



The Mountain Matters

THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT & LEARNING CENTER, INC.

February 1998



REFUEL is launched!

Four young adults are participating in the first REFUEL program, which runs through mid-May. Cory Andser is a UU from San Diego, CA. He has joined us after completing a two year degree at Landmark College and is here to decide what vocational or educational direction he wants to take in the next few years. Naomi Thomas, a '97 high school graduate from Griffin, GA is researching religious studies majors at a variety of schools and is intentional about spiritual exploration. She is passionate about the arts, particularly writing and theater. Keturah Orr is from Brevard, NC. She is a committed social activist and is seeking ways to integrate activism into her education and career. Jesse Poole-Van Swol, a UU from Safety Harbor, FL, wants to become a minister and is seeking ways to facilitate growth in that direction.

These REFUEL students are an exciting group of people. Incredibly sensitive and intelligent, each of them has brought unique insights and experiences to the Mountain community. With ambitious dreams, they seek to recognize their potential and gain focus.

Along with apprenticeships around the Mountaintop, REFUEL students perform community service, engage in intentional goal setting and informal academics and explore social issues through the program component, *Journey to Action*. This program is a framework within which we explore

different social issues each month. Our focus on issues of race and diversity in January took us to Atlanta for Martin Luther King Day and fostered exciting discussions around affirmative action, institutional and interpersonal racism and our own ethnic backgrounds. Each month, we will be exploring issues that challenge our world view and our personal understanding of the relationships we share. In line with the mission of the Mountain to embrace the diversity of life, energizing people to work for positive change, it is our vision that the *Journey to Action* series will continue to gain breadth and depth as REFUEL evolves. REFUEL students are not only learning about themselves in this program, but are finding their way within the context of community. Their engaged participation, unique skills and talents are great contributions to our Mountain.

REFUEL has a great future at the Mountain. Its components and curricula are evolving through the collaboration of the students, consultants and Mountain staff. We are currently accepting applications for the next session, beginning in the fall of 1998. Please call me if you have questions about the program or would like application information: Sarah Walls at (704) 526-5838 ext. 241.

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN...

Happy and Healthy New Year one and all! This, *The Mountain Matters*, is full of interesting articles, all worthy of your considered study. So, I'll keep my column brief.

REFUEL, our lead story - what an exciting program! This is the culmination of many people's efforts and ideas over the years starting back in the early 80s with Mo Wheeler. Shelley and Sarah, Cory, Naomi, Keturah and Jesse have brought it to life. Thank you to all who have believed in the concept and helped give it shape. I want to especially thank the UUA Grants Panel for awarding us scholarships for this program so that cost was not a barrier for our students.

The cabin upgrades are going well. But, we are out on that proverbial limb - we've borrowed the money to complete this project by April 1 and we are counting on you, our loyal supporters, to give us the funds to pay the loan off by year's end. We need these upgrades and if there was ever a project that was begun just in time, this is the one.

As you will read in Karen's article, summer camp is fast approaching and I never cease to be impressed with the complexity of getting ready for another season. Our whole staff is involved - and they all do it joyfully. Youth camp at The Mountain - our roots, our future. (continued next page)



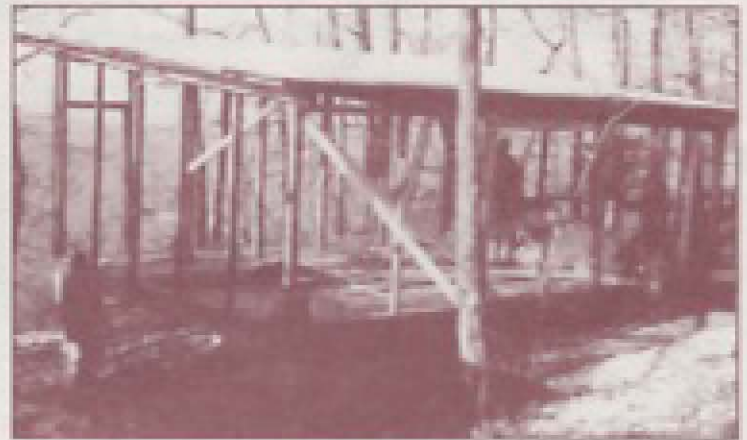
Seated from left to right: Cory Andser, Keturah Orr, Naomi Thomas; in front: Jesse Poole-Van Swol

CABIN UPGRADES UNDERWAY!

