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The Mountain Matters
published by

THE MOUNTAIN
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Printed by
Cashiers Printing



Energizing People to Work for Positive Change

"I hope you make continuous effort to train people with belief of bright world."

Korean Student, January 2004

In the August 2003 *The Mountain Matters*, I talked about the first two parts of The Mountain's mission – "Embracing the diversity of life" and "creating an environment" – and said I would write about the third part of the mission in a later issue. And that part, "to energize people to work for positive change." Without a doubt this is the heart of the mission, The Mountain's reason for being – "to energize people to work for positive change."

On occasion, Mountain guests have suggested that this phrase be amended to "define" positive change. They site examples of people and organizations working for change which they believe is "positive," but which would clearly not be "positive change" for us – change which would be outside of The Mountain's values of embracing diversity, of honoring the inherent worth and dignity of every human being. Each time this is mentioned I pause and reflect, agreeing that "positive change" can have many definitions. As often said, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder," and certainly, "positive change" is in the eye of the doer.

But on further reflection, it becomes very difficult to define "positive change" in a few words in the context of The Mountain. To me it's one of those "I'll know it when I see it" kind of things. And I think I speak for most Mountain participants when I say this – we know positive change when we see it or hear about it. And to this end I want to share the following:

"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 Mountain community offers 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."

By Geoff Boyce, former Camper, ASCENDER, Counselor and current political activist



Korean students with volunteer team leader Sarah Edelson.

Mission Statement

"... to embrace the diversity of life, creating an environment to energize people to work for positive change."

About The Mountain

Located high in the Blue Ridge of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers is a place to expand your horizons—explore new ideas, meet new people and re-connect with yourself, community and the natural world.

Surrounded by the Nantahala National Forest, our home is Little Scaly Mountain—four miles southwest of Highlands, North Carolina. At 4200' elevation, perched atop striking granite cliffs and nestled in an ancient dwarf white oak wind forest, our site is spectacular.

Open year-round, The Mountain offers excellent programming for all ages. Inspiration mixes with renewal as you challenge yourself to grow and learn.

Board of Trustees: 2004

| | |
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RESOURCE NETWORK

| | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Rosemary Bray McNatt | New York |
| Jeanne Shirley | Arizona |

Continued from page 1

"After my last summer as a counselor I moved on to college and then to the 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 and counselor
(now in the Peace Corps in Malawi)*

"We're at the Mountain, which for most of us is a sacred place ... we reconnect with the mountains, the wind, the stars, and rebuild ourselves in a community of trust and love ... that growth warms us, starting in our guts and radiating outward, so by the time we're ready to go home that green fire is burning in our eyes, a reminder that we are still alive, and through this place, and through each other, we are guided back to what it means to truly be human."

R. C. Mitchell, Senior High weekend conference (CON) PAL

"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 Univ. Freshman Class orientation group

"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 (Dallas Youth)

"I learned many things besides teamwork: open-minded, self-confidence, ability to express own ideas." "Thank you very much for your teaching about getting me more broad views in the world and more to improve teamwork." • "The classes about teamwork was absolutely impressing. It made us change. It changed our mind about the world. Our program made me 'Out of Well Frog.' I started to think differently. I hope we can change the world someday as you said." • "I hope you make continuous effort to train people with belief of bright world."

Korean Students at the conclusion of a one-week "orientation" program at The Mountain in January 2004, quoted verbatim as they wrote them in English.

"To embrace the diversity of life, creating an environment to energize people to work for positive change." I offer no better definition of positive change nor more conclusive proof of The Mountain's work than these testimonials.

This is The Mountain's mission, its reason for being. In the next issue of *The Mountain Matters*, I will address its vision – in what ways will the world be better because The Mountain works to fulfill its mission every day.

I invite you all to join The Mountain in working for a justice-filled, more peaceful world in the New Year.

Tom

Creating the World as it Can and Should Be

Korean Student Program 2004

By Shelley Jackson Denham

For the third consecutive year, Mountain staff were honored to welcome 26 electrical and computer engineering students from Daegu, South Korea for a program entitled "Engineering Design in a Global Economy." This sought-after pre-internship program is part of an ongoing partnership between The Mountain, Kyungpook National University (KNU)



Volunteer Bob Hargrove with his team.

and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC). Their trip to the USA was the first time away from home and on an airplane for many of the students; following a harrowing flight which included a last-minute, unexpected, overnight

diversion to Minneapolis, they finally arrived at The Mountain a day late but with huge smiles, courage, and appreciation in spite of bitter mountain winds and freezing temperatures.* They were excited about meeting Americans, speaking English – and trying their first American food – the hot stew and home-made bread awaiting them at midnight!

Mountain & UNCC staff worked with the students on critical thinking skills, systems, and effective teamwork; by the end of the week, they also had a greater awareness about the distribution of the world's wealth and the importance of accountability to one another to assure success. At week's end, four teams of students set off for UNCC to complete the remainder of their program under the leadership of Darwin Smith, Mountain Trustee. "Almost the entire program is hands-on experiential learning in a non-traditional sense," said Darwin. "It's a totally integrated program; it's not like they are going to have this experience at The Mountain and then go sit in a classroom at UNCC. The reason we need The Mountain's involvement is that teamwork and brainstorming are such new ideas to the students. The Mountain provides a better forum for developing understanding these concepts."

