

# THE Mountain matters

SPECIAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FUND  
EDITION

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc.

May 2002

## INSIDE

What is The Mountain  
Endowment Fund?

2

Planned Gifts Benefit Donors  
and The Mountain

3

How to Make a Planned Gift  
Commitment to The Mountain  
Endowment Fund and  
Become a Member of the  
President's Society

3



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RETREAT & LEARNING CENTERS, INC.  
P. O. Box 1299  
Highlands, NC 28741  
(828) 526-5838  
fax (828) 526-2511  
info@mountaincenters.org  
www.mountaincenters.org

Tom Warth, President  
Carol Hamilton, Editor  
Walita Olson, Production

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## THE PRESIDENT'S SOCIETY *Invitation for Charter Membership*

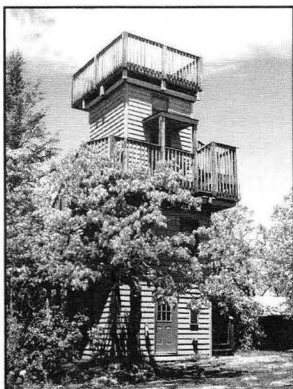
**A**s I begin my 13th year as President of the Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc., I am more energized than ever by our mission, **"To embrace the diversity of life, creating an environment to energize people to work for positive change."**

And I am deeply committed to the development of our centers as they offer relevant programs to people of all ages, cultures, faith backgrounds, orientation and abilities. These include: the Retreat Center, host to many diverse people and organizations, a place for spiritual renewal and nurturing space to reconnect with one's self, with others and with the natural world; Milestone Learning Center, creating environments for youth to explore, appropriately express and act upon their personal values, accept differing values and opinions, and to feel a sense of belonging to a loving group of peers; Learning Center for Leadership, providing web-based and residential training programs for congregations and non-profit organizations designed to prepare people to serve as members of transformational leadership teams within their communities and society.

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I AM PROUD TO SERVE  
AS PRESIDENT DURING  
THE FORMATION  
OF THIS GROUP OF  
DEDICATED MOUNTAIN  
SUPPORTERS . . .

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I have also learned that if The Mountain is to realize its full potential it needs a consistent source of funds far into the future to ensure its legacy. My wife Jane and I have made such a commitment to this future by including The Mountain and The Mountain's Endowment Fund in our estate planning. We ask you to consider doing likewise—commit to a planned gift for The Mountain, be it a bequest, life insurance designation, retirement plan beneficiary designation or other estate planning instrument. You will be making a difference in the lives of many through your support of this fine, relevant institution.

**For those of you who make such a planned gift commitment or contribute a current outright gift to the Endowment Fund by June 30, 2003, The Mountain will recognize you as a Charter Member of the President's Society.** I am proud to serve as President during the formation of this group of dedicated Mountain supporters and I look forward to welcoming each of you to this special group of visionaries.

Tom Warth, President

## About The Mountain

Located high in the Southern Appalachian Mountains, The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers is a place to expand your horizons—explore new ideas, meet new people and reconnect with your self, community and the natural world.

Surrounded by the Nantahala National Forest, our home is Little Scaly Mountain (4200' elevation), four miles southwest of Highlands, North Carolina.

The Mountain offers excellent programming for all ages—on The Mountain and beyond. **The Retreat Center** hosts diverse groups and provides programming for all ages. **Milestone Learning Center** sponsors participant-driven programs designed to facilitate personal growth and leadership development of youth. **The Learning Center for Leadership** provides programs and resources that enhance skills for transformational leadership in congregations.

Inspiration mixes with renewal as you challenge yourself to grow and learn.

## The Mountain Endowment Fund, Inc.

### Board of Directors

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## What is The Mountain Endowment Fund?

**T**he Mountain Endowment Fund was established in 1997 to enhance the programs and the mission of The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc. An endowment fund provides a permanent source of continuing income to a charitable organization. Gifts are made to the fund, and each year a portion of the fund — usually about 5%, roughly equivalent to the income of the fund — is distributed to the organization to assist in carrying out its objectives and, in some cases, to carry out the particular wishes of a donor. Gifts to an endowment fund can be made while a donor is living (outright gifts) or may be made through bequests, trusts, life insurance policies or other estate planning instruments (planned gifts).

To learn more about planned gifts and their considerable benefits to both The Mountain and its donors, see the article on the next page. The beauty of an endowment fund is that it is permanent and designed to grow over time through contributions and prudent investment management. In fact, most mature non-profit organizations need a healthy endowment fund if they hope to be viable long-term entities.

