

MURRAY GROVE RETREAT AND RENEWAL CENTER



Annual Report to the Murray Grove Community

March 2018

Caring, Compassion, Community, Culture

**Thanks to Generous Donors,
Murray Grove is THRIVING!**

Murray Grove's New 5-year Vision

After extensive discussion with our major donors it became clear in late 2016 that the enthusiasm and financial support (over one million dollars in five years) needed to implement the Murray Grove Master Plan was not there. However, there was support to the tune of almost \$300,000 for the right plan focused on Murray Grove improvements. So we re-envisioned the next five years to refresh and expand Murray Grove's services, programs and facilities, upgrading the facilities, increasing our staffing in key areas, and strengthening our programs.

We will begin this effort in 2018 with upgrades to our lodge and guest-houses. A new annual Sustainability Fund will replace the Annual Fund, supporting both operations and capital upgrades.

Learning from donor feedback, our Board and Executive Director devised a more balanced approach for the next five years: key facility upgrades, increased focus on core programs, and increased staffing in marketing, fundraising, and volunteer coordination. We also plan to strengthen ties with our surrounding UU congregations to address the social justice and human rights needs in our areas.

Our five year vision is a natural extension of progress already made. We have achieved a great deal over the past five years, with the renovation of the Cone House, new bathrooms in Friedrich, natural gas replacing oil, along with landscaping improvements throughout the facility. In addition, our partnership with the Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation has been beneficial for all as they hold their Sunday services at Murray Grove, and have helped financially with the Friedrich bathroom improvements.

Finally, in 2020 we will celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the first John Murray Universalist sermon in America. As we envisage the Sestercentennial (250 years) of Universalism in 2020, we are committed to making Murray Grove an important and attractive heritage site for our faith and our country.

~ Ron Schaeffer



*“An inspiring environment—keeping it true to the values inherent in Universal Love & Commitment. Truly **Radically Welcoming.**”*

In This Issue

- 2017—An amazing year of programs & accomplishments!
- Thank you to our generous donors, supporters, & vendors
- Messages from Murray Grove Leaders
- Looking Ahead—Our 250th Anniversary in 2020

Message from the Murray Grove Association President

I believe 2018 will be a year of transition and great promise. After a number of years studying and developing a very ambitious master-plan, the leadership at Murray Grove has readjusted its sights. The future focus is to stabilize Murray Grove's finances and initiate a series of building upgrades that will enhance the experience for our guests as well as strengthen the capability of our staff.



The Sustainability Committee, along with our fund-raising consultant Susan Oldroyd, has launched a five-year pledge campaign, congregational mission tours, and continues to emphasize its legacy giving effort. There are no new buildings contemplated, however Murray Grove intends to upgrade its current facility in phases over the next five years including a stepped-up maintenance and repair program, needed upgrades of the Weakley bathrooms, and guestroom windows, air conditioning, new finishes and new furniture.

Murray Grove has also finalized a five-year agreement with the Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation to hold their services here. This fulfills a long-standing desire of the Murray Grove board to have weekly UU services on the Murray Grove campus. UUOCC has also been a wonderful partner in helping Murray Grove complete some much-needed projects.

While it is important to upgrade our physical plant, it is equally important to support our professional and loving staff. They work ceaselessly to provide our guests with the best possible experience and make our programs possible. They need more help and we will try hard to fund some new positions this year to lighten their load.

To keep Murray Grove thriving and to move forward with the plans outlined above we need your help. Murray Grove receives no funding from the UUA but instead relies on donations from its supporters. Please help us fulfill the mission of radical hospitality first expressed by Thomas Potter in 1770. This is only possible if you help.

~ Dominick DePinto

Murray Grove Association Board 2017

Dominick DePinto
President

Bonney Parker
Vice President

Patricia Radtke
Treasurer

Janet Tillman
Secretary

Sonia Hardaway

Rev. Suzanne Henshaw

Ron Schaeffer



**Camping in the Grove
nurtures life long
friendships.**

Murray Grove Retreat & Renewal Center

Staff & Caretakers

Louise Ille,
Executive Director

murraygrove.louise@gmail.com

Geraldine Velecillos,
Administrator

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Lisa Arcoleo,
Sustainability Coordinator

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Elke Valladares, Financial
Business Mgmt. Consultant

Deb Wilczek,
Bookkeeper

debbiew@murraygrove.org

Kathy Hermansson,
Director of Housekeeping

kathy@murraygrove.org

Jacen Laguttutta,
Caretaker

Lynda Smith, Caretaker &
Kitchen Assistant

Mike Parker, Handyman

Bob Seidel, Caretaker

A Letter from the Executive Director



Sometimes people ask me what keeps me going with all the varied demands of Murray Grove that need attention. Undoubtedly, 2017 was a challenging year, with some surprise cancellations and financial challenges, but thanks to our supportive donors we ended the year with a small profit.

