

MURRAY GROVE RETREAT AND RENEWAL CENTER



2018 Annual Report to the Murray Grove Community

April 2019

Caring, Compassion, Community, Culture

Donor Generosity Changes Lives!

Camping in the Grove:

"I have made life long friendships at Murray Grove."

~ Ishaan

Women's Retreat:

"...provided me with a safe, welcoming space to explore and be myself and to meet and get to know other UU women."

~ Ilene

Coming of Age:

"The fact that it was held at Murray Grove added a real spiritual aspect to the experience, like a pilgrimage in a real sense...I finally understand the 'Universalist' part of UU"

~ an anonymous teen

Camping in the Grove:

"It was an amazing experience that I learned from, made long lasting friends from, and ultimately had a ton of fun at."

~ Mahin

Homecoming:

"I never thought I would experience a Universalist revival but I did at Murray Grove. What a joy and inspiration to listen to Rev. Charles Boyer and Rev. Robin Tanner under that big tent."

~ Pat

"Murray Grove saved my life."

~ Evelyn

With your increased support we can expand our summer camp to two sessions reaching more children. We could offer scholarships to youth and children to attend our programs.



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

In This Issue

- 2018—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

Proud member of UUACCC

Message from the Murray Grove Association President

Dear Friends of Murray Grove,

This year has brought a sense of renewal and continued purpose to Murray Grove. Amid all the conflict, nastiness, and rancor prevalent in our nation today, Murray Grove has been a place where peace, love, and a striving for social justice prevail. This would not be possible without our dedicated staff and you, our loyal supporters. This year your financial support made the Coming of Age program possible where 28 youth examined their value system in the context of growing up as a Unitarian Universalist. It helped to subsidize Camping in the Grove, a program where 30 children spent a week living their UU values including packing food in a local food pantry youth program. Your support helped fund the popular Women's Retreat in November where 30 women of many denominations exercised their creative spirit and took time for self-examination. And most of all your financial support provided the financial foundation to allow Murray Grove to host many retreats for Unitarian Universalists and other like-minded groups.

The Board of Murray Grove and staff, led by our wonderful Executive Director, Louise Ille, have worked this year to stabilize our finances both on the income and expense side. This was the first full year of multi-year pledges by our supporters. This has helped us create a foundation for our fund-raising efforts. I'd like to give a special thanks to the Rev. Carol Haag and the efforts of our wonderful Sustainability Committee. I'm also grateful for our association with the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ocean County who meet weekly at Murray Grove and provide/ an important spiritual presence and whose Board and membership have proven to be reliable partners. Despite everyone's hard work and commitment, like many non-profit organizations, there's never enough money to do all the work that's needed.

To that end Murray Grove is embarking on an effort to generate more income through facility rentals. Over the years Murray Grove has hosted a number of weddings. This year Murray Grove is excited to formally offer its facilities and its newly-developed food service capabilities for affordable weddings. We will be making the entire facility including Lodge, guest houses, pool, grounds, and the beautiful outdoor chapel and Moon Arbor available for weddings of any and all denominations. So many young people go into debt to have the wedding of their dreams. We hope Murray Grove can provide those dreams at a cost that most people can afford. Stay tuned for details and pass the word along about this new and exciting venture.

Finally, I'd like to remind everyone that Murray Grove is poised to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Universalism in America. It's easy to get caught up in the practical realities of operating a retreat and renewal center, but we must never forget that Murray Grove is holy ground for Unitarian Universalists. We are all excited about the wide variety of upcoming projects and events celebrating the anniversary. We hope you will come often to Murray Grove to take part in those celebrations.

Thanks again for your support!

Dominick DePinto, President



Murray Grove Association Board 2018

Dominick DePinto
President

Bonney Parker
Vice President

Patricia Radtke
Treasurer

Janet Tillman
Secretary

Sonia Hardaway

Rev. Suzanne Henshaw

Chelsea Pascoe

Ron Schaeffer

Love and thanks to Bonney Parker and Cory Howell for the beautiful new video Cory created for Murray Grove. You can find a link to it on our website. Share it far and wide!



Camping in the Grove nurtures life long friendships.

