



# THE MOUNTAIN

Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc.

Energizing people to work for positive change

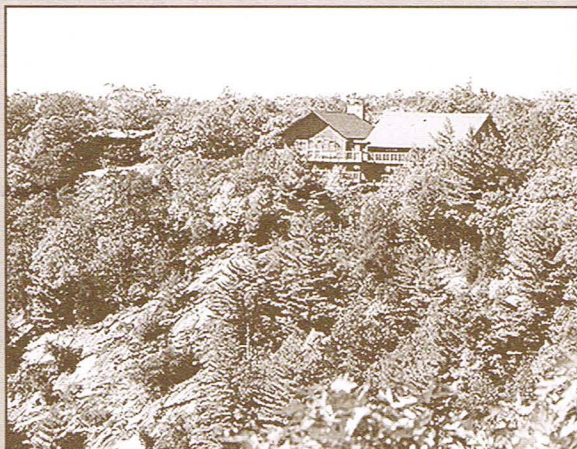
November 2003

Dear Mountain Members and Friends,

**There is an old Yiddish  
Proverb that says,**

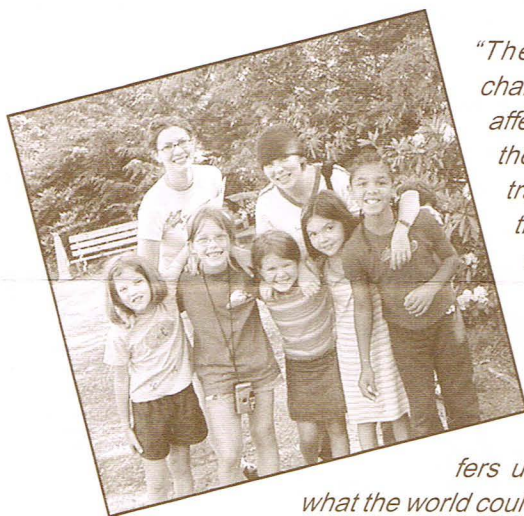
**"If you want your dreams  
to come true . . .  
don't sleep."**

**It seems hard to believe that  
this past October 15 marked  
the 24th anniversary of the  
date that we purchased this  
very special place and**



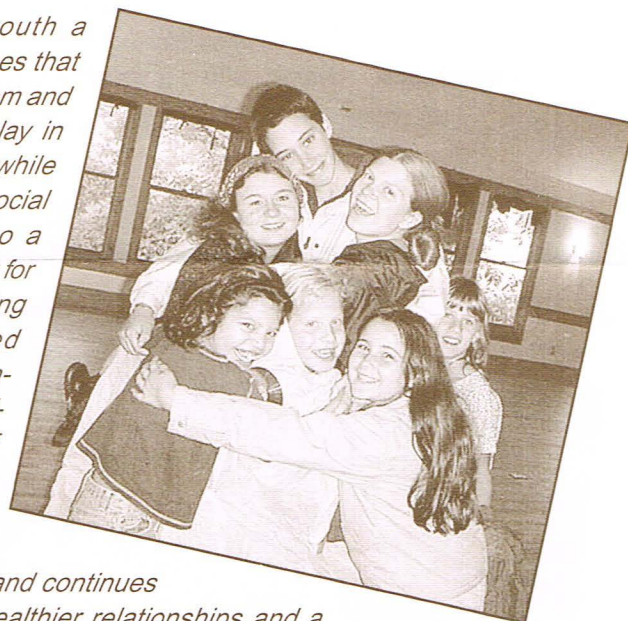
*This photo of the Lodge appeared in a USA  
Today article on April 2, 1999, which featured  
"10 great places to . . . renew the soul."*

**marked the beginning of our  
25th year. During the next 12  
months we will be celebrat-  
ing in a variety of ways and  
hope that you'll find an  
event(s) that captures your  
imagination and will ener-  
gize you to come to The  
Mountain – watch for up-  
coming articles in *The  
Mountain Matters*.**



*"The Mountain offers youth a  
chance to explore the issues that  
affect the world around them and  
the role that they can play in  
transforming these . . . while  
this helps to develop social  
conscience, it is also a  
valuable building block for  
everyone in becoming  
active, empowered  
adults. . . . The Moun-  
tain community of-*

*fers us fleeting glimpses of  
what the world could be like, where all are  
valued, where people are empowered to participate,  
where the earth is held sacred and spirituality nurtured.  
While this is especially important for youth, as it was and continues  
to be for me, it is important for all people seeking healthier relationships and a  
more sustainable society."*



