



The Mountain Matters

Summer 1996

listen

listen

listen

to your heart's song



Summertime

from the director's chair . . .

at **the mountain** . . . as I begin this column I'm reminded of the song from "Porgy and Bess" . . . "summertime, and the livin' is easy". For sure, the days have been long ones, the responsibilities huge, the glaring reality of running this complicated business always on my mind. But this summer at **the mountain** there's been a palpable energy, underscored by the laughter and music ringing in the air from the voices of guests of all ages. It is a privilege to be here . . . and so, yes, "the livin'" (feeling and being alive) is indeed easy.

Images of this summer remain vivid in my mind, and I'd like to share just a few of them with you —

* Opening day of Elementary Camp and the excitement reflected on all counselors' faces as they await the arrival of their campers. . .

* Morning circles, the music and laughter drawing us like a magnet to the Tree House. . .

* Elderhostelers experiencing group problem-solving initiatives as campers pass quietly by on their way to the field. . .

* Field Days and the Counselors in Training are in complete charge of this virtual carnival of activities. . .

* ASCENDERS putting a new roof on their home. . .

* Evening vespers, totally planned by campers, reflecting UU values in action

* Religious Education Week, with 40+ dedicated directors and teachers and 30+ children — all here to make a

difference in the religious lives of UU youth . . .

* A phone call with the sickening news that a gravel road has given way and a van is in a ditch; no one is hurt and that's all that matters — but it is wrenching to hear the children tell their stories afterwards as they bear witness to the courage, common sense and total commitment of the counselors to the safety of their campers. . .

* Leadership School participants and their faculty making the financial, time and energy commitment to the enhancement of strong congregations . . .

* Work Adventure youth building a new playground for our youngest — having to first learn tasks as basic as how to hammer a nail or carry a ladder. . .

* A camper who lost her Dad only four months ago, beginning her healing by reading one of his stories to her fellow Senior High Campers . . .

* And finally, closing ceremony when we say goodbye to most of our

**This is
your year,
your time
— be
involved!**



counselors, sharing candles of community: I am impressed by their clarity of vision about what they have contributed to **the mountain**, their peers and their campers and what they have received as a result of their participation; no heroes in this circle, just a strong team of people who have valued and respected each other as they united in a common mission.

The images could fill a book and new ones appear each day, for our Multifaith Political Action Conference is taking place this week, and their conviction and energy give me hope; our first Intergenerational Elderhostel program starts up next week; and soon ministers from all over will participate in a leadership school under the guidance of UUA President, John Buehrens. Summertime at **the mountain** — extraordinary opportunities for changed human behavior.

The facility looks lush, green and cared for; we've completed all the necessary preparations for our new water system and we're confident that we have an environmentally responsible, achievable plan ready to execute when we receive the "green light" from State engineers. In the mean time, our well has functioned beautifully, even through the driest June and July we've had in years.

For more news about **the mountain**, please take time to read this issue of *The Mountain Matters* cover to cover. And give special attention to Robert E. Smith's article on Development. Our needs are real and they are serious! We need you to be more involved here — so that we can continue to thrive and grow and offer opportunities for all people to experience **the mountain**. As I have said repeatedly: don't put yourself in the position years from now of looking back and saying "I wish I had been more involved in **the mountain**."

This is **your year, your time** — be involved.

Support "the livin'" — it's easy!



**1996 Youth Camp
Leadership**

Back Row: Shelley Denham, Sarah Walls, Pam Bachman, Susanne Whitehead, Steve Pond
Front Row: Chris Gilbert, Karen Kleiber, Michelle Frost, Brian Horvitz

KJ's Story


Staff Stories . . .


On a hot August evening **Kathy Jo Frelin** (fondly known as K.J.) stands looking proudly as the last few guests fill their plates. She should look proud. She and her kitchen crew have just served dinner to another 200 people! K.J. has been a part of **the mountain** staff for a little over a year and has eased into the role of Food Service Director with grace and skill, affording Richard the opportunity to move into other roles. K.J. became a Unitarian-Universalist in 1993 while living in New Orleans. "The U.U. principles and traditions were congruent with my belief system," according to K.J. "I was seeking a community of worship among diverse people who held these beliefs in common." She came to **the mountain** because she wanted to make a difference by putting those beliefs into action.



The kitchen this summer reflects K.J.'s outlook. Her crew works hard, but there is never a shortage of laughter and hugs for guests or staff. K.J. describes her staff as "a crew made up of friendly, versatile, and responsible people who care about the job and all the people they serve." This describes K.J. too.

