



October 2011

MOUNTAIN T.O.P.

This newsletter is designed to provide opportunities for partnership and giving.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends of Mountain T.O.P.,

It has been almost six years since God and the Board called me to serve this ministry. It has been an incredible journey and many times like a roller coaster. I have been blessed to witness the power of the Spirit transform lives of both those that come to serve and those we serve with. Every day I see how God has used this ministry to be a driving force of restoration and change in our vast service area. Constantly members of our community share stories of how volunteers have shared God's grace and love and how their lives and those of their families have been blessed. This ministry has an incredible 36 year legacy that continues being a consistent life changer following the God given vision shared since the beginning.

Many of you have told us how meaningful the stories in our last newsletter were for you. We shared with you just how God worked in significant ways through our campers this summer. You were able to see how the gifts of service and finances were used to spread Salt & Light to all involved with Mountain T.O.P. God's grace abounds and was visible through all the many programs facilitated by this ministry.

However, this year has been one of the most challenging financially since I have been here. I don't need to tell you how tough the economic climate has been. The economy hurt us in a

very real and profound way this summer. We had an unprecedented drop in YSM (Youth Service Ministry) campers that did not materialize until final payments were due in May. We lost over 250 campers on that payment date. These were campers that had previously reserved space but cancelled. This put us in a very difficult position since staff was hired, camp weeks established and material acquired. We have since modified our deposit policy to put more financial responsibility on the churches and to give us more advanced notice of these types of changes.

Once we became aware of the situation, we took immediate steps to manage finances within our means. However an over \$94,000 last minute drop in revenue is difficult to offset. This is why we need your help now.

You can help by contributing in any one of the following ways:

1. Make a generous gift to our **Annual Giving Campaign**. Our need is **\$80,000** before the end of 2011 to help finish the plan God has for us this year.
2. If you made a pledge to the **Celebrating the Past, Building for the Future Capital Campaign**, please accept our profound thanks. Now would be a great time to make a payment on that pledge. We invested over \$70,000 this year into new and renovated facilities. Gifts to this effort will help pay for those and future renovations.

3. There is still time to make a pledge to the **Capital Campaign**. We have several ongoing projects and some waiting funding.

4. Pray for this ministry and the Board & staff as we continue to seek God's will for Mountain T.O.P.

Please look over the many other giving opportunities highlighted in this newsletter and prayerfully consider how you can help. Every gift received is important and is a blessing. On behalf of all of us who serve this ministry year-round, may God bless you and may His grace be with you as you discern how God is calling you to help.

Ed Simmons

HIGHLIGHTED GIVERS

Fred and Dickie Kaserman are long-time friends of the ministry. Fred currently serves as the Chairman of the Board. Though they do not need nor seek any recognition for their gracious hearts, we are truly grateful for their dedication to this ministry. Fred and Dickie are the kind of people who will respond to any plea we put out. They still come as AIM campers. In fact, they were among the first campers to kick off Quest during the summer of 2010, and then returned again during the summer of 2011. Furthermore, Fred and Dickie are significant givers in our **Capital Campaign** initiative. Thank you, Fred and Dickie, for your ongoing support of Mountain T.O.P. and its programs!

GIVING MATTERS

There are many ways to give back to Mountain T.O.P. and we believe every gift is helpful to the success of this ministry. Just take a look at all of the ways you can help!

ANNUAL GIVING FUND

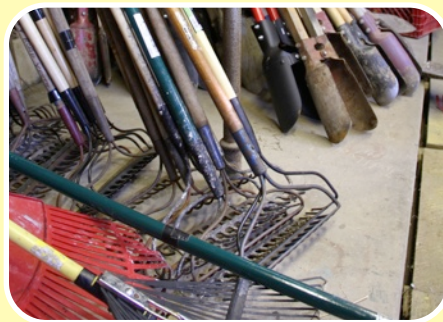
One of the best ways to help Mountain T.O.P. is to donate financial gifts to the Annual Giving fund. These gifts allow us to allocate money where it is needed most. If you're able to provide a gift this Fall, we invite you to continue partnering with us. As always, any gift is helpful in moving the Mountain T.O.P. Ministry forward.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