Dede Norungolo, editor of the Highlander Newspaper captured the essence of the program in one sentence of her full-page article which appeared in the January 22 edition:

"For 26 electrical and computer engineering students from Kyungpook National University (KNU), a recent visit became an exercise in connectivity that did not require a power source beyond the heart and spirit." Her interview with the students and faculty included an impromptu tour of the newspaper office, allowing the students an introduction to a functioning staff team.

In a moving ceremony on their last morning at The Mountain, each student and member of the staff, spoke about what they had learned during this first week in the program. The students offered thanks and praise to Bob Hargrove, Sarah Edelson, Nancy Heath and Glen Hawkins (volunteer and staff process observers and team leaders) for their work with their respective teams. "The students all declared how important this program was as they prepare to take their places within a thriving global economy. The world is a smaller place now to each person who worked on this program – we will never forget the Korean students, and they will never forget us," reflected Helen Bishop, principal staff faculty.

On January 30, Mountain staff went to Charlotte for the students' graduation and send-off party; a highlight of this event was when the students sang a love-song to UNCC and Mountain faculty. The goodbyes were tearful, the promises to stay in touch sincere. "We created a world together," said Darwin, "a world as it can and should be. Now it's up to us all to make that world a reality wherever we go."



Mountain and UNCC faculty and volunteers.

* The Mountain extends our heartfelt thanks to Simpsonwood Conference Center in Atlanta, who were prepared to host the students on Sunday night – we (and Simpsonwood) did not know until after 10 p.m. that night that the students would not make it to Atlanta. We also thank Roosevelt Bus Company – they were ready to bring the students to Simpsonwood on Sunday night, but then shifted their entire schedule driving through the night in order to transport them to The Mountain when they finally arrived on Monday night. These two organizations deserve a medal for their generosity and flexibility!

How often have Unitarian Universalists (and people of other "non-mainstream" faiths!) tried valiantly to describe their beliefs to people who can name theirs in 25 words or less? This was the focus of

The Mountain's UU WEEK in August 2003, facilitated by the Rev. Elinor Artman. Some of these "elevator speeches" (statements of faith that can be given in less time than it takes to ride the elevator!) have appeared in the *UU World* magazine. We wanted to share them with you ... for they

Mountain Song

Sharing our "Songs"

are indeed among the "songs" of The Mountain written by and for our community.

Whether Unitarian Universalist or a person of another faith, if you'd like to share your own "elevator speech" we'd be interested in receiving them. Please e-mail Shelley Denham at shelley.denham@mountaincenters.org (put "MountainSong" in the subject) or send to her at The Mountain's mailing address. Let us hear from you!

What is UUism in 25 Words or Less?

UUs believe in human worth, dignity, compassion, harmony in nature, and peace.

Viveca J. Nicholl, First Unitarian Society, Wilmington, DE

* A Unitarian Universalist is a free spirit. Free to seek his/her own spiritual truth within a warm and supporting community of diverse truth seekers.

Ruth Straus, UU Church of Lexington, KY

Welcoming congregations exploring the mystery and meaning of human life, sharing what we think we know and respecting what we know we don't know.

Bob Straus, UU Church of Lexington, KY

Being a UU means recognizing the truths in all world religions. It means being open and inclusive.

Beth Capp, UU Church of Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, FL

* UUism means never having to say, "I'm right, you're wrong!"

Jimmy Capp, UU Church of Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, FL

Innate self worth, personal spiritual growth, free, responsible search for truth, acceptance, fairness, compassion, conscience, democratic process, peace, liberty, justice, all human, non-human existence, universe.

Daniel Kapica, Englewood, FL (Port Charlotte)

UUs believe that all life is sacred, all existence is interconnected, and that justice and compassion must be the foundation of our thoughts and deeds.

Ann Creech, UU Metro Atlanta North, Roswell, GA

UUs believe in the power for principle-based human reasoning, grounded on the teachings of the great religions of the world.

Dick Fenci, St. John's Unitarian Church, Cincinnati, OH

UUism is an individual search for meaning and/or spirituality within a group offering mutual support. We believe that we need not think alike to love alike.

Julia Chansen, UU Fellowship, Boca Raton, FL

The UU denomination is like a mosaic. We embrace the variety of religious experience.

Joanna Holt, Auburn UU Fellowship, Auburn, AL

The UU church believes in the worth and dignity of every individual and encourages individuals to seek spiritual growth, truth and world peace.

Kathleen Schenkelf, UU Church of Spartanburg, SC

Open hearts, open minds, sacredness of life, mutual support in search for truth and purpose, deeds, not creeds, make the world a better place.

Joe Creech, UU Metro Atlanta North, Roswell, GA

* Published in the *UU World*

LEARNING CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP

Lay Leadership Certificate Program

The Lay Leader Certificate program is the product of a unique and exciting partnership between The Mountain and Thomas Starr King University. Participants are nearing the half-way point in this course, which takes nine months to complete. They've attended the first face-to-face module at The Mountain, where they worked with different learning styles, temperaments, and responses to conflict, and had fun beginning to create a learning community, too. They've made it through Unitarian Universalist history and theology, so they now have a firm grounding in the background of our faith community and its diverse theological perspectives. They're working on understanding how congregations, districts and the Unitarian Universalist Association work from a systems perspective, and are looking forward to examining how UUs work effectively for justice. By the end of the program, their leadership skills and knowledge will be honed and fine-tuned, and they'll be ready to continue their work as UU leaders.

