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Rolling Stones keyboardist plants chestnut trees from Asheville-based foundation

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ASHEVILLE — Charlane Plantation in Macon, Ga., home of Rolling Stones keyboardist Chuck Leavell and his wife, is now also the home of an American chestnut tree demonstration site.

The trees, donated by the Asheville-based The American Chestnut Foundation, are the result of the organization's breeding effort to develop a blight and disease resistant chestnut tree.

The demonstration site will be formally dedicated on Tuesday.

Recognized as a talented musician, Leavell is also a conservationist and tree farmer. He studied forestry by correspondence, including much of it while riding a tour bus with the Fabulous Thunderbirds in the mid-1980s.

Charlane Plantation is now a textbook managed forest.

The American chestnut trees being planted were grown at Chestnut Return Farm in Seneca, South Carolina.

A foreign fungus imported in 1904 devastated the tree, and by 1950, American chestnuts were nearly destroyed by the chestnut blight.

The mission of The American Chestnut Foundation is to restore the American chestnut tree in its native range within the woodlands of the eastern United States.

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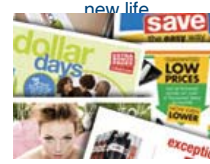
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