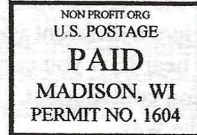


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Located off the south Frontage Rd. of the West Beltline Hwy near the Seminole Hwy exit.



Prairie UU Society  
2010 WHENONA DR  
MADISON WI 53711-4843



# 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.*

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**August 9, 2001**

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## PRAIRIE CALENDAR

### Summer Schedule

**This Prairie Fire covers the entire month of August. The next Prairie Fire deadline will be September 2.**

#### Sunday, August 12

10:00am

"Flight of the Stone" – Watch a short film depicting the face of humanity from a stone's viewpoint.

Discussion to follow.

#### Tuesday, August 14

7:30pm

Board Meeting. Open to all interested members.

#### Sunday, August 19

10:00am

"Starting Down the Path" a program about Taoism presented by John Stuart and Suzanne Phillips

11:45am

Woman's group meets downstairs. Bring a snack to pass and, if you like, a topic for discussion.

#### Sunday, August 26

8:45 – 3:30pm

**Prairie Parish meeting to discuss growth.**

All Prairie members are urged to attend.

Angela Merkert from the Central Midwest District

of the UUA will facilitate. Our goal is to reach decisions on critical issues facing Prairie growth. (See Details for a description of the agenda, etc.)

#### Sunday, September 2

**No Service at the Meeting House.**

10:00am

Canoe Party

12:00pm

Picnic at Wingra Park

#### Sunday, September 9

10:00am

"Textile Arts" first of lay ministry on "Creativity and the Arts" presented by Jean Matos.

12:00pm

Prairie Bicycle Ride. Bring your bike to Prairie and go on a group tour.

#### September 14-16

### FALL RETREAT

Come to Bethel Horizons, near Governor Dodge State Park. Registration enclosed. This yearly event is a Prairie favorite. Fill out the form and hand it in soon.

#### Monday, October 15

Van Gogh and Gauguin at the Chicago Art Institute.

Hurry, only 13 seats remaining and going fast...

Call Pat Watkins 233-5795 for details. (See RSVP)

## DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Sunday, August 19: "Starting Down the Path"**

"Is it better to be the Oak or the Willow? A Taoist would say the Willow since the Oak does not bend to the wind and will break. Taoism offers a different way to look at the world and ourselves. Come hear how you can begin down the path to Taoist thinking and contentment." Suzanne Phillips and John Stuart will lead the way.

### **Prairie Parish meeting to discuss growth scheduled for Sunday August 26th**

We're announcing this as an official Parish meeting because votes may be counted on actions to be taken. The agenda is:  
8:45 -Arrive at Prairie. Pastries and coffee will be provided.  
9:00 -Overview of day's activities and a discussion of Prairie Core Values

Which ones do we want retained and strengthened?

10:15 -Break

10:30 -Presentation of background information about needs for growth and potential growth options.

12:00(approx) -Lunch will be provided.

1:00 -Identify, discuss, and conclude what actions should be taken

3:30 -Adjourn

As most of you are aware, we have held several discussions on growth within the congregation. We believe that there is consensus on certain points:

1. The RE program is barely viable because of small numbers, and we are at risk of losing the families we do have.
2. We are burning out a devoted core of volunteers, and have difficulty filling positions for teachers, committee chairs, etc.
3. We need to grow significantly in membership, for the above reasons.
4. Our current RE space is insufficient to support needed growth.

Angela Merkert from the Central Midwest District of the UUA has agreed to facilitate this workshop. (Child care will be provided). Our goal is to reach decisions on critical issues facing Prairie growth. The questions before us include:

- Can our current space be remodeled to meet our projected needs, or would moving be the better solution? If we move, where? Buy an existing space or build?

- Do we need to change our structure to attract and retain new members, or would such a change run directly counter to Prairie's mission? Specifically, should we hire a full- or part-time minister, increase duties for the administrator, or pay for some of the duties now done by volunteers?

- Should we consider jointly building a new congregation with First UU society as an alternative to trying to expand Prairie?

We expect the retreat will help prepare us for action on these issues. In order to act with confidence that the congregation is in agreement, *there must be a large turnout.* We hope that the entire Prairie community will attend. We are asking for your

commitment to participate in this planning retreat. WE NEED YOU!

If you have questions please contact Ken Skog, 273-4813, e-mail kskog49@aol.com

~The Long Range Planning Committee ~

(Erin Bosch, Norma Briggs, Rachel Long, Mary Mullen, Barb Park, and Ken Skog, Chair)

### **Sunday, September 2: Canoe Party and Picnic**

There isn't a service at the Prairie Meeting House- instead we will meet at WINGRA PARK at 10am for a canoe outing on Lake Wingra followed by a picnic about noon. To get there, take Monroe Street to Knickerbocker, go south toward the Lake and the Park. The Park has a boat ramp and rents canoes, which can supplement the canoes our members bring. Bring a picnic lunch for yourself and your household. We will have canoes and people available to give instructions about paddle strokes and other canoe skills.

