

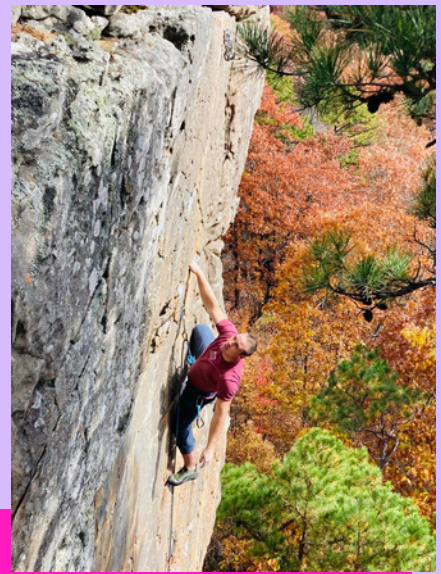
# 2023



**END OF YEAR  
REPORT**



# LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



**Dear ARCC Members and Climbing Community,**

**2023 flew by in a whirlwind of activity and achievement! It feels like just yesterday we were planning for a big year, and what a remarkable year it turned out to be.**

**While you might only see the most visible accomplishments, the Arkansas Climbers Coalition is hard at work behind the scenes every day. From ensuring access to climbing areas to organizing events, managing finances, communicating with members, and addressing a wide range of concerns, the list of our tasks is extensive. Serving on the board often involves a variety of challenges, each requiring careful attention and problem-solving skills.**

**Negotiating with landowners, navigating complex permit processes, and creating a strong community can be extremely time consuming. Yet, each day, our dedicated volunteer board members rise to the challenge, working tirelessly to advance the ARCC's mission. I'm incredibly grateful to share this journey with such passionate, resourceful, and optimistic individuals. Day in and day out, climbers across Arkansas volunteer their time and expertise, contributing to the strength of our community. We are all part of the Arkansas Climbers Coalition, and each individual's effort makes a difference.**

**As we look ahead to 2024, I'm excited about the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead for our community. By working together, we can make the Arkansas climbing community a beacon of growth and inclusivity, a place where everyone can find their place and reach their climbing goals. Let's go beyond expectations in 2024, proving that Arkansas has the best climbing community in the nation!**

**Stay safe and have fun!**

**Dave Thompson - ARCC President**

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# INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

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Internally for the ARCC, we focused on the efficiency of communication, financials, and documentation. Being an all-volunteer nonprofit organization, we pushed ourselves to the edge of what we could physically and mentally organize in 2023.

As usual we kicked the year off with the 2nd annual Arkansas Climbers Festival at Horseshoe Canyon Ranch. The community truly stepped up for this festival, making it a resounding success! Over 200 excited attendees joined 60 passionate hosts and 12 vendors, creating a lively atmosphere of learning and connection.

Participants embraced the opportunity to explore new skills, while hosts generously shared their knowledge and expertise. The air buzzed with shared laughter and conversation, as people from all walks of life connected and formed new friendships.

This wasn't just an event; it was a vibrant celebration of the power of community. Everyone left feeling enriched, with new skills in their pocket and a renewed sense of belonging.

The weather started off a bit wet, but Friday night the skies cleared for the perfect Saturday and Sunday event! The weather was on our side and provided some splitter Arkansas spring weather.

The ARCC Board is always learning to adapt. Each year we face new challenges in the climbing community to overcome and 2023 was no different. After the Festival we set our sites on community engagement and touching base with land managers. These actions, along with the festival lead to a very successful year! [...continued]



**Contact ARCC if you  
want to sponsor a  
spot on our trailer!**

[...continued] To help foster such a successful year we brought on several keep people to help tackle unique challenges. In the beginning of 2023, we had the pleasure of bringing on Sharon Bennett and Brandon Griffin to the Central Arkansas ambassador team. Both of them, along with long time developers Stark Ligon and Reed James, set in motion negotiations with the city of North Little Rock to hopefully open a new local climbing area.