**Geoff Boyce  
former camper, ASCENDER, counselor  
and current political activist**



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*"After my last summer as a counselor I moved on to college and then to Peace Corps. I have no doubt that without the confidence I gained at The Mountain I would not be here right now ... the things that I have seen and done here in Malawi would have only been idealistic dreams. ... And I echo many an ASCENDER when I say thank-you to The Mountain for giving me one of the best experiences of my life."*

Katie Clayton  
former camper, ASCENDER, counselor,  
now in the Peace Corps in Malawi



So, what have the "dreamers" accomplished in the last 24 years? The following are some highlights (an entire listing is much longer):



- **Property** – acquired 12 additional acres in 1999 for a total campus of 96 acres
- **New buildings** – Lodge (including a library), REC Hall, Chapel, President's home and offices
- **Renovated buildings** – Dining Hall Lounge, the Tower, Cabins 4 through 20 including winterization of 13 through 20, the ASCENDER Home
- **Infrastructure** – new water and waste systems, low flush toilets, fiber optic cable serving 25 computer work stations, host site for on-line leadership development courses, high and low ropes initiatives courses
- **Accessibility** – ramping to and accessible bathrooms in all public meeting and dining spaces, three totally accessible living spaces. An active scholarship program for those who need help (more than \$45,000 a year)
- **Attendance** – over 90,000 guests of which 7,000+ youth were in summer camps, 15,000+ were in other youth programs, 15,000+ were in Elderhostel, 33,000+ Unitarian Universalists, and 20,000 people of other faiths "on retreat"
- **Programs** – Leadership Schools for lay leaders and Religious Educators, Leadership Schools for Social Justice and weekend theme cons for youth, web-based leadership training, Gay & Lesbian, multi-cultural and multi-faith retreats



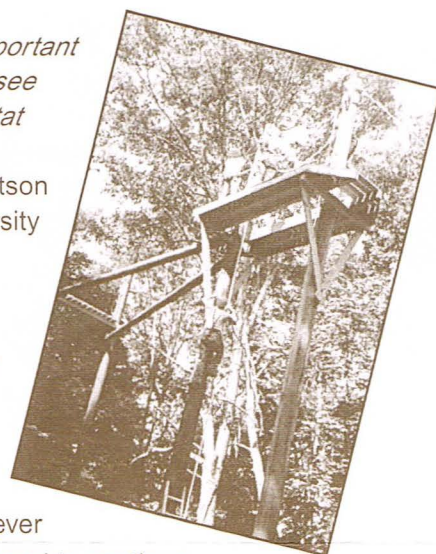
*"I want you to know I disagree with almost all your religious and political values. And I want you to know you've given me something to think about for the rest of my life. Thank you."*

An Elderhosteler

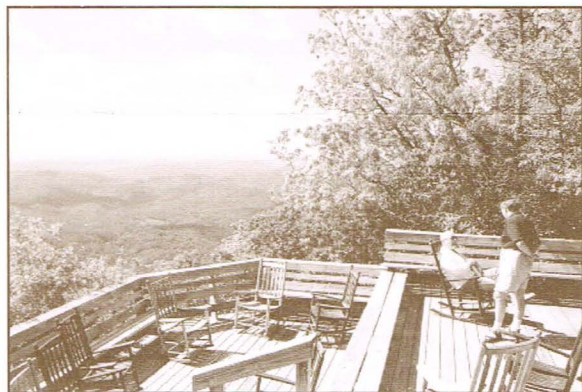


*"The students took risks that they normally would not have taken. It was important for those who have never seen the mountains to explore the culture and to see nature at its best, where all people and animals coexist in their natural habitat without humanity ignoring nature."*

James Cuthbertson  
Johnson C. Smith University



But as excited as we are about these accomplishments we remain very aware of how much can and must still be done. **Many of our dreams are**

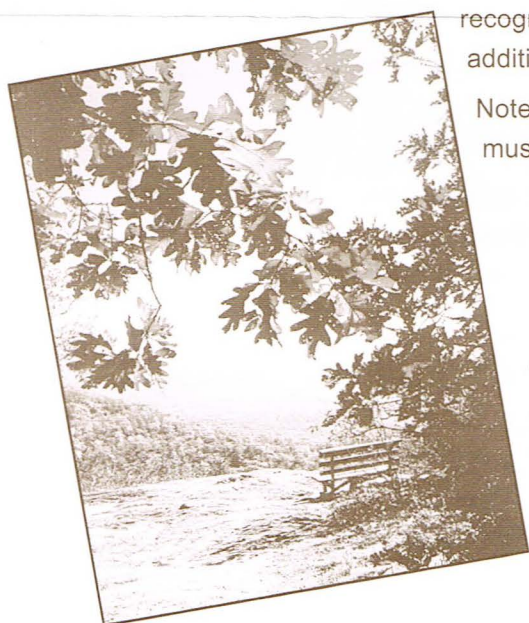


**still unfulfilled** and this isn't the time to relax – there probably never will be such a time. We need to continue the work we do and ask for your support.

