PRAIRIE FIRE

... As the prairie stretches out until it becomes one with the sky, let us reach out to touch and be one with the natural world and with one another.

From our Bond of Union.

The Prairie Fire is the newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society and is published semi-monthly.

March 4, 2001

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, March 11
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00am
“Science and Spirituality”. Our guest speaker is public radio producer and host, Judith Strasser. This service will be devoted to “The Reason/Unreason Project”: Part I (reason)
11:45am
Pizza lunch, followed by Annual Prairie Service Auction. Come one, come all!

Tuesday, March 13
7:00pm
Board Meeting. All members may attend.

Sunday, March 18
10:00am
“Science and Spirituality” Judith Strasser will continue with “The Reason/Unreason Project”.
11:30am
Secret Friends Party. Meet your secret friend and/or enjoy a potluck lunch. All are invited.

Saturday, March 24
7:30pm
Prairie Playreaders at the Hagstrom household.
(See RSVP for details.)

Sunday, March 25
10:00am
“Prayers from Prison”. Guest speaker is Judy Washbush.
11:45am
Prairie women’s group meets downstairs.

Saturday, March 31
7:00pm
Excerpts from the play “Questionable Origins” including discussion of gay and lesbian issues. (See RSVP for details.)

Sunday, April 1
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00am
Susan Hagstrom presents the third in her four-part lay ministry on Skepticism. This program will deal with “Tricks of the Mind”.

Monday, April 2
6:30pm
Spanish Speakers Potluck at the Meeting House.

Next Prairie Fire deadline is Sunday, March 18, 2001
DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, March 11:
The Reason/Unreason Project: Part I (reason)
Judith Strasser has been working on a collection of poems that explore the relationships between reason and unreason, science and religion, material and spiritual ways of knowing. She will explain the genesis of her interest in this subject, and read some of the poems she has written that focus on "reason."

Judith recently retired as a producer and interviewer for the nationally syndicated public radio program, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. She has been writing poetry since the mid-1980s. Her work has been published in Poetry, The Kenyon Review, Prairie Schooner, Quarterly West, and other literary magazines. She has been awarded several writing residencies, including a three month fellowship at the Wurlitzer Foundation in Taos, New Mexico. She will continue work on her Reason/Unreason Project at Hawthomden Castle International Retreat for Writers in Scotland later this year.

Sunday, March 11: Prairie Service Auction
After the Sunday program, we’ll hold our annual auction with a pizza lunch at 11:45 (suggested donation $2 per slice) and auction at 12 noon. Fun and excitement are guaranteed. (See ‘Our Society’ for details.)

Sunday, March 18:
The Reason/Unreason Project: Part II (Unreason)
In this second presentation, Judith Strasser will continue discussion of the themes presented in her first service and will read some of the "unreason" poems.

Sunday, March 25: Prayers from Prison
Judy Washbush, the "prison poet", accompanied by friends, will offer the poetry and voices of former prisoners of the Wisconsin Corrections system. They will discuss injustice and racism in the system, the humanity of prisoners, and the possibility of forgiveness.

Her fellow poets in the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets know Judy as "the prison poet". She published "Poems from the Dane County Jail", a collection of inmates' poems, in 1997. Soon after that, her poets went off to prisons and they and their cellmates continued to send her poems, so she began publishing a prison poetry newsletter, which regularly reaches about 40 inmates. In the last four years, she has corresponded with about a hundred men in Wisconsin prisons. Her program will humanize these prisoners.

OUR SOCIETY

Socially-Acceptable Bragging
On February 25, Erin Bosch, in a bold move, gave us permission (encouraged us, even) to recount to others, in small groups, things about ourselves that we are especially proud of. We discovered that this was a rare opportunity, as we are socially conditioned to modesty, mostly encouraging and bragging about OTHERS. A great variety of feelings were expressed in the small groups, including a spirituality of sharing our sense of life's deepest moments. This may well become an annual program. Thank you, Erin, for originating and presenting it.

