Evie Ankunding
Herman Bauch
James and Amanda Rice
Jodi Dare
John and June Leatherbee
Kathleen Rice Regan
Mary Omara
Robert O'Donnell and Erin Pick
Sabrina Clark
Simon Harvey
Susan Worth and Ed Reilly
Ted Lawson and Liz Moldenhauser

Donations In Memory

We want to honor and thank everyone who donated in memory of their loved ones during 2023. We received donations in memory of Charlie Lott, Charlie Dickson, and Joseph W. Strode. Below is the list of families who dedicated their donations.

Karen Chase
Tom and Ethel Huff
Richard and Susan Huffman

John and June F Leatherbee
Jock and Kay Miller
Mary Omara

Chris and Jeannine Robbins
Anthony and Susan Mainwaring Roberts
Dana Strode-Tritle

Donations In Honor

We are grateful to the Foxhove Association for their donation in honor of Bonnie Brennan, a former trustee and member of the Foundation.

Please note the list of donors above (the “donor list”) reflects the total cash and in-kind donations (collectively, “charitable donations”) received by the Foundation from each individual/family during calendar 2023. The Foundation’s calculation of charitable donations includes only proceeds for which no value was received by the donor and excludes proceeds from other purchases such as event tickets, raffle tickets, wine vault keys, and community garden plot licenses. Please contact the Foundation at info@tbhcf.org if you believe your placement (or absence) on the donor lists is in error. Donor lists and tax statements prepared by the Foundation do not constitute tax advice. The Foundation recommends that each donor seek professional advice on the tax treatment of its transactions with the Foundation.