If you can help in teaching and/or sharing a canoe, please call Warren Hagstrom at 238-4970. (Warren knows nothing about kayaks, but if you have one and can teach, please do.) Come and join in the fun. Everyone is welcome.

### **Sunday, September 9: Textile Arts**

Jean Matos' lay ministry on Creativity and the Arts will kick off with a focus on textile arts. Quilters, embroiderers, weavers, tailors, crosstitchers, etc. are encouraged to bring in samples of their best work and be ready to answer questions about their creative process. Please call Jean if you plan to bring a sample.

Other artists, take note: Jean's other ministries will focus on three-dimensional art (sculpture, ceramics), - September 23; painting, drawing and printmaking - October 14; and photography - November 4. She hopes to have large displays of Prairie folks' work for each service so start looking over your oeuvre now, or be sure to finish that special project in time. If you have any questions or are interested in participating more actively in a service, call Jean at 255-2209.

### **Prairie Bicycle Ride**

Join us Sunday, Sept 9 at 12:00 for a ride along the loop formed by the Capital City, Wingra Creek and Southwest bicycle trails. We will leave at noon and stop for lunch about twenty minutes later at the North American Rotisserie (chicken, barbecue, Cuban bean dishes, etc) on Fish Hatchery Road. The rain date is September 23.

~ Al & Aileen Nettleton



### **September 14-16**

### **FALL RETREAT**

The Prairie Fall Retreat is our way to reconnect with each other and to feel our humanity through nature. Join us at

scenic Bethel Horizons for an enjoyable weekend of activities for all ages and interests. This is a great way for people who are new to prairie to get to know others. The retreat begins Friday evening with snacks and a campfire. Bethel Horizons staff serve excellent meals with vegetarian options. Meals are served at specific times beginning with breakfast Saturday through breakfast Sunday. The registration form is enclosed with this Prairie Fire. This year Bethel has expanded the Prairie Center to accommodate 72 people. Therefore we can all stay at the main Center and use that as a base. Registration must be received by mail at Prairie or phoned to Marilyn Ruecking

838-8540, by **August 19**. Some scholarship funds are available to assure all may attend. A map will be in the next Prairie Fire along with more information about what to bring.

### **Harness Your Creative Energies for Retreat Programming**

Our Prairie Fall Retreat at Bethel Horizon is a wonderful time to share your talents and ideas with others. You can do this by leading an activity or workshop in an area of your interest--and making a valuable contribution to this important Prairie weekend together. Could you teach several others a specific craft? Coordinate an indoor or outdoor activity for kids? Lead a nature or photo walk? A music session? Coordinate an evening activity for all ages? Lead a discussion for a workshop on a topic that would be timely? We are depending on YOU to help make the weekend come alive. Please call Aileen Nettleton, retreat program coordinator, 238-6053, with your ideas and your offer to help.

## **OUR SOCIETY**

### **What Do I Do With My Prairie Pledge?**

You can put it in the collection basket at the Sunday service or mail it to Prairie UU Society, 2010 Whenona Drive, Madison, WI 53711. These two choices will work best for prompt handling.

### **Cleanliness is next to . . .**

THANK YOU--THANK YOU--THANK YOU--THANK YOU--THANK YOU

Wow! We cleaned (and I mean really cleaned) 80% of the downstairs on Sunday (July 22), including the front & (yuck) back stairways & the dreaded RE/furnace storage closet. You should have seen the huge pile of bush trimmings, garbage bags and stuff by the curb when we left (all the more impressive considering U-U's could find a use for anything--or at least it might be useful someday). Thanks to all of you who made the brave decision to throw something out.

What made it a special day was all of you. I had fun (yes, I really did) and I hope you did, too. There were over 36 of us there even though it was beastly hot and humid! I want to especially thank Bill Littman and Sam, and Fran Zell, from Shaarei Shamayim for joining us for the potluck and helping clean our stuff (not theirs). The other really cool thing was how ALL the kids helped in some way (carrying about 40

cushions out to the back yard to air them out and washing all the toys in the preschool room). This was truly an intergenerational undertaking. You "guys" even cleaned things that weren't on my list which made it easier for the second cleaning day on Saturday, August 4.

I would especially like to thank my long-suffering family (Ken, Erica, Kate and Brian) for doing everything I asked, no matter how weird, and being willing to bail me out many, many times.

**XOXOX ~ Judy**

### **The Report on General Assembly July 8**

Bob Reuschlein and Nancy Schraufnagel shared with us a taste and some materials from General Assembly and the consensus feeling of the delegates that the new president of the UUA will be great. They described a UU social action demonstration against the caricature mascot of the Cleveland Indians despite a pouring rain. Visitors from James Reeb, also GA delegates, added perspective to the discussion. The many materials they brought back attested to the scope of the gathering.

### **GLSEN in the Schools, July 22**

On July 22 Bev Cann presented the first part of her program on "How Homophobia Hurts Us All". Everyone who was present had the opportunity to express personal concerns regarding lesbian/ gay/bisexual/transgender issues in the schools. Bev also introduced the new coordinator for L/G/B/T issues in the Madison schools. Bev will continue her stimulating and challenging program on October 21st.

