



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 Bond of Union)

May 21, 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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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, May 23

☞ 10:00 a.m. Transitional program presented by the Religious Education Committee

Tuesday, May 25

☞ 7:00 p.m. Beginning of 10-week study course, "Challenge Corporate Power/Assert the People's Rights." Meets every other Tuesday at Prairie.

Sunday, May 30

☞ 11:00 a.m. Memorial Day Picnic at the Briggses'

Tuesday, June 1

☞ 7:00 p.m. Second in an adult education series of discussions focusing on Iraq War issues, held every other Tuesday at Prairie. Led by Nancy Graham.

Saturday, June 5

☞ 1:30 p.m. Prairie Outside Work Day. Help spruce up the Prairie lot. Organized by Judy Skog.
☞ North Central Area Council Spring Workshop, Green Bay. Focus will be on religious education.

Sunday, June 6

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Pictures of Mothers and Daughters" presented by Marty Drapkin
☞ 12:30 p.m. Toning, meditation led by Judy Skog

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

Next Prairie Fire Deadline: June 6

Friday, June 11

☞ 5:30 p.m. Prairie Playreaders Annual Fish Dinner, followed by reading of a one-act play at the home of Pat Watkins

Saturday, June 19

Prairie Bus Trip Fundraiser to Milwaukee

Thursday-Monday, June 24-28

General Assembly, Long Beach, California

Saturday, August 7

☞ Prairie Bus Trip to Chicago's Field Museum.

DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, May 23

This Sunday program is the annual transitions intergenerational service. This year it will be led by Robin Carre. We will celebrate two eighth-graders who will be entering high school in the fall: Marie Nahlik and Toby Wacker. Teachers and other contributors to the RE program will be recognized.

Sunday, May 30

The annual Memorial Day weekend picnic convenes at the home of Mike and Norma Briggs, 1519 Storytown Road, Oregon. Bring yourselves, a dish to pass, and time to play games, socialize, and make music. Beverages and, if needed, grills for grilling will be provided. Starting time is 11:00 a.m., although lunch will start about noontime. Plan to be done midafternoon, no later than 4:00.

Directions: Take Hwy. M west from Fish Hatchery Road or east from PB to Brazill Road. Go south

until it deadends at Purcell Road, and turn left, following the road around a big bend, where it turns into Storytown Road. The turnoff lane leading to the house is less than half a mile south of the bend, on the right side of the road. Call 835-0914 for more information.

Saturday, June 5

Come one, come all to Prairie for our long-awaited "Outside Work Day." We will fix up and spruce up our outside, so we make a good first impression on visitors and neighbors.



There will be activities for all ages. Oh, yes...It will be Saturday, June 5 at 1:30, with a rain date of Saturday, June 12 at 1:30. Questions? Contact Judy Skog at 273-4813 or jaskog@tds.net.

Sunday, June 6

In "Pictures of Mothers and Daughters," Marty Drapkin will be showing and discussing his black and white photographs of mothers and daughters, a project that he has been working on for a number of years. Some Prairie folks are featured in these photos. He will tell about his interest in this subject, and his techniques. This will also be an opportunity for participants to talk about mother-daughter relationships, in general or specifically.

OUR SOCIETY

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WALK MAY 23

The high school and middle school classes from Prairie have put together a 5K walk as a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. The older students are also working on a building project. We've been working hard, and have a planned date for the walk on May 23, around 1 p.m. If you would like to pledge, contact any of the students.

Walkers are circulating pledge forms at Prairie and amongst their friends; all the money raised will go directly to Habitat. Brian has planned the route through the Arboretum; it should be beautiful. Any interested adults are welcome to join us, as well as any of the RE kids' friends. If you are interested, please contact any of the Middle School/High School Teachers---K.K. Anderson, Brian Kudzas, Rachel Long, or Larry Nahlik.

Reuben Arnold

HEALING MEDITATION

Join me after church on Sunday, June 6th for toning and meditating on healing the earth. I hope to eat a little first and meditate around 12:30. If you'd like to participate, but don't want to wait till 12:30, let me know. I could be persuaded to do it earlier.

Judy Skog

STUDY COURSES BEGIN TUESDAY NIGHTS

Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society is sponsoring an adult education summer discussion series about the war in Iraq. We will meet every other week this summer and provide a forum for information, support, and action. At the next meeting on Tuesday, June 1, the forum will discuss news about U.S. actions as reported in the international press. The discussions are open to the public. For more information, contact Nancy Graham at 244-6495.