Financial Support Still Needed...

The December issue of *The Mountain Matters* highlighted the renovation of the bunkhouse cabins (# 13 - 19), but what's actually being done to transform them from rustic summer cabins to safe and sturdy, year-round guest space is nothing short of amazing! Work has progressed steadily since our last issue (with the project scheduled for completion by the first of April). We're excited to be able to offer our youth programs guests—from youth camp to school groups—safe and comfortable housing, more conducive to community building than ever before!

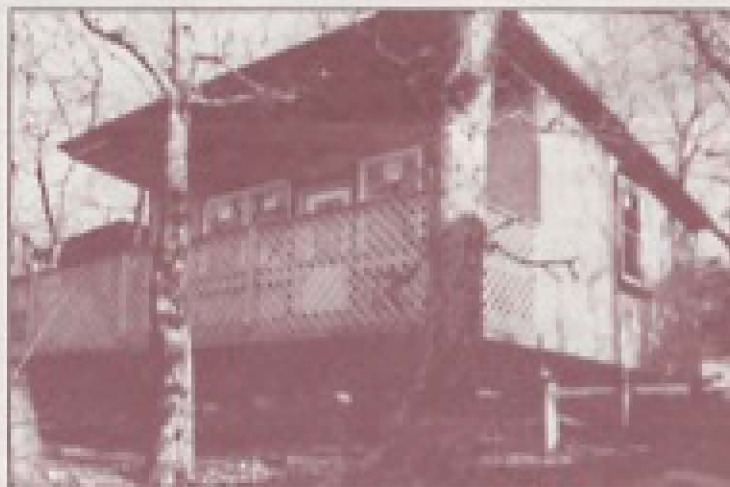
During the month of January, a professional construction crew (with help from some able volunteers) has stabilized the foundations of all the cabins, created level floors and brought the walls into plumb. Each cabin has received sturdier siding, well-installed electrical wiring, weather proof windows and door and a re-build, child-safe porch. Already the cabins are looking cozy enough to spend a winter night in! Ultimately, the picture will be completed by metal enamel roofing that will last at least twenty five years (as opposed to the two to three years of service given by our current roofing



material!), ramps that extend all the way to the ring road, propane heating systems and new inside furnishings that will make the space even more practical and comfortable for campers and guests. The renovation of Cabin 19 has been generously funded by **Carole Light, Alex Redmountain and Mo Wheeler**. Cabins 13-18 (at \$12,000 each) are still in need of funding, but the safety and comfort of our children and youth make this project an immediate necessity.

Also in progress are the upgrades to cabins 7-12 — with additions to the decking, new windows, new doors and improved amenities inside the cabins to make your stay more pleasant. Five of these cabins have already been "adopted" with \$5,000 gifts — Cabin 8 - **Anonymous**, Cabin 9 - In honor of **Ian Denham** by his many friends on his 50th birthday in December, Cabin 10 - **Zed & George Kesner**, Cabin 11 - In Memory of **Robert Schilling** and Cabin 12 - **Margaret Schilling**.

Please contact Larry Wheeler if you would like to adopt a cabin. You can adopt the whole cabin or part thereof!



DIRECTOR'S COLUMN...

(continued from page one)

As you will read in Larry's column, his wife Nancy Heath will be joining the staff the first of April. And as I prepare for her arrival I realize that many of you may not know who all the staff are and the important roles each and every one of them plays. So the next issue of *The Mountain Matters* will introduce them to you. In addition, we will talk about governance, the roles of our trustees and have bios and a ballot for you for the election of two new trustees. I think you will find it an interesting edition.

One last item - April 3-5, 1998 will be our first meeting of the Milestone's Board of Directors. We are planning our first program for the fall. Stay tuned - this is transforming! Read on...and come up and see us sometime this year!