People in this pilot project say this is the most exciting work they've ever done. One participant said, "Did I tell you I love this class and feel so very at home in it? Thank you, thank you, thank you!" If this sounds like a program you're interested in, contact **Helen Bishop** (helen.bishop@mountaincenters.org) for an application for the 2004-05 class. We look forward to hearing from you! Look up our photo album on The Mountain's website!

Online Courses

Don't have time to attend a program in person? Take advantage of The Mountain's online courses in volunteer management, media relations and publicity, or how church systems work. Never taken an online course before? Sign up for "How To Take an Online Course!" All participants can earn Continuing Education Units, and receive individual attention from faculty. Check course descriptions and dates by going to www.mountaincenters.org and following the links to the Learning Center for Leadership's Online Courses. Register today!

Workshops at The Mountain

In workshops on justice given by Mountain Director Helen Bishop, during our New Year's at The Mountain and Let's Pretend It's New Year's with UU Metro Atlanta North Congregation, participants explored their own passions, and found small and large ways to make contributions to the common good. They committed to acting for justice whenever they could, from getting information about Head Start in their own communities to encouraging Latino/a voters to register and vote to working on land use and development plans in their communities.

Workshops on justice can be included in programs for your congregation, district or organization. Contact **Helen Bishop** at The Mountain for further information.

"Building Healthy Congregations"

This program, offered by the Learning Center for Leadership and supported by a generous grant from the UU Funding Panel, will be offered at the Ferry Beach Conference Center in Maine, April 23-25, 2004, for a cost of \$90 per participant, including housing, meals and materials for registrations received by March 15, or \$120 per participant for registrations received by April 12. Participants will learn how professional and volunteer staff can work together effectively within UU congregations and districts, expand their knowledge of volunteer management, and learn how congregational systems work.

This is a perfect example of how The Mountain sponsors programs of interest to UUs from around the country, and is open to congregational teams from the seven northeastern districts: Ballou Channing, Clara Barton, Massachusetts Bay, Metro New York, New Hampshire-Vermont, Northeast, and St. Lawrence. Contact **Helen Bishop** (helen.bishop@mountaincenters.org) or the **Massachusetts Bay District Office** (mbd@uua.org, or 617-542-3231) for further information or to register.

Mountain Transitions

by Tom Warth, President

My October 2003 *Mountain Matters* article talked about the creative tensions we are experiencing at The Mountain – balancing current realities with vision. I wrote: “The current Mountain realities are simply this: revenues and development gifts have been significantly down for the last two years while expenses continue to grow. Although we are seeing some turnaround this fall in revenue, the future is not clear and so we have been faced with the creative tension between lowering our vision or bringing our realities more in line with those visions.



Robert E. Smith.

“But paying heed to Management Consultant Peter Senge’s words, ‘sooner or later new pressures pulling reality away from the (new, lowered) vision arise, leading to still more pressures to lower the vision,’ lowering the vision isn’t an option. We remain clear and committed to our vision of ‘being a relevant institution, for generations to come, actively participating in the creation of a transformed society.’ So it’s bringing the

realities in line with this vision that is the focus of our energies.”

I went on to say: “On the expense side, we have recognized that although we are open year-around, we are basically a two-season business – April through October, and November through March. So we are realigning our staff, creating a smaller ‘low season’ staff and using more seasonal staff, volunteers and interns to meet the demands of ‘high season.’”

Since that article, I have talked with trustees, staff, members and guests, and have found universal agreement with the two-season concept and the need to reduce year-round staff. The staff in particular has been supportive even though we all recognize the challenges (both personal and in the context of the staff community) that reducing staff presents. For many of us, this has been an opportunity to take stock of our own situations and hopes for the future. The result: some staff decided to retire, others want to com-

mit to work for another year or two, or longer.

Therefore, it is with mixed feelings that we announce the following Mountain transitions. **Nancy Heath** will retire the first of February, but has made it clear she is staying in the area and would like to continue to volunteer with us on occasion. **Robert E. Smith** has also decided he will retire and pursue independent consulting. He has committed to being a volunteer, even offering to coordinate The Mountain highway cleaning project on an ongoing basis – a great gift to us and the environment. And lastly, **Larry Wheeler** has decided that he will leave The Mountain to have more time with Nancy and to do more with his UUA consulting work. Larry is staying for the time

being to fill a critical need we have for lining up volunteers for the coming months. His actual date for leaving The Mountain is sometime in the next month or two. Fortunately, like Nancy and Robert E., Larry has expressed his interest in staying involved at some level – volunteering, consulting, etc.



Larry Wheeler and Nancy Heath.

The mixed feelings? We are truly sorry to see these three people leave. They have contributed so much for so long. But we are happy that they are in a position to move in new directions that are exciting to them. Filling any of their shoes will be most difficult.

Let me reassure all of our supporters: The Mountain, through its board and staff, remains clearly focused in its commitment and ability to be the “relevant institution for generations to come” that inspires us all. In addition, the staff and I are looking forward to our upcoming year of youth camps and CONS, leadership schools, Elderhostel, and retreats. I encourage you to look carefully at the Program Calendar (see page 10) included in this *Mountain Matters* and invite you to attend a program or two this year. The Mountain is a vibrant, transformative, institution – come and be a part of it.

