

RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Rattlesnake Gutter Trust Annual Report 2009

This past year, 2009, has been a particularly active one for the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust. We acquired two pieces of property, worked together as a full fifteen member board, and made major strides toward the launch of a new website.

In the spring, Elise Kroeber donated 24.5 acres of meadow and forest to RGT. This piece is on the south face of Cave Hill Rd. and is now called Ellamoose Repose at the request of the donor. This generous gift helps maintain open space on Cave Hill and provides the public with a lovely place to hike.

Last fall RGT purchased 57 acres of forest on Diamond Match Ridge from Dorothy Bennett. This has been named Dan Glazier Forest, also at the suggestion of the prior owner. With its stunning views of Brushy Mountain and dramatic cliffs, this forest is a great place for hiking if you like hilly terrain.

We are indebted to Ken Kahn for all of his work on the legal issues pertaining to the land acquisitions.

We welcomed two new members, Julie Collier and Bob Dolan, and one returning member, Mary Alice Wilson, to the board at our Annual Meeting in June. Their varied talents are a boon to the organization. The Annual Meeting was hosted by Jean Bergstrom and followed by a hike on the newly acquired Ellamoose Repose. The rain was not able to dampen our spirits!

We are very excited about the work on our new website (thanks to the talents of Bob Dolan, Lou Bannister, and Eva Gibavic). Besides providing information on RGT, eventually the site will have details about RGT and public-owned land, including trails, access information, driving directions, and photos. Keep checking rattlesnakeguttertrust.org – we should be going live soon.

Our programs included a kestrel release at East Leverett Meadow led by Julie Collier, and a hike on Brushy Mountain led by Brooke Thomas for the 5th grade with the kindergarten joining until the trail got steep. Our table at the Harvest Festival was the focus of much attention as Julie Collier introduced folks to Connecticut (an American kestrel falcon), Sagem (a screech owl), and Sagamore (a barred owl). Julie was also responsible for The Francis King Program at the Leverett Elementary School where she delighted the students with her North American Birds of Prey Program.

Over 20 years ago Gordon King had this idea that donations of 5¢ refundable cans and bottles could net the trust a little cash. There were a few chuckles around the room when Gordon made this suggestion, but no one's laughing now – thanks to the initiative of Gordon and Dave Field, the small army of volunteers who have sorted and hauled the empties to redemption locations, and to all the folks who donated their cans and bottles to RGT, we have now raised more than \$50,000 - over a million cans and bottles (laid end-to-end, 23 times the height of Mt. Everest)!

Our 2009 membership drive brought in over \$6000 in our annual fund drive – we thank all of you for your continued support of the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust.

We were saddened by the death of founding trustee Dave Field in 2009. His warmth and energy made working with him a true pleasure; he will be missed.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Shively, *Secretary*