-Tom

\$7000 in Camperships awarded! 1997 Scholarship Fund exceeded

Though youth camp at The Mountain is far less costly than most summer camps, for many families, a camp experience for one or more children is still not financially possible. Each year, The Mountain awards "Camperships" to families who would otherwise be unable to send a child to MOUNTAINCAMP. Last summer 22 campers received Camperships, generally awarded in amounts up to fifty percent of the program's total cost. We awarded \$7,000 total: \$3,000 more than we had in our Campership Fund! It's important to us that our programs be as financially accessible as possible. Offering assistance is a part of making our commitment to socioeconomic justice a reality. A portion of all guest fees is devoted to the fund, as are 5% of proceeds from The Mountain Store. Give the gift of MOUNTAINCAMP: consider making a donation to the 1998 Campership Fund.

The Mountain on the Road in Florida

A MEMORABLE RE-CONNECTION...

"I've been a UU for 5 years and now I finally know what Unitarian Universalism is about!"

"You are troubadours of love, hope and social justice sharing your talents with others."

"I want to 'meet' The Mountain!"

These are the kinds of comments we heard as we moved through our extensive tour of some of Florida's most vibrant UU congregations. Larry Wheeler joined Quartet members Shelley and Ian Denham and Jane and Tom Warth for eight days of the thirteen day adventure. It was an exhilarating and challenging schedule - 2400 miles and 31 events in 12 days, including eight concerts, two Sunday worship services, wonderful potlucks, receptions, luncheons and visits to individuals in their homes. If we had a dollar for every piece of equipment loaded and unloaded into Tom and Jane's RV (our terrific "Mountain-mobile") we could fund a year's worth of scholarships.

We came home with a clear message: Florida UUs need and want The Mountain in their lives! We were truly enriched by the wonderful people we met along the way who opened themselves to our music and our message. And we were inspired by the privilege of "telling the Good News" of The Mountain: this institution's stories are about transformational experiences, passion and commitment to making a difference in the world! The Mission of The Mountain is to energize people to work for positive change. Wherever we go, we hear resounding support for this mission as we all work toward and contribute to a just and ethical society.

Some of the immediate results of the trip....a Life Membership and several pledges of gifts in the near future; a new REFUEL participant (whose mom heard about the program on the 16th and arrived six days later with her

enthusiastic son who'd dropped everything to get into the program at the last minute!); and a \$5000 matching gift from Bob and Anne Hornberger in order for the Quartet to cut a compact disc and share our music with a broader audience! We know that long-term relationships will continue to develop, too as we continue to serve and nurture our Florida members and friends.

This major outreach effort would not have been possible without the caring, competent staff who stayed behind, kept The Mountain running smoothly in our absence and so warmly welcomed 55 members of Atlanta's Peachtree Methodist Choir for their January retreat. We also thank Larry Wheeler, who handled all the arrangements and was the inspiration behind the tour!

In addition, our deep appreciation goes out to everyone who participated in making this undertaking possible. Special thanks to: Lind & Ernie Hollingsworth and M.H. Rahn (Savannah), Linda Mowers and Linda Plummer (Jacksonville), Betty Green and Gretchen Bremer-Hosken (Ormond Beach), Rev. Marni Harmony, Sharon Durrant and Bill Baker (Orlando), Susan Hemmer and Myrtle & Art Lockwood (Stuart), Diane St. Pierre, Bill & Phyllis Brewer and Marge & Ed Riley (Ft. Myers), Frank Dunn, Dorothy Conlon and Rev. Richard Bentler (Sarasota), Janet Judge and Steve Dante (Clearwater), Bob & Anne Hornberger (Gainesville) and Marty Beech, Joe & Jean Chulak, Sally Bellamy Wigginton and Elinor Elfiner (Clearwater).

A Visit with the Lockwoods

While in Florida, The Mountain Quartet had the opportunity to visit once again with friends **Art and Myrtle Lockwood**. The Lockwoods have been the moving spirits and major funders behind the REC Hall renovation and have long been fans of Mountain music. For many years they have spent their summers in Franklin, North Carolina, returning home to Stuart, Florida each winter. In recent months, both Art and Myrtle have experienced major health problems. We promised them we would come visit when we got to Florida—and bring the music to their home if they couldn't make it to the concert. So we visited them one evening, along with their two daughters, for a special selection of their favorite songs. It was a wonderful and inspiring evening with old friends.