Job Opportunities!

The Mountain is seeking qualified candidates for the following positions.

Development Director

Major Responsibilities:

- Expand the Annual Member and Benefactor donor programs
- Seek major gift donations in the \$10,000 - \$50,000 range
- Develop and implement new, effective ways to conduct direct mail appeal programs
- Prospect research and identification will be a shared responsibility with the President and the President's Advisory Council

Qualifications:

- At least two years of successful fund-raising experience
- Strong writing and verbal communication skills
- Experience with business computer applications including Microsoft Office
- Experience working as a member of a management team
- Demonstrated ability to work with a diverse constituency
- Be self-motivated, work well under pressure and be able to handle several projects at one time

Salary & Benefits: Commensurate with experience and existing pay and benefit scales of The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc., Executive Staff.

Applications: Send resumes to:

tom.warth@mountaincenters.org

Sales Manager

Major Responsibilities:

- Generate guest revenue in line with annual budget objectives
- Develop sales materials including publications, WebPages and Mountain signage that will achieve annual objectives
- Relate with guests while they are at The Mountain to determine their satisfaction with their Mountain experience and to develop future opportunities for repeat business
- Attend trade shows and conferences as appropriate for sales generation

Qualifications

- At least two years of successful sales experience
- Strong writing and verbal communication skills
- Experience with business computer applications including Microsoft Office
- Experience working as a member of a staff team
- Demonstrated ability to work with a diverse constituency
- Be self-motivated, work well under pressure and be able to handle several projects at one time

Salary & Benefits: Commensurate with experience and existing pay and benefit scales of The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc., Management Staff.

Applications: Send resumes to:

shelley.denham@mountaincenters.org

Director - Membership & Resourcing

Major Responsibilities:

Membership

- Develop and implement a high quality Mountain member program that includes recruitment, recognition, ongoing communications and engagement.
- The member program will focus on motivating others to participate in, engage with and give support to The Mountain. In addition, ways to encourage Mountain members to participate, engage and give to other supportive organizations will be developed and managed by this director.

Resourcing

- Develop and implement a high quality program for the recruitment, selection, assignment, assessment and recognition for all volunteers and seasonal program staff "employed" by The Mountain.
- Work with Mountain team leaders to identify ongoing volunteer and program staffing needs - responsibilities, skills, numbers, dates - and fill positions as appropriate.

Qualifications

- At least two years of successful experience recruiting and/or managing volunteers
- Demonstrated creativity in initiating people-focused programs
- Strong writing and verbal communication skills
- Experience with business computer applications including Microsoft Office
- Experience working as a member of a staff team
- Demonstrated ability to work with a diverse constituency
- Be self-motivated, work well under pressure and be able to handle several projects at one time
- Demonstrated interest in working with people and a high energy level
- Must be willing to live within the greater Highlands/Mountain area

Salary & Benefits: Commensurate with experience and existing pay and benefit scales of The Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers, Inc. Management Staff.

Applications: Send resumes to tom.warth@mountaincenters.org

Help The Mountain "Get in Shape"

As we begin the 2004, many of us hear and many of us make resolutions for the new year. One of the most frequent is that we will "get in shape," whatever that might mean. A recent news story said that fitness centers experience a significant increase in the first three months of a new year, attracting those who define "get in shape" as a physical process.

The "get in shape" resolution makes a lot of sense and so, too, The Mountain has made the same commitment – get and stay in shape. And for us that means financially. We have a deeply felt responsibility to our vision of being **"a relevant institution, for generations to come, actively engaged with others to create communities committed to justice, civility and compassionate behavior."**

To move along the path of that vision requires us to be financially fit. And so we invite you to include in your resolutions for 2004 to be "actively engaged" with us by becoming an Annual Member of The Mountain. Annual Membership works this way:

| | | |
|----------------|-------|---|
| Levels: | | Terms: Twelve month period from date of subscription |
| Regular | \$100 | |
| Mountaintop | 250 | |
| Presidential | 500 | Discounts: 5% discount for all programs at The Mountain including drop-in visits and 10% off The Mountain's on-line leadership courses |

Recognition

- Receipt of *The Mountain Matters* publications
- Invitation to attend the Member Memorial Weekend program
- Listing on The Mountain's Annual Member plaques and in its Annual Report (by giving levels)
- Special recognition when attending Mountain programs

Benefits

The benefit to you is simply this: By being an Annual Member you make possible the ongoing work of The Mountain. You make it possible that The Mountain, through its programs for youth, young adults, seniors, multi-faith and multi-cultural groups, gays and lesbians, abled and disabled people, are making a difference in the world, that they are active multipliers of behaviors that reflect the inherent worth and dignity of everyone, a commitment to justice and to world peace.

Margaret Mead wrote, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has." **We invite you to be an Annual Mountain member**, at whatever level works for you, so that you too can be a part of a "small group of thoughtful, committed people (who) can change the world." For we believe it's the primary thing The Mountain is asked to do.

Please fill out and return the enclosed envelope today!