During the Spring of 2011, we kicked off a **Capital Campaign** to raise funds for camp improvements over the next three years. There are still several items that need pledges. Any amount is helpful in collecting all these funds! Please note that a new gift has been added. **A \$10,000 gift towards the Pines Worship Center will provide a new roof, enhanced lighting, and electrical to the worship area. This renovation is to provide a rain site for worship and increase the options for worship with multiple groups in camp.**

GIFTS STILL NEEDED:

- **\$25,000** - Year Round Camper Cabin (1)
- **\$12,500** - Fellowship Porch (1)
- **\$10,000** - Worship Center (1)
- **\$10,000** - YSM Camper Cabin (4)
- **\$3,500** - Meeting/Gathering Room (1)
- **\$3,000** - Year Round Camper Cabin Room (8)
- **\$1,500** - Friends/Peabody Room Renovation (11)
- **\$800** - Twin over Full Bunk Set (7)
- **\$350** - Couch (2)
- **\$250** - Chair (4)
- **\$175** - Game/Card Table (2)
- **\$125** - Round Table (9)
- **\$100** - End Table (3)
- **\$100** - Bunk Mattresses (58)
- **\$75** - Rocking Chair (5)
- **\$30** - Card Table Chair (6)



TOOLS FOR THE TOOL SHED



PINES WORSHIP CENTER



NEW FELLOWSHIP PORCH



NEW PEABODY RENOVATIONS



PHIL BROWN (ST. LUKES) & ZACHARY

TOOL FUND

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Ray Jones spearheaded a huge tool drive at his church, Forrest Hills in Nashville, TN. Together, he and the congregation collected \$3,400 and donated everything from post hole diggers to swing blades. We want to continue helping our churches alleviate the burden of tool collection and transportation. In our efforts to do so, we are taking funds that will go towards buying any of the new tools that break and towards purchasing van buckets.

1 Van Bucket = \$500

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

SCHOLARSHIPS

In the past, we have had a huge response to the call for children's programs scholarships. For those of you who don't know, we run 6 weeks of children's programs in the summer, 3 run by YSM campers and 3 run by AIM campers. Last summer, we had 139 children in these programs. The reality for some of them (2 of 3 children in Grundy County are reported to live in poverty) is that money is not available. All it takes is **\$25** for one week of day camp, which includes transportation, meals, activity fees and a t-shirt. One small gift can grant a child "one of the best weeks of their lives!"

1 Child Scholarship: \$25

CAMPER SCHOLARSHIPS

When we think of offering camper scholarships, we almost always think of the children living in Grundy County. However, the reality is that there are volunteers who are eager and willing to serve at Mountain T.O.P. but do not have the funds. Please help a willing volunteer come experience the mountain and serve God's people!

1 YSM Fee: \$325/375

1 AIM Fee: \$200/375

**Please use the pledge card on the fourth page of this newsletter to specify the area in which you'd like to give.*



AIM VOLUNTEERS WORKING ON THE CLINIC



HEATH WORKING ON THE WHEELCHAIR RAMP



GRUNDY COUNTY FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTION



BOXES OF EXTENDING THE PARTNERSHIP SUPPLIES



HUNDREDS OF YOUTH AT THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL BASH

COMMUNITY INTERCONNECTEDNESS

One of the ongoing missions of Mountain T.O.P. is to find ways to holistically care for the people living on the Cumberland Plateau. Though we can offer home repair and children's programs, we can't meet all the needs expressed by the families. Sometimes, all we can do is point those families to other services, but other times, we're invited to have a hand in supporting those community partners that help achieve the big vision goal: restoring the hearts, minds, bodies and homes of those living in these communities in whatever ways possible.

