



THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT & LEARNING CENTER, INC.

The Mountain Matters



August 1999



Director's Report

As I write this column, we are in the very heart of the Summer at **The Mountain**. With ninety **Senior High Campers**, fifty-one **Leadership School** students and some Drop-Ins, we are busy, and it feels good. In addition to our guests and programs, we are in the middle of a major, long overdue remodeling of the Tower. For too long it has had leaking roofs and rotting timbers; the stairs have been too difficult for many of our guests to use. It is time to invest in its upgrade. And speaking of upgrades, we continue our cabin remodeling project beginning with a new deck and ramp on Cabin 8 and a complete redo of Cabin 7. All of this — programs, guests, construction — speaks to the vitality of **The Mountain**, a wonderful institution, making a difference many lives at a time. For an update on our programs, please take the time to read the articles in this issue on Milestone and adventure programming — both are very exciting initiatives!

As we expand our programs and develop our facilities, our need for additional staff continues to grow. **The Mountain** is a unique place that provides programs of relevance, that transforms lives; we need skilled, caring and devoted staff who want to be a part of an organization committed to *"embracing the diversity of life, creating an environment that energizes people to work for positive change."* We are looking for people new to the workplace who would like the opportunity to develop their recently acquired skills and people who are considering a career change, who would like to try something different, to expand and grow . . . to transform.

Listed here are current opportunities we have for those with requisite skills and a commitment to "working for positive change." All positions include competitive compensation and benefits. Please give them serious consideration; if you are interested in learning more, write or e-mail me, **Tom Warth**, Executive Director, at the address on the back cover.

Director - Mountain Operations — responsible for the day-to-day supervision of **The Mountain's** operations including food service, guest services, maintenance/housekeeping, program design, sales and promotion. The applicant must have extensive experience in supervising large teams with multiple functions.

Assistant Food Service Director — proven experience and interest in cooking (special emphasis on vegetarian/vegan meals), menu planning, inventory management and food service staff management.

Accounting Associate — proven experience in senior or "mid-level" accounting.

Information Systems Associate

- Experience in web page development and maintenance
- Experience in Microsoft NT-based network administration and maintenance
- Experience in PC hardware and/or software development and maintenance

Office Staff — personal computer skills and experience working with Windows 95 and Microsoft Word; willing and able to respond to multiple tasks/guest interaction while maintaining poise and positive responses; careful attention to detail and efficient in accomplishing tasks. Also in need of an Office Supervisor — all of the above Office Staff skills plus the ability to supervise the work of others.

All of these are meaningful jobs and ones that we need to fill with capable people if we are to continue to grow **The Mountain** in substantive ways. Please give these opportunities serious consideration and/or refer these opportunities to others you know who have such skills and may be interested themselves.

Summertime — great things happening on **The Mountain** — considerable opportunities await you; come be a part of it all, either as a guest or employee. We look forward to seeing and/or hearing from you soon.

Tom



adventure activities have been an important part of **The Mountain** experience from the very beginning. There was much excitement when this property was found because of all that it and the area had to offer — rock climbing, white water rivers, national forest land with trails and waterfalls, and vistas galore.

Our first writer in this issue is **Nancy Heath (Suda)** who was hired in the Spring of 1980 to be **The Mountain's** first Nature Director. She developed much of the outdoor programming before leaving in 1985. Over the next dozen years, she was a guest and volunteer program leader before returning as a staff member in early 1998. She is an American Canoe Association Whitewater Canoe Instructor. She is working to strengthen our outdoor programming.

Twenty years ago when we started **The Mountain**, I volunteered to explore the outdoor possibilities of the area around our property. The first exploration hike I went on was to Holcomb and Ammons Creek Falls with my son, Ken. It is still a favorite hike for many who have visited over the last twenty years. My dream then went in two directions. One was toward the big outdoor adventures. The other direction was a quieter, more contemplative approach for getting in touch with the natural world and our relationships with it. Those early days were filled with bushwacking explorations as we went in various directions from our Mountain. A rock climbing friend came up, and we explored our own cliffs doing rappels with ropes around our bodies. The local Forest Service was a great help with information about area whitewater, rock climbing, and backpacking possibilities.

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Over the years, people have often come back to thank me for "saving" their life on the river, or the rocks, or the trails.

Betty Stein still reminds me of our climb down the bank to Rainbow Falls that was both terrifying and thrilling for her. One of our early paddlers, **Shane Benedict**, is now a world class kayaker, winning competitions and introducing people all over the world to the sport. The Nantahala Outdoor Center has always seemed glad to hire staff who have worked at **The Mountain**. I believe that this is because staff arrive well trained, but also with superb people skills.

