



## 18th Annual Gift of Hope

**In the Spirit of Holiday Giving, we believe in sharing our blessings with those in need.** The holiday season is the time when want is keenly felt and abundance rejoices. We ask that you share your blessings by making a donation to The Ark's **Gift of Hope**, which will be used throughout the year to provide emergency assistance for rent, utilities, prescription medicine and other basic life necessities. Mail your tax deductible donation to The Ark, 640A Barber Street, Athens Georgia 30601. If you would like your donation to be made in honor of family or friends include a list of names and addresses with your donation.



640-A Barber Street  
Athens, GA 30601  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### As Dickens wrote in A Christmas Carol,

*"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousand are in want of common necessities; hundred of thousands are in want of common comforts."*

**To that end The Ark hopes  
that you will help make  
a difference in the community.**

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# The Dove

MESSENGER FROM THE ARK

Borne by God's Promise to a Place of Hope

DECEMBER 2009

640 A Barber Street • Athens, Georgia 30601 • (706) 548-8155 • www.athensark.org

### Farewell from Laura

As my time comes to a close here at The Ark, I am overwhelmed by the multitude of blessings this twenty year career has brought to my life. What an honor it has been to serve as the Captain of this worthy ship. Our community built a strong foundation based on need and has proudly served to meet those needs with and by local support and guidance. There are far too many friends, family and colleagues to individually thank on this one short page. To all of you I give my heartfelt thanks—you have all helped to make my time at The Ark a powerful learning and loving experience.

I am grateful to the founding mothers and fathers who navigated such a clear path for The Ark that it would have been hard to go astray. On its journey, The Ark was blessed to be able to bring on board devoted long term volunteers, dedicated board members, committed congregations, gifted program coordinators and a general population who gave generously of their time, talent and money.

The Ark answered the needs of our community while helping our neighbors to understand our expectation that they take responsibility for their own actions—no different than you and I. Regardless of whether financial help was given or not, everyone who walked through the door of

### New Director On Board

While it is sad to say goodbye, new faces bring renewed energy to the work of The Ark. We welcome aboard the new Executive Director, Lucy Hudgens. Lucy comes to Athens from Charleston, South Carolina with her husband Nate and 18 month old daughter Ella.

Lucy grew up in Rome, Georgia where she attended Darling School for twelve years. She went on to get her Bachelors of Science in Psychology from Presbyterian College. While attending Presbyterian College, Lucy also played on the women's soccer team for four years. Lucy went on to work for Outward Bound for six years where she worked with adjudicated and at risk youth in Florida and South Carolina. She became Program Director for Outward Bound operations in South Carolina for four years before relocating to Georgia.

Congratulations and farewell to Laura MacArthur who has navigated The Ark for the past twenty years. Laura will be retiring on December 31, 2009 and will be greatly missed.

*Give the Gift of Hope  
this Holiday Season  
Make your donation today!*

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**THE ARK  
EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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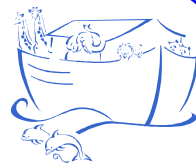
**LIAISON GA FED CREDIT  
UNION**  
Tom Cochran

**STAFF**

**DIRECTOR**  
Laura MacArthur  
Lucy Hudgens

**PROGRAM COORDINATOR**  
Patty Brooks

**Special Tribute to The Ark**



Dear Laura and Friends at The Ark,

Arks were never meant to be fast, or slick  
mere speeders or showboats.

They were designed to raise precious cargo above the flood - -  
to rescue and to save.

But arks need to be in the right place at the right time,  
resourced and ready, to do their work.

Currents, wind and waves can cause a crash upon the rocks  
or a keel run aground  
were it not for the vision and strong arms  
Of those who set the course and under-row the craft.

St. Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth (1 Cor. 4:1):  
this is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ.

The servant word used here, in the Greek, is huperetes  
the under-rower.

One who, at the beat upon the drum, pulls upon the oar,  
to steer the mighty ship.

Through these twenty years, as the rescue raft became an ark,  
many pulled upon the oar.

The course set was through the waves and wind of  
despair and fear to a shore of safety and hope.

Thank you, Laura.

Thank you fellow under-rowers.

The working definition of love - - to seek the happiness, betterment  
and well-being of the other - - is fulfilled in all who have so labored.  
It is functionally, what the Ark has become.

We thank God for all the men & women - - under-rowers of the Ark  
and for its precious cargo - - our neighbors.

Row on, faithful servants.

**Ed & Dianne Ralph**

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The Ark was treated with dignity, respect  
and with utmost courtesy and concern for  
their situation.

The Ark stayed true to its course over  
the years. We were able to weather, and  
see the light at the end of, significant  
storms: welfare reform, cost of prescription  
medicine and most recently the failing  
economy bringing lay offs and shorter work  
hours. There were a few passing showers as  
well to keep us on our toes: I coxed a  
squirrel out of the toy box and onto the  
front porch; convinced an opossum to play  
possum on one of our desks until animal  
control could pick him up; experienced  
multiple thefts; and survived a couple of  
power surges.

Despite the storms, being captain of this  
ship has allowed me the luxury of 20 years  
of gentle breezes. I arrived every day with  
joyful anticipation. I was met by a volunteer  
staff who walked through the door willing,  
able and anxious to serve, and a paid  
program coordinator who shared in my joy  
of being in a congenial and pleasant work  
place and treasured the honor of being able  
to help others in need. In spite of some of  
my own personal storms The Ark was a  
refuge where I could count on caring and  
supportive colleagues and a healthy dose of  
healing laughter. We are a true family.

Along with my pride in The Ark, my  
greatest accomplishment over the past  
twenty years was raising, educating and  
maintaining a close loving relationship with  
all of my five children and their families.  
Many of the "talents" I brought to The Ark,  
not the least of them multi tasking, can be

attributed to those five kids. My father, my  
children, and my grandchildren are my  
rainbow and the pot of gold that is waiting  
for me in retirement.

Finally, I want to express my most sincere  
thanks to the current Board Members and  
the Search Committee who had the arduous  
and time consuming task of finding a new  
Captain. I offer the same sincere thank you  
to the Twentieth Anniversary committee  
who took six months to plan and execute  
the most wonderful, joyful 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
banquet and celebration of my retirement  
along with multiple other events throughout  
the year. And to your new Captain, Lucy  
Hudgens, I wish you at least as wonderful a  
journey as I have had for two decades.

And now using nautical terms  
(appropriate as I stated my life in Athens at  
the Navy Supply Corps School), it is time for  
you all to "pipe" me off the ship and onto  
land and for me to wish all those who will  
continue this magnificent journey, "fair winds  
and following seas". Laura

*Great Gift Idea!*

**The Ark Cookbook**

**\$10**

Features favorite  
recipes from  
Ark volunteers  
and members of  
the community.

*The Ark*

United Ministry Outreach Center



*Feeding the Flock*

Contact The Ark (706) 548-8155