BEERSHEBA MEDICAL CLINIC

One way we were able to partner with other community projects was to help construct the Beersheba Medical Clinic. During the fall of 2010, Mountain T.O.P. AIM volunteers helped prepare the Clinic for its November 21st opening by building the facility's wheelchair ramp, replacing the doors to make them handicap accessible and installing hardwood flooring throughout. The Clinic's website says, "Beersheba Springs is a community of about 800 people located in Grundy County. The median family income in Grundy County is \$26,000 compared to a Tennessee median family income of \$42,000. The closest medical facility is more than twenty miles away. All of the hospitals in the area are for-profit hospitals. Twenty-five percent of Grundy County residents are below the federal poverty level. Unemployment is above 15%. The medical need is great."

GRUNDY COUNTY FOOD BANK

This Fall, we are partnering with the community by helping construct a dividing wall at the Grundy County food bank. Doing so will allow half of the facility to be heated in order to save on energy cost. The Food Bank serves hundreds of families weekly and distributes food to other local agencies supporting the community. Access to food is a major issues for Grundy County. Over 82% of children qualify for free or reduced lunches at school.

THE CUMBERLAND FARMERS MARKET

Another way we are partnering with the community is by purchasing some of our produce from the Cumberland Farmers Market. Their website reads, "The Cumberland Farmers Market is a project of local farmers and artisans who wish to better serve you, the local community. The project is in its third year and we have been very pleased with the positive customer and farmer responses. While our mission remains constant, the market is continually growing and changing." Buying from the market helps support a plateau-wide vision for a food hub, which would help long-term economic development in this area.

EXTENDING THE PARTNERSHIP

Our support of the Grundy County Family Resource Center has been widely successful. A big thank you is in order for all of the churches and individuals who have collected an overabundance of supplies and toiletries. We had donations each week of the summer from both YSM and AIM campers as well as donations from other sources. Because of your generosity, many young people and families have been provided necessary resources that will help their overall quality of life.

We saw your generosity at work at the Grundy County Back-to-School Bash where Mountain T.O.P., along side the Family Resource Center, was able to distribute hundreds of supplies. The Back to School Bash is a place where families can bring their children to receive necessities to help them get ready for a the new school year. Emily Partin, director of the Family Resource Center, said, "Armed with shampoo, conditioner, soap, tooth paste, deodorant and more, the Grundy County School's Family Resource Center was able to make a dent in the back to school needs of over 400 children this year. Most of these toiletries were provided through our partnership with Mountain T.O.P. Ministries. Thanks Mountain T.O.P., we couldn't have done it without you!"

WANT TO HELP?

ANNUAL GIVING FUND

AMOUNT TO PLEDGE \$ _____

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

AMOUNT TO PLEDGE \$ _____

DESIGNATED FOR _____

TOOL FUND

AMOUNT TO PLEDGE \$ _____

DESIGNATED FOR _____

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS SCHOLARSHIPS

AMOUNT TO PLEDGE \$ _____

DESIGNATED FOR _____

CAMPER SCHOLARSHIPS

AMOUNT TO PLEDGE \$ _____

DESIGNATED FOR (YSM/AIM) _____

PLEASE SEND THIS FORM AND YOUR GIFT TO:

MOUNTAIN T.O.P.

P.O. Box 128

ALTAMONT, TN

OR ... GIVE ONLINE!

Back in May, Mountain T.O.P. started using **Razoo**, a fundraising website dedicated to making generosity a part of everyday life, to help raise Summer Staff Partnerships and make giving easier. To date, we've raised **\$9,007.43** through Razoo! To give electronically to one of our campaigns, click on the fundraiser of your choice below!

[Annual Giving Fund](#)

[Capital Campaign](#)

[Tool Fund](#)

[Children's Programs Scholarships](#)

[Camper Scholarships](#)

"Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity." Mark 4:24, The Message

Cut Here

MOUNTAIN T.O.P.

P.O. Box 128

Altamont, TN 37301



*"You are the salt of the earth...
You are the light of the world..."*

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