Murray Grove Retreat & Renewal Center

Staff & Caretakers

Louise Ille,
Executive Director

murraygrove.louise@gmail.com

Lisa Arcoleo,
Sustainability Coordinator

lisa@murraygrove.org

Evelyn Benton,
Operations Manager & Chef
emb8312@gmail.com

Kathy Hermansson,
Director of Housekeeping

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Mike Parker, Handyman

Geraldine Valecillos,
Booking Coordinator

murraygrove@murraygrove.org

Eike Valladares, Financial
Business Mgmt. Consultant

Deb Wilczek,
Bookkeeper

debbiew@murraygrove.org

Lynn Higgins,
Caretaker

Alfred Martin, Caretaker

Lynda Smith, Caretaker &
Kitchen Assistant

A Letter from the Executive Director



Greetings!

Over the past twelve years, my belief that Murray Grove is a "diamond in the rough" has grown. I believe that it was no coincidence that John Murray was stranded in the same geography that Thomas Potter lived and prayed for the appearance of a Universalist Minister.

There is something unique about the energy here, regardless of one's spirituality. I hear from UU's, pagans, Buddhists, literally all faiths; that feedback is truly Universal. Over the past couple hundred years our grounds have hosted American Indians, settlers, and countless spiritual pilgrimages, enhancing the energy of this sacred ground.

I believe that it is our responsibility as UU's to polish the edges of our rough diamond, maximizing our natural resources to share our historic Universalist landmark with the world.

We made progress in 2018, turning land that was previously ignored into charming natural settings. Taking the advice from our fabulous architect, Thom Kocubinski, we repurposed mountains of soil leftover from construction into a berm, transforming it into our new Outdoor Chapel. With generous individuals' support we purchased a handmade wooden arch, our Moon Arbor, and installed it as our portal to our Chapel.

It was delightful to observe our Camping in the Grove youth sitting on the berm for their daily worship with Rev. Carol Haag. The Moon Arbor was also a charming venue for a mid-night wedding; the bride and groom shared their vows under the moonlight, surrounded by their loved ones, and enjoyed a weekend family reunion at Murray Grove.

Another repurposed natural resource was the overgrown wooded area behind our Cone House. It has been transformed into a small group camping area; the fire circle, bar-b-q station, picnic tables, and hammocks offer a private and peaceful escape from the stresses of the world.

We've been able to tap into what we have and enhance it to be enjoyed by all; however, we need more people to book and enjoy Murray Grove!

We have never looked better, inside and out, but we need increased visibility. You could easily help by promoting us within your networks and social media platforms. It's painless. I believe that word of mouth is the most powerful marketing tool and sharing info about Murray Grove is doing people a favor.

Whether it's a Congregational Retreat, Social Justice Workshop, Family Reunion, Wedding, Women's/Men's Retreat; our affordable refuge in the Pine Barrens is peaceful, affordable and welcoming. We even have a Chef on staff offering excellent food options!

I cannot tell you how many times in the past twelve years I've heard people tell me they never heard of Murray Grove! Simply suggesting Murray Gove as a venue and sharing our website, FaceBook or brochures could make a significant difference in our financial stability, to fund adequate staffing, and continue to maintain and enhance our precious diamond.

Please don't hesitate to contact our office if you would like any flyers or brochures. Find our wonderful new video on our website to share!

In gratitude,

Louise Ille

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

Deep Gratitude to our 2018 Donors

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

Ron & Patricia Schaeffer

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

Rev. Suzanne Henshaw

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

Brad & Julie Bradburd
 Sarah & David Fischell
 Carol & Carl Haag
 Sonia & Olaino Hardaway
 Rev. Craig Hirshberg & Dominick DePinto
 Ann Perry & Mark Allison
 Karen York