In the last 20 years, the fields of outdoor education and adventure have grown in numbers and sophistication. And **The Mountain** is now expanding our emphasis on the incredible environment that surrounds us. We are getting new whitewater canoes of the best quality. The goal of our canoeing program will be not only the building of hard skills, but also the soft skills of communication and group support.

Look elsewhere in this issue and in future ones for descriptions of upcoming canoeing programs and come be a part of some of them. We can work with all ages and will help you meet whatever goals you have set for yourself.

I hope you'll also come hiking with me to explore this wonderful and unique area that I'm privileged to live and work in.

Jill Allison is **The Mountain's** Program Manager. A year ago she joined the staff to become the Youth Programs Director, but earlier this year her duties were expanded to include all programming. Jill has a Masters Degree in Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration and ten years of experience running Girl Scout camps. She is a certified Challenge Course Instructor, and it is because of her qualifications and interests that **The Mountain** built the new High Challenge Course and greatly expanded the Low Course.

I first experienced the challenge course at a Boy Scout camp near the Girl Scout camp where I grew up on the edge of the Ozarks. Our camp staff spent the day with their camp staff on a low course. The experience was a little overwhelming and not very pleasant. I remember falling backwards from a trust fall platform that was 8-feet off the ground into the arms of Boy Scouts. I would not have believed, as I stood on that platform contemplating my safety and sanity, that I would some day become a challenge course trainer and operate low and high courses.

A few years of school and a few jobs later, I experienced my first low course training as part of staff training at an environmental education center in Georgia. My memories of this experience are much more positive. The peak experience of the day for me was making it over a 15-foot wall. When I reached the platform at the top of the wall, I not only felt invincible but connected to my team. I appreciated each teammate for their support in helping me reach my goal and proud that I had helped them reach success as well. I became a believer in the power of the challenge course experience. My belief became stronger and stronger as I worked with groups at the environmental education center and other camps.

One of my goals, upon being hired at **The Mountain**, was to have the low challenge course expanded, a new high course built and professional training for our staff. The challenge course experience at **The Mountain** builds community. The challenge course is a tool for communities to examine their relationships, challenge and change roles, and recognize and reward the strengths of each individual. Each group on the challenge course helps **The Mountain** take a step toward meeting its mission — embracing the diversities of the group, creating an environment for positive change and growth within the group. The next step is for the community to return to their larger community and share those changes.

As we continue to enhance and expand our adventure program, we are excited to have the challenge course on-site for our guests. It is one piece of the bigger experiential education picture we continue to bring into focus on **The Mountain**.

*K.C. Boyce is from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan and is a long time camper and counselor for **The Mountain's** Youth Camp. This summer, he is the camp's Adventure Director and Senior Leader for the Work & Adventure Program. He is a Senior at Colorado College, in Colorado Springs, majoring in Political Science.*

When I first came to **The Mountain** in 1989 with the Birmingham (Michigan) Unitarian Church, I was enchanted by this place and disappointed that I was too young to participate in the adventure activities offered. For two years, I eagerly anticipated my next visit to **The Mountain**. I was then able to experience rock climbing and whitewater rafting

for the first time. Little did I know that as I set foot upon **The Mountain's** cliffs I was embarking upon a life-changing experience.

After getting my first taste of adventure at **The Mountain**, I returned in 1994 for High Adventure Mountaincamp. Camp gave me a chance to challenge my beliefs about others and myself. I learned more than I ever thought I would: about how to live simply in the woods, about the environment and our interdependent web of life, and most importantly, about myself. I was able to translate these lessons back into my daily life, and I became involved in adventure activities throughout high school.

In recent years, I have returned to **The Mountain** as the High Adventure Counselor Leader and as the Youth Camp's Adventure Director. I have returned because I believe in **The Mountain's** mission and want to help campers grow and

mature through challenging adventure activities. Rock climbing, the high challenge course, and backpacking trips (among other Mountaincamp activities) put participants in unfamiliar and potentially uncomfortable environments. In this setting, they have an opportunity to break down stereotypes and the external facades that children in today's society build. I have had the opportunity to see campers metamorphose from unsure to self-confident, from meek to strong-willed, from kids to balanced young adults.

My Mountaincamp leadership roles have helped me learn more about myself and develop my technical and people skills. I have learned where my limits are and when to ask for help. I have learned the power of simple words or phrases . . . or silence. I have learned just how much work goes into planning an adventure activity or a whole two-week camp session. And I have learned how to successfully transfer my experience to campers while maintaining the integrity of their adventure. Throughout my experience as a camper and a leader at Mountaincamp, I have challenged myself, my peers, and my campers. The adventure provides the catalyst for challenge and change and has helped me become the person I am today.