Resolve This Year To Put Your Estate In Order

Did you make any New Year's resolutions this year? A lot of people don't because they're afraid they won't be able to keep them. One important resolution to make though is to put your estate in order. Keeping this resolution means, first of all, making or updating your will or living trust. Just as important is to have advance directives set up. You need to make sure you have a "living will" that indicates in writing your wishes when you may be near death. Without a living will which documents your intent, you may be kept alive against your wishes. The recent Terry Schiavo case in Florida underscores the need for a living will. In addition, many people need a power of attorney that allows another person to act in the event of incapacity; a power of attorney can prevent a potentially costly and controversial appointment of a guardian or conservator. It's also important for most people to appoint a health care surrogate to make medical and

health care decisions in case you can't yourself.

Most hospitals have appropriate forms for executing a living will. However, powers of attorney and designations of a health care surrogate should be prepared by a qualified attorney. Your will and estate planning should be worked out with an attorney and other qualified professionals, as well.

Why not also resolve to keep the future of The Mountain in your estate plans, too? By including the Mountain Endowment Fund, you assure that your estate gift will continue to help The Mountain carry out its mission each year on a perpetual basis. The appropriate designation for your estate plans is **The Mountain Endowment Fund, Inc., Highlands, North Carolina**. For additional information about how your estate planning can benefit The Mountain or the Mountain Endowment Fund, please call or email **Tom Warth** at tom.warth@mountaincenters.org – 828-526-5838, ext. 218.

The Mountain Calendar: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why are there so few programs for me to attend on this calendar?

The programs on this calendar are the "open enrollment" events that anyone can attend. There are many, many other events that take place here – such as congregational retreats, business meetings, and conferences. This is a dynamic calendar, constantly changing, so for the most current information, please refer to our website at www.mountaincenters.org.

2. The Mountain used to run so many programs I loved – like Build Your Own Theology, Religious Education Renaissance Modules and family events. Why are there so few now?

UU Districts and Congregations have made tremendous strides in offering programs for their members. These

include UU History, Theology, Bible study, and other Life Span Religious Education courses. Because The Mountain supports the work of our districts and congregations, and because people can experience these events locally or regionally, we have turned our attention to developing programs that aren't currently being offered at other venues.

3. Can individuals or families just come for their own personal time at The Mountain and not participate in a program?

Yes! Yes! Yes! You are welcome to come for a visit as long as you register in advance (to assure space availability). Even when we have large groups or programs running, we often have space for individuals or families. So call us – and come on up!

Mountain Volunteers of Note



Marilyn Lovell

"It is a privilege to be a volunteer at The Mountain. The physical space is inspiring and the setting so positive, from the Chinquapin Loop, to a moonrise from the Tower. The groups who come also bring a special vitality. The Elderhostlers learning from presenters like storyteller Gary Carden and

ballad keeper Sheila Kay Adams; the wonderful voices (and the antics) of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus were so grand."

Marilyn Lovell

When volunteers have worked at The Mountain for six cumulative weeks, they are given the honor of



Jim Barnes

Seasonal Volunteers Needed

The Mountain's "high season" runs from April through October, and we need volunteers from mid-March to mid-November with a variety of skills and lots of flexibility. Jobs range from Assistant Cook/Dishwasher to Office Assistants dealing with our guests and staff, both in person and on the telephone. Each job has its own particular requirements such as meeting health department standards to providing appropriate first aid. We need skilled carpenters who also might occasionally unplug a toilet. Many of the most critical jobs go on behind the scenes – in housekeeping and maintenance. But there are also jobs like the Health Staff for our Summer MountainCamp.

If you would like to be considered for a Mountain Volunteer Position, please fill out the application on our website: www.mountaincenters.org/volunteers.html.

"Volunteer of Note." Our most recent awards have gone to **Jim Barnes** and **Marilyn Lovell**. Jim has done his 6 weeks+ over several years coming for a couple days at a time. He brings a wealth of talent to our building and maintenance projects. Marilyn, on the other hand, comes and settles in for 3-4 weeks at a stretch. She, too, is multi-talented working as host to various programs, working in the registration office, to filling in with last minute guest service needs.

The Mountain celebrates its **25th Anniversary** in 2004. Plan to attend one or more programs in this very special year. Please visit our webpages (www.mountaincenters.org/calendar.html) for frequent program updates!

NEW IN 2004!

10% Discount for families of 4 or more, if registering by the Early Bird date.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Gay Spirit Visions Spring Conference

April 9-11, 2004

The 7th Annual Spring Retreat for Gay Spirit Visions will be April 9-11, 2004. This gathering will provide traditional heart circles, Dance of Peace, fire rituals, meditations, and caucuses/workshops on spiritual experiences. For registration information, please call or email The Mountain; or look up www.gayspiritvisions.org.

11th Annual Embracing Your Lesbian Identity Weekend

April 22-25, 2004

Join us for a weekend of spirited exploration, fun, conversation, laughter, quiet moments, companionship and dancing at The Mountain! We create a safe space and time to relax, renew, and revive in a community of lesbian women of all ages. There will be a variety of workshops, drumming by the fire, yoga, massage, and a special program on "Exploring the Enneagram" with **Sandra Smith**. Bring your stories, your musical instruments, and your arts. Relax at the Lavender Rock Cafe, hike the mountain trails, and dance your heart out on Saturday night. Come share this very special annual event! The Mountain will be open only to this group this weekend. This year's theme: "Ripples in the Pond – Taking our Healing Energy into the World." How will we take our energy back into the world in ways that will make little or big differences, in our own lives and the lives of others. Interested? Call, fax or email The Mountain for brochure and registration! Scholarships available – call or our the website for applications.