Our devoted staff inspires me. They work hard, solve problems, are constantly creative and keep a warm and refreshing sense of humor, blessed be.

In response to this year's challenges, our dedicated board developed a Task Force to focus on recommendations to help Murray Grove stabilize and create financial security. Their hard work and creativity were beneficial.

In these unpredictable and stressful times, the social action, non-profit and spiritual groups who are calling Murray Grove their home for retreat and renewal are especially inspiring! Teen groups come to deepen their spirituality, to learn responsible decision making, to develop leadership skills, to bond and have fun. We are pleased to host UU groups of all kinds: men, women, youth, and intergenerational fellowships. Organizations representing a broad spectrum of humanity are booking Murray Grove, for example, The Black Artists Retreat, DRUUMM anti-racist collective, South Asian and Desi heritage youth, Silent Meditation groups, Reiki healing, Yoga, Mature Lesbians & Queer Women of Color Housing Collective, and Jewish Mindfulness.

I am fortunate; it is exciting to host these groups and meet the guests; it not only motivates me, it gives me hope for the future! We have a strong board, hard-working Sustainability Committee and loyal employees. I am very grateful for our teamwork!

We invite you to join our fantastic group of volunteers to help us fund-raise, promote our programs and organize work parties. It's not just worthy work; it is a lot of fun meeting new people and working towards a common goal. What better time than now to put our Universalist values into action!

I am honored to direct this sacred place, promote Universalism, and work towards enhancing our Center for healing, growth, service, leadership, and community. Thank you for supporting Murray Grove and making all of this possible.

In gratitude,

Louise Ille

A Natural Setting for Hope, Transformation, Service, and Fun!

Deep Gratitude to our 2017 Donors

Guardian Donors **\$10,000 or more**

Ron & Patricia Schaeffer

John Murray Donors **\$5,000 to \$9,999**

Rev. Carol & Carl Haag
Suzanne Henshaw
John & Susan Hook

Thomas Potter Donors **\$2,500 to \$4,999**

Brad & Julie Bradburd
Sarah & David Fischell
Mary-Ella Holst
Karen York

Judith Sargent Murray Donors **\$1,000 to \$2,499**

Rev. Scott Alexander
Deb Dagavarian-Bonar
Rev. Craig Hirshberg & Dominick DePinto
Theodore J. & Jane M. Fetter
David Hunter & Kerry Mueller
Susan & Craig Lyons
Charly & Jean Nelson
Gary D. Nissenbaum
Anthony Panzetta & Kevyn Malloy
Bonney J. Parker
Terry Sweetser
Pat & Doug Radtke
Anne & David Sailer
Rev. Ned Wight

**1473 Followers
on Facebook**

Olympia Brown Donors **\$500 to \$999**

Rev. Lara Campbell & Jay Pacitti
Gail & Peter Costanza
Liz deBeer & Ted Wardell
Eileen Fallon
Frank Helman & Marty Peak
Chris & Virginia Jarocho-Ernst
Susan Oldroyd-Miller & Lance Miller
Ann Perry & Mark Allison
Terry Sweetser
Janet Tillman & Rev. Dr. Richard Speck
David & Annette Winther
Madelyn H. Woolnough

**2758 Contacts
on Email List**



**Carol Haag, Past President &
Sustainability Committee Chair**

Ways to Donate to Murray Grove

- ◆ Annual Gift by check, bill pay, or credit card
- ◆ Monthly Sustainer Gifts by check, bill pay, or credit card*
- ◆ Stock gifts or wire transfers
- ◆ Bequests or planned gifts
- ◆ Donate online:
www.murraygrove.org/donations

*If it is more convenient for you, Murray Grove can follow your instructions for sustaining gifts using the credit card information you provide.



**Fun at our Annual
Women's Retreat**

Our Sustainability Committee

The members of the Murray Grove Sustainability Committee work throughout the year with the Staff and Board to raise the funding for the annual operating budget and special projects.

