



CROSSROADS

FALL 2016 ISSUE

WRITTEN BY JAY FETCHER, MAGGIE HANNA, MOLLY FALES AND MOLLY FETCHER LOTZ

Creatures of Our Own Histories

Jay Fetcher: Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust started in 1995 because a few of us were looking for solutions to the family transfer of ranching property to the next generation.

Kirk Hanna, Bill Fales, and I investigated tools such as conservation easements that could help ranching families. Ironically, the three of us were the fathers of daughters and were unsure of their interest in taking over our family ranches. Twenty years later, these young women have become integral to our ranching operations with their passion for Colorado and its open productive lands. Enjoy their stories.

Maggie Hanna¹: I am learning my past, my dad, and my legacy from others, from the stories they share and from the unwavering support they have shown me as I stumble my way into a career. My dad didn't get to teach me to rope, doctor foot rot, or watch the market, but he did leave me with a profound legacy: a legacy of family, land, and conservation that has driven me forward since I can remember.

¹Maggie Hanna is the External Relations Coordinator for CCAAL. Her father, Kirk Hanna, was instrumental in founding CCAAL in the early to mid-1990s.



► Molly and Katie Fales and their cousins on the trailer following the Carbondale Potato Days parade

"We grew up in a house that believed wholeheartedly in a conservation ethic, an ethic we try to apply not only to land and livestock, but to the system we are each part of."

— Maggie Hanna

► Kirk Hanna working cattle on Hanna Ranch



"The Goat Era" at Hanna Ranch. Kirk and Maggie with some of the kids ►



14% of the nation's 2.1 million farms and ranches had a female principal operator according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture.

MORE THAN

36k

family farms and ranches in Colorado, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture.

My sister and I were young when we learned to think critically and evaluate holistically, where calves come from, and how and when to stay out of the gate. Many lessons came in the form of being left at a water tank to wait (and wait and wait), or being asked to swim across a pond to stretch out electric fence, or at eight years old manning the noxious weed booth at the county fair. We grew up in a house that believed wholeheartedly in a conservation ethic, an ethic we try to apply not only to land and livestock, but to the system we are each part of.

Last summer I was home on the ranch learning to be in business with family

(a few tears and lots of discussions about why we can't change everything at once), when Erik called with an offer to join the CCALT team. It was an offer that not only presented a paycheck, but an opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way to a lifestyle that means the world to me, to build my own legacy, and to commit to a Colorado with ranching in its future.

Molly Fales²: One of my first babysitters was my grandfather. He was laid up with a broken leg from a horse wreck; my parents were working for my grandfather and trying to start their own ranch, and I was a sedentary baby. Like most ranch kids, my sister Katie

²Molly Fales is the Director of Conservation Transaction for CCALT. Her father, Bill Fales, was instrumental in founding CCALT in the early to mid 1990s and went on to serve as a board member until 2015.

*“Here is where my
husband and I choose
to work, live and love.
Here is my new center
of the universe.”*

— Molly Fetcher Lotz

and I grew up working alongside our parents and grandparents. As soon as I was coordinated enough to ride, I started tagging along with my parents on the ranch, refusing to let anyone lead my horse. Although I'd like to say this showed my early initiative to be involved in ranching, my refusal to hand over the reins had more to do with an incident when the lead rope caught under mom's horse's tail, causing her horse to buck and mine to jump, leaving me on the ground.


There was never any mystery about what our parents did for work. We also knew that our dad was part of a group working to start an agricultural land trust. Growing up with the land trust, Katie and I heard stories of the land trust's formation, overheard conference calls, and took a lot of phone messages. When my parents placed our ranch in a conservation easement, we were part of that process too. For Katie and me the conservation easement created options instead of limiting them. We know that the land, our home, will be there when we're ready to return to the ranch in any capacity. This knowledge that the ranch will remain productive for us and for future generations is the result of the CCALT's work and the founders' dream. Now, after completing law school, I have

chosen to invest my skills and energy to further an organization that I grew up with and whose mission has always been a part of my life.

Molly Fetcher Lotz: I was a 20-year-old in 1995 working on a dude “ranch” down in Durango when I was asked to speak to a reporter about the innovative work my dad, Jay Fetcher, was doing by putting our land under easement and starting the CCALT. At that age, at that time in my life, my own life was the center of my universe, not the ranch and certainly not the legacy of land conservation. I had just left the ranch I so desperately wanted to get away from for the last five years of my adolescence, and what was happening on the ranch was, I made sure of this, none of my concern.

The conversation with the reporter was short and I walked away from the pay phone not thinking about the impact or innovation of what was happening in

the world where my roots ran so deep. Fast forward 20 years and I now find myself living on that ranch that I so desperately wanted to escape. Here is where I raise my three young kids who not only get to see their grandfather every day as he comes out to continue his work on the ranch, but they get to look out on a view that will never change. Here is where my husband and I choose to work, live and love. Here is my new center of the universe.

As our stories and choices illustrate, the enthusiasm and passion that laid the foundation for the land trust appear to be contagious and hereditary. On one hand a conservation easement is a legal tool, but in reality it is a product of devotion to land, family, and the way we were raised. Working on the family ranch and with CCALT is the way we have chosen to carry on our families' legacies and leave our marks on conservation and Colorado. From one generation to the next. 