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

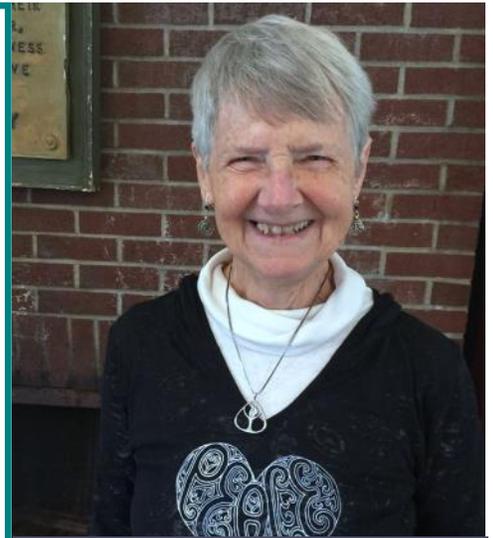
Gale & Julie Alexander
 Rev. Scott Alexander
 Deb Dagavarian-Bonar
 Theodore J. & Jane M. Fetter
 Shirley Giles in honor of Chuck Giles
 Mary-Ella Holst
 Susie & John Hook
 David Hunter & Kerry Mueller
 Charly & Jean Nelson
 Anthony Panzetta & Kevyn Malloy
 Bonney J. Parker
 Pat & Doug Radtke
 Anne & David Sailer
 Wardell Family Foundation
 Rev. Ned Wight

**1728 Followers
on Facebook**

**3130 Contacts
on Email List**

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

Laurel Amabile	Linda Kay
Gail & Peter Costanza	Ilene Palena
Richard & Joyce Gilbert	Donna Renfro
Charles Harris	David & Annette Winther
Cori & John Hoffman	Norma Winther
Susan & Craig Lyons	
Chris & Virginia Jarocha-Ernst	
Susan Oldroyd-Miller & Lance Miller	
Janet Tillman & Rev. Dr. Richard Speck	



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.



HOMECOMING WORSHIP

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*

SUSTAINABILITY

2018 was the first complete year of the new Sustainability initiative for Murray Grove. Combining the operating budget with some capital improvements, we are insuring Murray Grove's predictable present functioning with a solid foundation for the future. Supporters of Murray Grove have committed donations for 3 to 5 years, pledging monthly, quarterly or annually.

Accomplishments include:

- Major repair of the foundation of the Cone House
- Installation of air conditioning in several rooms in the guest houses.
- Completion of the outdoor chapel with its moon arbor in preparation for destination weddings & other celebrations.

The success of this initiative can be measured by the 30% increase in annual giving over the previous year.

Please consider becoming a sustaining donor.

Clara Barton Donors

John Adrian
 Thomas Belz
 John & Estelle Best
 Linda Bonk & Richard Brown
 Rev. Charles Boyer
 Alberta Brown
 Nancy Brungard
 John Cavallero
 Parker Cohen
 Kathleen Cosgrove & Harry Parker
 Karen Cubberly in honor of CitG
 Fern (Simonson) Culhane
 Barbara Daly-Schpok
 James & Billie Ellis
 Joan Field
 Elizabeth S. Flemer
 Linda Foshee
 Jef Gamblee
 Gloria Gietz
 Bill & Amanda Gillum
 Rick Goldberg & Molly Walker
 Rob Gregson & Family
 Louise Gross
 Ann Howe
 Ted Howe & Kathy Burke-Howe
 Colleen Huckabee
 Marilyn K. HYTE
 Louise Illé
 Jennifer Kelleher
 Donna Laidlaw

\$100 to \$499

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 Linda & Bruce Pollack-Johnson
 Ivan Polonsky & Liz Tortorella
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 Martin C. Rothfelder
 Jackie Scarcella
 Robert Schindler
 Faith Ann Scott
 Kelly & Michael Scott
 Ken Shilling & Karen Scrivo
 Lynn Sodora
 Vanessa Southern
 Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong
 Kathie Davis Thomas
 Denice & Jeff Tomlinson
 Diane & Aaron Torrance
 Joseph Toye & Family
 Joel E. Weaver
 Lynn Whitney



In connection with the excitement about the 250th Anniversary and wonderful spiritual energy of Murray Grove, staff and regular beneficiaries of the Grove were blessed by a new volunteer, a trained archivist to help get our history back in order. Parker Cohen, a long-time UU from Washington Crossing, PA, saw the need to help prepare for the important anniversary by volunteering her talents and expertise. Since February 2018, Parker has consolidated a vast majority of historic artifacts, documents, and photos into a central and safe closet space, has outfitted the space with appropriate archival materials, and has started organizing the collection. While many people have looked into saving Murray Grove's history, Parker is hoping to create organization that makes historic research easier and adequately preserves history for future generations. She is also assisting in a project to restore and protect Thomas Potter's gravesite and has helped Murray Grove obtain a grant from the Ocean County Historic Commission to help make this possible.