A second series, "Challenge Corporate Power/ Assert the People's Rights," is a 10-week study course that begins Tuesday, May 25. This course, assembled by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, focuses on the root causes of corporate and state oppression, and on ways to direct efforts for change in law and culture. The reading materials have *not* been selected to provide a balanced view of corporate power and its impacts on all countries and people. We are already inundated with the corporate perspective on almost every issue. The materials were instead chosen to provide pieces of the largely untold story of how corporations have come to dominate our lives in the name of profit and at the expense of people and the planet. For more information, call Nancy Graham at 244-6595.

PLAYREADERS ON JUNE 11

The PLAYREADERS ANNUAL FISH DINNER will be held at Fitzgerald's, 3112 West Beltline Hwy (in Middleton) at 5:30 pm on Friday, June 11th, to be followed by the reading of a short play and dessert at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane (near Hilldale Mall).

Everyone in Prairie is invited to join us in this annual ritual of the Friday Fish (haddock this year--broiled or fried) Dinner, but going out to dinner does not obligate you to attend the playreading. Please phone Pat at 233-5795 no later than 4 p.m. on Wednesday, June 9th, if you'd like to join us for dinner.

FILM ON RACE AND DIVERSITY

Community Forums on Race and Diversity 2004, co-sponsored by the Madison Urban League and Wisconsin Public Radio, has embarked on its second year of free film screenings and facilitated discussions. The second meeting will feature *Farmingville*, in which a shocked middle-class community struggles with the attempted murder of two Mexican day laborers.

Come out to the Catholic Multicultural Center, 1862 Beld Street (one block off Park Street) at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 10, for a very interesting evening.
Pat Watkins

PRAIRIE BUS TRIP TO CHICAGO'S FIELD MUSEUM

On Saturday, August 7, we will sponsor another fundraiser to the exhibit entitled THE SPLENDORS OF CHINA'S FORBIDDEN CITY: THE GLORIOUS REIGN OF EMPEROR QIANLONG. See the flyer on the church bulletin board. Make checks out to Prairie UU Society for \$52 and mail to Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane, Madison 53705, to arrive no later than June 26.

GEAR UP FOR SUMMER PRAIRIE BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

Sunday, June 13. *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi is a nonfiction memoir of a teacher's life in Iran, centered on a women's reading group. 384 pages (Chosen by the book group as a whole from NY Times paperback best-seller list)

Sunday, July 18. *Tortilla Curtain*, by T. Coraghessan Boyle, is a novel set in an upper middle class gated community in California follows an undocumented couple. 355 pages. (Suggested by Ruth Calden)

Sunday, August 15. *A Fine Balance*, by Rohinton Mistry, a fiction book set in India. 624 pages. (Suggested by Ruth Calden)

We meet after the Prairie Sunday service. Bring food to share. This is an open book club. You can come once or many times.

Books are available at 20% discount at Borders on University Avenue if you mention that this is a Prairie Book Club selection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PRAIRIE YOUTH TAKE A FLING AT SPRING

A group of close to 30 kids and teens (including numerous friends of Prairie kids) enjoyed a unique Spring Fling on May 15-16. The festivities started with a 4:00 p.m. swim party hosted by the Stanger family. Then we returned to Prairie for a hamburger, brat and hot dog dinner. Afterward the kids amused themselves for several hours with games such as Wink and Ghost in the Graveyard.

Around 10:00 p.m., thanks to Dirk Herr-Hoyman (who arrived with a DVD player), a large group watched *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. About 22 kids ranging from 5 to 16 years old stayed overnight.

Many thanks to all of the adults who helped with Spring Fling: Rachel Long, Martin Arnold, Brian Kuzdas, Robin Carre, Erin Bosch, KK Anderson, Randy Converse, Dirk and Susan Herr-Hoyman, Jeanie Trigg, and our esteemed Sunday morning chef, Dean Schroeder.

Anne Urbanski, Immediate Past RE Chair

TRANSITION SUNDAY MAY 23

Next Sunday will be Transition Sunday, May 23. This is when any RE students who are graduating from middle school or high school are honored in an inter-generational service. It's an opportunity for the congregation to become better acquainted with these students and to celebrate their uniqueness. Robin Carre will lead this special event.

Jeanie Trigg, Religious Education Director

Shavuot (sundown May 25 through May 27) marks the conclusion of the period of seven weeks that follows Pesah. Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah to the Israelites and the completion of God's purpose to create a special people. It is celebrated for two days in the diaspora and for one day in Israel and among Reform Jews.

