

# A Home for A Place Apart

God has answered the prayers of so many of those who have been working toward this vision of A Place Apart. Sponsors have emerged to fund the purchase of one-half of the current Grout/Beery house (pictured) and the former home of Kroka Expeditions, both on West Hill Road in Putney, Vermont. These will serve as new homes for A Place Apart.

The former Grout/Beery house, located at 728 West Hill Road, served as the starting point for a Brethren congregation in Putney 26 years ago. Today it hosts a new beginning. With sufficient space inside, and ample gardens, grounds, and access to wilderness outside, it will allow seekers to truly “step apart” more often and with more flexibility than they have had in the past.

The house has been owned jointly by Paul & Dorothy Grout and Reba & Dean Beery. Reba & Dean have moved out and sold their share to Charlene Galarnau & Don Tucker, who have generously agreed to fund the purchase of the half of the house and to make it available for A Place Apart’s use. This model allows A Place Apart to operate without the burdens of actually owning the property. In return, A Place Apart will provide maintenance, cover some costs, and help with renovations. It is hoped that this partnership will be a gift to both parties.

**At the same time**, A Place Apart has acquired an additional property, just a few hundred feet away at 659 West Hill Road. This property, formerly owned by the Kroka Expeditions of Vermont, will be a place to develop the next phase of the vision, allowing for expanded arts & wilderness training facilities. See inside for more details.

**A Place Apart gives thanks to God** for these gifts of space to ground and grow this vision. To learn more about this exciting new direction for A Place Apart, and to get more information about supporting renovations through time or financial contribution, contact us at 802.387.4517 or [apartvermont@gmail.com](mailto:apartvermont@gmail.com).



## *Also in this issue:*

**A Place Apart’s online community** just moved into its new home at:

<http://apartvermont.blogspot.com>.

This site contains the most up-to-date news and announcements from A Place Apart, *plus* it provides a forum for anyone to post a comment, question, or reflection. Add it to your list of favorite sites and visit often.

**Marie Rhoades** of Harrisburg, PA, has joined the A Place Apart community in Putney as an on-site staff member focused on communications and organizing A Place Apart’s growing spiritual training ministry.

**A full-length album** of prayer songs is A Place Apart’s latest artistic creation. Professionally produced by an eclectic group of young adults, the album is available on CD and is accompanied by a 20-page “prayer cycle” booklet featuring artwork and devotional meditations by Paul Grout.

## **Register Now!**

### **“Introducing a New Monasticism”**

### **A Place Apart Winter Gathering**

**Jan. 31 – Feb. 3, 2008**

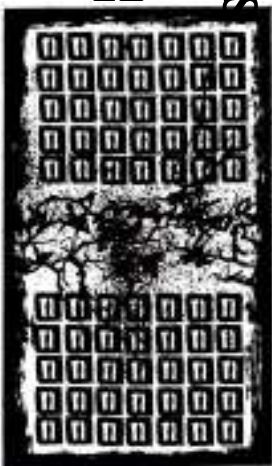
**Camp Ithiel, Gotha, Florida**

Step apart for this extended weekend of teaching, sharing, and spiritual retreat.

Register by returning the **enclosed registration form** or visit [apartvermont.blogspot.com](http://apartvermont.blogspot.com).

# A Place Apart

Summer 2007 Newsletter - Volume 10



## Introducing Marie Rhoades

**Hello!** It is exciting to be able to introduce myself to all of you as the newest “oblate in residence” at A Place Apart. I’ve just moved out of my apartment in Lancaster, PA, have handed in my last paper for my Master of Divinity degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary, and have three days left as Pastor of Youth at Lancaster Church of the Brethren. Prior to my experience in Lancaster, I grew up a member of the Harrisburg First Church of the Brethren in Harrisburg, PA and graduated from McPherson College in McPherson, KS.

The question may be asked: How does a girl make the decision to leave her familiar life for an experiment in Brethren monastic living? To that I say, I’ve probably been heading here all my life. I grew up a member of a religiously blended family- my father a Church of the Brethren pastor, my mother of Catholic heritage. I was named after Sister Marie Ann, a sister in the order of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and spent my birthdays visiting with her at the convent. I remember being fascinated by these women who would pattern their lives in such a strange way. Now, that strange way seems natural, even necessary.

I look forward to time apart in Vermont. There, I will be working with the other residents to discern how we will live together, and will be working to help other communities of A Place Apart oblates network and discern their lives in relationship to one another and the community in Vermont. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of what is happening. I look forward to working with you.