"Engolfed" in Spirituality Golf Tournament

May 5-7, 2004

Attention all golfers who have wanted both The Mountain and a chance to golf in the same program – here's your chance! Arrive on Wednesday, and on Thursday, May 6 we'll have a tense, emotional tournament of your very own at the beautiful Sky Valley 18 hole championship golf course – from 5000 yards to 6450 yards (see www.skyvalley.com). Thursday night, join Elderhostel in one of the "famous" Mountain

Quartet concerts. Depart on Friday, or stay over for a relaxing, non-program weekend.

WomenSpirit Institute – May 12–14, 2004

WomenSpirit Gathering – May 14–16, 2004

The Institute and Gathering are biannual events at The Mountain in the Spring and Fall that offer the experience of an all-woman retreat for strengthening talents and renewing energy in a supportive and safe environment. Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit expects and encourages all women to honor the safety, integrity, and confidentiality of those attending its sponsored events. For information, please contact the WomenSpirit registrar: Registrar@uuwomenspirit.org or look up <http://www.uuwomenspirit.org>. Spaces fill quickly!

FAMILY PROGRAMS

8th Annual International Golden Flower T'ai Chi Retreat

June 15-20, 2004

The Mountain is proud to partner with renowned Golden Flower T'ai Chi. Learn authentic T'ai Chi practices and principles and experience the magic of The Mountain in one very special program. All levels are welcome. We will work on T'ai Chi forms, applications, pushing hands and chi cultivation. Learn and relax with both local and European students and instructors, led by **Master San Gee Tam**. For more information, check the Golden Flower website: www.goldenflower.us or call **336-727-1131**. You also may register through The Mountain's Guest Services Office. But hurry – our limited spaces are already filling.

Family Camp

July 4-9, 2004

What would summer at The Mountain be without family camp – a time for intergenerational families to experience fun and adventure together away from the TV, cell phones and the frenetic pace and noise of daily routines. While the program traditionally has focused on families with children 12 and under, all ages are welcome – older children will have the chance to "revisit their younger days"! Hurry and register for this fun filled and meaningful week – space is limited.

UU RETREATS

13th Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPS) Convocation
March 19-21, 2004

Re-Visioning Our Connection With the Sacred – Re-Visioning CUUPS: Convocation is a gathering of CUUPS people from around the continent who gather to share community, knowledge, and worship. This year's program includes opportunities to Re-Vision the future of CUUPS, as well as a panel discussion on connecting with the sacred. Guest speakers include, **Issac Bonewits, Carole Eagleheart, Rev. Melanie Sullivan, and Rev. Joan VanBecelaere**. For more information, please visit the CUUPS website at www.cuups.org. Or contact CUUPS board president, **Mary Gelfand**, at MaryCUUPS@aol.com.

Universalist Convocation 2004 "The Mission of Universalism for the 21st Century"
May 21-23, 2004

"Per our constitution, the purpose of The Universalist Convocations is ... to explore and draw from the heritage of Universalist experience and faith to inform Unitarian Universalism today and help light its way toward the future." It is an independent affiliate of the UUA. Event highlights: Theme talk by **Rev. Richard Trudeau**; worship services with **Rev. Barry Whittemore, Justin LaPointe, and Derek Parker**; workshops with **Harry Hamil, Rev. Peter Lee Scott and Rev. Richard Trudeau**. Music with **Alan Malpass, Rodney Sutton and Pete Leary**. And, of course, the annual business meeting! All this in one magical weekend. Hurry to register in time for the special Early Bird rate.

25th Anniversary Event: Members' Memorial Reconnections Weekend!
May 28-30, 2004

It's The Mountain's 25th Anniversary year, and many of our members haven't come to a program or seen each other in a long time. This is the weekend to reconnect, renew relationships, share memories and explore our plans to assure that The Mountain stays a relevant institution for generations to come. And, of course, you'll participate in the one-of-a-kind Mountain Annual Meeting Celebration. Don't miss this very special trip down memory lane ... and back to the future!!

Upcoming Fall Events

mark your calendars – details to follow!

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

TJ/Mid-south Religious Education Week – an Invitation from Jessica York, Dean
July 11-16, 2004

There will be something for everyone at the Thomas Jefferson/Mid-south RE Week at The Mountain! This year we plan to offer TWO Renaissance Modules: UU Identity and Teacher Training. There will be a workshop by **Sally Patton**, author of the soon-to-be-published UUA curriculum "Involving All Children and Youth Into Our Faith Communities" that discusses ways to make our congregations more welcoming to families in general and children with special needs in particular. This is the only time this workshop is planned to be given on the East Coast. Make sure your Board is allocating money for training to be used for this event. If you'd like more information or to be put on the mailing list, contact **Jessica York** at yorkj3@bham.rr.com. Don't delay – limited space is available. See you in July!

Mountain School for Congregational Leadership (MSCL)
August 1-7, 2004

Why MSCL? A proven track record in preparing lay-people for leadership roles in UU congregations; excellent advance preparation for emerging leaders; development of support networks to access resources and share ideas.