----Multifaith Calendar 2004

PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

Mondays 7-9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 noon

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR

Saturdays 8:45 - 1:15

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933

PROGRAM

[Here are two poems associated with recent Sunday services. The first poem (May 2 program, "Caged Birds: Slavery in Today's World" presented by Pat Watkins) couldn't be included because of time constraints; the second (May 16 program, "Give Me Your Tired...But Not Yet!" presented by Andrew Somers) was referred to but wasn't at hand. --Ed.]

SYMPATHY (I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS)

by Paul Lawrence Dunbar

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals---
I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till his blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting---
I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me
When her wing is bruised and her bosom sore,--
When she beats her bars and she would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that she sends from her heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven she flings---
Yes, I know why the caged bird sings!

THEN THEY CAME FOR ME

by Pastor Martin Niemoeller

In Germany they first came for the Communists,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist.

Then they came for the Jews,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.

Then they came for the trade unionists,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Catholics,
and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant.

Then they came for me—
and by that time no one was left to speak up.

NEW EFFORTS TO BOLSTER THE PRINTED WORD

Finding the right balance between personable, oral announcements during the Sunday service and detailed, printed announcements that can be carried home for reference seems to be a constant battle. Lately, the spoken announcements have been getting longer and more numerous again, extending the time of the Sunday program and trying the patience of those in attendance.

The administrators will begin sending e-mail reminders that printed announcements for the Sunday program can be submitted until Saturday morning by sending them to prouds@tds.net. Please consider whether your announcement will have better effect being carried home on paper than being lost in the ether of the fellowship hall amid the din of other announcements, post-service conversations, and the press of thoughts about the remainder of the day.

In other words, the printed word has a lasting effect. Use it!

SUNDAY PROGRAM BULLETINS GET A NEW LOOK

You will have a new program cover at Sunday services starting May 23. The new Prairie UU Society officers were installed on Wednesday, May 19, and are listed on the inside of the cover. The officers for 2004-2005:

President—Mike Briggs
Vice-President—KK Anderson
Secretary—Dean Schroeder
Treasurer—Dirk Herr-Hoyman

Congratulations to our new officers!

LETTERS

A TRIBUTE TO PRAIRIE / LEST WE FORGET

As we sometimes heatedly debate the issues related to Prairie's growth and future direction, let us not throw the baby out with the bathwater. It is all too easy to lose the good during vigorous efforts to support our own positions in a situation which often divides us.

During the seven months of my late husband, Timothy Fast's, final illness, there were very few days when I was not, one way or another, reminded of the support of my Prairie friends. Whether they brought chicken soup or kitty litter (don't laugh—it is *not* a good thing to be out of), sent postcards or flowers, or simply came to keep me company during those many weeks when I could not leave the house unless someone stayed with Tim, there was always a Prairie friend ready to help out. Not only that, there was a committee to organize volunteers so that I didn't have to spend precious time away from Tim.

If you haven't cared for a terminal patient in your home, you have no idea what a relentless, draining task it is. You may be doing it out of affection, in order to gratify your loved one's last wishes---but still it is onerous. The patient's needs, however much you love him, will exhaust and test you. This is where “getting by with the help of one's friends” really matters.

When I needed my Prairie friends, they gave generously of their time. They stayed with Tim so I could go to the dentist. They shoveled, raked, and mowed. They shopped for our groceries, changed our furnace filter, repaired our small appliances. They brought us a pumpkin at Hallowe'en, sumptuous feasts at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In short, they were there at every turn. Tim and I both come from small families; we have no family nearby. Prairie was, and is, our family.

For how many of us is, or has this been, true? It is something to consider, when our discussions of ministers and buildings become acrimonious.

Prairie has, for many years, been the only extended family I have. Like all families, we have our differences. And, like all good families, when you truly need them, they are there for you.

Lest we forget.

Thank you, my Prairie family, for being there when Tim and I so desperately needed you.

Rosemary Dorney

SEEDS FOR GROWTH

Greetings, Prairie,

In addressing our need to grow, I want to suggest that Prairie revive a past system of raising funds toward prospective expenses...a system which I instituted back when we chose to renovate to suit our needs. It was called “Pro-seeds to Prairie” to represent the transaction of members who had some sort of expertise (whether “pros” or by experience) who donated their time to accomplish work needed by other members, who in turn, donated the cost of the services to Prairie.