Unfortunately as summer comes to a close and the seasonal staff members return to school or other jobs, openings for cooks and dishwashers are a pressing concern. We need a few good people — dedicated, ready to work with us toward fulfilling the vision. Please give serious thought to year-round employment in **the mountain** kitchen — send your resume to KJ at **the mountain**. If you have questions, you can call KJ at (704) 526-5838 ext. 232.

And . . . next time you are here for a visit make sure to stop in and say hello to K.J. and her crew! 

As many of you know, **Richard Arends** has been on the staff since 1988 as Food Service Director. On Thanksgiving day, 1994, Richard announced his plan to retire gradually over the next few years. His transition from the physically strenuous kitchen work has been gradual and painless. Richard has taken responsibility for the new store operation and was heartily appreciated this summer by campers of all ages in the arts and crafts program. 

Richard's Story



Buddy's Story

Buddy Brown came to **the mountain** four years ago to work on the maintenance staff. A skilled carpenter, auto mechanic and handy in so many ways, Buddy has become Ian's 'right hand man'. In fact, Buddy has successfully completed coursework and testing to earn Waste and Water Systems Certifications.

These days you usually find Buddy smiling and handing out bubble gum to everyone as he participates with campers on various projects. Buddy has worked with **mountain** ASCENDERS for several years, guiding them through various work projects. This summer the ASCENDERS, under Buddy's watchful eye, renovated the ASCENDER home, built benches, refurbished the waste water filters, put a new roof on their home, and did some much-needed landscaping.

But it hasn't always been so easy for Buddy. He's battled with alcoholism since he was a teenager. Clean for three years now, Buddy is getting the chance to help teenagers and others through the sharing of his experiences and his story.

This summer's experience with the ASCENDERS was more than just the work projects they completed together—it was a truly meaningful time for everyone, for Buddy was able, on his own time in the evening, to share his story about alcoholism and the 12-Step Program for personal growth with these caring youth. Buddy's trust was such that he felt comfortable opening up to this group of teenagers who responded with questions and concerns arising from their own personal and sometimes perplexing experiences. Most have already encountered either friends or family with an addiction to alcohol or another drug. One young person told Buddy: "This has helped me to find out that other people's experiences are the same. . . Your story was pretty much what happened to my father and brother. Now I understand better. . . ."

The consensus of all who witnessed this heartfelt exchange is gratitude and appreciation for Buddy — one of our **mountain** treasures.





Taking a walk around the mountain this summer — here's what you would see. . .

Images of summer 1996



Ascenders helping John Jolley "fix" the high ropes!



Fun on Field Day —Bronwyn Blass (Counselor) and her brothers (Junior High)



Gentle giant Richard —escapes from the kitchen to crafts— enjoying a camper's "creation" with summer staffer, Carlton Brown.



How many maintenance folks does it take to launch the new lake raft??



A vibrant, palpable energy permeating the mountain—the CIT's (Counselors In Training)

Elderhostel on the initiatives course —voices ringing through the woods blended with the chatter of campers on nearby trails.



Benjie, Cathy, Rachel and Samara enjoying the staff ingathering.

The Work and Adventure group and their 'finished' project: a playground for our youngest guests.



Junior High Campers and Counselors "working" on Camp Work Day.



Walking around Little Scaly this summer you would have observed a caring, confident, well-trained staff who considered it a privilege to work together and contribute to this extraordinary place called **the mountain**; you would have touched and been touched by others; you would have been moved to laughter and perhaps to tears as you witnessed the dream of **the mountain** in action.



Rethinking Ed Heath

Passages . . .

Our **mountain** community has suffered a tremendous loss in the death of Ed Heath on June 27, 1996. Ed was up early preparing for a Sunday run when he suffered a stroke. He passed away four days later, one day after life support was removed.

A beautiful and moving Memorial Service was conducted in the UU Congregation of Gwinnett, Lawrenceville, GA, on Saturday, July 6th. The Rev. Heather Collins gave a fitting eulogy which captured many of the traits which made Ed a person of unquestioned integrity and accomplishment. Several family members shared stories which helped us remember the many good things that Ed did and gave us all insights into his unique personality.