► Ann Hanna checking heifers



WRITTEN BY PAGE TURECEK | PHOTO BY ALLEN BIRNBACH

A LEGACY THAT LASTS: THE BOOTS WE NEED TO FILL

A life on the farm isn't always an easy one. Days are long and grueling, free time is in short supply, and Mother Nature never seems to cooperate. Though there is great sacrifice and adversity in this way of life, I never thought I would be so humble as to live it and carry on the tradition. My childhood didn't start on the ranch and I knew next to nothing about agriculture, but I always knew I wanted to be a part of it. That dream became a reality when I met the love of my life, my husband, Tyler. He introduced me to a world where family members work side-by-

side with one another, a peep is never spoken when the weather comes on the news, healthy baby calves are the best cure for a bad day, and caretaking is not just a job, but a legacy. With each coming day, we strive to be the best stewards and caretakers of the land and livestock that we can be, but anymore, that isn't enough. Tyler and I face new challenges with our generation of farmers and ranchers. Not only must we successfully follow Tyler's parents and their accomplishments, we will also have to fight to preserve the way of life that we are trying so desperately to carry on.

With each coming day, it seems that a new challenge arises against agriculture. Town begins to encroach on the outskirts of a family farm, graphic videos of animal abuse are broadcast on the television, and horror stories about GMOs are at the forefront of social media conversation. With succession already a difficult process for family farms and ranches, the growing concern and distaste for how our food is produced further jeopardizes the future of family operations. Luckily, Tyler and I have some of the greatest mentors and supporters to combat these challenges:



► Photo of Tyler and Page Turecek captured by Sandi Turecek

Tyler's parents, Keven and Sandi Turecek. Keven and Sandi aren't just wonderful people, they have also set incredibly high standards not only for us, but for our industry as well. They are the most recent recipients of the Leopold Conservation Award and arguably have one of the best herds of Black Angus cattle in the country. Not only do they encourage Tyler and me to be the best stewards and conservationists that we can be, they also encourage us to seek out new ventures and discover what will be important for our generation to accomplish. We know that our job will not just consist of nourishing and caring for the land, livestock,

and incredible opportunity that we are given, but preserving the way of life that we live.

The connection between the producer and the consumer is pertinent to the preservation of agriculture itself. Nothing is more important to my husband and me than securing a future in this wonderful industry for ourselves and for future generations. I have been so fortunate to have the most supportive and loving partner by my side to teach me and help me grow into the producer I want to be. Nothing gives us more pride than knowing that we provide a safe, reliable, and affordable source of food, fiber, and protein to the American

consumer. Though we go to the ranch every day, work hard, and learn everything we possibly can, we also have to prepare for the future. We can do that by continuing to improve and innovate the operation and by being better spokespeople. Tyler and I are absolutely thrilled that we have the opportunity to take over the Stacked Lazy 3 Ranch one day, but with that comes great responsibility. We are hoping to not only do right by Keven and Sandi's legacy, but to forge a path for truth and connection from the American rancher to the American consumer. I know we're doing the right things and taking the right steps, we just have very large boots to fill. ©

A photograph of a person wearing a cowboy hat and a light-colored shirt, riding a horse through a field of tall grass. The person is seen from behind, looking out over a valley with mountains in the distance under a clear sky.

PLANNED GIVING

Are you a trailblazer?

/ˈtrāl,blāzər/ noun: A person who makes a new track through wild country. A pioneer; an innovator.

Throughout this issue of the fall newsletter we have recounted the stories of individuals who have blazed trails and left legacies, helping to ensure that Colorado remains the wonderful place we all love for future generations to enjoy. We have also touched on how their contributions have impacted those who have followed them.

People can blaze new trails and create legacies in many different ways. One of the most impactful ways people can leave a legacy is through planned gifts. Planned gifts are transformational and help CCALT to continue to blaze new trails in conservation and allow donors to establish a legacy of conservation that will carry on forever. CCALT planned gift donors become members of the Trailblazer Society.

How can you become a CCALT Trailblazer?

It's easy to join the Trailblazer Society. All you need to do is:

1. Be prepared to blaze a trail for conservation and leave a legacy for the next generation.
2. Name the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust with the tax ID number (84-1317592) in your will, or name CCALT as a beneficiary on your life insurance policy or retirement plan, bank accounts or certificates of deposit.
3. Contact CCALT! We want to recognize you for your investment in our organization. If you would like to be recognized for your commitment to CCALT and Colorado's future, or have any questions, contact Erik Glenn at **303.225.8677** or eglenn@ccalt.org.

SPECIAL THANKS | FOREVER COLORADO BBQ AT THE BLUFFS

The staff and board of the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust is very thankful to the MacLennan family for all of their hard work.

Special thanks also goes out to all of the sponsors, donors, volunteers and guests who supported this event. We couldn't have done it without you!

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THOSE WE HAVE GAINED

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Collins Livsey

Photo courtesy of Dušan Smetana Photography



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Visit us at www.ccalt.org to learn more or find additional information about the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust.

The Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust protects Colorado's agricultural land, heritage and families for future generations by conserving working rural landscapes.