



Barbara & Bob Park
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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>

June 6, 2003

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, June 8

10:00 a.m. Mary Mullen "Summer Reading: Book Reviews" Please feel free to discuss books you have read and would recommend to others.

Tuesday, June 10

7-9 p.m. IHN training (see article)

Sunday, June 15

10:00 a.m. Rev. Gordon Gibson, "Small Acts of Great Courage." Rev Gibson serves at a UU church in Elkhart, IN (Many years ago he worked with Prairie as part of a District program, developing some dreams and plans.)

11:30 a.m. WOW

Wednesday, June 18

6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers Potluck

Sunday, June 22

10:00 a.m. Summer Outdoor Service at Picnic Point. No service at Prairie unless inclement weather. See directions inside.

Tuesday, June 24

Men's Homeless Shelter Breakfast

Sunday, June 29

10:00 a.m. "Nature as God in Contemporary and Ancient Religions" presented by J. Baird Callicott.

Sunday, July 6

Independence Day Picnic at Hoyt Park. See inside for directions.

Sunday, July 13

10:00 a.m. A Report from Our Delegates to the UUA General Assembly: Sarah Lord, Pat Watkins, and Nancy Schraufnagel.

Wednesday, July 16

7-9 p.m. IHN training (see article)

Sunday, July 20

Program to be announced.

Sunday, July 27

Four congregation service at the Free Congregation in Sauk City. Details and directions to follow.

Tuesday, July 29

Men's Homeless Shelter Breakfast

August 3-10

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Thursday, August 14

7-9 p.m. IHN training (see article)

**Next Prairie Fire deadline is
Sunday, July 8, 2003**

DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, June 8. Summer Reading Book Reviews moderated by Mary Mullen.

Sunday, June 15 The Reverend Gordon Gibson's sermon is entitled "Small Acts of Great Courage." He writes: "Three years ago on sabbatical I continued a process begun while I served Unitarian Universalist congregations in Mississippi, and I collected oral histories of what southern Unitarian Universalists did during the civil rights era. There are high points and low points, but over all it is a record of "small acts of great courage" by housewives, school children -- average people, with a vision far above average inspired and sustained by their religious community."

Gordon Gibson was born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky. He earned degrees from Yale and Tufts, and next week Starr King School for the Ministry intends to confer an honorary doctorate on him. He has served the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart since 1985, and will be in town to officiate at the wedding of Ellie Mandt, one of the "young kids" when he started in Elkhart. Prior to Elkhart, Gordon served Unitarian Universalist congregations in West Roxbury, Massachusetts, and in Jackson and Ellisville, Mississippi.

Sunday, June 22 We will share our appreciation of the joys and wonders of nature in an outdoor service at Picnic Point. Picnic Point is located on University Bay Drive. You can turn north on University Bay Drive directly off of University Avenue, past First Society, and continue on until you reach the parking lot. There will be signs directing you to where we will meet. In the past we have always found a spot under the trees up a little hill about 200 feet from the main entrance. (The joys and wonders of nature include rain, but not for our service. In case of

inclement weather we will meet at the Meeting House.)

Sunday, June 29 "Nature as God in Contemporary and Ancient Religions" is the third in a lay ministry series on Nature and Spirituality organized by John Lewis and the Prairie Program Committee which included earlier presentations by Nancy Vedder-Shults and Cal DeWitt from Pagan and Christian traditions respectively. "Nature as God in Contemporary and Ancient Religions" will examine parallels between world religions and the spiritual connections many of us feel in our experience with the natural world.

J. Baird Callicott describes the importance of this topic as follows: "One of the most exciting new developments in the general field of environmental studies is a dialogue between religion and ecology. It also promises to be one of the most efficacious, because practically the only thing that can effectively resist the juggernaut of amoral consumerism is an environmental ethic grounded in religious belief."

Sources tapped for the program include: "Wisdom of the Elders" by Suzuki and Knudtson; "Deep Ecology and World Religions" edited by Barnhill and Gottlieb; "Biodiversity" by Wilson; "Make Prayers to the Raven" by Nelson; "Models of God" by McFague.

John Lewis is a long time Prairie member who seeks spiritual inspiration in urban nature as well as in backcountry trips to wild places. He is currently making a transition from water quality work in State government to conservation and sustainability projects in Belize and Costa Rica.

Also, As an addition to our regular program, we will have a brief ceremony to welcome new members. We hope that they can attend, and that many old members will be on hand to welcome them.

Sunday, July 6 INDEPENDENCE DAY PICNIC AT HOYT PARK, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Go to Hoyt Park on 3902 Regent Street, about two blocks west of Glenway and Regent. There is a spacious parking lot at the bottom of the hill. We have reserved the

main shelter, a light tan stone structure to the right and uphill of the parking lot. The shelter is handicapped accessible. Please bring a dish to share and your own plates, cups and utensils. We will have a charcoal grill going, so if you wish, you may bring something for better or for wurst. There is a playground with climbing things and swings, a basketball court, and a baseball area. There is also space for your outdoor toys - frisbees (ultimate frisbee anyone?), etc. The park includes some nice walks through the woods. Since there is a shelter, we will meet anyway if there is a bit of rain, but if the rain is hard or cold, we will retreat to the Meeting House.