Adventure, whether a one-day rock climbing experience or a two-week Work & Adventure Camp, is critical to fulfilling **The Mountain's** mission statement. Campers who participate in adventure activities learn firsthand the very real rewards that come from risktaking. By encountering and conquering

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"By encountering and conquering difficulties, participants in adventure activities build self-confidence and courage."

Sarah in Palestine

MountainCorps is a human resource initiative of The Mountain which provides up to five paid days to full-time employees (after being here for at least a year) to do a community service project. The application process and subsequent reports after the trip help clarify and articulate the relationship between the service project and the staff person's work at The Mountain. Sarah Walls, Milestone Program Coordinator, did her MountainCorps project in Ramallah, Palestine in June/July, 1999.

"Why would you want to visit the West Bank?" This was the recurring question asked of our group as we met Israelis and western tourists. To us, the reasons were obvious — the incredible hospitality and warmth of Palestinians, delicious food and the opportunity to learn about the political situation from the real voices of local people. We even grew to love the call to prayer, which was broadcast over speaker systems from local mosques and woke us up every morning at 3:30!

The 18-day trip was planned by Friends United Meet-

ing — a national Quaker governing organization located in Indiana. There were three major components: service projects at Ramallah Friends School and a local refugee camp, meetings with political activists and touring of significant religious and cultural sites throughout Israel and Palestinian territories. To me, the most interesting and engaging part of the experience was learning more about the complex and disturbing Arab/Israeli conflict. What I had read in books or heard on the news became real and three-dimensional as we talked with Palestinians and Israelis, as well as politicians and nonviolent activists.

A metaphor that an American friend shared with me before I left became understandable — "If the entire region's history and culture is a book, I've just glimpsed the title page." My experience made me want to keep reading the book and share it with others. Keep your eyes open for another article about my experience in the Middle East at a later date.

Continued from Page 3

difficulties, participants in adventure activities build self-confidence and courage. All of these things — courage, self-confidence, and a willingness to take risks — are necessary to effect positive change in a world which is generally unfriendly to change.

Work & Adventure Camp gives Junior High and Senior High kids a chance to spend two weeks immersed in challenging situations. With a theme of environmental steward-



Two guests successfully completing the high challenge course.

ship to tie the program together, campers spend two weeks rock climbing, whitewater rafting, backpacking, "playing" on the challenge course, and preserving and enhancing our Mountain environment by completing a work project. At an age where they are beginning to define themselves and their place in the world, these campers get to tackle new and difficult situations — and learn that they can overcome apparently insurmountable obstacles. It is wonderful to hear about Work & Adventure campers who return home glowing about the experience, or the camper who confides that W&A provided much-needed self-confidence. But the real success of the program is that campers transfer this enthusiasm and sense of self-worth to their everyday lives.

Adventure activities help set Mountaincamp apart from other camps. These activities give campers a chance to challenge themselves in a safe and supportive environment. Many campers become involved in outdoor pursuits as a result of their Mountaincamp experience, but everyone who comes through the program experiences personal growth and a newfound sense of awe and respect for themselves and our natural world.

I leave you with the words of John Muir, who said, "Whenever we go in the mountains, we find more than we seek."

Milestones Along the Way . . .

Welcome to Milestone Learning Center's new addition to *The Mountain Matters*, which we're currently calling "Milestones Along the Way."

The intent is to communicate to Mountain Members and Friends exciting news of activities and progress of this dynamic new offspring at **The Mountain Retreat & Learning Center**. Most importantly, it is an opportunity to share stories and experiences as we set about the task of fulfilling our mission. That mission is "to incite people to contribute to a just and ethical society" — a very big assignment for an as yet very small organization whose staff, participants, advisors and donors are dedicated to changing the world!

"Along the Way" we'll update you on current and developing programs and offer perspectives on some of today's issues. We'll provide glimpses of the rich and challenging dilemmas that emerge when people choose to transcend barriers of culture, creed and class in order to lift up a collective voice for decency, compassion and equity. There will also be articles about people who are moved to contribute time and energy to community service in local, national and international projects; or others who extend the generous hand of friendship and discovery to people in other cultures. Articles may disturb, fascinate, confuse or enlighten you. Tell us what you think. E-mail at: mountain@dnet.net (please be sure to put "Milestone" in the subject line); or write to Mile-

stones Along the Way, c/o The Mountain Retreat & Learning Center, P. O. Box 1299, Highlands, NC 28741.

And join us along the way! Since the fees charged for many of the programs do not cover all of the expenses, Milestone is seeking funding from both institutions and individuals to assist in covering program costs and participant scholarships.

We are deeply grateful to those who have already said "Yes!" to Milestone's philosophy and programs through gifts of \$5,000 or more:

Anonymous Foundation — \$40,000 matching grant for L-EAP!

