NEWSLETTER OF THE PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

VOLUME 10, NO. 3 EDITOR:
1 OCTOBER, 1973 PAT WATKINS

PRAIRIE CALENDER

Tues. 2 Oct. Social Action Committee meets at Melinda Roznoy's, 2205 Westlawn Avenue at 7:30 PM. Phone: 256-5308

Fri-Sun, 5-7 Oct. Prairie Retreat. See details below.

Sun. 7 Oct. 10 AM. Service by George Calden. Details not available.

Thurs. 11 Oct. 8 PM. Board Meeting at Parrish's, 302 Glenway. Phone: 238-1725

Sun. 14 Oct. 10 AM. "The Gospel According to the Prairie Chicken Pluckers."

Thurs. 18 Oct. 8 PM. Program Committee meets at the Parrish's.

Sat. 20 Oct. 7:30 PM. Playreading at the Finane's, 1506 Morrison. 257-3084

Sun. 21 Oct. 10 AM. 21st U.N. Family Service: Davidson, Parrish, Meyer, Nettleton.

Sun. 28 Oct. 10 AM. Geo. Calden explores "The Personal Meaning of Music."

****

PRAIRIE CAMP RETREAT: We are scheduled to meet at the Racine YMCA camp--Anokijig--in Sheboygan County, on the weekend beginning at 3 PM, Friday, 5 October. Reservations, with at least half of your fees, MUST be RECEIVED by LILO KOEHL, 3907 Fern Court, Madison, WI. 53711, by 6 PM, Saturday, 29 September. LAST CALL!!!

COSTS, except for infants whose parents will bring their food, is $ 6.25 per person for meals (3 on Sat, Oct. 6, and 2 on Sun. Oct. 7); plus $ 6.00 camping fee per person 16 yrs old or over. SCHOLARSHIPS are available; however, those seeking them are encouraged to provide 40% of the costs. If this is impossible, don't let that deter you. Contact John Schafer for all scholarship arrangements--at 266-2720 between 9AM-5PM, or at 255-6257 at any other hour.

BRING WITH YOU: Warm clothing and bedding, and you may need a flashlight. No food is provided on Friday, so bring snacks, cider, or what-Have-you, but NO beer, no booze, no pets--these are prohibited by camp rules. Cots with mattresses are there.

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS? Contact Lilo Koehl, 233-7383. Let Lilo know if you can offer someone a ride, also.

HOW TO GET THERE: From downtown Plymouth, go east (toward Sheboygan) on State 23 to County E, near the edge of Plymouth. Turn left (north) on E. Go through the junction with County J, but slow up at the junction with Greentree Road and begin to look for the large Indianhead sign on the left (west) side of the road. Follow the bumpy trail west and a little south till you come to the lodge. If you arrive at the intersection of County E and JJ, turn around and try again--you're too far north.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE BY-LAWS: Nancy McElreath will present some changes to the By-Laws (see underlined words and phrases) at the next Parish Meeting.

It is proposed that the By-Laws be amended to read:

ARTICLE VII: STANDING COMMITTEES.

4. Social Action. The chairperson, elected . . . the Board. The Committee shall . . . national or international. The Committee may make public statements or tak take public action only in its own name and by a vote of a majority of its members; . . . (no further change in section 4).

It is proposed that every reference to chairman be changed to read chairperson; and every reference to "his," "him," "he," be changed to read "his/her," "him/her," and "he/she."

The Social Action Committee invites all members to attend its next meeting. But, whether you attend or not, your suggestions and nominations for recipients of the "Prairie Recognition Award," a $ 25. monthly stipend which will publicly recognize significant social action by a person or group, is sought. Contact any of the committee members: Ted Clark, Mark or Nancy McElreath, Rebecca French, Sidney Mannering, Melinda Rozmoy, or Dan Willard.

Theron Caldwell writes from Spain that after a few problems, she is settled in and would love to hear from some Prairie friends. Write to:

41 Torrecedeira
6º C
Vigo, Pontevedra
SPAIN

Airmail postage is $ .21

HAVE YOU MAILED YOUR PRAIRIE PLEDGE?

THE NEW MORALITY OR THE NEW IMMORALITY

Here we are, back again, stressing the fourth "M" of our fall themes: Morality. We often hear from many people these days, as well as from the press and the pulpit, that we are entering into a period of moral breakdown and chaos. One minister has proclaimed, "The moral lights have gone out for millions."

The old morality, the Ten Commandments, the family, marriage, the church, are all feeling the effects of our changing moral values. In the area of sex, for example, it seems that anything goes these days. Husband and wife swapping (the official term is "co-marital sex!") is on the increase. X-rated movies and dirty books are within easy reach. Adultery is becomng more acceptable. Premarital sex is becoming the norm. Virginity before marriage is viewed as a "hang-up." Here in Madison, we have our massage parlors, nude strip contests, and drug

scenes.

Those who defend the moral ideals of our forefathers and hold to the traditional codes are regarded by many "advanced" sophisticates with scorn or as being "quaint." Yet, the old moral codes are still strongly upheld by the majority of Americans. One of the reasons for Nixon's massive electoral victory in 1972 was his success in identifying McGovern with the "new immorality," with those who advocate permissiveness, "softness" on drugs, sex, crime, and racial issues. I guess the "softness on communism" issue has been replaced by new kinds of softness.

Is God being dethroned and being replaced by sex? It is true that never in our history has sex been so open and uninhibited. Although we may ban topless waitressing or close a massage parlor here and there, I feel that sex is here to stay. And so, also, I believe, are our morals.

I don't believe America really is suffering from a moral breakdown. It is true that there have been many individual cases of moral decline leading to tragedy. For example, we have read of women addicted to heroin, who have become prostitutes in order to pay for the perpetuation of their addiction. Instead of a moral breakdown, however, I see a moral interregnum in our times. Just as there used to be a lapse in government between the death of one king and the crowning of another, so today we may be going through an in-between stage from one set of moral codes to another.

A similar moral interregnum occured at the time of the Roman Empire, when the pagan codes had broken down and the Christian morality had not been fully shaped and accepted.

Instead of one new morality for the future, with one basic set of morals, I suspect there will be new moralities. Just as we are becoming more and more a society of greater choices, in a similar way we are becoming pluralistic in our morals. This would mean that the Mosaic commandments or the morality inherited from the Victorians may flourish strongly among many people, particularly in small towns and rural areas. But, in the cities or in middle class suburbs, the Gospel according to Hugh Hefner will have its disciples.

In a survey of its members, released by the UUA in 1967, the majority of the Unitarians polled indicated that sex between unmarried people should be left to the free choice of the people involved. Although Unitarians may be more liberal than most people on this issue, it won't be long before many other Americans will have similar sentiments. I feel we are entering into an era where a new freedom will be before us: the freedom to choose among moral alternatives.

I'm not so sure that these new moralities will make people any happier. Freedoms bring joy and delight to some and agonies to others. Just as in the Victorian era, people felt guilty about having sexual feelings, people in the future will feel guilty if they don't have intense sexual satisfaction, or don't have as much fun as the sex manuals propose.

In the above comments, I've only reflected on the morality of sex. I hope that new, more humanistic moralities also develope in regard to war and violence.

George Calden

If not deliverable, return to sender-Postage Guaranteed
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
1806 Westlawn Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin
53711

Non Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 1604