Similar to our approach when we first started The Mountain by raising \$354,000 from over 500 "dreamers" (Charter Life Members) in the first 2 years, we are now launching a 25th year Anniversary campaign, called **"A Jump Start for the Next 25 Years."** It works this way:

- Consider giving \$2,500 or multiples such as \$5,000, \$7,500, \$10,000 in appreciation of The Mountain's 25 years (these gifts may be pledged to be paid within a 25-month period – November 1, 2003 – November 30, 2005).
- If \$2,500 exceeds your current capabilities, please think about giving in increments of \$100 for as many years of The Mountain's existence as you can afford (e.g., in appreciation of 10 years – \$1,000). These gifts need to be paid in full by **June 30, 2004**.
- Public recognition will come in the form of special new plaques (reflecting different giving levels), listings in *The Mountain Matters* and the Annual Report.
- For existing Benefactors (Life, Patron and Visionholders), new gifts will accrue towards the next level of recognition and for those not yet donors. Gifts of \$2,500 or greater will, in addition to this appeal, be recognized at the appropriate Benefactor level.

Note: To qualify for recognition as a donor to the appeal, gifts and pledges must be in addition to any existing commitments to The Mountain.



*"Before going to The Mountain ... little did I know I was so far away from truly embracing the fullness of life. ... But the moment I set foot on Meditation Rock ... everything changed. I knew immediately that something was different. And it still is."*

Daniel Kuehn, Senior High  
First Unitarian Church, Dallas, Texas





*"Our members feel facility and the staff at The Mountain are unmatched. Our meetings are often very ambitious and the comfortable atmosphere allows our participants to give their focus to the work — and enjoy themselves after the work is done."*

Bob Baschnagel

Associate Director, Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition

**Why Participate?** The Yiddish proverb is the answer — "If

you want your dreams to come true . . . don't sleep." This is

not the time for us to "rest on our laurels," to think The Mountain "has

arrived" and we've done all that we need to do. Quite the contrary — even more is asked of us now **because** of our past accomplishments. **We have built a facility, assembled a staff, developed programs and technology to do transformative work.** In many ways, our work is just now beginning as we plan:

### Programs

- Youth CONS for UU and multi-faith groups — service focused
- Weekend camps for under-served children in the local area
- Programs for Youth and Young Adult leaders to learn how to build inclusive, interfaith, caring communities
- Leadership programs for church administrators, musicians, community and activist organizations
- Youth advisor leadership training
- More grandparent-grandchildren programs — connecting generations

### Physical Plant

- Upgrade staff, volunteer and intern housing
- Enhance and increase the use of the base for outdoor challenges, activities and environmental studies
- Build a new entrance road and improve the road up the mountain

**Greater accessibility** — hearing, sight, financial (more scholarships)

**Debt** — Reduce and eventually eliminate it - pure and simple

As you can see, we have many unfulfilled dreams, unmet opportunities — this is not the time to sleep.

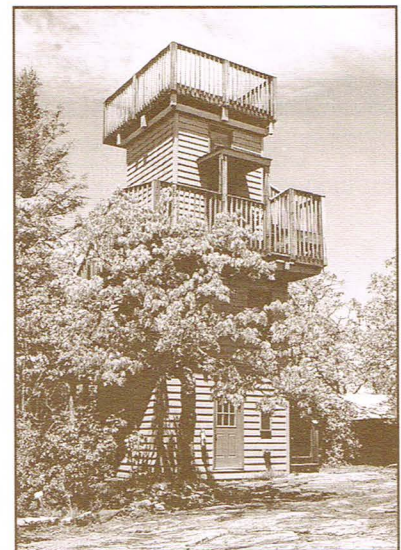
The entire staff and board take our responsibilities to The Mountain seriously and at the same time are excited by the opportunities ahead of us. But we need your help. We ask you to join us in this campaign, **"A Jump Start for the Next 25 Years,"** by mailing your check today or making a pledge. We three have, and we look forward to your participation.

In the spirit of dreamers,

  
Tony Stringer  
Board Chair

  
Tom Warth  
President

  
Larry Wheeler  
Development Director



*P.S. Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift or pledge.*