Anonymous Individual — \$40,000 (to match the Foundation)

Anonymous Individual — \$10,000 (to match the Foundation)

John Lantz — \$10,000

Unitarian Universalist Funding Program — \$8,000 (Senior High Leadership School — see below)

Believe in us — Please join those who have already stepped forward — send a generous contribution to **The Mountain**, designated for Milestone. By doing this you support both organizations! You may call **Shelley Denham** for further information — **Ext. 224**.

GOOD NEWS!

The Unitarian Universalist Funding Program just awarded Milestone Learning Center \$8,000 to be used for scholarships for Senior High Leadership School for Social Justice. We're really excited about this grant because it will make the schools accessible to more groups and individuals. Many thanks to the UUFP for their generous support!



L-EAP Coordinator, *Anne Mayher* (left) and Milestone Coordinator, *Sarah Walls* (right).

Re-Visioning REFUEL

The first two semesters of REFUEL (Residential Education For Unique Experiential Learning) were completed in December 1998, and a total of seven students affirmed our belief in the value and potential of this program. Participants, staff and faculty all experienced the rewards and challenges inherent in an experience of this depth and duration.

Milestone staff recently decided to cancel the fall session of REFUEL. With cumulative knowledge about the effort that it takes to market and run REFUEL, as well as the expertise and support of the Milestone Board of Advisors, we will be assessing how to best serve our constituencies through new partnerships, marketing initiatives and program modules.

It was exciting to see the Milestone Advisors' tremendous energy around determining what a different residential model might look like. We will be utilizing their contacts and ideas to re-assess this type of programming. This is a healthy hiatus that will allow Milestone to offer an even more effective program. During this time, we will be taking stock of what we've learned about REFUEL in its existing configuration and gathering information about other models. We are confident that this will result in a model that reflects both the innovation of the current program and sustainability of a product that responds to the needs of the market.

If you have questions or concerns, please call Sarah Walls at Ext. 241.

L:EAP! Update

The L:EAP! program is off and running and new L:EAP! programs are in the works! L:EAP! (Leadership: Ethical Action Project!) offers an opportunity for groups of youth in particular geographic locations to spend up to 2 years focusing on values clarification, social justice issues, and community building. Over the 18-24 month period, the youth spend 6 weekends at **The Mountain** and have regular meetings in their hometown. Halfway through the program the group decides on a service project, targeting a social justice issue in their home community.

The pilot L:EAP! group, which consists of youth from the UU Congregation and Quaker Church, both located in Asheville, North Carolina, continues to affirm the importance and potential of L:EAP!. They have decided to host an inter-cultural community festival in the city of Asheville. The festival will provide fun and interesting booths and activities designed to educate children and youth (and their parents) about embracing diversity and reducing prejudice. They are in the process of enlisting youth from diverse backgrounds to be on the planning committee. The Mayor of Asheville, **Leni Sitenick**, was most impressed when the L:EAP! youth met with her to enlist her support. She agreed to have a ceremonial role and expressed her appreciation for their professional presentation! The community festival is set for May 2000. Many thanks to **Laurel Amabile**, DRE at the Asheville UU Congregation, for her vision and the joyful commitment she brings to her role as Asheville Coordinator. For more information or if you are interested in starting a L:EAP! group, please contact **Anne Mayher**, L:EAP! Coordinator, at Ext. 238.

Dallas Youth visit The Mountain

Fifteen youth and three advisors from the First Unitarian Church of Dallas, Texas, arrived at **The Mountain** on June 5 for their specially designed Leadership School. It was an intense week. Piling into the schedule two-and-a-half days of service work, a full day of canoeing and workshops, they were all fairly worn out by Friday. For many of the students, it was their first time focusing on social problems in a classroom setting and in service work. They responded in a variety of ways. Some resisted, some fully engaged in it and some were quiet and pensive, but it was clear that it changed their consciousness in one way or another.

Not only did they learn about various social issues and tools for communication, they also came to some important conclusions about how they operate within their group. At the end of the week, we discussed how they can be more proactive and collaborative in planning their activities and determining the course of their next year.

The week was a success. The youth set group goals on their arrival day and narrowed them to the three most important ones: have fun, grow together as a group and gain outward direction. As we evaluated the week, it was unanimous that the group had accomplished its goals.

For more information about the Dallas youth group and their Leadership School experience, check out their website: www.dallasuu.org/yr00.html.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Mother Daughter Weekend Retreat with Special Guest Sheila Kay Adams — September 17 - 19

This special weekend retreat offers a time for daughters, age 11-18, and their mothers to spend quality time together focusing on their relationships. Our Program Staff will lead you in communication and cooperation activities, sharing successes and challenges and looking to the future. A time capsule will be dedicated and buried holding special mementos from participants. Vespers and journal writing encourage story telling and reflection. As a special treat, **Sheila Kay Adams** will perform Saturday evening. Sheila is a dynamic seventh generation ballad singer, banjo player and storyteller who will share family anecdotes and music, providing a glimpse into the culture of mountain families. Mothers and daughters will leave the weekend feeling renewed and stronger in their relationship. All activities are intergenerational.