The seeds mentioned in the title were to represent the seeds of growth. Over time, the system earned a fairly sizable amount of money, and can do so again, if people will put it into practice when they think of needs they would ordinarily hire out for. Buyers would need to request such services at meetings or in the newsletter, and others would need to be willing to give their time. The question arises, would Prairie be willing to put out such an effort today?

In the past, “Pro-seeds” included many kinds of help...some typical of our service auction, others more like you'd look for in the Yellow Pages. I recall I paid for an electrical outlet being put onto the other side of a wall from the power source by Mel Micke, who had done such work in his own home. The price was negotiated by the two of us, I believe.

In this spirit, I am bringing in shade-loving, ground-cover plants, around 30 packets, which, if 30 people paid \$5.00 each for them, would put \$150 into our coffers to pay toward the projected expenses in our plans. However, in the past I always had a subtitle for plants I brought, “Pay what you want, take what you want,” and so it is now.

I will not be in charge of this effort if Prairie wishes to pursue it, but I can offer my garden excesses when I have them. Today there is ajuga, and scilla-bulb seed pods, and info on how to use them.

Metje Butler

CARING COMMITTEE

Members of the Caring Committee met to discuss the past year and would like to share several points: First, members agree that the committee has been a fairly effective way to organize assistance for members who need it. However, because of the voluntary nature of the committee, committee members are not as consistently available as would be a minister.

Second, the committee would like to remind Prairie that folks can ask any committee member for assistance. Current committee members are Erin Bosch, Aileen Nettleton, Marilyn Ruecking, Dean Schroeder, and Linda Sheehy. Finally, upon approval of the Board, Dean will become the new chairperson of the committee. Please call any of us if there are questions.

Linda Sheehy

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

NCAC SPRING WORKSHOP JUNE 5

The North Central Area Council, part of the Central Midwest District, is planning a June 5 spring workshop at the Green Bay Fellowship as it was last year. The focus will be on religious education: "Faith Development as a Key to Growth." Dori Davenport and possibly Ann Barker will be presenters. There will be a small fee to cover costs. Details will be announced in the coming weeks. For questions in advance, you can call Gail Slaughter, NCAC Coordinator, at 920-901-1168.

PRAIRIE DELEGATES TO GA

Our two delegates to the General Assembly June 24-28 are Kathy Converse and Sarah Lord. Enjoy!

EXPLORE OUR UU ROOTS: TRY TRANSYLVANIA

Second Unitarian Church of Chicago is organizing a trip to Transylvania September 21 to October 4, 2004. The church is opening up the trip to other people in the district who are interested in Transylvania and would like to visit, but don't have a congregational trip planned. It's also a great opportunity for the District folks in general. There is a brochure about the trip at Prairie.

For more information, you can contact Kimberly Bares, 2U/Partner Church Council District Networker, Central Midwest District, at 773-508-5885.

FIRST COOL MUSIC CONCERT TO FEATURE LOCAL TEENAGE TALENT

The Madison area is home to some extremely talented young musicians who will be the headliners of the first concert in First Unitarian Society's series "Cool Music in a Hot Spot—2004."

On Friday, June 4, at 7:30 p.m. the themed program, *K is for Kinder Konzert*, will begin with Casey and Kyle Coolidge (ages 16 and 13) from Baraboo, playing the *Concerto in C major for Two Keyboards by J.S. Bach*. The brothers have participated in many competitions and performances, and Kyle has performed on radio's Prairie Home Companion.

Soprano Beth Allred will sing "Batti, Batti" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and "Domini Deus" from Vivaldi's *Gloria*. Beth received honors from the National Foundation for the Advancement in the Arts and is enrolling in the fall as a vocal performance major at UW-Madison.

Alison Rowe, a sophomore at West High School, has been a member of the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra, and performed on the cello last spring with the Milwaukee Symphony at the Young Artists Concert. This summer she will be attending the String Academy at Indiana University. Alison will play the first movement of Haydn's *Cello Concerto in C major*.

Krista Stewart (14) will play Mozart's *Fifth Violin Concerto in A Major*. A rising star in the violin world, last year she was a semi-finalist in the Johnson International Competition in Washington, D.C. This month she is performing for the NPR program "From the Top" with Christopher O'Riley in Minneapolis.

Now in its 30th season, Cool Music ushers in Madison's summer season of music. The four Friday night concerts in June take place in the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Meeting House of the First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive. Tickets are \$12, \$10 for seniors and students, and can be purchased at the door, which opens at 7:00 p.m. For more information, call 233-9774 ext. 21.