In August, we welcomed new board member and long time Arkansas climber, John David (JD) Borgeson. With his experience as a climber and skills as an engineer, JD has proven to be an invaluable member of the ARCC board.

Along with all the work we do around the state, we are always looking to improve systems, communication, and efficiency on an internal basis. This has allowed us to continue to increase the work we do as volunteers in the community. We will forever be focused on bettering the organization and ourselves for good of the community.

# RELATIONSHIPS

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Relationships among many different organizations are paramount. Without land managers, Local Climber Organizations (LCOs), and corporate sponsors, we could not do what we do.



## 01 — Local Climber Organizations (LCO's)

American Safe Climbing Association, Access Fund, Illinois Climbers Association, Black Hills Climbers Coalition, Southeastern Climbers Coalition, Oklahoma Climbing Alliance, Kansas City Climbing Club



## 02 — Land Managers

Arkansas Forest Service Land - Boston Mountain Ranger District (BMRD), Big Piney Ranger District (BPRD), Arkansas Game and Fish, The Johnson family (owners of HCR 2023), National Park Service, Trail Blazers (owner of Fitzgerald MT)



## 03 — Corporate Sponsors

Ozark Outdoor Supply, Fossil Cove, Climb Source, Pack Rat



## 01 — Local Climber Organizations (LCO's)

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2023 Brought some unique challenges to Arkansas, and we were fortunate enough to have the SCC to lean on to help us navigate the muddy waters, since they had been down such roads. LCOs supporting each other is such an amazing sight to see! Thank you SCC for always being there when we have questions!

And of course as always the ARCC works closely with the Access Fund! A special shout out to our Regional Manager, Brain Tickle! Brian not only manages the central region of the country, he is also the Access Funds Acquisitions Manager. No matter what, Brian is there for the board and the community even if the advice and guidance is hard to give. As I mentioned above, we learn so much every year, and much of what we learn come from the Access Fund, especially from Brain! Thank you Brain for everything you do!

The Access Fund has been closely working with us on the opening of Fitzgerald. Countless planning of trails policy, and not to mention the hard work of the Access Fund Conservation Team. This had a lot of heavy lifting to do and the Access Fund was right there with us in the trenches.



**Trail Day at Cowell  
(Andromeda trail)**



### **Digging New Wag Bag Posts at Hudson**

[...]

It's worth mentioning that the ARCC works with several LCOs nationwide. We are always eager to join the Access Fund Central Time Zone LCO Meetups. During these meetings, we learn a lot from other LCOs regarding their successes and failures. We are always excited to hear how other LCO's are making policies with land owners and keeping Climbing areas safe through many creative and resourceful avenues. Everyone on the call gets really excited for when the community gets to purchase climbing areas!

We are very grateful for their recommendation. In the past, we have been in contact with the Illinois Climbers Association for event advice, Black Hills Climbers Coalition for ideas on a website platform, and the Southeastern Climbers Coalition for information on development standards, administration structuring, and land acquisition. Working with other LCOs has opened the door to many great collaborations and ideas.





## 02 — Land Managers

The Forest Service continues to welcome climbers in all four of their districts across Arkansas, and continues to be receptive to ideas and projects we present.

We continue to work with the Boston Mountain Ranger District (BMRD) to develop a climbing management plan to move forward discussing a rebolt day at Fern. We are hopeful to help the BMRD with the issues of unauthorized trails and bat habitats in their district.

In 2023, we worked with the Big Piney Ranger District (BPRD) on several projects, including approval to make the wag bag pilot a permanent program! This was exciting news and we are now able to dig post, in approved locations, to mount the wag bag boxes. This program will help reduce human waste in the climbing areas most impacted by climbers. Please contact the board to notify us when a wag bag box needs refilled.