Prime Connections — September 19 - 22

This is a program for gay men 40 and over. Partners or companions of all ages are welcome. The retreat will provide an oppor-

tunity to socialize, network and learn within a community of older gay men. The workshops fill part of each day, but there will be time for exploring the area with hikes, a waterfall tour, or other adventures.

Paddling in the Fall Colors — October 17-20

Enjoy fall colors at their peak while learning to paddle whitewater. Sunday we'll be on the lake to learn the basics. Monday we'll go rafting on the Nantahala to learn river techniques. Tuesday we'll paddle canoes on a local river.

Mountain Fall Fest — October 29 - 31

Trick or Treat! A weekend of fun is planned to celebrate the changing seasons and the Halloween holiday. Everyone is invited to join **The Mountain** for a ghostly good time making masks, painting pumpkins, hiking through the changing trees, bobbing for apples and more. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes as **Lee Knight** will lead us in an evening of folk songs and dancing. Singles, families, young and old . . . everyone is invited!

Karen Thomson Workshops

Fall / Winter 1999-2000

Angels in Contemporary Life – September 17 - 19

What are angels and what role do they play in our contemporary lives? What kinds of experiences are being associated with angels now? Learn how angels have been reflected throughout the world's history, art and literature; how they guard, guide, heal and play with us. Whether you are a skeptic or a believer, this class is ideal for individuals who want to have fun learning about angels.

Fees: \$350

Yoga & Meditation Retreat – October 22 - 24

Participate in a retreat that leaves you feeling refreshed, relaxed, yet energized and in a heightened state of awareness. For every level, beginners through advanced. Instruction will include yoga deep breathing, gentle stretches, and a variety of asanas/yoga positions, including partner stretches. Meditations will punctuate the weekend. Recommended reading: *Yoga, Truth & Reincarnation*, Jess Stearn. **Fees: \$250**

Meditation Retreat – November 19 - 21

Gain practice and explore different kinds of meditation techniques. Through meditation, one can achieve relaxation, thus a reduction of stress, a sense of peace and well being, greater awareness and healing. During this retreat, you will have the opportunity to explore several methods of achieving a meditative state, including candle meditations, guided visualizations, color, music, toning, chanting, mantras, affirmations and a variety of sounds (drumming, rattling, chimes, bell). **Fees: \$250**

Archetypes and Symbolology: Learning to Read the Runes, Tarot, Cartouche or Medicine Cards December 10 - 12

Choose the symbol you'll focus on and bring your book and set of symbols suggested from the following: Blum, *The Book of Runes*; Gray, *The Complete Guide to the Tarot* and the Rider-Waite deck; Hope, *The Way of the Cartouche* and Egyptian card set; or Sams and Carson, *Medicine Cards*. Have fun learning to read symbols for self-development and for other people. Discussion will include intentions and ethics, use of prayer and "tuning in" processes, and the importance of working within Divine Will and for the highest good. **Fees: \$325**

Death and Dying: A Spiritual Approach January 28 - 30

Discover the viewpoint that death is a natural part of the rhythm of life. Explore spiritual approaches to death and dying through a variety of cultures, traditions, writers and theorists. Look at death and dying from the perspective of near-death experiences, discuss healthy ways of grieving, and learn about the role angels can play in the dying process. **Fees: \$325**

Karen Thomson, a resident in the Atlanta area, has been a teacher of yoga and meditation since 1975. She began certifying teachers of yoga and meditation through the Center of Healing & Spiritual Awareness. Among her other areas of study and practice are Re-Hun Therapy, Past Life Regressions, Hypnotherapy, Angel Akasha Readings, and Chakra and Auric Cleansing and Balancing.

Program Calendar — Fall / Winter 1999-2000

Note: Programs in **bold print** are open to the public. Call The Mountain Office for more information and a detailed brochure — (828) 526-5838

September

- 03-06 Mountain 20th Anniversary & Staff Reunion
- 03-06 Tallahassee UU Retreat
- 05-10 Elderhostel
- 12-17 Elderhostel
- 17-19 Mother-Daughter Weekend Retreat
- 17-19 Angels in Contemporary Life Workshop
- 17-19 Chamblee First Methodist Chancel Choir
- 17-19 LEAP! (Leadership Ethical Action Project!)
- 19-22 Prime Connections
- 22-26 Gay Spirit Visions Fall Retreat
- 26-01 Elderhostel
- 29-01 WomenSpirit Institute