Leave a Legacy of Love.....

Generations before us established Murray Grove. Others sponsored rebuilding the Weakley and Friedrich guest houses after the hotel burned down. Still others saved Murray Grove by arranging the preservation of land as part of the Edwin B. Forsyth National Wildlife Preserve.

YOU can Leave a Legacy of Love too!

- Ensure future generations will come to know a thriving Murray Grove.
- Inspire your family, friends and fellow Unitarian Universalists as you set an example of generous support.
- Join the John Murray Legacy Society and be recognized for your commitment to the future of Murray Grove.

GIVING IS EASY

- Designation as part of your estate planning.
- Bequest — gift through your will.
- Contingent beneficiary of a retirement account.
- Charitable gift annuity — receive quarterly payments for life.
- Umbrella gift through the UUA umbrella giving program.

Participating in the John Murray Legacy Society ensures the continuation of your values in the world. You can help guarantee that the great Universalist tradition of LOVE will live on.

Contact Us!

Murray Grove Retreat & Renewal Center
 PO Box 246
 Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
 Phone: 609-693-5558
www.murraygrove.org
 431 US Hwy. 9 at Church Lane
 Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

Honor List of Unitarian Universalist Congregations

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

Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock

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

Community Unitarian Church of White Plains
 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton
 Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing

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

Beacon—Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit
 First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist
 First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, DE
 First Universalist Church of Brooklyn, PA
 Liberal Religious Educators' Association (Metro Chapter)
 Unitarian Universalist All Souls Bethlehem Church
 Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration
 Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington
 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
 Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation

Honor List of Supporting Organizations

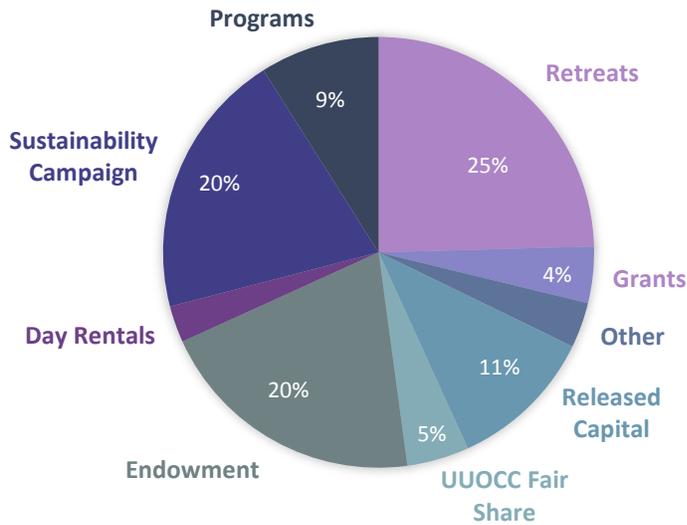
The Doolittle Fund of the Community Church of New York City
 New York State Convention of Universalists
 Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission
 Pennsylvania Universalist Convention
 Universalist Heritage Foundation
 Unitarian Universalist History & Heritage Society

**Breaker
 Zine**

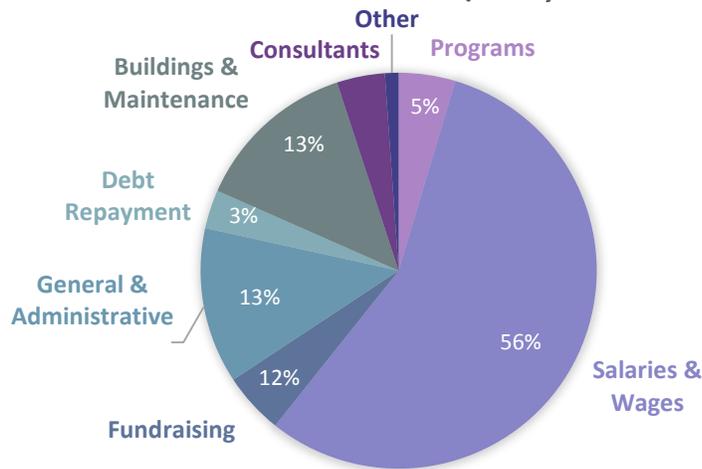


Women's Retreat

2018 INCOME \$411,882



2018 EXPENSES \$390,133



Mark Your Calendar!

