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

August 6, 2004

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, August 8
10:00 a.m. “Looking Outward/Defining Our Strengths,” presented by Kathy Converse and Sarah Lord.

Saturday, August 14
1:30 p.m. Prairie Playreaders Organizational Potluck Lunch.

Sunday, August 15
10:00 a.m. “Peace Like a River, Joy Like a Fountain,” a musicale featuring Prairie musicians.
11:45 a.m. The Prairie Book Club meets to discuss Reading Lolita in Tehran, by Azar Nafisi.

Wednesday, August 18
7:30 p.m. Prairie Board Meeting

Sunday, August 22
10:00 a.m. “How Far Can Reach a Smile?” presented by Judy Skog.

Sunday, August 29
10:00 a.m. Intergenerational Game Day, led by Rick Ruecking and Erin Bosch

Friday–Sunday, September 17–19
Annual Retreat, at Bethel Horizons

= Details follow in this issue.

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: AUGUST 15

DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, August 8
Kathy Converse and Sarah Lord returned to Prairie from General Assembly, loaded with thoughts and ideas on growth for small UU churches and youth programs; speaking out for social justice; and covenant groups. They will speak about these with the theme of looking outward as opposed to looking inward to achieve congregational goals.

Sunday, August 15
Musicians young and old will share their talents and engage the audience in a celebratory service on the theme, “Peace Like a River, Joy Like a Fountain.” Anticipate the unanticipatable.

Sunday, August 22
Are you feeling a little frayed regarding Prairie doings? Would you like to have a little fun without worrying about what's going to happen related to growth or to a building or a minister? We will play some games and share with each other, to build on the great community that we have at Prairie.

OUR SOCIETY

PROGRESS ON THE FITCHBURG SITE
Last March, our congregation voted to authorize Prairie's Board to designate a committee to negotiate a tentative agreement for the construction of a new meeting house at Fitchburg Center, and to choose an architect to design and help construct the meeting house.

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The Board appointed the Ad hoc Committee on the Fitchburg Site to continue the work it had begun when it undertook fact-finding on the site last Winter. On Saturday, July 24th, the Committee took the significant step of choosing an architect. We began at 8:00 a.m. and interviewed teams of architects all day at two-hour intervals. The firms that were invited to interview were: J. Kimber Architecture of Taliesin; Architecture Network, Inc.; Strang Architects; and BWZ Architects of Middleton. Prairie was represented by Larry Nahlik, KK Anderson, Norma Briggs, Anne Urbanski, and John Peterson. Mike Briggs sat in at the end of the day, and helped the Committee to “see the forest among the trees.”

The interviews were somewhat free-ranging, though we asked each team of architects many of the same questions, for example:
- How will you work to gain acceptance of your design by an independent-minded congregation?
- Having seen the Fitchburg Center site, how will you take advantage of the setting in your design?
- Describe Prairie UU Society to us.
- How much will initial schematic drawings cost?

At the end of each session, the committee members politely dismissed each group, and rated them using the interview evaluation form from the Qualifications-based Selection manual recommended by the American Institute of Architecture.

The interviews seemed to get better as the day progressed. In the end, BWZ edged out Strang by 3.5 points out of a possible 175. We found Strang’s representatives to be enthusiastic, even passionate, about the project, and very familiar with Fitchburg Center's design standards.

In the final analysis, however, we chose BWZ. They propose an innovative idea for a “green roof,” that is a rooftop garden and community space, with tremendous potential for energy savings. Here we might emphasize that their idea is just an idea at this stage, with reviews by Prairie folk and the Fitchburg Center Design Committee in the near future. While the Ad hoc Committee realizes we might never see the partially-underground design built, we gave BWZ high marks for creativity and vision.

Next steps: We will introduce BWZ Architects to the owners and administrators of Fitchburg Center. We will organize sessions for Prairie Board members and committees to meet with the architects to discuss their needs and desires in a new building. We will organize listening sessions for the whole congregation. We will turn our attention to negotiating the terms of a land purchase agreement with Fitchburg Center.