Four Favorite Skeptics
On March 4 Susan Hagstrom led a service about the "Joie de Vivre" of four eminent skeptics: - James Randi, Ray Hyman, Steve Allen, and Carl Sagan. Susan was witty. For example: "A father was preparing to put some salve on his son's injured skin. The son said, 'Are you sure it won't hurt?' The father replied, 'If I was sure of anything, I wouldn't be a Unitarian'."
Besides the books displayed, you can access the web. For James Randi, just search his James Randi homepage. For Carl Sagan, see: www.seti.org and www.planetary.org

Prairie Service Auction
On March 11th we'll hold our annual (you've got to be there) service auction with Orange Schroeder serving as auctioneer. Enjoy a pizza lunch while Orange entertains you with her wit and inimitable style.

New offerings (in addition to those below) are: - minor medical procedure, dinner for eight, clay bas
relief, cottage weekend, pottery, phobia cure, wildlife note cards, cheesecake, and house cleaning. There’s also a request for: - kitchen ceiling painted.

The list continues with: - personal retreat at St. Benedict’s, Ethnic Connection performance, a weekend of child care, home repair, "A Day in the Country", small sewing repairs, strawberry-rhubarb pie, photo session (professional level), pumpkin pie, home-made oatmeal bread, farm weekend, chart of your family tree, horseback ride, stamp art workshop, personal web site, garden tilling, extended Saturday night childcare, personal finance workshop, politics or economics workshop.

There’s still time to contribute. Call Bob Reuschlein 848-5248 or e-mail earlwal@itis.com Let your imagination be your guide.

Do You Want to Be Part of Tricks of the Mind?
Susan Hagstrom, for her third program in her lay ministry, “Tricks of the Mind”, April 1st (April Fool’s Day) would like three volunteers to demonstrate some mentalist techniques. Rick Owens has already kindly volunteered so she needs two others. Decent memory is the only requirement for the demonstrations. If you are willing, please-call 267-4797 days or 238-4970 nights. The sooner anyone volunteers the sooner they can start practicing!

Easter Program Needed
Would you be Prairie's Easter Bunny?
We need a program presenter for Sunday, April 15, traditionally an Intergenerational and potentially a Potluck. Would you be willing to rise to the occasion? If so, please let us know: Prairie Program Committee: Dean, Linda, Marian, Paula, Rick R., Rosemarie, and Warren.

CMWD Annual Assembly April 27-29, Springfield, IL
The Central Midwest District Annual Assembly is April 27-29 in Springfield IL, about a five hour drive from Madison. The theme is “Sharing the Search: Religious Education in the New Millennium”. The keynote speaker will be Judith Frediani, Curriculum Development Director of the UUA and project editor of Our Whole Lives. Workshops include Survey of Economic Justice Curricula by Reverend Jean Darling (Rachel Siegfried’s daughter). Candidates for UUA President, Moderator and Financial Advisor will speak.

If you're interested in becoming a Prairie delegate, voting at business meetings, attending programs and reporting back to Prairie, contact Nancy Schraufnagel, Denominational Affairs Chair, 273-3195 by this Sunday March 11th. If received by April 1st, the registration fee is $55; delegate’s registration paid by Prairie. Nancy encourages all interested to attend: it’s a chance to meet other UUs, enhance your religious/spiritual life, learn and have fun.

Lay Ministers for Next Year
Do you have an idea for a series of services for Prairie for next year? Or ideas you would like to see someone present? We depend on our members and community friends for taking responsibility for about 3 lay ministry series each year. These stimulating series have included topics ranging from philosophy and religion to the arts, ecology, and social justice. Each person gives their special twist to inspire us to think in new ways! A series may consist of 4-6 services around a topic. Some lay ministers "recruit" other members to help them with a series. A small stipend is provided to recognize the leadership of each lay minister. If you have a proposal, please submit a few paragraphs or an outline of topics and content to the Committee on Committees, Paula Pachciarz, Chair (273-4806, pachwack@chorus.net) or Rick, Aileen, Anne, or Phoenix.