We hosted a trail day (Ozark Ramble) in the Cowell region with 32 volunteers! The trail crew cleaned trails from Invasion to Land of the Little People, along with Hudson Mountain trail, Power Wall trail, and helping improve the trail to Andromeda! The rebolt crew replaced 83 bolts, 49 of which were hole-for-hole (59%). 44 of those non-hole-for-hole bolts were specifically moved to create better flow and to make the route better/safer. Only 5 couldn't be replaced hole-for-hole due to technical issues. All bolts replaced used stainless steel ClimbTech wave bolts or SS" x 4.5" Powers 5-piece. It was a massive effort over two days, and we appreciate having a forest service administration that loves climbers!



**Cowell Trail Crew  
December 2023**

# EVENTS

2023 was the year of events, meetups, trail days, and movie nights. Starting the year with the [2nd Arkansas Climbers Festival](#) - If you didn't attend, you missed out! We are very thankful for the community support and want to say a huge "Thank You!" to our class hosts, who offered 24 clinics to learn new skills.

You can sign up for the 2024 Climbers Festival by Clicking [HERE](#)

Carol Fittell	Jacob Frears	Kyle Rowden
Chase Webb	Judith Brown	Jason Groves
David Thompson	Jon Richard	Levi Harrel
Jason Roy	Ty & Krista Cloud	Nick Chavez
Jeremy Collins	Sam Warren	Olivia Vitaterna



**Festival - Kids at the Crag Event**

EVENT DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2nd - Movie Night at Little Rock Climbing Center</li> <li>• March 18th - Rattlesnake Ridge Meet Up</li> </ul>
April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 6th - Movie Night at Little Rock Climbing Center</li> <li>• April 15th - Rattle Snake Ridge meet up</li> <li>• April 21st - ARCC Ambassador Sharon Bennett hosted a clean up stewardship event at Dardanelle Rock.</li> <li>• April 25th - Flyway Brewing Company pint night social</li> </ul>

We look forward to other climbers' meetups 2024!

EVENT DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 23rd - Celebrated opening of new gym in Conway AR - <u>Climb Conway!</u> Ambassador Sharon Bennett served up hot dogs and talked to over 100 folks about climbing in AR and the ARCC's mission.</li> </ul>
Spring/ Summer 2023	<p>The ARCC partnered with the Access Fund to open a new area at Fitzgerald Mtn in Springdale AR. We co-hosted some volunteer trail days to build trails, get some route development done, and encourage stewardship in the community. Major "thank you" to the Access Fund Conservation Team, for helping organize these events, and to all the volunteers who showed up to smash rocks, bolt routes, and play in the dirt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 8th and April 15th - Trail Day with Access Fund team at Fitzgerald South</li> <li>• June 3rd - Development Day</li> </ul>
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July 7th - Rattlesnake Ridge Met Up</li> <li>• July 11th - Flyway Brewing Company pint night social</li> </ul>
August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 11th - Tabled at Little Rock Climbing Center's 20th anniversary party</li> </ul>
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 27th through October 1st - 24HHH - Installation of temporary perma draws, got to raffle off some sweet swag, and talk to loads of folks from all over the country about what the ARCC does.</li> </ul>

EVENT DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION
October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October 7th - Fitzgerald Grand Opening</li> <li>• October 12th - King of the Crag</li> <li>• October 21st - Ozark Climbing Gym - Boston Mountain Pull Down Comp</li> <li>• October 27th - Climb Conway Halloween Party</li> <li>• October 28th - Rattlesnake Ridge Met Up</li> <li>• October 28th - Boulders and Brews Comp</li> </ul>
November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 10th-11th - The Access Fund Advocacy Conference took place in Bentonville.</li> <li>• November 25th - Vertical Horizons - Thanks-gripping Comp</li> </ul>
December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 1st - UREC Outdoors Bouldering Comp</li> <li>• December 2nd-3rd - Ozark Ramble - Annual ARCC Rebolt and Trail day. (See page 9 for full details)</li> </ul>