Thank you to those who serve tirelessly in this vital capacity:

- ◆ Carol Haag, Chair
- ◆ Ron Schaeffer
- ◆ Dave Winther
- ◆ Karen York
- ◆ Louise Ille, Executive Director, *ex officio*
- ◆ Lisa Arcoleo, Support Staff for Development, *ex officio*
- ◆ Pat Radtke, MGA Treasurer, *liaison*



Camping in the Grove Fun

Clara Barton Donors

\$100 to \$499

John Adrian
 Sarah Ahrens
 Laurel Amabile
 Cameron Archibald
 B & J Safe & Lock Company
 Beverley Baxter & Doyle Dobbins
 Thomas Belz
 John & Estelle Best
 Linda Bonk & Richard Brown
 Nancy Brungard
 Chris & Melanie Buja
 John Cavallero
 Jamaine Cripe
 Fern (Simonson) Culhane
 George & Sarah Easter
 James & Billie Ellis
 Joan & Herb Field
 Elizabeth S. Flemer
 Jef Gamblee
 Gloria Gietz
 Bill & Amanda Gillum
 Rob Gregson & Family
 Louise Gross
 Sonia & Olaino Hardaway
 John & Cori Hoffman
 David Hoffman & Sharon Copeland
 Ann C. Howe
 Colleen & Bill Huckabee
 Marilyn K. HYTE
 Louise Ille

Linda Kay
 Gabor Kiss
 Bruce Lawrence & Barbara MacLeod
 Andrea & Ira Lerner
 Nicholas Lewis & Judith Rinearson
 Jennifer L. May-Ortiz
 Barbara & James Miner
 Olav Nieuwejaar
 Elaine & Raj Nigam
 Michele Ochsner
 David & Luann Palmer
 Nancy & Paul Pinson
 Ivan Polonsky & Liz Tortorella
 Frances L. Prestianni
 Guy Quinlan
 Anonymous
 Alice Reilly
 Donna Renfro
 Adam Robles
 Roots & Wings Drum Choir of UUCMC
 Martin C. Rothfelder
 Rebecca Smith
 Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong
 Christine & Jim Sturm
 Diane & Aaron Torrance
 Joseph Toye & Family
 Unity Healing House, LLC
 Ruth H. Wagner
 Joel E. Weaver
 Robert W. Wynn

"From arrival to departure, everything exceeded expectations. Staff were amazing, food was so incredible and the grounds are beyond a doubt sacred. There is a serenity that caresses you the second you arrive. We will absolutely be back."
 ~Unity Healing House Retreat

Our industrious Facility Manager, Jay MacDonald, has relocated to New York state to spend more time with his family. We are extremely grateful for his love and care of Murray Grove buildings, grounds and staff.



Leave a Legacy of Love.....

The UUA Wake Now Our Vision Legacy Challenge has been launched. Murray Grove is included in this legacy campaign matching grant program and every new legacy gift to Murray Grove is eligible for a 10% matching grant from the Shelter Rock Congregation, in addition to the legacy gift itself. www.wakenowourvision.org.

While Wake Now Our Vision was created primarily to support the Unitarian Universalist Association, the UU Service Committee, Meadville Lombard Theological School, Starr King School for the Ministry, the UU Ministers Association and the Church of the Larger Fellowship, camps and retreat centers may participate also.

Support Murray Grove through the UUA's Umbrella Giving Program. www.uualegacy.org

WAKE NOW OUR VISION

COLLABORATIVE CAMPAIGN

Legacy Challenge

Contact Us!

We would love to hear from you!

Murray Grove Retreat & Renewal Center
PO Box 246
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

Phone: 609-693-5558

www.murraygrove.org

Our street address is:

431 US Hwy. 9 at Church Lane
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

Honor List of Unitarian Universalist Congregations

Judith Sargent Murray Donors **\$1,000 to \$2,499**

Community Unitarian Church of White Plains
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton

Olympia Brown Donors **\$500 to \$999**

Unitarian Church of All Souls, NYC
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County
Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington

Clara Barton Donors **\$100 to \$499**

Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit
First Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hunterdon County
The Unitarian Society of East Brunswick
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South Jersey Shore
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook
Women's Alliance, Unitarian Church of All Souls, NYC
Women's Alliance of UU Congregation of Princeton

Friends of Murray Grove **\$1 to \$99**

Dorothea Dix Unitarian Universalist Community
First Universalist Church of Brooklyn, PA
Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation

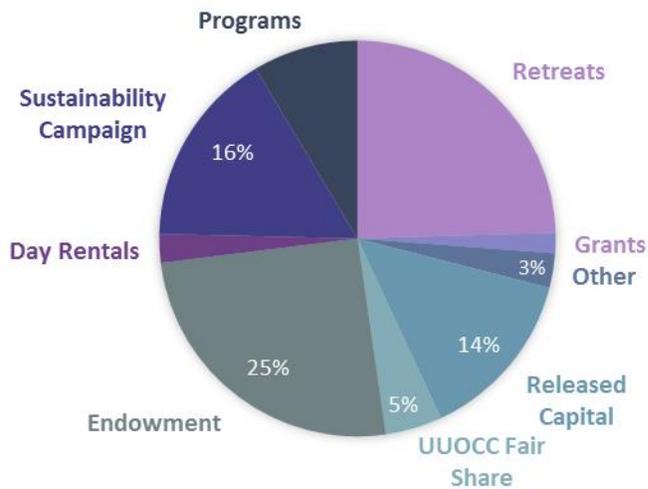
Honor List of Supporting Organizations

The Doolittle Fund of the Community Church of New York City
New York State Convention of Universalists
Pennsylvania Universalist Convention