Please note: If you have a message for the co-chairs of the Program Committee, please address it to both Doleta Chapru and Warren Hagstrom (dchapru@aol.com, warrenolaf@aol.com). We may live together, but we don't usually read one another's e-mail.

OUR SOCIETY

Caring Committee Update

Submitted by Linda Sheehy

The Caring Committee was established several years ago to assist Prairie members in times of need. The types of support offered include rides, hospital visits or phone calls, meals during an illness, emergency childcare, support and resources when dealing with a crisis, and someone to talk to about a problem. This support is not intended to replace the informal network of support that has always existed at Prairie.

Caring Committee members currently include Erin Bosch, Aileen Nettleton, Marilyn Ruecking, Linda Sheehy, and new member, Dean Schroeder. Each committee member has been assigned to a number of Prairie members. Committee members will try to be sensitive to the needs of the people in their groups and will keep information confidential when necessary.

We realize that we cannot meet all of the needs of Prairie members. But we're hopeful that the committee will provide more consistency in

supporting Prairie members. If you need help or support, you may call or email any one of the committee members.

Thank you to all

submitted by the Membership Committee

In this space should go the names of all who helped Prairie run smoothly Sunday mornings in May by making coffee, greeting and washing up afterwards. You all deserve a mention and a sincere thank you. However, we kept only a few of those names on record, and, rather than mention the few and slight the rest, we hope you will please accept a blanket thank you from the Membership Committee on behalf of Prairie. It's wonderful the way everyone pitches in. Thank you!

Interfaith Hospitality Network News

submitted by Paula Pachciarz for the Social Action Committee

The week of April 27-May 4 was our most recent experience with the IHN as a buddy church and it was a stimulating one, as there were a total of 11 children with the families being hosted by Midvale Lutheran! The following people contributed their time and energy to meet the needs of the guest families: Peter Anderson, Molly Plunkett and Jed, Dave and Marcia Johnson's family, Paula Pachciarz, Marilyn Ruecking, Orange Schroeder, and Anne and Maya Urbanski. Special mention goes to Judy Wacker and her friend Maggie Whitehead, who worked a total of **five** evenings helping with child care!

Volunteers are expected to attend an IHN training session before, or sometime soon after, they begin to volunteer for the organization. Fortunately, there are several opportunities for training coming up this summer and fall, listed below. The IHN Day Center is located at 1121 University Ave. Please call Shannon Hayes at 294-7998 so she'll know how many to expect. Prairie's next IHN shift will be the week of August 3-10. Information about IHN and the training sessions is also posted on their web site at www.madison.com/communities/ihn.
Tuesday, June 10, 7-9 p.m. at the Day Center
Wednesday, July 16, 7-9 p.m. at the Day Center
Thursday, August 14, 7-9 p.m. at Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ

Thanks for the Memories

On Memorial Day, May 25, many of us had a wonderful time at the picnic at the beautiful home and gardens of Norma and Michael Briggs. The kids had a great time, and we hope the goldfish in the pond, whatever of them is left, have recovered. The grown-ups enjoyed the gardens, and spent lots of time gabbing, as they usually do. Thank you Norma and Michael.

Results of the Study/Issues for GA

Prairie has voted on the proposed study issues to be voted upon at GA. In order of importance, the results are as follows.

1. Human Rights and Peace
 2. Criminal Justice and Prison Reform
 3. Factory Farming
 4. Weapons of Mass Destruction
 5. Civil Unions and Same-Sex Marriage
- Thank you to everyone who filled out the survey. The results have been forward to the Central Midwest District.

Prairie Fire Reminder

Remember that through the summer months the Prairie Fire is issued only one time per month. Please keep that in mind as you consider information that you would like to get to other members in advance.

The deadline is the first Sunday of each month. The next deadline is an exception. I will not return from General Assembly until the evening of July 2nd. Given that and the postal holiday, the next deadline is postponed one week to July 8. I hope this is not too inconvenient and that you can plan accordingly.

For your Consideration

Deep within our Hearts

By Edmund O'Neill and submitted by Wendy Williams

Deep within our hearts,
Each of us carries the seed
of a secret dream,
special and unique to each individual.
Sometimes another person
can share that dream
and help it grow to fulfillment;
other times, the dream remains
a solitary pursuit, known only
to the seeker. But secret or shared,
no matter what it might be,
a dream is a potential which
should never be discouraged. For
each of us also carries within ourselves
a light which can cause the seed
to grow and blossom into beautiful reality...
that same light I've seen shine
so clearly in you.

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar

2nd, 3rd & 4th Sat 9am-2pm. Upcoming Religious
Services will be on July 14, 21 & 28.
Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933