Art and Myrtle after an impromptu Quartet concert in their Stuart, FL home.

From the DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR. . .

What an exciting time this is for me, both personally and professionally! The Mountain's 1997 development income reached an all-time high at \$304,000 and 1998 is already off to a great start. **THANK YOU ONE AND ALL !!** There's so much going on here at The Mountain that members and friends are excited to become a part of. Come join us!

On a personal note, Nancy's joining the staff has encouraged us to buy a home in Sky Valley, GA and we'll be moving from Atlanta soon. We've always wanted to return to The Mountain and this seems like the right time for both of us.

Please contact me with any questions about how you can help The Mountain or let me know if you have any questions.

~ Larry

NEW PATRON MEMBERS (\$5,000 +)

Fred & Bonnie Forte	Atlanta, GA
Garry & Becky Tisdale	Alexandria, LA
Arnold & Marge Gelbin	Winston-Salem, NC
Paul & Sandra Clipp	Clemson, SC

NEW LIFE MEMBERS (\$1,600-\$2,000)

Gerry Lowrey	Atlanta, GA
Patrick Pohl	Lexington, KY
Brian Pohl	Tucson, AZ
Joan Watterson	Columbia, SC
Eric & Isabel Oate	Columbia, SC
John Thomas	Rock Hill, SC
Carl Bretz	Oak Ridge, TN
Ken Schmidt, Jr.	Blacksburg, VA
Anneliese Schmidt	Inman, SC
Bill & Margaret Kleiber	Yonkers, NY
Karen Kleiber	Highlands, NC
Gillian Denham	Highlands, NC
Roberta Crocker	Needham, MA
Ted & Jan Elders	Tybee Island, GA

IN MEMORIAM

Betty Pirkle	Atlanta, GA
Mary Leta Tolleson	Swannanoa, NC

Volunteers!!

• Those who attended the Life and Patron Member Thanksgiving put in 284 (!!) person hours of volunteer work. That's 65 adults doing an average of 4 1/2 hours of work each. Many needed and important projects were completed and the summer cabin renovation was begun. We have improved views, installed new storm windows in the Dining Hall, gathered lots of firewood, put craft supplies neatly away, potted native plants for sale this spring, dismantled many Bunkhouse interior walls and skirted the foundation of Cabin 9. Phew!!

• **Pat Gnagey** (Franklin, NC) is back in her old stomping grounds, working with Larry in the Development Department. She has put in many hours doing research and working on special projects. In late December, she and **Dixie McGinty** (Cullowhee, NC) put together a large mailing.

• **Carl Clements** (Tuscaloosa, AL) has visited The Mountain several times during his sabbatical this fall working with Milestone start-up projects.

• Most recently, **Dixie McGinty** and **John Wood** (Sky Valley, GA) completed the end-of-year Store inventory and **John Vacher** (Atlanta, GA) has been installing new electrical wiring.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



Volunteers...

Terry Beale, Anne Staley, Melanie Murel Sullivan sort games while Jack Lawrence shelves books. Volunteer parties put in 284 person hours of work over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Yes! I want to make a donation to support The Mountain's vision!

My contribution to the fund—

☐ \$ _____ ☐ \$1000 ☐ \$750 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$300 ☐ \$200 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50

PLEASE SEND ME INFORMATION ON:

☐ The Mountain Endowment Fund ☐ Charitable Gift Annuities ☐ Charitable Remainder Trust ☐ Membership

Name/ Address: _____

Please return to The Mountain's Development Office.

Getting Ready for Camp!

While it is only January 28, and the summer is more than 4 months away MOUNTAINCAMP registrations and preparations are already in full swing. As of today, both Junior High, Senior High and Work & Adventure camps are close to capacity enrollment. We have even begun waitlists in some camps. We encourage people to join the waitlist—spaces do open! Elementary camp, Senior High Leadership School, and Beginning camp are slower to fill but are making continual progress. The good news is that Gillian Denham will design and run the one-week Beginning MOUNTAINCAMP again this year—ensuring us another successful summer.