Ed and Anne were a big part of **the mountain** community from day one; they became Charter Members and frequently volunteered their time in the early years. In 1984, Larry Wheeler, Co-Director, happened to call a company in Atlanta about a water pump problem; his call was routed to the "Engineer" and while discussing pumps and possible solutions, the Engineer suddenly interrupted himself to say: "Larry, this is Ed!" This was the beginning of Ed and Anne's employment at **the mountain**. Ed served as **the mountain's** Facilities Director 1984-85, Interim Director 1985-86, and Finance Director 1986-87. Anne was the Elderhostel Coordinator and "did whatever else was needed, both in the office and for six months in the kitchen." Ed's work made a difference and he will be missed.



As a **mountain** community, we all share this great loss but the wonderful memories and stories will keep Ed alive in our hearts and minds. We send our love to Anne, his daughter Lorna, his mother, Ellen, his sisters Nancy and Margaret and to all other family members.





Remembering Carroll Payne and Carolyn Pratt

This year has seen the loss of Life Member, Carroll Payne and Patron Member, Carolyn Pratt. Both were active **mountain** Members who will be greatly missed. They both remembered **the mountain** through generous codicils in their wills; we deeply appreciate being included in their planning.

Carroll visited **the mountain** last summer for the UUCA (Atlanta) Work Week. We still appreciate his hard work every day as we pass by the REC Hall. Carolyn's last visit with us was in 1994. She came up to enjoy a Lost Art of Doing Nothing Weekend and we fondly recall her standing on Meditation Rock and gazing out at the valley below.

To all those who knew and were touched by these beloved members of our **mountain** community we send our thoughts. We were blessed by their presence, and are now equally blessed with memories of them.



**Barbara &
Richard Arends**

Highlands, NC

John Beck & Marion Kern

Tucker, GA

Houston & Betty Brice

Birmingham, AL

Mark & Bonnie Gramlich

Decatur GA

Martin Isganitis

Decatur, GA

Mary Ann Lawrence

Whispering Pines, NC

Jeannette Manning

Charlotte, NC

Carla Syverson

Atlanta, GA

Noland Thuss

Graham, NC

Life

New Members this year

Patron

**Dan and Suzanne
Boyce**

Troy, MI



Mountain Growth

As I watched the

1996 Summer camp session wind down I was amazed by the growth and maturity that I encountered in our campers, especially Senior Highs. Teen years can be exhilarating and painful — a time of discovery and possibility. Organizations, like people, move through life stages. **the mountain** is in its adolescence and, much like our teenage campers, is reaching toward full potential. This means that, like the extended community to a questioning teenager, **mountain** members must participate and provide encouragement if that potential is to be reached.

the mountain faces many obstacles to growth. Increasing costs and an aging facility with its endless needs are daunting. Yet, with your participation and support **the mountain** can move through these growing pains to realize our vision.

There are four very important ways for you to support **the mountain**:

1. **Contribute with a tax deductible cash donation.**
2. **Gift Appreciated Securities and realize both a charitable deduction AND avoid capital gains on your 1996 taxes.**
3. **Invest in a *mountain* Promissory Note as a secure, no-risk vehicle, either as a personal investment or through an IRA fund.**
4. **Pledge through a codicil or bequest to *the mountain* Endowment Fund and it will be matched by an anonymous contributor—now.**

Any one of these four methods of commitment will help ensure **the mountain's** successful growth from adolescence into a mature and self-assured organization.

This is your year, your time—to be involved and show your commitment to quality programs for all ages.



Robert E. Smith
Director of Marketing & Development



Promissory Note

Invest in the mountain

Mountain Promissory Notes are a great investment for you — a child, or grandchild — young adults heading to college in about five years — your IRA or IRA Roll-Over Account — your church's Endowment Fund — the memory of a loved one. Quarterly interest payments, in your name, can be paid toward the special fund of your choice. Accrue the interest to be paid when you redeem your Mountain Promissory Note. Or, gift the interest for a tax deductible contribution to The Mountain.

Interest is tied to current treasury bill rates. Notes may be purchased in \$5,000 increments with a term of 60 months. Mountain Promissory Notes are secured by the assets of The Mountain. For more information, call Robert E. (704) 526-5838 ext 227. Or talk with Finance Director, Neal Resch on ext. 204.

How can I make a difference?

- ① be a volunteer
- ② come to a program
- ③ give a cash donation
- ④ fund a scholarship
- ⑤ pledge to the endowment





mountain dream list

- ☛ low mileage 15 passenger vans (good condition!)
- ☛ slide projector with 200 m lens & remote control
- ☛ After you buy your Pentium, give us your 486 computers and printers

On the cover—The mountaingroup Logo
designed by Gillian Denham

If you can help
with one of
these, please call
Robert E.



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