

# 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.*

*The two most recent issues may be seen on Prairie's Web site at <http://www.prairie.madison.uua.org>*

President: Ken Skog; (608) 273-4813

Editor: Wendy Williams; [webet@chorus.net](mailto:webet@chorus.net); (608) 249-7790

**March 7, 2003**

## PRAIRIE CALENDAR

### March 9-16

Interfaith Hospitality Network shift.

### Sunday, March 9

9:00 a.m. Choir

10:00 a.m. Cal DeWitt presents "Caring for

Creation: Environmental Stewardship in Practice."

### Saturday, March 15

7:00 p.m. Playreaders.

### Sunday, March 16

9:00 a.m. Choir

10:00 a.m. Nancy Vedder-Shults presents "Wicca as Nature Religion."

### Monday, March 17

6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers potluck at Prairie.

### Thursday, March 20,

7:30 p.m.- "Guitar Band" and sing-along. All instrumental players and singers are invited to sing peace songs and other selections from the RISE UP SINGING book and PRAIRIE SONG BOOK. We are calling this the "guitar band" in hopes that everyone who plays guitar will bring theirs. Other instruments are welcome as are any singers.

### Saturday, March 22

7:00 p.m Karaoke night at Prairie.

### Tuesday, March 25

Men's Drop-In Shelter Breakfast

### April 27-May 4

Interfaith Hospitality Shift

### September 12-14

Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society's Retreat.

## **Next Prairie Fire deadline is**

Sunday, March 16, 2003

## DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sunday, March 9

Cal DeWitt, Ph.D., a field naturalist and environmental scientist at the UW Madison, has worked in his community in the Town of Dunn and as Director of the Au Sable Institute to instill an environmental ethic that will make a difference in the world. He will be speaking to us on his experiences in this work, emphasizing the need for developing awe and wonder for the natural world and creatures around us. From awe and wonder

comes appreciation, from appreciation comes respect, from appreciation and respect comes love, and from love comes caring stewardship. From leading kids and adults on his "Sidewalk Safari" in Madison to his "African Safari" with his Au Sable students in Kenya, he will help us focus on the awesome nature of our world and the vital need to take care of it.

Through his stories, DeWitt will show us how stewardship is developed in every person and every society throughout history as a consequence of observing, recognizing, and acting upon the consequences of our own individual and collective actions in the world. It is produced by the interplay between human action and reaction, between natural action and human reaction of living and working in the world. He will show why this is a necessary concept for survival and sustainable human individuals and societies.

### **Sunday, March 16**

Nancy Vedder-Shults, Ph.D. is a musician, storyteller, educator, workshop facilitator and ritualist whose work is rooted in feminist theology and women's studies scholarship. She has been offering spiritual growth workshops, keynotes and concerts since 1987. Regarding her program, "Wicca As Nature Religion" Dr. Vedder-Shults offers the following preview: The ancient earth-centered religion of pre-Christian Europe has been revived in the last century. Like all earth-centered religions, Wicca honors nature as central and sacred. We will experience a Wiccan ritual honoring the Spring Equinox while learning more about the sacredness of nature within this new spiritual path with ancient roots.

Here is an excerpt from Nancy's writing "*Song to Gaia*

*Gaia, you who unite earth, air, fire and water  
on this beautiful blue-green orb,  
Mother of us all, bless us today!  
You who birthed the two-leggeds and the four-  
leggeds,  
the creeping animals and those who swim and fly,*

*Remind us that we are one with all our relations  
as we live our lives today.*

## **OUR SOCIETY**

### **Would you like to be a Delegate?**

Do you want to be an official delegate for Prairie at the UUA General Assembly in Boston from June 26-30<sup>th</sup>? If interested, please contact Ken Skog or Rick Ruecking ASAP. [kskog@tds.net](mailto:kskog@tds.net) or [ruecking@hotmail.com](mailto:ruecking@hotmail.com).

### **Should Prairie Raise Funds and Move to a Larger Building?**

*Submitted by Ken Skog for the Long Range Planning Committee*

The Long Range Planning Committee is continuing its efforts to find ways to help Prairie grow and support a larger RE program, as well as attracting the larger number of members needed for this. We are continuing to look at (1) ways additional professional staff could help and (2) the need for more and better space for both the RE program and adult programs. We are looking at ways to phase in help from additional professional staff and think it is currently important to focus more effort on the need for more and better space.

The LRP Committee would like to invite Prairie members to engage in discussions over the next month and a half about working to obtain larger facilities for Prairie.

It is important to work to develop a plan now—both to specify how we will move ahead and how we may collaborate with James Reeb and First Society. James Reeb, Prairie and First Societies are working to see if they can prepare a joint proposal to the UUA that would help grow UU membership in Dane County. If Prairie members can develop a consensus about more building space we would be in a better position to join with James Reeb and First Societies in specifying our role in the proposal to the UUA.

We will be asking for your discussion and feedback about *new facilities* in the following ways:

1. March 10 -31. Discuss Information developed by the LRP Committee in Circle dinner groups or in other small groups and provide feedback to Ken Skog or Barb Park.
2. April 6. Attend a potluck lunch at Prairie to learn about the feedback, discuss a plan, and take a straw poll to determine support.
3. Later in April. Attend a parish meeting to vote on a plan for new facilities.