October

- 01-03 WomenSpirit Gathering
- 03-08 Elderhostel
- 05-07 Enviro-Scope
- 08-10 First Existentialist Congregation Retreat
- 08-10 UUCA Fall Retreat
- 10-15 Elderhostel
- 13-15 Enviro-Scope: Mitchell Road Christian Academy
- 15-17 Atlanta Unity Women's Retreat
- 17-20 Paddling in the Fall Colors
- 17-22 Elderhostel
- 22-24 Yoga and Meditation Retreat
- 22-24 Mountain Ambassadors Meeting
- 22-24 Board of Friends Meeting
- 22-24 UU Men's Fellowship Retreat
- 22-24 Artist's Conference Network Retreat
- 24-29 Elderhostel
- 27-29 Enviro-Scope: Pace Academy
- 28-31 Exploring and Expanding Retreat
- 29-31 Mountain Fall Fest

November

- 31-05 Elderhostel
- 05-07 Presbyterian Student Center Retreat
- 05-07 Junior High CON
- 05-07 Mountain Board Meeting
- 07-08 Endowment Board Meeting
- 08-11 Fall SEUUMA Retreat
- 12-14 Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus Retreat
- 19-21 Meditation Retreat
- 19-21 Milestone Board Retreat
- 24-28 Life Member's Thanksgiving Celebration

December

- 03-05 Senior High CON
- 10-12 Light-Redmountain Retreat
- 10-12 Archetypes and Symbolology Workshop
- 23-26 Appalachian Christmas
- 26-29 Senior High Winter Break
- 30-02 Millennium on The Mountain

January

- 21-23 Junior High CON
- 28-30 Northwest UU Men's Retreat
- 28-30 Death and Dying: A Spiritual Approach

February

- 11-14 Atlanta Knitter's Retreat
- 18-20 Mountain Board Meeting
- 18-20 Dream Interpretation
- 25-27 Senior High CON

Conference Center Space

The Mountain provides meeting space and program support for retreats, seminars, board meetings, family reunions and more! While some groups provide their own programming, The Mountain also offers a wide variety of workshops and outdoor adventure programming to match the interests and needs of your group. We can accommodate groups as large as 150 to as small as 10; audiovisual equipment is provided. Meals (including vegetarian) are provided on-site.



Improvements Abound

Since Spring we've seen lots of construction and re-modeling here at **The Mountain** as the following indicate:

- Paving the "ring road" from the volleyball court around Cabins 7-20, the Dining Hall, and back to the Tower. What a difference this has made — no more washing away of the road after rain storms, no cars getting stuck in the gravel . . .
- New lake dock — thanks to several volunteers from the **UU Congregation of Gwinnett**, we have a new dock.
- New beach — thanks to the generosity of Vision Holders **Linda** and **Mike Plummer**, we now have a sandy beach at the lake. It was built as a combined effort of **Ian Denham**, **Neal Andreae**, and our **Ascenders**.
- Walkway to the lakes — **Work & Adventure Campers** continued the work started last summer and now have completed the walkway to the lakes and put a railing on much of it.

- Dining Hall Parking Lot — the recycling area has been relocated nearer the Kitchen and off to the side. Specific parking places have been created for 4 vans in that lot. And in those parking places, we have two new vans to showcase thanks to the great shopping efforts of **Neal Andreae**: GMC Safari 9-passenger van and a Ford Mark III 14-passenger van. We're proud to have quality vehicles!
- The Tower and Cabin 7 are being completely rebuilt.
- Painting, painting, painting — thanks to **Bill Smith**.
- Screen doors for the cabins, again thanks to **Bill** and **volunteers**.
- Skirting of the Development Building with doors for access, courtesy of volunteer **Paul French**, who also skirted Cabin 8.

Thanks to all who have made these improvements possible — workers and funders!

Does your organization have a matching gifts program?

In the past, most companies have not been willing to match gifts to 501(c) (3) religious organizations. Of late, however, we're seeing some loosening of the regulations. Notably, we have recently received matching gifts from both Bell & Howell and Bell South. If you've never tried the program before, give it a try and send the forms with your gift to us. We'll be sure to include information about our non-religious programs, especially the Milestone Learning Center. Thank you.

Order your 2000 Calendar NOW!

By the end of September, we'll have our own **Mountain Calendar** for the year 2000. Thirteen color pictures of Mountain related scenes will be a wonderful wall hanging which will remind you daily of this special place. Each month will also have highlights of our 20-year history. When the year is completed, you'll probably want to save the calendar as a memento.

Place your orders now — \$15 each. They'll make great Christmas presents, nice giveaways to friends and business associates, etc. Just complete the form at the bottom of Page 11, and your calendar will be mailed by early October.

Design Contest for Mountain Banner

Anyone who has ever been to a UU General Assembly is thrilled by the banner parade on the opening night. This year, some of us concluded that **The Mountain** should have its own banner for future GAs.