**Board Members attending the Access Fund Conference**



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**EVENT DATE****EVENT DESCRIPTION****Social Tabling Events**

- April 1st - Boulders and Brews - Climbing Comp
- April 29th - Ozark Climbing Gym - April Pulls Day
- September 10th - Meet up at Boulders and Brews, followed by Fossil Cove social



*Joe Walker Cooking at the Ozark Ramble*



*Chase Webb & Aaron Madey Rebolting at Invasion 2023*

# MEMBERSHIPS

We had a great membership year with 175 paying members! We want to recognize these members for their continued support. Contributions to the ARCC help tremendously to help fund many projects and events. We cannot thank each member enough!

<p>Aaron Madey            Adam Bolyard            Alexander Huesing            Amy Garland            Amy Strohmeier            Andrew Blann            Andrew Merrow            Ben Williams            Benjamin Damgaard            blake hulse            Brant Bishop            Breanna Todd            Brian Luxton            Brian Martin            Brittany Baize            Bruce Cash            Caleb Bryan            Camden Boardman            Carly Short            Carol Fittell            Chase Webb            Chris Cohoon            CHRIS MASON            Colin Matthews            Corbin Carlisle            Dane Coffey            Daniel Christopher            David Thompson</p>	<p>Dennis Nelms            Douglas Sidfrid            Dustin Cruseturner            Eddie Ifill            Eli Stokes            Elisabeth Miller            Eric SPIVEY            Fallon Cardoza            Glenn Ritter            Gray Griggs            Henry Spayde            Ivy Graves            Jack Travis            Jake Blackburn            jake murray            James Lassater            Jane Lacson            Jason Berry            Jason Hricik            Jeremiah Cascairo            Jeremy Myers            Jeremy Myers            john borgeson            John Cagle            John Cagle            John Sutton            Jonathan Fields            Jonathon Malagon</p>	<p>Jordan Fugitt            Jordan Gardner            Joseph Gordon            Joseph Walker            Josh Bentley            Josh Sanderson            Justin Prazak            Justine Baker            Kacey Vaughn            Kathryn Hicks            Kendra Childs            Kristi Batchik            Kyle Rohlman            Logan Green            Lori Rooney            Louie Anderson            Mabel Serrano            Mack Price            Marisela Price            Martin Ferguson            Matthew Beeson            Matthew Petty            Matthew Williams            Megan Smith            Meghan Baker            Michael Brent Lenoir            Michael Goodrich            Michael Haisten            Michael Hendren</p>	<p>Mitchell Allen            Natalie Davenport            Oliver Ihrig            Olivia Vitaterna            Patrick Mason            Patrick Randall            Rachel Piontak            Rachel Young            Ragita Pramudya            Raul Escobar            Rodrigo Alva            Ryan Lynch            Ryan Rauch            Scott Borden            Shane Seaton            Sharon Bennett            Shea McCrary            Spencer Quast            Stewart Matthews            Tanner Harris            Tanner Harris            Thomas Lampe            Tom Avery            Tyler Hamedi            Victoire Becart            Wesley Gordon            William Hargus            Zachary Martzahn</p>
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We joined forces with the Access Fund by joining the Joint Membership Program allowing climbers to join both the Access Fund and the ARCC. if you are interested in supporting both, visit <https://www.accessfund.org/join-or-give/support-access-fund>

**Joint Access Fund/ ARCC members:**

Adam Wood Andrew Deal Celina Suarez Chan Eaton Christopher Miller Connor Brass Dennis Nelms Derrick Harrison	Dirk Davis Elliot Grissom Jeremy Collins Jerry Cagle Jillian Moore Judith Brown Kaylee Willis Mathias Simmons	Matthew Keltner Michael Ayers Michael Wilkinson Nate Miller Ryan Stalder Shawn Gates Zachary Brooks-Miller
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# CORPORATE SPONSORS

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Current list of Sponsors:

- Fossil Cove Brewing Company (Fayetteville Arkansas)
- Ozark Outdoor Supply (Little Rock Arkansas)
- Kastle Graphics (Harrison Arkansas)
- Access Fund



Photo Courtesy of Cole Fennel

We will continue to work with these and other businesses in Arkansas. We are very thankful for our sponsors. Please help us thank them by doing business with these generous brands.