Best Wishes to George
Ruth Calden sent a message via Ginny C. on Sunday afternoon to let us know that George is in the hospital with a cardiac diagnosis in Naples, Florida, their winter home. Cards and messages can be sent to him at their home: 940 Palmview Dr., Apt. 214, Naples, Florida, 34110. We wish you a smooth recovery George, so you can get back out to enjoy that great weather. (Check with Aileen or Doleta for further information.)

Note: The editor regrets all articles submitted could not be published. They should appear in the next issue of the Prairie Fire.
A Thank You Note from Dan
Dan Stevenson will be coming home to Peg and Will’s in Michigan sometime in March. He has made good progress and will continue with rehab after his return to the States. Members of his family have been with him most of the time. He sends his thanks to Prairie friends, appreciating all the messages sent to him. He states, “Prairie is a special place.”

Something to Brag About
When Joys and Sorrows were shared on Sunday March 4th, Rick, of Verona modestly did not tell us that his daughter Eleanor had won first place in each of the three musical spheres in which she competed. The area solo and consortium contest was held at Middleton High School.

Unitarian Camp for Middle Schoolers
Marwood Unitarian Camp for adolescents entering 7th 8th 9th or 10th grades is held each summer for one week (this year August 5-11). It has been in existence for 40 years. For more information, call Catherine Mandt at 256-0398.

From the RE Contingent
High school
We spent our OWL time thinking about our sexual response cycles: - what turns us on. We explored this idea by writing “safe sexual fantasies”.  
6-7-8
We had a great time attending the play “The Good Times Are Killing Me”. It really made the reading of the play in class come alive.
3-4-5 and K-1-2
A huge mural was created (now hanging in the hall downstairs) depicting aliens invading Madison. Our task was to draw pictures of ways in which aliens were forced to leave without lethal shots being fired. Some ingenious strategies: noisy music, warming lights, playing chess, etc. Come down and see the mural!

RSVP/You’re Invited – The Social Events Calendar
March 24th: 7:30 Playreaders
The Prairie Playreaders, will meet at the Hagstrom Household, 916 Shorewood Blvd., Madison, WI.

All reading skills welcome. Sweets, etc., at intermission. In the mood for a farce? That’s probably what ‘s in store. Tel 238-4970.

Karaoke Gathering
Some of us have been talking about possibly doing another karaoke evening, soon, in March sometime. Everyone is welcome. Good voices not required. Please contact Erin Bosch for details (238-6285; erin@forestprod.org).

March 31, 7:00pm: Shaarei-Shamayim/Prairie Co-sponsor Performance and Discussion of Gay and Lesbian Issues
On Saturday, March 31, at the Prairie Meeting House, TAPIT/new works will excerpt scenes from their upcoming production “Questionable Origins”, which explores the collusion between private lives and public ideology. What is the appropriate use of personal information about historical and current public figures? How much of yourself will you hide to protect your life? Joseph Elder, UW professor and founder of the Madison chapter of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), will facilitate discussion of the scenes presented in the play.

Book Club – What’s Up: The Next Three Months
Come join our spirited discussions once a month, after the service at Prairie, with a new feature - a finger-food potluck. The club is open on a drop-in basis. You probably can get these books from the public library, but if you want to buy them, Borders Bookstore on University Avenue will provide a 20% discount if you tell them you’re part of the Prairie Book Club. The schedule is:
Sunday, April 8 - THE CIDER HOUSE RULES by John Irving.
Sunday, May 6 - R.L.BLUE by Walter Mosley.
Sunday, June 10 - THE POISONWOOD BIBLE by Barbara Kingsolver.
~ Mary Mullen, 238-7904

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<th>Shaarei Shamayim Calendar</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesdays 4pm–6pm Children’s Classes</td>
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<td>Saturday, Mar 10, 6pm-Midnight, Purim Party</td>
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<td>2nd, 3rd &amp; 4th Sat 9am–2pm Religious Sv</td>
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<td>Sv for March will be on the 10th, 17th and 24th</td>
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