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Harpeth Conservancy almost doubles proceeds from 20th Annual River Swing fundraising event

River Swing's total grows more than \$300,000 to \$657,000 in 2023

FRANKLIN – Harpeth Conservancy raised \$657,000 at the 20th Annual River Swing fundraising event, almost double what any previous River Swing generated. “The increase was more than \$300,000, and that was astounding. It showed Tennesseans’ dedication to supporting clean water and healthy ecosystems for rivers across the state,” said Grace Stranch, who became the organization’s CEO in April. “These are funds will go towards our work to ensure Tennessee’s globally unique waterways are protected and every Tennessean has clean water,” she said.

River Swing is Harpeth Conservancy’s signature fundraiser that allows supporters to contribute to the vision - clean water and healthy ecosystems for rivers in Tennessee championed by the people who live here. “The event is an important way to celebrate our work with old and new supporters alike,” said Dorie Bolze, founder and president of Harpeth Conservancy. “Seeing River Swing grow over the past 20 years has been incredible. This year, we debuted a new video about why people should pay attention and invest NOW to protect our waters, which you can find on our website.”

Proceeds from table sales, corporate sponsorships, and the silent auction, topped \$657,000, a growth of more than \$300,000 from the previous record-breaking year.

More than 50 companies supported the event as sponsors led by FarmVet and Leslie and Jimmy John Liautaud as Presenting Sponsors. This was the seventh year that Christian Currey (vice chair of Harpeth Conservancy board) chaired and hosted the event at his family farm. “My thanks go to Leslie, Jimmy, many other sponsors, and individuals who are passionate about protecting our waters for helping make this 20th anniversary the biggest year yet,” Christian Currey said. “Our rivers need support and protection NOW.”

The event was a night to remember with a performance by Moon Taxi and special guests Grace Bowers and Nicki Bluhm. To commemorate the 20th year, the

SCIENCE-BASED CONSERVATION FOR THE RIVERS OF TENNESSEE

Harpeth Conservancy is a Tennessee non-profit corporation and a 501(c)(3) organization.

All donations are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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committee went above and beyond in all aspects of the event. This year included bars stocked by Lipman Brothers, one being a Jack Daniel's bar (provided by Brown-Forman) and a specialty bar inside a custom-built 1920's corn crib. Two specialty cocktails - the Blackberry Bourbon Mash with Old Hickory Bourbon and the "Mudbug Juice," a tamarind-based cocktail with Gentleman Jack – commemorated the event. There were also two ice sculptures with one consisting of an ice luge for espressotinis and one with Jack Daniel's Old No. 7. This year also featured an additional tent dedicated to the "Big 20" auction packages. A few standout items included a large metal heron sculpture by Sarah Stork, tickets to the sold-out Widespread Panic show at Red Rocks, and an outdoor experience package at the new resort on the Harpeth River in Kingston Springs, Bells Reserve.

Other event features included hand-rolled cigars from the Red Phone Booth, Instaburst Photo Booth Sponsored by Wealth Strategies Partners, a tailgate area for folks to watch the UT vs. Florida game, custom-made hats from Huck Hats, permanent jewelry from The Spark Collection, jewelry and accessories from South Carolina based Brackish, and sparkling water and Hopwater provided by Maypop Water. Killjoy also staffed a zero-proof bar for those preferring NA options. The ever-popular Wine Pull sponsored by Emily Humphreys and Moon Wine & Spirits was a hit as always. Olivia Olive Oil provided samples of savory and sweet bites throughout the night. Martin's BBQ Joint provided passed appetizers and a buffet dinner. Above & Beyond Cakes created specialty logo designed cookies. Designed by Garden Delights and Hearts of the Harpeth, the table decorations featured rocks from the Harpeth River with grasses and plants from the riverbanks in keeping water and rivers literally at the center of the event. This year, the event also had three large screen LED boards that showed a new mission-based video to educate attendees about the cause and how the funds from the night would be used.

A late-night party at the corn crib featuring The Sweet Lillies was the perfect way to end the unforgettable night. Late-night nosh of slaw dogs and veggie burgers from Hugh Baby's fueled the extended revelers.

As in past years, River Swing was planned to be environmentally friendly. EcoProducts donated renewable and compostable sugarcane plates. Volunteers from Montgomery Bell Academy and throughout the area managed the WM and The Compost Company bins for recycling and composting. The Compost Company removed all the compostable material. Almost 1,000 gallons of glass and an eight-yard container of cardboard, aluminum and plastic were recycled from the event.

Some attendees included: Chair Christian Currey, Brittainy Jones and Karl Sprules, John Ingram, Lauren and Baxter Ingram, Mary and Hank Brockman, Mallory and Tommy Hart, Melinda Welton and John Noel, Wanda and George Tomlin, Jimmy John Liautaud, Monty and John Steele, LeAnne and Chad Bottorff and many more environmentally conscious supporters.

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River Swing would not be possible without the hard-working committee that included: Laura and David Anderson, Lisa Anderson, Marie Avery, Mercedes Baker, Anna Barnes, Christie Bowling, Owen Canavan, Lee Ann and Jeremy Cox, Christian Currey, Carrie DuRard, Samantha Estes, Wray Estes, Kay Ferrell, Kelly and David Frazier, Joe Glaser, Heidi Hartman, Lea Hayes, Callie Hinson, LaTisha Holt, Jeni Housley, Steve Huck, Daniel Jiminez, Brittainy Jones, Annette Kyzer, Amanda and Courtney Laginess, Debbie Layman, Steve Mitchell, Mary Jeanne Moody, Kathy and Eddie Moon, Dee Plunkett, Julie Russell, Autumn Ryan, Sarah Schaedle, Christine Setzer, Kimberly Sharp, Kristen Smith, Tori Staggs, Jennifer Stewart-Wright, Carolene Tacconelli, DeeDee Wade, Elizabeth and Ben Wheeler, Buck Williams and Will Wright. Also, new this year was our Junior Committee Co-chaired by Chris Briggs and Josie Oldham with Jack Davidson, Baxter Ingram, Martha Ingram, Julia McCartney, Steele McDonald, Margaret Rolfe, Clay Whitson, Jr. and Jordan Wood on the Junior Committee.

Some of the sponsors of the event who generated more than \$225,000 included Alliance Bernstein, Brown Forman, Jack Daniel's, FarmVet, Grasslands Environmental, Waltrip Automotive Group, Lipman, AF Foundation, Amazon, Civil Constructors, Conesco Group, Equitable Securities, GBT Realty, Ingram Barge, John Bouchard & Sons, McEwen Realty, Sandra Schatten Foundation, Tensco, Waste Management, Wealth Strategies Partners, Hardaway Construction, Price Printing (formerly Allegra), and Southern Events.

About Harpeth Conservancy

Harpeth Conservancy is a science-based not-for-profit conservation organization. Founded in 1999 as the Harpeth River Watershed Association, Harpeth Conservancy's mission is to restore and protect clean water and healthy ecosystems for rivers in Tennessee by employing scientific expertise and collaborative relationships to develop, promote and support broad community stewardship and action. Harpeth Conservancy works with landowners, businesses, community, local, state, and federal decision-makers and others to foster solutions that reduce pollution and maintain healthy areas.

Supported by a broad network of volunteers, donors, and professional staff, Harpeth Conservancy has expertise in a range of disciplines including water quality science, environmental and conservation law and policy, sustainable land use planning, agricultural best management practices, volunteer and community engagement, and others.

www.harpethconservancy.org.

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