### **Sing-along for Peace**

On Thursday, March 20, 7:30 at Prairie there will be a "Guitar Band" and sing-along. All instrumental players and singers are invited to sing peace songs and other selections from the RISE UP SINGING book and PRAIRIE SONG BOOK. We are calling this the "guitar band" in hopes that everyone who plays guitar will bring theirs. Other instruments are welcome as are any singers.

### **Karaoke Night**

A few years ago we had a karaoke party at Prairie, and it was a fun event. However, renting the karaoke machine was a bit expensive so we had to charge admission. This time, we are borrowing a machine from a friend of the Schroeders, so no admission charge will be required. But there will be fewer karaoke CDs available, so you are welcome to bring a regular CD and sing along to that. Come and have a bit of fun in the middle of the winter doldrums. No one is ever coerced into singing. It is fine to just sit and be entertained/amused by the singing of others. Children are very much encouraged to attend. Details: Saturday, March 22, 7:00, at Prairie. Please bring drinks for yourself and finger food to share.

### **Book Club**

MARCH 9 BOOK CLUB MEETING  
CANCELLED

Due to a glitch that resulted in inability to get copies of our March Prairie Book Club selection (THE ECSTACY OF OWEN MUIR by Ring Lardner, Jr.), the March Prairie Book Club meeting is cancelled. This book will be shifted to July.

Upcoming selections are:

April 6 - THE CORRECTIONS by Jonathan Franzen, described in an Internet review as a "spellbinding story with sexy comic brio, and evokes a quirky family akin to Anne Tyler's, only bitter." Recommended by Al Nettleton, it runs 566 pages. For the internet review, check <http://www.oxfordmusic.com/ole/franzenco.html>

May 4 - A LIFE OF HER OWN -THE TRANSFORMATION OF A COUNTRYWOMAN IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRANCE by Emilie Carles. A 264 page memoir set in the Alps. Recommended by Rose Smith.

June 8 - Ann Patchert's BEL CANTO. This is a book that is recommended as a must-read in Dane County like the book Caucasia that we read last April. Multiple copies are in the libraries.

July ? - THE ECSTACY OF OWEN MUIR by Ring Lardner, Jr., a novel set in the 1950's about a man snared by the McCarthy hearings, who sees things in black and white, and goes whole hog for whatever he is involved in. Some key words: Satire, Catholicism, and Humorous. Recommended by Andy Sommer.

### **Playreaders Meeting Scheduled**

*Submitted by Susan Hagstrom*

I will be holding Prairie Playreaders this month on Saturday, March 15th, 2003, 7:00 pm. Given the time of the year, I was thinking of a nice Irish comedy or drama, with a nice Irish themed dessert for the break. The address is 916 Shorewood Blvd., Madison, WI 53705, phone number 608-238-4970 for any questions. Come help me celebrate St. Patrick's Day a day or two in advance! By the way, RSVP's are really helpful planning-wise.

### **Spanish Speakers Potluck**

On March 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m., the Spanish Speakers will hold its monthly potluck at Prairie. Please bring a dish to pass of any variety. If you have questions, please contact Rosemary Dorney.

## SOCIAL ACTION

### Men's Drop-In Shelter Breakfast

*Submitted by the Membership Committee*

Prairie wasn't able to cook the breakfast at the men's drop-in shelter in February, but Dave Johnson made sure the groceries were bought and delivered, with extra eggs for those hungry men. Thanks, Dave.

## MEMBERSHIP

### We Appreciate You

*Submitted by the Membership Committee*

Hot coffee and friendly faces help make Prairie a welcoming place during these cold months. Thank Dave Johnson for making the coffee. The following posse made sure we didn't go short of greeters, flowers, and clean coffee cups during February: Norma Briggs, Robin Carre, Randy Converse, Rosemary Dorney, Marcia Johnson, Al Nettleton, Molly Plunkett, Dan Proud, Linda Sheehy, Judy Skog, Rose Smith, and Phoenix Wardell.

## For your Consideration

*Submitted by Wendy Williams*

For those of you who enjoy poetry, I commend to your attention a website for the peaceful poet spirit [www.poetsagainsthewar.org](http://www.poetsagainsthewar.org). The following poem was found on that site.

### Manifesto for Preemptive Peace

By Don Abbott

Cede not your rights for the sake of security.  
Resist all trespass on your soul.

Practice truth, with forgiveness.  
Refute death and start all over.

Outwit the dead-end; manifest a miracle.

Believe in the power of whimsy.  
Never be young enough to know everything.  
Put yourself in the hands of a respectful mind.

Banish "exclusive" from the lexicon.  
Argue each source of ignorance and prejudice.  
Wrestle with angels, but don't make them weep.

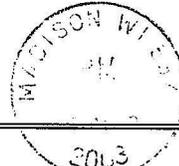
Sit still and let grace amaze.  
Breathe out, to breathe in.  
Accept the long haul.

Proclaim the justice of food.  
Bake the bread of life.  
Always make room in the inn.

Sanction transcendence.  
Remember: You may.

### Office Hours for Office Administrator

Tuesday and Friday: 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.



### Shaarei Shamavim Calendar

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sat 9am-2pm. Upcoming Religious Services will be on March 9, 16 & 23rd.  
Prairie Liaison: Bill Littman 829-1909

Barbara & Bob Park  
5610 HAMMERSLEY RD  
MADISON WI 53711-3408

