"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 Bond of Union)

PRAIRIE FIRE

April 23, 2004

Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. The two most recent issues may be seen at www.prairie.madison.uua.org

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Friday, April 23 through Sunday, April 25
Central Midwest District Assembly, Lisle, Illinois

Saturday, April 24
12:00 noon.  Memorial service for Timothy Fast at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive

Sunday, April 25
9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
10:00 a.m. “Rollback of Environmental Laws: An Inside Story,” presented by Robert Martin, former EPA Ombudsman
11:45 a.m. Potluck and Annual Prairie Spring Business Meeting

April 25 - May 2
Prairie's shift with Interfaith Hospitality Network

Monday, April 26
6:15 p.m. Potluck and WOW Program at Prairie

Tuesday, April 27
Prairie cooks at men's drop-in shelter breakfast

Sunday, May 2
10:00 a.m. “Caged Birds:  Slavery in Today's World,” facilitated by Pat Watkins

Sunday, May 9
10:00 a.m. “Is My World Threatened by Islam?”, presented by Bob Lawrence

Saturday, June 19
Prairie Bus Trip Fund Raiser to Milwaukee

= Details follow in this issue.

Next Prairie Fire Deadline:  May 2
SPRING PARISH MEETING AGENDA
Prairie UU Society will hold its 2004 Spring Parish meeting on Sunday, April 25, after the Sunday program. The program and a potluck lunch will begin at 11:45 a.m.

The agenda, printed in full in the last Prairie Fire issue, includes the election of officers for 2004-2005. The nominees for the officers are:

President: Mike Briggs
Vice President: K.K. Anderson
Secretary: Dean Schroeder
Treasurer: Dirk Herr-Hoyman
Denominational Affairs: Mary Somers
Finance: Kathy Converse
Housing & Property: Larry Nahlik
Long Range Planning: Ken Skog
Membership: Dan Proud
Program: Doleta Chapru & Warren Hagstrom
Religious Education: Rachel Long & Brian Kuzdas
Social Action: Bob Park

MEMORIAL SERVICE SCHEDULED
A memorial service for Timothy Fast, who died March 18, will be held on Saturday, April 24, at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, at 12 noon. It would have pleased Tim to know that friends from all parts of his life were gathering to honor his memory. Please join our family in a final farewell to a man we dearly loved.

Rosemary Dorney

AUCTION ITEMS AVAILABLE
At the Prairie Annual Auction, five items were not bid on and were held in reserve. We will place a notice for silent auction on each item at the Prairie welcoming table for five Sundays. The items are child care and adult (respite) care.

If you are interested in more information on the child or respite care or want to bid and cannot attend Sunday services, contact Kathy Converse at conversekrtm@msn.com or 608-238-1856.

PRAIRIE BUS TRIP FUNDRAISER JUNE 19
On Saturday, June 19, we will travel to the Rose Show at Boerner Gardens in Whitnall Park (and the peonies will probably still be in bloom), followed by lunch at Mader's German Restaurant in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward. Then, it's off to the Milwaukee Public Museum for the I-Max film on Egypt, followed by the Egyptian exhibit "The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt" (audio guide included).

Price of the entire package and transportation is $71 which is due no later than May 15th. For additional details, contact Pat at 233-5795.

SOCIAL ACTION
HOSPITABLE HEARTS
In 2004, Prairie will work with the Madison Interfaith Hospitality Network for four week-long shifts. This valuable agency helps families find homes and jobs. Prairie last volunteered in February and the next shift will be from Sunday, April 25 to Sunday, May 2. There are opportunities for both adults and children to be involved with this effort. Look for the sign-up board and information sheets at Prairie on Sundays.

Please contact Paula Pachciarz if you would like to volunteer or would like more information.

From April 21 to May 2, the Baha'i observance of Ridvan commemorates the 12 days that Baha'u'llah spent in the garden of Ridvan during his exile in Baghdad. During this time he proclaimed himself as the one announced by the Bab. On the 1st, 9th, and 12th days of Ridvan, Baha'i followers suspend work.
A POEM FOR OUR PLANET'S PEOPLE
Bob Park will read this poem in the April 25 service.

The Planet is a Gift
by Dawn Shegonee

In the womb of the universe
Spins a circular egg
It's the Mother Earth, the planet
You travel near her
Can you hear her many sounds?
The cries of millions being murdered every second
The people
The screams of millions in fear every second
The people
Feel the pain to the womb
Wars of violence
The war machine
Travel to another place...

Can you see the many colors?
Blue, green, yellow, black, red, purple, white
The mother who gives us all nourishment
From the water and the plants
Such beauty and goodness
The mountains
The streams
The birds
The trees
The peaceful, sacred places
Travel to another place...

Earthquakes, floods, pollution
The mother is not in balance
She is sick
The spinning egg is underdeveloped
It is immature
Loss of nutrients
Loss of oxygen
The water is contaminated
The blood nourishes the egg
Stillborn,
Not yet.
Remember...
Responsibility,
Respect, nurture, honor, bless
Make peace, and forgive.

The planet is a gift.

(Reproduced with permission from the Call For Peace Web site, www.callforpeace.org/poem.html)