We look forward to seeing you at one or more of these upcoming 2019 events:

- Camping in the Grove, August 4-8
- Homecoming, September 27-29
- Women's Retreat, November 1-3
- Monthly Drum Circles

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



Campers: 2018 Camping in the Grove



Love and deep gratitude to Karen Cubberly as she retires as Camp Director, for her many years of dedication to Camping in the Grove. Her spirit lives in the happy campers!

MURRAY GROVE IS AN OASIS, A SANCTUARY IN CHALLENGING TIMES

LOVE WITH NO EXCEPTIONS



250 YEARS OF UNIVERSALISM

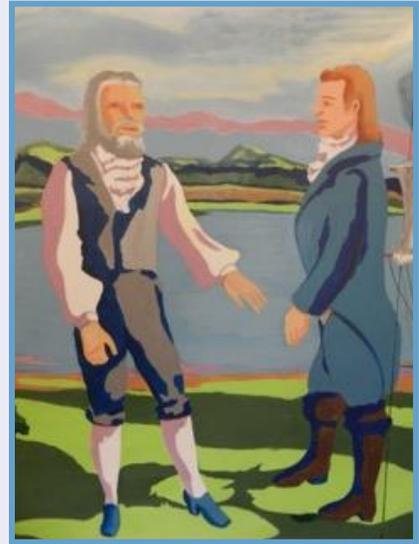
September 30, 1770, is the moment when Love caught Fire! For 250 years the belief in God as Love with no exceptions has continued with inclusive love and acceptance of all people. This Love has been evolving over the decades — from personal salvation to social salvation — from afterlife to life here and now — from love of persons to love of the planet and the Web of Life.

Universalism is alive and well and inspires us **now**. Rev. Susan Fredrick-Gray, in an early message as UUA president claimed the importance of our Universalist heritage: “Theologically, our faith tells us now one is outside the circle of love.”

Universalism's Sestercentennial will be launched at this year's Universalist Convocation May 17-19 at Murray Grove. Universalist beginnings will share the spotlight with Unitarian origins at the History and Heritage Convocation October 17-20 in Baltimore.

Throughout the year of 2020 the Sestercentennial celebrations will lift up this sacred heritage of the past and highlight its movement in the present. **Sestercentennial plans are taking wing.** The details will be available on the Universalism 250th landing site on the new Murray Grove website, made possible by the generosity of the New York State Convention of Universalists. Our dreams:

- Dramatization of “Love Notes” near you — the correspondence between Judith Sargent and her husband John Murray.
- Seminary courses and workshops at Harvard Theological School and Ferry Beach Retreat Center.
- Barbara Coeyman’s book tour about Lydia Jenkins, truly the first Universalist woman to be ordained.
- An article in UU World.
- Articles in The Universalist herald, the oldest continuously published liberal religious magazine in North America.
- Activities, lecture series and events across the country in Universalist settings—New England, Southeastern US, the Midwest.
- Worship resources and sermons
- A digital Toolkit with monthly themes and resources
- **Two weeks of celebration at Murray Grove, September 25th to October 4th—dedicating the restored Thomas Potter gravesite and (hopefully) a representation of the Hand in Hand.**



The Sestercentennial Planning Group formed under the leadership of:

Rev. Richard & Joyce Gilbert, honorary co-chairs

Revs. Elizabeth Strong & Carol Haag, co-chairs

Members: Rev. Barbara Coeyman, Fern Culhane, Rev. James Galasinski, Rev. Gordon Gibson, Lynn Higgins, Jim Hild, Dave Palmer, Bonney Parker, Rev. Susan Ritchie, Phyllis Shaw, & Cathy Stackpole.