**Marie, center, rings the gathering bell. She moved to Putney in June to work more intentionally with A Place Apart.**



## Spiritual Training in Southern Ohio Takes Next Steps

This year’s spring training, held at Camp Woodland Altars in southern Ohio, turned out to be more than a gathering of strangers. For many participants, it was also a reunion of old friends. Most participants, some of whom came from as far away as Nebraska, were already familiar with the basics of A Place Apart; they came to receive support in taking the “next steps.”

Twenty people attended the four-day, three-night gathering, including a diverse mix of young and old, married and single, Brethren and non-Brethren. Throughout the weekend, participants followed a modified version of the medieval liturgy of the hours, which gave a monastic structure to the days.

Paul Grout & Bob Etzweiler led teaching sessions, while Karl Honsaker led music. Some of the musicians who collaborated to create the A Place Apart music album were present, and shared live renditions of some of their work. Pictured here, participants left their shoes behind on a wilderness walk intended to awaken the senses and the spirit.

**To see what participants have to say about this gathering, visit the discussion blog at [apartvermont.blogspot.com](http://apartvermont.blogspot.com) and search for “Woodland Altars.”**



# Atlantic Northeast District Sr. High Winter Retreat

Each January, youth from the Atlantic Northeast District gather at Camp Swatara in Bethel, PA for their Senior High Winter Retreat. This year's event, which included headliners Paul Grout (A Place Apart) and Seth Hendricks (NYC music leader), brought over 200 youth and advisors together.

The theme for the retreat was "Deep Roots, Stand Strong, Branch Out," the image of a tree. Paul Grout connected these images to those of the "Warrior, Mystic, Monk" that A Place Apart regularly uses to imagine the way that Jesus calls each to be in the world. Through discussion of movie clips, books, and music, personal stories, and scripture verses, Paul introduced these already known but not named parts of being. The youth instantly connected with Paul's message. Their comments reflected their hunger to be understood by the church: "Paul relates Godly things to real life." "He brought 'being spiritual' back into the worship experience without it being sappy." "He put a lot of things into perspective." "It all made sense."

The youth were challenged to experience the monastic hours as intentional times of worship. Seth Hendricks and Marie Rhoades, along with the ANE District Youth Cabinet, led these services in the style of Lectio Divina. Praying with their youth groups, chimes were heard by each as individual words were shared connecting the many groups as one. Many responded, "It feels like all we do is worship," in both exhaustion and awe.



Insight sessions were designed to engage youth in current issues and ancient practices of the church. They included a discussion of war and peace (David Sollenberger), next steps: from youth to young adult (Ethan Gibbel), disaster relief (Breanna Kreider and Bob Wolgemuth), a nature walk (Bob Etzweiler), art (Laina Hendricks), and prayer (Ryan Braught).

"The weekend continues to come up in conversations among youth and adult advisors," observed Tim Tanner, the youth and young adult coordinator for the Atlantic Northeast District. "It definitely made an impact."



## Hear the Music of A Place Apart

In our last newsletter, Paul Grout shared the story of six young adults who gathered in Putney, Vermont this winter to make holy music. The result is an eclectic mix of meditative and at times raucous songs that focus on themes central to A Place Apart. The music, mostly instrumental, utilizes guitars and synthesizers as well as the Indian sitar. The album is available on CD for a suggested donation of \$14.00.

Grout has created a 20-page booklet of illustrations and poetic meditations designed to provide a visual accompaniment to this music album. The booklet and CD represent the most recent multimedia production from A Place Apart. For a complete list of books, videos, and audio recordings available from A Place Apart, visit [www.apartvermont.org](http://www.apartvermont.org) or call 802-387-4517.

## Paul Grout teaches TRIM, YAC

A Place Apart Director Paul Grout has been busy this spring with preparations for the acquisition of properties in Putney and his many other efforts on behalf of A Place Apart. In addition to his A Place Apart work, though, he made time to lead the Training in Ministry (TRIM) workshop at Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, Indiana this past winter. The course focused on spiritual leadership and Christ-centered living.

Grout also led Brethren young adults in spiritual training at the Church of the Brethren Young Adult Conference (YAC), held May 26-28 at Camp Harmony, Pennsylvania. He was joined by others from A Place Apart, including Bob Etzweiler, who was one of the organizers of YAC. To learn more about YAC, visit [www.brethren.org/genbd/yya](http://www.brethren.org/genbd/yya).