Since its inception, The Mountain Endowment Fund has increased to several hundred thousand dollars in value, thanks to the generosity and thoughtfulness of a number of supporters of The Mountain. The growth of the fund has occurred as a result of the foresight of donors of outright gifts, including cash and stock, and its growth will also benefit from future gifts established through the estate planning of donors. Although The Mountain Endowment Fund is still in its early stages, an Endowment Board of Directors has been established and works to encourage outright and planned gift contributions to the fund and to oversee fund investments. Donors who make an outright contribution or a planned gift commitment to the Endowment Fund become members of the President's Society.

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**DONORS WHO MAKE AN  
OUTRIGHT CONTRIBUTION  
OR A PLANNED GIFT  
COMMITMENT TO THE  
ENDOWMENT FUND BE-  
COME MEMBERS OF THE  
PRESIDENT'S SOCIETY.**

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The information in this publication is not intended as legal or professional tax advice. For legal or personal tax advice, please consult an attorney or professional tax advisor.

## Planned Gifts Benefit Donors and The Mountain

**P**lanned gifts, sometimes referred to as deferred gifts, are gift commitments made through estate planning.

Planned gifts can take the form of a bequest, a provision in a living trust, life insurance proceeds, a life income plan such as a charitable remainder trust or charitable gift annuity, a beneficiary designation in a retirement plan or IRA, and in several other ways. Planned gifts often provide a donor either immediate or future tax benefits—or both. Brief explanations of planned gifts follow:

### Bequests

A charitable bequest in a will is a provision that distributes a specific amount or percentage of one's estate to a charitable organization such as The Mountain. If one's estate is subject to estate or inheritance taxes, a charitable bequest usually avoids taxation on the value of the bequest.

### Living Trust Provisions

The terms of a living trust can provide for the distribution of an amount or percentage to The Mountain upon the termination of the trust. Such a distribution may also allow avoidance of estate or inheritance taxes.

### Life Insurance Policies

The Mountain may be designated as a partial or full beneficiary of life insurance proceeds upon the insured's death. Such proceeds to a charitable organization may also be free from estate taxation in an estate subject to such tax. If a donor has an insurance policy with cash value and no longer needs that policy, it can be donated to The Mountain with an immediate charitable tax deduction.

Continued on page 4

## How to Make a Planned Gift Commitment to The Mountain Endowment Fund and Become a Charter Member of the President's Society

**The President's Society** recognizes those who have made a planned gift commitment to The Mountain, or who have made an outright gift to The Mountain Endowment Fund. Charter member status will be bestowed upon those who become members of the President's Society by June 30, 2003. There will also be a special inaugural recognition event for charter members at The Mountain during the Memorial Day weekend in 2003. **To make a bequest to The Mountain's Endowment Fund or to designate it in any other planned gift, the following wording is appropriate: The Mountain Endowment Fund,**

**Inc., Highlands, North Carolina, a not-for-profit organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.**

If you have included The Mountain in your estate plans or would like additional information, please fill in and mail the form below and we will enter your name on the charter member roster for the President's Society. We have records of all who have made outright gifts to date to the Endowment Fund and these donors are also charter members of the society.

Continued from page 3

### Charitable Remainder Trusts

These trusts can be established during the lifetime of donors to pay income back to the donors, usually for the rest of their lives! Upon the death of the donor, the remaining trust assets are distributed to The Mountain. Charitable Remainder Trusts provide a charitable deduction during the donors' lifetime, as well as a steady stream of income and, in some cases, deferral or avoidance of capital gains taxes on assets contributed to such trusts. There may also be estate tax advantages.

### Charitable Gift Annuities

These are similar to charitable remainder trusts, but without the need to create a trust instrument. Charitable gift annuities provide the donor with an attractive income stream and usually provide a significant future gift to The Mountain. Gift

annuities also provide an immediate charitable tax deduction and possible deferral or avoidance of capital gains taxes and estate taxes.

### Retirement Plans and IRAs

The Mountain can be named a partial or full beneficiary of an IRA or a retirement plan such as a 401(k) or 403(b). Such designations usually provide an attractive gift to The Mountain and can also significantly save on income and estate taxes.

### Gifts of Residence or Farm with Donor Retaining Life Estate

Donors may contribute a residence or farm to The Mountain, while retaining a lifetime right to live in the residence or on the farm. These gifts provide an immediate income tax deduction to the donor and may have favorable estate tax consequences.

**For additional information about planned gifts, please contact The Mountain's Development Office (828-526-5838, ext. 230) or see your estate planning professional. Working for designating a planned gift to The Mountain Endowment Fund is found on page 3 of this special edition of *The Mountain Matters*.**

## THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT & LEARNING CENTERS, INC.

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Highlands, NC 28741

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