If you are a business or know of a business that would like to sponsor the hard work we do, please reach out to us!



# FINANCIALS

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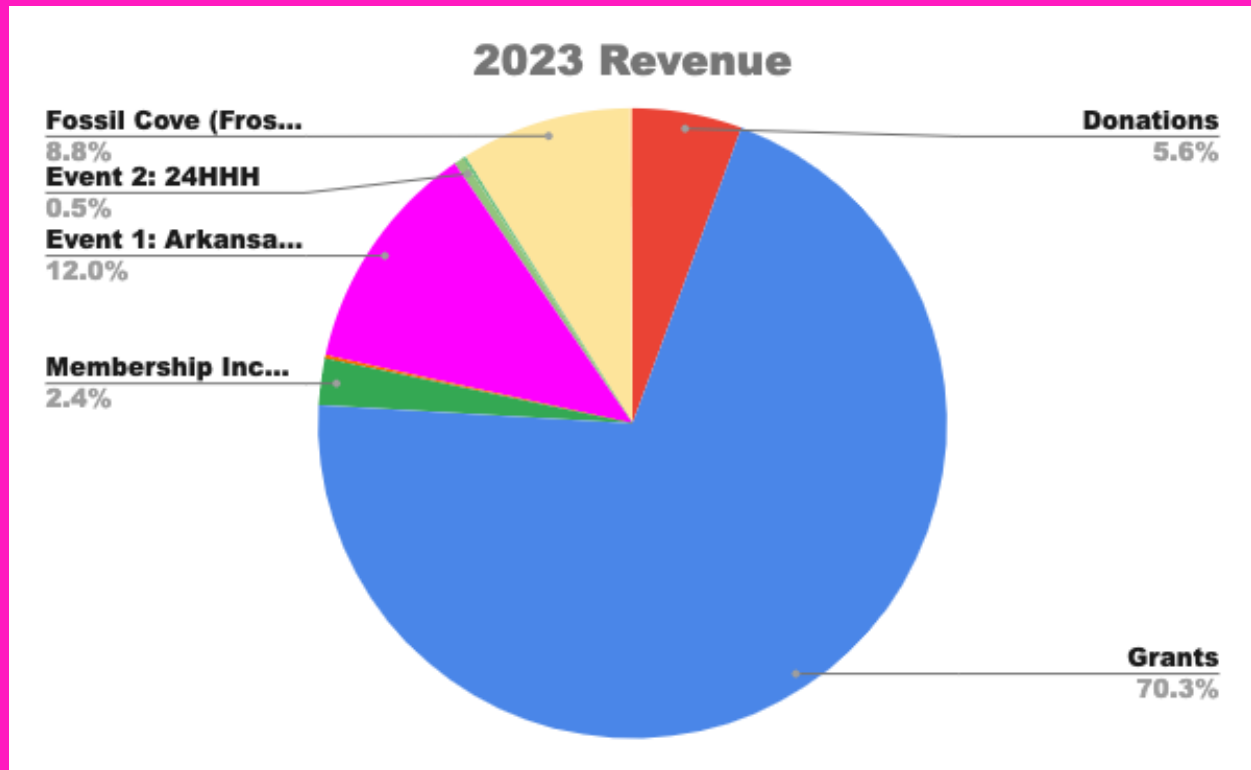
## How Money Was Raised:

The ARCC board was hard at work in 2023, pursuing grant options for funding climbing, outreach, and development projects. This momentum, coupled with the Arkansas Climbers Festival, and events around the state turned 2023 into an incredible year for grants and funding. In addition, ARCC membership was over 150 annual members, with 175 members signing up - Thank You! Membership is a small yet vital component of the ARCC's revenue, and the summation of all these components allowed the ARCC to raise \$133,742.23 in 2023 - no small feat.