Who Should Attend?

Leaders in UU congregations and districts; Board members; Committee chairs; others with a commitment to leadership and Unitarian Universalism. Send two leaders from your congregation for maximum effect! MSCL is an intensive learning experience. You must apply for acceptance and have your minister or board president support your participation. For a brochure and application, please call The Mountain Guest Services Office; they will send you information.

UU Week at The Mountain
Aug. 29-Sept. 3, 2004

2nd Annual Church of the Larger Fellowship Gathering
September 3-6, 2004

Gay Spirit Visions Fall Conference
September 15-19, 2004

Womenspirit Institute – September 22-24, 2004
Womenspirit Gathering – September 24-26, 2004

ADULT PROGRAM COSTS

| Program & Dates | Rate Type | Registration Deadline Date | Adult (per person) | 3-Night Option | 2-Night Option |
|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Gay Spirit Visions Spring Conference April 22-25, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 3/18 On or after 3/18 | \$190 \$215 | N/A N/A | N/A N/A |
| 11th Annual Lesbian Identity Weekend April 22-25, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 3/23 On or after 3/23 | | \$225 \$250 | \$160 \$185 |
| "Engulfed" in Spirituality Golf Tournament May 5-7, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 4/5 On or after 4/5 | \$260 \$285 | <i>Rates include Greens fees</i> | |
| WomenSpirit Institute and Gathering May 12-16, 2004 | Contact the WomenSpirit registrar at Registrar@uuwomenspirit.org or visit http://www.uuwomenspirit.org to register. | | | | |

FAMILY PROGRAM COSTS

| Program & Dates | Rate Type | Registration Deadline Date | Adult (per person) | Commuter Rate | Youth 12-17 | Children 4-11 * |
|---|--|--|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8th Annual International Golden Flower T'ai Chi Retreat! Weekend Program Only Weekend Program Only June 15-20, 2004 | Early Bird Regular Early Bird Regular | Before 4/17 On or after 4/17 Before 4/17 On or after 4/17 | \$730 \$830 \$380 \$430 | | \$275 \$325 \$115 \$165 | \$190 \$240 \$79 \$129 |
| Family Camp! July 4-9, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 6/4 On or after 6/4 | \$402 \$427 | \$300 \$300 | \$238 \$253 | \$238 \$253 |

UU RETREATS AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING COSTS

| Program & Dates | Rate Type | Registration Deadline Date | Adult (per person) | Youth 12-17 | Children 4-11 * |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 13th Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPS) Convocation March 19-21, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 2/25 On or after 2/25 | \$160 \$200 | \$104 \$133 | \$84 \$124 |
| Universalist Convocation 2004 May 21-23, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 4/21 On or after 4/21 | \$154 \$179 | | |
| 25th Anniversary Event: Members' Memorial Reconnections Weekend! May 28-30, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 4/28 On or after 4/28 | \$130 \$155 | \$85 \$100 | \$56 \$71 |
| TJ/Midsouth RE Week July 11-16, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 6/11 On or after 6/11 | \$468 \$503 | \$202 \$237 | \$202 \$237 |
| MSCL August 1-7, 2004 | Early Bird Regular | Before 6/30 On or after 6/30 | \$665 \$700 | N/A N/A | N/A N/A |

* Children 0-3 attend for free.

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

New! Elementary Spring CONFERENCE March 5-7, 2004

Recognizing how successful our Elementary CON was in the Fall, we have an exciting announcement. Mark your calendars for...drum rolls, please...We want our youngest CON participants back at The Mountain again! If you have youth interested (whether or not they've attended previous Elementary CONS), please contact **Gillian Denham** at (gillian.denham@mountaincenters.org; 828-526-5838, ext 241) for a packet. CON registrations can only be completed by the designated congregational religious educator. **Cost of the Program: \$80 per youth.**

MountainCamp 04 – Spirits Planning Weekend March 12-14, 2004

Fee-less weekend for Senior High Campers elected by their peers to plan the 2004 Camp. Spirits will receive registration forms and information.

25th Anniversary Event – Counselor, CIT and ASCENDER Reunion! *An invitation from Gillian Denham, Youth Programs Director* September 3-5, 2004

Hey, former Counselors, CIT's and ASCENDERS ... we are WAY over due for a reunion! So come on up Labor Day weekend – bring costumes for a coffeehouse and dance (what ELSE would we do Saturday night!), mug books, photos, and anything else you can think of to share with old friends. If you have children, bring them along! We can't wait to see you here. Because you worked so hard for The Mountain, this program is being offered at a very special price of \$85, but don't hesitate to ask for a scholarship if you need one! Come on up and re-create The Mountain Magic together! Cheers, Gillian!

Note: former CIT's/ASCENDERS must be 18 or over to participate in this young adult weekend.

\$85 per adult (by August 2); \$100 (after August 2)

\$52 per youth 4-17* (by August 2); \$67 (after August 2)

**Children 0-3 attend for free.*

MountainCamp 2004

Registrations are coming in FAST – so if you're even thinking about giving your child the magic of MountainCamp 2004, please hurry to assure your space! For information, brochure, or registration, please see our webpages, or call or email our **Guest Services Office** at 828-524-0998, ext. 0 (info@mountaincenters.org).