Larry Nahlik

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SUMMER SPREE
Our first ever RE Summer Spree for high school and middle school youth was a spectacular success! I attended Friday night, where the festivities began with checking out the Friendship Center facilities and beautiful grounds, along with a meeting where the youth decided how to spend their weekend.

After the Herr-Hoymans delivered a pizza dinner, Erin Bosch, Mei-Lien, and I led several games to build comfort and create community with one another. Several youth built a campfire, and everyone gathered there for music, with Carl Wacker on guitar.

On Saturday I wasn’t able to be there, but according to Paula Pachciarz, there was quite an experience with some gluten-free pancake mix in the morning. After breakfast there was a scavenger hunt designed by Paula, which culminated in judges awarding one of the scavenger hunt teams with a delicious carrot cake to share, baked by Kathy Nutter.

In the afternoon, it was off to the beach at Governor Dodge, where numerous people were buried in the sand or covered in pudding during the “pudding game.” Erin Bosch was also on hand leading some awesome games and they had perfect swimming weather!
That night at the campfire, jokes were shared for hours and the campers cooked up some S’mores.

Sunday morning after breakfast and a spectacular clean-up job, Rachel Long gathered everyone for a group circle and picture. Then it was back to Prairie, after a weekend dubbed by Paula as “sensational” and by Judy Wacker as “continuous fun!”

*Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky, DRE*

**MEMBERSHIP**

Updates:

- Mike and Norma Briggs
  brigglaw@earthlink.com

- George and Ruth Calden
  georu2@tds.net

**PROGRAM**

**SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS!**

It’s not too late for musicians to join the musical program on Sunday, August 15. Please contact Doleta Chapru (238-4970).

**LETTERS**

**SUMMER SPREE**

WE DID IT! And, we were all still smiling at the end!

Great job everybody—THANKS for making this happen.

Special thanks to—

- Rachel for having the vision in the first place and getting the whole thing started
- Susan & Dirk for planning the menus, buying the food, and helping with ALL the meals!
- Paula for organizing the scavenger hunt & Kathy for bringing the grand prize
- Erin for leading games at Governor Dodge and Friendship Center
- Brian for generally helping keep things under control
- Dave & Gretchen Pearson for their hospitality

And of course, thanks also to Melissa for helping with planning, leading games Friday evening, and organizing the "pudding game," which was a great success!

And of course, all the Prairie kids and friends for being such great campers!

Give yourselves a pat on the back—you helped make the first ever Prairie UU Summer Spree a success!
NEW BOOK ON THE HISTORICAL JUDAS
To the UU congregations in Wisconsin,

My name is Dan Unterbrink, and I have written a book on Judas the Galilean. This book details the amazing coincidences in the lives of Judas and Jesus, using the letters of Paul, the Gospels and the histories of Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius. These coincidences are so numerous and striking that the reader will wonder why this historical period (4 BC - 19 AD) has never been adequately explored before. For example, a Barabbas prisoner release occurred right after the death of Herod the Great, in 4 BC. Herod's son, Archelaus, released Judas and others to appease the crowd. More details of the book are detailed on www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com and www.iuniverse.com.

If you have any questions concerning the book, please feel free to e-mail me at unterbrink7@copper.net.

Thank you for your consideration,
Dan Unterbrink
Delaware, Ohio

NEW DOCUMENTARY FILM: “POETRY IN WARTIME”
(Release date: September 2004)

We weren't going out and causing harm to people because we wanted to. It was just, the more efficiently, the faster, the better aim we had while killing people, more likely the faster we'd get to go home, which is what we wanted to do.—US Army Lt. Paul Mysliwiec, returned from Iraq in 2003.