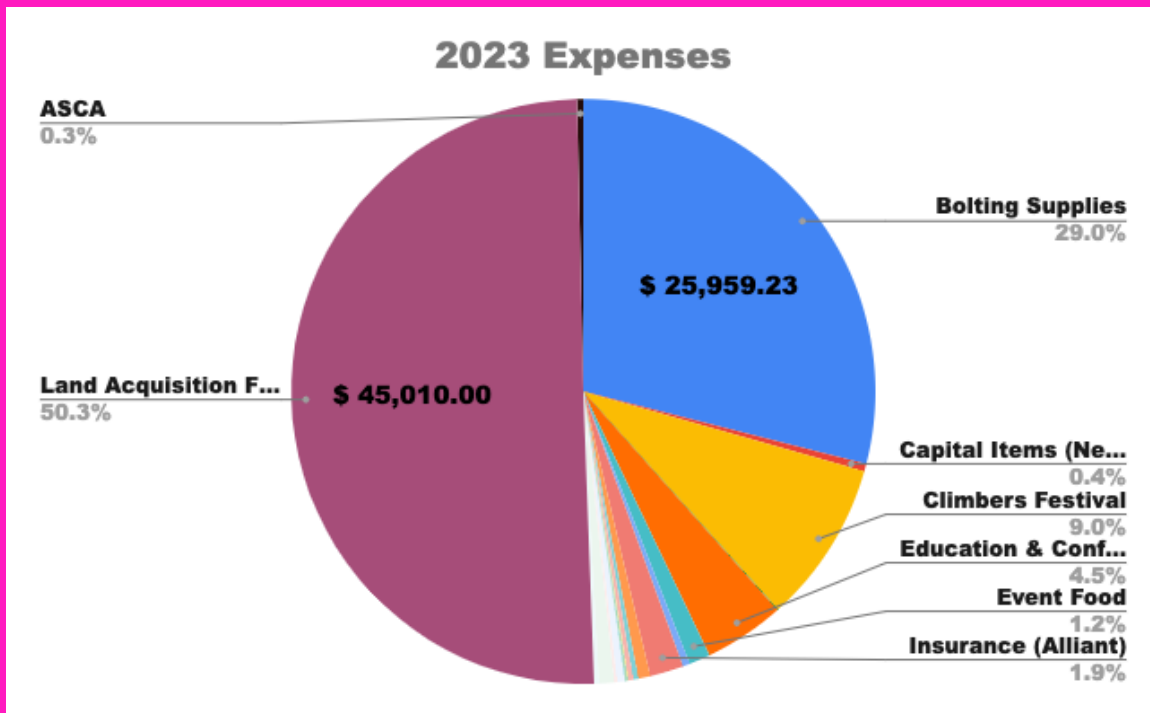
**Photo Courtesy of Jonathan Childs**

# We Raised \$ \$ 133,742.23 in 2023!



<p><b>Memberships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$ 3,187.51 raised from 174 paying members in 2023</li> </ul> <p><b>Events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$15,988.55 Arkansas Climbers Festival</li> <li>• \$ 657.00 24HHH Raffle and donations</li> <li>• \$ 219.43 April Pulls day : Ozark Climbing Gym</li> <li>• \$ 11,740.00 Fossil Cove Frost Fest</li> </ul> <p><b>Grants total - \$94013.05</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$71,343.48 Climb Solutions and Arkansas Parks Foundation Grants</li> </ul>	<p><b>Grants total - \$94013.05</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$71,343.48 Climb Solutions and Arkansas Parks Foundation Grants</li> <li>• \$22,669.57 Access Fund</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$7935.79                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Sustaining Members</li> <li>◦ Misc Donations</li> <li>◦ Amazon Smile</li> <li>◦ Paypal Donations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## How money was spent:



## Expense Breakdown:

Bolting Supplies	\$ 25,959.23
Capital Items (New Tents, Banners, etc.)	\$ 368.72
Climbers Festival	\$ 8,052.50
DonorBox	\$ 33.55
Education & Conferences	\$ 4,000.00
Event Food	\$ 1,055.77
Event Supplies	\$ 342.77
Insurance (Alliant)	\$ 1,668.95
Membership T- Shirts	\$ 597.00
Merchandise (Excluding Memb. T-Shirts)	\$ 244.71
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ (195.23)
Paypal Processing Fees	\$ 238.09
Printful Fees	\$ 38.33
Property Taxes	\$ 113.77
Special Projects (SSI,...)	\$ 50.00
Tech/Software/Website Needs	\$ 366.48
Trail Maintenance Supplies	\$ 137.05
Wag Bags	\$ 752.46
Donation to HowNot2	\$ 230.00
Land Acquisition Fund	\$ 45,010.00
ASCA	\$ 300.00



# LAND ACQUISITION

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We are always on the hunt for cliffs available to purchase. We have the steps in place to act quickly if an opportunity arises to buy, lease, or get an easement on a property. We will continue actively exploring any and all land acquisition options. Don't hesitate to contact the ARCC through email or social media if you learn of any land opportunities.



**Climber Katie Childs: Photographer Jonathan Childs**



# FUTURE

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We are looking forward to 2024: The Climbers Festival, more trail days, rebolt days, climbing education events, Gym-To-Crag classes, social events, and much more are in the works for 2024. We are focusing our energy on becoming even more organized and efficient. We want the ARCC to have the ability to involve more members and to do more good, not just for climbing, but the outdoor recreation opportunities in Arkansas as a whole. The only way for this goal to become a reality is for everyone that climbs in Arkansas to recognize their role in the community. No matter the role, each person plays a huge part.

## Climbers have to step up!

- Clean up your trash and other people's trash.
- Practice Leave-No-Trace ethics.
- Replace old gear with better gear (if you are able).
- Speak up and say something to the ARCC Board if you notice problems
- Report bad bolts to [info@arkansasclimbers.org](mailto:info@arkansasclimbers.org), [BadBolts.com](http://BadBolts.com), or ASCA.
- Be respectful of Public Lands and our incredible freedom living in Arkansas.
- Manage your human waste.
- Donate when and where you can (i.e., Sam's Throne pit toilets, wag bags, Stainless Steel Initiative, ASCA, Access Fund, or the ARCC).
- Show up to events with your positive energy and warm smile.
- Try to be the best example of how you want climbers to be perceived by the public.

If everyone does one of these things, Arkansas climbing will keep moving forward with positive momentum.

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We are always looking for those who want to go beyond being a regular member! If you are interested in serving as a board member or an ARCC ambassador, please click below and fill out an application!

[Ambassador Application](#)

[Board Member Application](#)

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I see firsthand how hard volunteers work, on and off the board, to keep climbing protected and safe in Arkansas. Remember that the ARCC is more than the volunteers on the board; It is all of us! Without the members, the ARCC does not exist, and if only a small group of members participate, then we will always feel like nothing is progressing. 2024 will provide many opportunities to be involved, and I strongly encourage everyone to get out and make a difference.

The board has a lot of work to do in 2024, and we hope to see all of our community be a part of the journey to make the Arkansas Climbers Coalition a strong community of climbers that educates, promotes, and protects climbing in Arkansas for the next generations!

**Check your knot and stay safe! - David Thompson**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Follow us on Social Media!

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Instagram - arkansasclimberscoalition

**We thank you for your continued support  
of Arkansas Climbers Coalition**

**[Click Here to Become a Member!](#)**

## Contact

**Arkansas Climbers Coalition**

arkansasclimbers.org

info@arkansasclimbers.org