Thus, we announce a design contest to develop a banner. The actual dimensions of the banner are 32" wide X 51" high, but the design only needs to reflect the general shape. The submitted design should have a detailed description of

the materials, colors, etc. The person designing it doesn't necessarily need to be the person who will make it, if that design is chosen.

The deadline for designs to be submitted is October 1, 1999, and the winner will be announced in the December issue of **The Mountain Matters**. The prize will be a free stay at **The Mountain** for two (2 nights/6 meals). Questions? Contact **Larry Wheeler** at Ext. 230 or e-mail (attn: Larry).

gifts
since
last
issue

Our profound thanks to . . .

Trillium Vision Holders (\$100,000+)

Elinor Artman, Cincinnati, OH

Flame Azalea Vision Holders (\$10,000-\$14,999)

Irv & Millie Kagan, Atlanta, GA

Patron Members (\$5,000+)

Libba Green, Tallahassee, FL

Jeri Moulder & Paul Murray, Santa Barbara, CA

Kay Giese & David Sweat, Athens, GA

Life Members (\$1,600 - \$2,000)

Laurel & Frederick Amabile, Asheville, NC

Joyce Fleming & Carlton King, Atlanta, GA

Joyce King, Largo, FL

Lisa Macy & Ed Munster, Dunwoody, GA

Sally Schumacher, Richmond, VA

Barbara (Bobbi) Stenstrom, Augusta, GA

In Memoriam

Bernice Donavon (1915-1981)

Thomas Donavon (1914-1992)

(These are the parents of Vision Holder Harry Donavon)

Management Information System (Gifts of \$250+)

Jeri Moulder, Santa Barbara, CA — \$1,000

Scholarship Fund (Gifts of \$250+)

Chris & Maralyn Christoffersen, Scaly Mountain, NC — \$385

Sara & Walt Johnson, Southfield, MI — \$385

Comstock Fund (Gifts of \$250+)

Thomas Jefferson UU District — \$464

Special Gifts/General Fund

Dan & Sue Boyce, Bloomfield Hills, MI — \$346

Doug Bracy, Alexandria, VA — \$500

Betsy Ellis & James Lawrence, Atlanta, GA — \$2,000 (Generator)

Additional Short-term loans to help us maintain the momentum

Margaret Ann Hogue, Grovetown, GA

Dixie & Miles McGinty, Cullowhee, NC

Bobbi Stenstrom, Augusta, GA

Don't forget our new Bank Draft options

Members are starting to sign up for the Bank Draft option for their membership payments. It's painless to do and **The Mountain** will then deduct your monthly or quarterly payment from your designated account. Contact **Larry Wheeler** at Ext. 230 for more information.

New 5 year Promissory Notes

Peggy Beard, Atlanta, GA

Dixie & Miles McGinty, Cullowhee, NC

Nancy Heath & Larry Wheeler, Sky Valley, GA

Norma Zabel, Gainesville, FL

Endowment Enlightenment

Question: How can you make a lasting impact in the lives of future generations and reinforce those values you hold most deeply without using money you might need during your lifetime?

Answer: Make a bequest to **The Mountain**. How?

Setting up a bequest can really be quite simple.

- Make **The Mountain** a beneficiary on a life insurance policy
- Or an IRA
- Or a company retirement plan

Each involves filling out a free one-page form supplied by the company. It takes one phone call, five minutes of time, and a 33-cent stamp.

Alternatively, a bequest can also be made by putting **The Mountain** in your will or trust. A specified dollar amount or a percentage of the estate can be so designated.

All such bequests fully qualify as a deduction from your taxable estate. Why not take some of those dollars you would pay to the IRS and send them to **The Mountain**?

For further information, contact **Larry Wheeler** at Ext. 230, or any of the 10 members of **The Mountain** Endowment Committee: **Dan Boyce**, Chair (248) 539-9178; **Faith Comstock**; **Ann Creech**; **Harry Donavon**; **Carole Light**; **Jeri Moulder**; **Bill Pulgram**; **June Sholin**; **John Vacher**; or **Bob Whitney**.

What do I get from an investment in **The Mountain**?

This is a question we hear all the time from folks, be it around a membership, a designated gift or a loan. It's also one which has an easy answer (in fact, several of them):

- It's a way to ensure that **The Mountain** is available for generations to come
- Life Memberships provide tangible benefits — rate reductions, Thanksgiving Weekend, Memorial Day Weekend, friendships and recognition
- A Life Membership benefits both the donor and a person of his/her choosing
- The satisfaction that **The Mountain** is "reinvesting" the money in ways that help others to benefit themselves — thus the original investment serves as a multiplier
- And, yes, donations are tax-deductible

Volunteer Opportunities

You are cordially invited to come to **The Mountain** for a volunteering visit in late Summer/Fall.