OTHER NEWS

RADFEST 2004 MIDWEST SOCIAL FORUM

The Havens Center, UW-Madison, presents RADFEST 2004 at the Lake Geneva campus of Aurora University in Williams Bay, Wisconsin, on June 4-6, 2004. Over 50 panels and workshops will be featured, including the following keynote panel discussions:

“Latinos and the Struggle for Political, Social, and Economic Justice”

Elizabeth Martínez, Institute for Multi-Racial Justice; **Richard Moore**, Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice; **Christine Neumann-Ortiz**, Voces de la Frontera; **Reneé Saucedo**, La Raza Centro Legal

“Progressive Strategy for 2004, and Beyond”

Medea Benjamin, Global Exchange; **Brenda Konkel**, Madison City Council; **Elizabeth Martínez**, Institute for Multi-Racial Justice; **Jamala Rogers**, Black Radical Congress

The weekend will include more than 100 speakers, musical entertainment, the award-winning play *One Wall Missing*, daytime recreational activities, and a major book signing session with authors Charles Derber, Robert Jenson, Robert McChesney, Jason Mark, and Thomas Ponniah.

For information on registration and directions to the conference site, call 608-262-0854, write to info@havenscenter.org, or consult the Havens Center at www.havenscenter.org.

SOULFORCE ACTION AT SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION’S ANNUAL MEETING BEGINS JUNE 13

[Prairie receives e-mails from a variety of organizations every week. It is impossible to pass along all information. One group we hear from periodically is Soulforce. If you are interested in hearing more from this organization, please let me know. --Ed.]

It is only one month until the next Soulforce Southern Baptist Convention Action takes place in Indianapolis, IN, June 13-16. This will be the fifth year in a row that we have confronted the spiritual violence perpetuated by Southern Baptist policies and teachings.

Since 1976, Southern Baptists have passed 13 resolutions against GLBT persons. Last year, they established the *SBC Task Force for Ministry to Homosexuals* – which is based on ex-gay and reparative therapy approaches and resources.

It is apparent that the SBC is not interested in taking seriously the historical, psychological, scientific, pastoral and even biblical evidence that sexual orientation is just another of God’s creative, mysterious gifts. Their Task Force is already deep into the process of damaging the lives of hundreds of thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people inside and outside of the SBC.

See www.soulforce.org/denomination/sbc/ for more information and resources.

This year in Indianapolis we will be present carrying giant portraits of members of their Task Force. We are determined to hold Task Force members accountable for the suffering of our SBC sisters and brothers.

We keep going back for many reasons: because Gandhi teaches us about relentless non-violent resistance; because Southern Baptist youth need to hear our message; because changing hearts and minds can happen in miraculous ways, because if we prevent one gay or lesbian Southern Baptist from committing suicide we have succeeded, and because by seeking to end spiritual violence, we empower ourselves and others in so many ways!

Thank you for your generous support, your presence, and your prayers. In love and peace,

*Karen Weldin, Director of Operations, Soulforce;
Jamie McDaniel, Southern Baptist Denominational
Team Co-Chair*

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Prairie UU: my.execpc.com/~prairieu/

PrairieNews Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>

PrairieViews Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>

Social Action: <http://socialaction.homestead.com>

PRAIRIE FLORA: COLUMBINE

[On April 18, Galen Smith gave a tour of Prairie flora (flowers, weeds, etc.). This is the second in a series examining our leafy residents more closely.]

On May 15, Mary Mullen brought beautiful red and yellow flowers to the meeting of the Book Club's discussion of *The Secret Life of Bees* so everybody could taste the nectar in the five tube-shaped "spurs". This nectar is also sipped by hummingbirds and long-tongued insects like hawk moths.

The flowers are those of Canadian columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*, pictured here), in the buttercup family and native to eastern North America. It is forming a beautiful spring display in the rock garden at the lower-level entrance to our church.



This species is one of about 70 in north-temperate parts of the world (21 in North America). Many species, hybrids, and cultivars are grown as ornamentals.

Other flower colors in the genus are blue, purple, yellow, cream and white.

The name **columbine** is derived either from the Latin *columba* (dove), for the imagined resemblance of the petals to doves, or from *columba* (eagle-like) for the resemblance of the nectar spurs of some species to the claws of eagles. The name *Aquilegia* is presumably derived either from *aqua* (water) plus *legera* (to draw or collect) for the wet habitats of some species or the abundant nectar sometimes produced.

Galen Smith

Pictured below: The entrance to the church from Whenona Drive, with the rock garden.