MountainCamp At A Glance

| Camp | Grades | Dates | Cost |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| ASCENDERS | Rising 11th - 12th | Sunday, June 13 – Friday, July 16 | \$875 |
| CITs | Rising 12th - '04 Grads | Sunday, June 13 – Saturday, July 31 | \$1,035 |
| Junior High | Rising 7th - 9th | Sunday, June 20 – Friday, July 2 | \$915 |
| Beginning | Rising 1st - 3rd | Sunday, July 4 – Saturday, July 10 | \$482 |
| Elementary | Rising 4th - 6th | Sunday, July 4 – Friday, July 16 | \$891 |
| Work & Adventure | Rising 8th - 12th | Sunday, July 4 – Friday, July 16 | \$915 |
| Senior High | Rising 10th - 12th | Sunday, July 18 – Saturday, July 31 | \$987 |
| Art and Revolution | Rising 10th - 12th | Sunday, August 1 – Saturday, August 7 | \$485 |

Elderhostel at The Mountain – Spring and Summer!

Why Elderhostel? That's for "old folks." Just the name makes it sound that way. Elderhostel is for the young at heart 55 and older who want more than tourist traps for their vacations. Hostellers want in-depth learning vacations with other curious, energetic, diverse people. And Elderhostel guarantees that, along with all-inclusive costs.

Why Elderhostel at The Mountain? The Mountain offers the absolute best faculty leading your adventures; the best storytellers, ballad and folk singers of Appalachian culture and history, and the best natural history experts in the area, along with experts in other fields of interest. Of course, there's always the "Mountain magic" – friendly, welcoming staff; great meals; sunrises and sunsets; and that sense of peace and belonging of being at The Mountain.

Want to know more? Call toll free **1-877-426-8056** and request an Elderhostel catalog containing hundreds of programs at sites all over the country, including The Mountain in North Carolina. Or go online to **www.elderhostel.org**. To learn more about Elderhostel programs at The Mountain, visit our website at **www.mountaincenters.org**, and click the Elderhostel pennant.

How to register? Registration for an Elderhostel program at The Mountain must go through Elderhostel. Call toll free **1-877-426-8056**, or go online to **www.elderhostel.org**.

Don't miss these exciting opportunities for continuing education, adventure, community and fun! Please check our website for specific program information, or contact The Mountain for a brochure.

Spring-Summer 2004 Elderhostel Programs

| | | | Cost | |
|--|--|---------|--------|--------|
| Date | Program Name | Prog. # | Double | Single |
| Three-night Programs | | | | |
| March 14-17 | A Season of Laughter | #6599 | \$350 | \$425 |
| April 13-16 | The Spirit of Appalachia: Mountain Culture Through Story and Song | #10767 | \$350 | \$425 |
| June 1-4 | The Best of Appalachia: An Outdoor Adventure | #5558 | \$375 | NA |
| Traditional Five-night Programs | | | | |
| March 21-26 | NEW! Stories Come to Life: Culture Through Character Portrayal, Appalachian Literature, and The Real Story of <i>Gone With The Wind</i> | #10723 | \$425 | \$585 |
| Mar 28-Apr 2 | Roots of the Appalachians | #8019 | \$430 | \$590 |
| April 4-9 | Southern Appalachian Folklore: The Humor, the Traditions, the Wisdom; Mark Twain: (Not) Always a Laughing Matter; 130 Years of Broadway Musicals | #10655 | \$425 | \$585 |
| April 25-30 | Natural History and Heritage of Appalachia | #8612 | \$440 | \$600 |
| May 2-7 | Appalachian Spirit: Wildflowers, Culture, Literature | #11122 | \$435 | \$595 |
| May 16-21 | Bloomin' Time: Wildflowers and Wildcrafting in the Southern Mountains; Music/Stories of the Mountain People; The Civil War in the Mountains | #11121 | \$435 | \$595 |
| May 23-28 | NEW! Down Home Appalachia: Culture, History and Natural History | #8620 | \$450 | \$610 |
| August 22-27 | Southern Appalachian Culture: Music and Stories; The Civil War: History Through Music and Stories; Natural History and Appalachian Splendor | #11123 | \$425 | \$585 |
| Aug. 29-Sept. 3 | Wealth of the Appalachians: History and Culture of the Mountains | #4893 | \$430 | \$590 |
| Outdoor Adventure | | | | |
| June 6-11 | Appalachian Whitewater and Hiking Adventure | #9001 | \$555 | NA |
| August 8-13 | Appalachian Outdoor Adventure | #2249 | \$485 | NA |
| August 15-20 | Hiking in the Southern Appalachians | #2248 | \$485 | NA |
| Special Programs | | | | |
| May 2-7 | Service Project: Panthertown Valley Habitat Protection | #11119 | \$425 | NA |
| May 9-14 | Appalachian Fun: An Adventure for Active Women | #8613 | \$485 | NA |

Seasonal Employment Opportunities!

The Mountain is looking for program, housekeeping, food service and office staff on a seasonal basis from approximately mid-March to mid-November. This is a great opportunity to work in this dynamic organization and still be free during low season to pursue your own interests! For information, please call or email **Jim Short (828-526-5838, ext. 217 – jim.short@mountaincenters.org)**.

This is your *Mountain Matters* Spring and Summer Calendar Edition!

THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT & LEARNING CENTERS, INC.

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