What do the items listed below have in common? The answer is below at *

1. Trail work/trimming/landscaping/spreading woodchips
2. Cleanup craft barn, garage, stable, etc.
3. Connecting water lines to cabins
4. New/improved signs
5. Painting, caulking cabins or the Tower, etc.
6. Adding elements to play structure — steering wheel, cargo net, suspension bridge, etc.
7. Road cleanup
8. Pressure wash decks and steps
9. Landscaping/clearing in the Memorial Garden
10. Repairing/painting rocking chairs
11. Cleaning, waxing/polishing vehicles
12. Recycling
13. Transplant shrubs for screening in Challenge Course
14. General building maintenance and repairs

15. Kitchen: dishwashing
16. Housekeeping: cabin cleaning, room setup, etc.

*These all are things that **volunteers** can do.

The preceding list shows lots of tasks you can help us with in our current construction/renovation work and some that we know from experience will always be on our volunteer list. This list is current through Thanksgiving. By then, there will be more exciting opportunities, and we'll publish an update.

Remember, when you give us 4 hours of work, one night's lodging is free. The next 4 hours give you one day's meals. Volunteers (individually and/or groups) also can be credited with work done at home. Examples: **Anne Staley** sewed new drapes at home; **Terry Beale** produced and mailed letters to celebrities to get contributions for our Thanksgiving auction.

Appealing? Intriguing? Here are 4 (EASY) steps:

1. Look at your schedule and pick some dates.
2. Select a (a few) project(s) you want to do.
3. Call **Robert E. Smith** at Ext. 227. He will check on the status of projects and availability of housing. (You can also e-mail, write, or fax.)
4. If we have a match, finalize your plans and come ahead.

Patron Members Joe & Joan Moore Honored

The First UU Church of Nashville, Tennessee recently honored long-time members **Joe and Joan Moore** with the establishment of the **Joe and Joan Moore Award** for commitment and service. This award honors their almost 50 years of service to the Nashville church. Their service goes well beyond local activities, and we have been privileged to have them as part of **The Mountain** family from the beginning.



Bill Smith is Selected Volunteer of Note

Bill Smith, from Snellville, Georgia, is our newest **Volunteer of Note**. He had called in April and requested to volunteer with us. Bill had such fun and made such a positive impact on our work accomplishments, that before long, the idea of a permanent job was being discussed. This did come to pass in June. In those intervening weeks, Bill gave us a big boost in cabin renovation, completion of the Milestone Building renovation, and a host of things that needed attention. His total contribution was 284 volunteer hours. Of course, his contributions continue, and he joins a long list of employees whose Mountain career started with being Volunteers. **Thank you Bill!**



YES! I want to make a donation to support The Mountain's Vision!

Apply my contribution to:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ 2000 Calendar | ☐ Bottom of The Mountain | ☐ Scholarship Fund | ☐ General Fund |
| ☐ \$50 | ☐ \$100 | ☐ \$250 | ☐ \$500 |
| ☐ \$750 | ☐ \$1,000 | ☐ \$5,000 | ☐ \$_____ |

Pay By: ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature on Card: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (day) _____ (evening) _____

Time to start thinking about Thanksgiving

Invitations for Thanksgiving weekend will go to all Life Members of record as of August 15. Remember, this is a weekend without fees for Life Members and their families. Special this year will be the 20th Anniversary Auction — thanks to **Melanie Morel Sullivan** and **Terry Beale**, we've already received some neat items — Mary Tyler Moore Show Scripts autographed by Ed Asner and Mary Tyler Moore, *A White House Diary* autographed by Lady Bird Johnson, and a Samantha doll. Also, there'll be many autographed pictures from celebrities. Our Minister for the weekend will be **The Rev. Dillman Sorrells**, of Rochester, Minnesota, but formerly from Clemson, South Carolina. If this sounds like the place to be for Thanksgiving and you're NOT yet a Life Member, contact **Larry Wheeler** at Ext. 230.

Remember to become a Life Member before the rates increase

Now is the perfect time to join at the current rates. Consider a holiday gift. Give an additional Life Membership to a youth under the age of 18. Just understand that you only have between now and December 31:

One-Time Payment — \$1,600

Up to 5 years — \$2,000

Young Adult (18-35) — \$2,000 (9-year plan)

\$100/year — 4 years

\$200/year — 2 years

\$400/year — 3 years

Additional Life Membership (under 18) — \$1,200 one-time payment

As of January 1, 2000, our Life Member rates will increase from the current \$1,600/\$2,000 levels to:

One-Time payment — \$2,000

Up to 5 years — \$2,500

Questions? Call **Larry Wheeler** at Ext. 230.

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