# Two Places Apart - One Community Together

*A closer look at the properties used by A Place Apart...*

## 728 West Hill Road

This property is the “main house” of A Place Apart. It includes a 12-bedroom New England farmhouse situated on a little over two acres of land atop a ridge above the village of Putney, Vermont. The grounds include gardens, a labyrinth, yards, a garage and a shed.

Until recently, this house was jointly owned by Dorothy & Paul Grout and Reba & Dean Beery. Reba & Dean have sold their portion to Charlene Galarneau & Don Tucker, who have generously decided to fund the purchase of the half of the house and to make it available for A Place Apart’s use. Dorothy & Paul will continue to reside in their own section of the house, while Marie Rhoades will serve as the guest house’s first resident and hostess.

The home is in many ways a perfect starting point for the emerging community and center for spiritual retreat that is A Place Apart. Once current renovations (**pictured at right**) are complete, it will allow A Place Apart to help seekers truly “step apart” more often and with more flexibility than they have had in the past.



## 659 West Hill Road

This site, the second property to be used by A Place Apart, is the former home of Kroka Expeditions of Vermont, an “Earth Living Skills School.” Located only a few hundred feet down the road from the main house, A Place Apart will be able to make use of this property’s additional lodging and flexible space for the teaching of wilderness skills, practice of the fine arts, and gatherings for worship.

This 22-acre property was purchased from Kroka Expeditions by a partnership of Henry Gibbel, James Gibbel, and John Gibbel, brothers and friends to A Place Apart. Like Charlene Galarneau & Don Tucker, the Gibbel brothers have decided to invest in A Place Apart’s future. In return for A Place Apart will manage and practice good stewardship of the property.

659 West Hill Road consists of a farmhouse with an attached yurt, and a separate barn with an upstairs office. The rest of the 22 acres are largely wooded. Bob Etzweiler will be the property’s first resident and manager.



## *A Continuing Partnership: Genesis Church of the Brethren*

A Place Apart's development up to this point would not have been possible without the generous support of the only Church of the Brethren in Vermont. For years, members of Genesis Church have provided lodging for A Place Apart residents and guests, meetings space, countless hours of volunteer support, and prayer. This congregation's support of the vision continues to be a vital part of A Place Apart's development.

The Genesis Church building, **pictured here**, is located in the village of Putney and continues to be a vital piece of the larger A Place Apart community. It would be a mistake not to include this church on a list of A Place Apart's "homes."



## *Contributions*

The work of A Place Apart is funded entirely through the donations of those who support our vision and seek to be a part of our life and mission. Operating costs include upkeep of facilities, publication of newsletters, music, videos, and other materials, rental costs for campgrounds, and modest stipends for staff. A Place Apart is an independent, non-profit (501(c)3) ministry based in Vermont. Your support is greatly appreciated. Please send your tax-deductible donation payable to "A Place Apart" to the address on the back of this newsletter.

## *A Place Apart Leadership*

### Board of Trustees

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Larry Dentler  
Joe Detrick  
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Karl Honsaker, music coordinator  
Bob Etzweiler, resident staff  
Marie Rhoades, resident staff  
Jim Stokes-Buckles, part-time staff  
Travis Poling, web & blog moderator  
Asaph Murfin, web support

## *In Brief*

*A Place Apart is a community of Jesus' followers, seeking to develop monastic communities in the local church.*

*A Place Apart's unique ministry is based at a physical place that is monastery, garden, and wilderness, where people can come apart from the world to receive training in a monastically-styled life.*

*This physical place is currently in the development phase, with staff actively preparing land and facilities, even as we prepare ourselves to enter into the heart and mind of Christ and into a deeper connection to all that God has created. During this season of growth, we encourage your prayers and support.*

## Calendar

**June 2007:** A Place Apart occupies its new home on West Hill Road in Putney, Vermont. Work begins on renovations.

**August 3-5, 2007:** Trustees' meeting and official consecration of the new A Place Apart home in Putney, Vermont.

**September 2007:** Young adult gathering in Putney, Vermont. This weekend gathering will be a chance for young adults to come together, enter into the rhythms of A Place Apart, and strategize about the future direction of their involvement in this community. Dates TBA.

**Jan. 31 – Feb. 3, 2008:** Training at Camp Ithiel, Florida. This four-day, three-night gathering will focus on introducing participants to the basic concepts of spiritual practice through the eyes of the warrior-mystic-monk. See enclosed registration form.

## Contact

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A Place Apart



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