With the office taking registrations, and Gillian designing Beginning camp—what do I do? I organize. The camp schedules are finished, meaning that I can already tell you that on July 9th our Elementary youth will participate in Arts & Crafts, a hike up Scaly Mountain, rock climbing on our indoor wall, a trip to Cliffside Lake or Pot Hole rock slide, or a nature education program and games! While we need to be flexible with programming, it is a huge relief to know that the schedules and logistics are already taken care of, leaving more time for me and the Youth Camp Coordinators to focus on providing meaningful Mountain experiences for our campers during the coming summer.

The selection process for staff, ASCENDERS and CITs will begin in late February. We have received a number of applications so far, but it's still not too late to call and request an application for any of the positions or programs. The CIT and ASCENDER programs are already taking shape and the mentors will soon be selected and can begin their own planning for the summer.

All of my camp preparations are informed by my personal experience, but also by the feedback I have received from youth, parents and staff. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to Youth Camp over the years, and continue to support and impact our program! For more information about current camp enrollments or to register, please feel free to contact The Mountain's main office. For applications and program information, please call me directly, 704-526-5838 x234: Karen Kleiber Youth Programs Director.



Summer Leadership Programs

Over the years, The Mountain has taken pride in offering annual leadership programs for UUUs and non-UUUs alike. Leadership training is part of our mission: creating an environment to energize people to work for positive change means developing programs that offer participants the tools to effect that change at home. Each year participants tell us that leadership programs have not only given them skills—the experiences have changed their lives. This summer, we are offering three programs for people either currently holding or preparing for future leadership roles who would like to enrich their contributions to their congregations and communities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WEEK (July 10–16) is a program designed for DREs, RE teachers and others involved in children's religious education. Jacqui James, Education and Resource Director in the Faith in Action department at the UUA, will lead the new Multicultural Renaissance Module for both new and experienced RE workers. Program and registration information is being mailed to all Southeast area DREs, past participants and Mountain Ambassadors.

The 18th annual **MOUNTAIN LEADERSHIP SCHOOL** (July 26–August 1). Leadership School dean (and Patron Member) Paul Clipp and faculty are preparing for another week of informative, experiential learning—excellent preparation for current and incoming UU lay leaders. Practice problem-solving difficult congregational issues, learn effective facilitation techniques and explore your personal theology. Members should encourage their board, minister and congregation to support attendance by identifying candidates now. Registration materials are now being mailed to all Mid-South and TJ congregations, all district Executives and students from the past three years, but the program is open to all.

THE SENIOR HIGH LEADERSHIP SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (August 2–8) is a week-long camp for activists and aspiring activists in the 10th grade through 1998 graduates. With workshops, visits to a variety of social justice organizations and group building activities, explore current social justice issues like race and diversity, gender, the environment and the role of government in social concerns. Participants gain an understanding of the issues, but just as importantly, learn how to take action! See the 1998 MOUNTAINCAMP brochure for details and registration information.

HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN?

HERE'S HOW TO CALL!

We have a 24 hour voice mail system. When you hear the "Welcome to The Mountain" recording, just push the extension number of the staff member you'd like to speak with or 0 for the office and your call will be connected.

Let us hear from you! Please do remember that we are a 7 day operation and each of us gets 2 days off each week (not necessarily on the weekend!), so it may be that you won't get an immediate response. If you need one and we don't answer the phone, you can press "*T 201" to reach the main office. You can then check on our schedules.

DON'T KNOW WHO CAN ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?

THE OFFICE WILL BE HAPPY TO HELP!

You can also contact any staff member by e-mail: mountain@dnnet.net — just put the staff member's name in the message header.



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PO Box 1299 • Highlands, NC 28741

(704) 526-5838 • fax (704) 526-2511

mountain@dnnet.net • <http://themountain.usa.org/mountain/>

We're not moving, but our area code is. . .

AFTER JUNE 1, 1998 DIAL 828 INSTEAD OF 704!

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