### **Four Congregations Meet For A Joint Service**

The four area UU congregations met at the beautiful and historic Free Thinkers Hall in Sauk City on Sunday, July 29. Prairie President Erin Bosch helped kick off the discussion of the service topic, "Ministry is All That We Do--Together". Typically, there was both agreement and dissension among the UUs present regarding the points raised. The difference between volunteering and true ministry was one that seemed to defy consensus. Prairie was well-represented by about 15 people during the discussion and the delectable picnic potluck which followed.

### **Hospitality**

**Sorry to report there are no volunteers listed on the sign up sheets. We depend upon our volunteers, so please plan on pitching in.**

### **Oh No, Barbara Rames Is Moving Away**

You may have heard that Barbara Rames is leaving us. She's moving back to Minneapolis. Her last Sunday morning with us will be Labor Day weekend. I know that Barb "LOVES" ice cream and it would be so fitting for us to arrange an ice cream social at Prairie for her before she leaves. People could bring their favorite poem to share.

Since we're having a canoe outing on the Labor Day weekend we'll have to pick an alternate day or evening to celebrate.

Anyone who knows Barb knows about all the wonderful things she has done for Prairie and also how she doesn't like to

be in the limelight. She asks that no one send gifts, but if you wish to give something, would you please consider giving money to help Karen Gross extend her Peace Corps mission by helping young people in her community. Karen would like to provide primary and secondary youths, in her Dominican Republic rural village, a textbook and uniform for school. Your contribution would help these children and this would be a good way to bid Barb "adieu" because your contribution would mean a lot to her.

What follows is excerpts from letters we have received from Karen that tells of her experiences in the Dominican Republic (D.R.) and her need for contributions to help the children there:

(In July of 2000 Karen joined the Peace Core to help people develop small businesses. The D.R. has 30 percent unemployment and is a poor country. Over half the population fall below the poverty line and half the poor live in extreme poverty.)

In the D. R. I live in a wood house painted green on the outside and bright pink on the inside. I have four rooms, a tin roof, no running water, no flush toilets, no consistently available electricity, no telephone or TV. My neighbors are three generations of Dominicans and they watch out for me. I feel very safe, accepted, and even loved by my community. The first evening I sat outside, 17 children visited me on my porch. I am getting to know them all. I read fairy tales to them in Spanish and have coloring books and crayons for them when they come over. The children are beautiful and full of life, hope and energy. There is only a limited amount I can do on my Peace Core salary to help them at this time.

I have taught one Jr. Achievement class and taught five youth leaders about AIDS so they can present this information to their peers. The schools are sorely lacking and less than half the children have a textbook for school. Many cannot afford the uniform. I yearn to give them more of what America has to offer. It is my hope to give each child in my rural community a gift of development from the United States - this gift could help them receive an education by providing them with a necessary uniform to attend school or with a textbook.

If you cannot attend Barbs going away party or in addition to Barbs going away party, please consider a donation.

## THE COMMUNITY

### Sunday, August 19, 3pm: Listen to Rosemarie Lester

"Cowboys, Indians, Hogan's Heroes: How Germans and Americans see each other". Well - how do they? And where do some of those images come from? Rosemarie Lester will be talking about that with Emily Auerbach and Norman Gilliland on the University of the Air program, Sunday, August 19th, at 3pm, on the Ideas Network. Tune in if you have nothing better to do - it might get you into some lively arguments!

### Precious Pints

Recent blood donors at Red Cross centers are Erica Skog, John Peterson and Fredericka Schilling (apheresis). Thanks to all who gave and those that tried.

## RSVP/You're Invited - The Social Events Calendar

### Another Fabulous Prairie Fundraiser!

On Monday, October 15th, we will have a bus trip to the Chicago Art Institute to see the Van Gogh and Gauguin exhibit entitled "Studio of the South." Price is \$ 59 for bus and exhibit. Only thirteen seats remaining; no deadline, but it's first come, first served. If interested, mail check made out to Prairie U.U. Society to Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane, Madison 53705-3331. For additional information, phone 233-5795.

### September 8<sup>th</sup>, 7pm: Playreaders Get-Together

Playreaders is a Prairie group that meets monthly at a host's home to read plays. As host, you choose the play read that month. In addition, the host generally provides finger snacks and beverages and dessert during intermission. If you are interested in hosting playreaders, or want to help make plans, come to the initial playreading, September 8th, 7 pm, at Susan Hagstrom's, 916 Shorewood Blvd., Madison, 53705. Call Susan at (H) 238-4970 or (W) 267-4797 if you have any questions. Everyone is welcome even if you don't wish to host a play.

### Notes from the Book Club

Believe it our not, the Prairie Book Club missed only one meeting due to summer! At the meeting on August 5, members chose dates and selections for the next few months. Remember, anyone can participate. This is a drop-in club: you don't have to be a regular attendee. We meet once a month at Prairie after the Sunday service and bring simple finger food to share. Hope you can come.