Coming of Age Credo Writing Retreat

2017 INCOME \$415,500

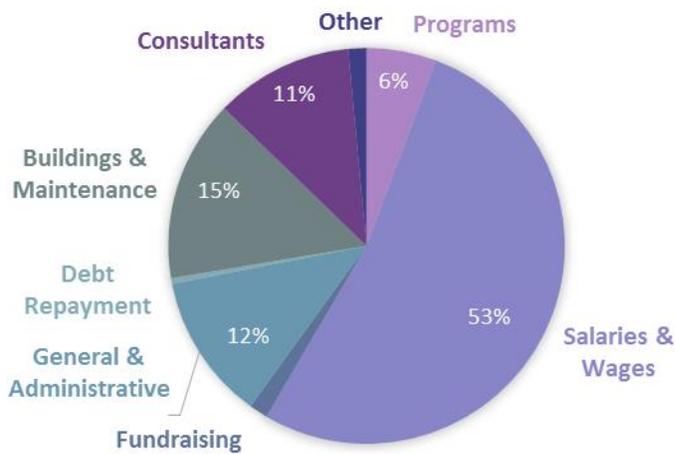


**We are looking forward to
UNIVERSALISM'S
SESTERCENTENNIAL
in 2020**

Preparing to celebrate Universalism's Sestercentennial – 250 years – in 2020, a dedicated group is planning programs, activities, resources and celebrations to occur from 2019-2020. There will be events at Murray Grove. Renovation of Thomas Potter's grave is being considered. Other plans in process:

- Pilgrimages to Universalist sites in New England, the Midwest, Philadelphia and New Jersey
- Programs at Ferry Beach
- Seminary programs from Meadville-Lombard, Starr King and Harvard Theological School
- Collaboration with LREDA, UU History and Heritage Society and Collegium
- Events at General Assemblies 2019 and 2020
- Resource materials in a digital toolkit

2017 EXPENSES \$413,660



Campers: 2017 Camping in the Grove



MURRAY GROVE IS AN OASIS, A SANCTUARY IN CHALLENGING TIMES

We're looking forward to our 2020 celebration of 250 years of Universalism!

LOVE WITH NO EXCEPTIONS



250 YEARS OF UNIVERSALISM

September 30, 1770, is the moment when Love caught Fire.

The meeting of John Murray and Thomas Potter kindled the fire of Universalism which has burned for 250 years!

Murray Grove is the sacred historic site where this event occurred.

This 250th celebration in 2020 commemorates Universalism that began with John Murray's preaching of a God of Love with no exceptions and continued with inclusive love of all peoples through the following two and one half centuries.

This Love has been evolving over the decades – from personal salvation to social salvation – from afterlife to life here and now – from love of persons to love of the planet and the Web of Life.



This thread of Universalism is still making history and informs a vision of a world made whole; FAITH without dogma, HOPE through action, LOVE with no exceptions: UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM.

Open invitation to all who would like to be part of a celebration of 250 years of Love made real. Calling artists, dramatists, historians, preachers, organizers, teachers, writers and Visionaries. Contact: Murraygrove@murraygrove.org / revcarolh4@gmail.com

Join the visionaries who have brought us this far
250th Advisory Committee:

Barbara Coeyman, Gordon Gibson, Mark Harris, Naomi King, Elizabeth Strong, Richard Trudeau

250th Visioning Participants:

Dr. Amy Aiserither, Laurel Amabile, Tim Atkins, Eleanor Ditton, Ted Fetter, Joyce and Rev. Dick Gilbert, Avery (Pete) Guest, Tim Hart, Mary-Ella Holst, Peter Hughes, Louise Ille, Rich Koster, Andrea Lerner, Rev. Jenny Rankin, John Sanders, Ron Schaeffer, Rev. Dr. Richard Speck, Holly Tanguay, Mark Hicks

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Mark Your Calendar!

We look forward to seeing you at one or more of these upcoming 2018 events:

Camping in the Grove, August 5-9

Homecoming, September 28-30

Women's Retreat, November 2-4

Gifts of Grief Retreat, TBA

Monthly Drum Circles

Find out more on our website, Facebook, Twitter, email list or Meetup!

Fundraising Consultant

Susan Oldroyd Consulting



It has been an honor and joy to work with Susan Oldroyd! She helped us (realistically) dream and grow our Sustainability Campaign. She is an amazing creative spirit.

Namaste



Flame Dame, our superhero fundraiser Susan Oldroyd and Chalice Man at our Universal Love Festival