Poetry in Wartime is a new feature-length documentary film designed to expand your imagination, deepen your compassion, and change the way the world thinks and talks about war. The film explores war through images and the words of poets—both unknown and famous—to bring the experience of war into a sharp focus that inspires horror, sadness, a passionate quest for truth, and a profound sense of hope. The film presents poets from countries and conflicts around the world—from Iraq to the US and the UK, from India, Nigeria, and Colombia to Vietnam.

The film offers a broad diversity of voices—warriors and civilians, victims and veterans, journalists and historians, immigrants, refugees, and activists. It includes poets from Iraq and the current Poets Against the War movement as well as ancient Sumerian priestess Enheduanna and Homer, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, Walt Whitman, Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, and survivors of Hiroshima.

What you can do:
1. Learn more about the film: http://www.voicesinwartime.org /voicesinwartime/Film/PoetryInWartime.aspx
2. Ask your local library or community center to schedule a special advance screening—especially on 9/11: http://www.voicesinwartime.org/voicesinwartime/Film/septemberproject/septemberproject.aspx

Thanks for your help in telling millions of people about one of the most important films of the year.
 Yours,
 Andrew Himes
 Executive producer of Poetry in Wartime

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

JOB OPENING FOR YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM COORDINATOR
First Unitarian Society is calling for applicants for a 1/3-time Program Coordinator for Young Adult and Campus Ministry. Job details are posted at: www.fusmadison.org/adult/YACoordinator.shtml

Feel free to contact Rev. Scott Prinster at scottp@fusmadison.org or at 233-9774 x24 for more information.

UU OPENINGS IN WAUSAU
Director of Religious Education: 20-25 hrs/wk
Requirements: Bachelors Degree or equivalent; excellent computer software and communication skills; instructional experience; ability to recruit, manage and direct a volunteer and paid staff; ability to work with children and adults; develop and implement a religious education curriculum.

Send resume and references by Aug. 15 to:
First Universalist Unitarian Church, P.O. Box 1448, Wausau, WI 54402-1448.
Email: Kathy@uuwausau.org
Paid Nursery Care Provider: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Sundays, Sept. 12 through June 12, 2005. Requirements: Prior child care. Send resume and references by Aug. 15 to: First Universalist Unitarian Church, PO Box 1448, Wausau, WI 54402-1448. Email: Kathy@uuwausau.org

Music Coordinator: 10-month position, approx. 10 hrs/wk. Coordinate Sunday music, develop new music programs. Must work cooperatively and be familiar with various musical styles. Piano/organ/choir skills a plus but not required. Could be combined with organist and choir director duties. Total job description from the email Kathy@uuwausau.org. Send resume and references by Aug 15 to: First Universalist Unitarian Church, PO Box 1448, Wausau, WI 54402-1448

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS EXTENDED FOR REEB RE COORDINATOR
The deadline has been extended to August 15 for receiving applications for Religious Education Coordinator at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

Position Description:
1. Attend JRUUC on Sundays.
2. Coordinate parent volunteers for classroom.
3. Sunday orientation of RE to new families.
4. Communicate with parents and teachers.
5. Track attendance of the RE program.
6. Convene and attend the RE committee monthly.
7. Problem-solve issues that arise on Sundays.
8. Coordinate work with office/professional staff.

Qualifications:
1. Good organizational skills
2. Good communication skills with adults & kids.
3. Ability to work well with staff.
4. Child Development or Ed background desirable.

Hours and Pay:
Approximately 4 hrs/wk x 3 wks/mo x 10 mo/yr Stipend: $120 month for 10 months

How to Apply:
To apply, send a letter of interest by August 15 to Jruuc@terracom.net or to:
James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Attention: RE Committee
2146 E Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53704

Friday, August 9, marks the beginning of Fravardeghan Days, or Muktad (memorializing ancestors), in the Zoroastrian religion. The ensuing 10 days lead to Nowruz, the start of the New Year for those who follow the Shenshai calendar.

PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS
Tuesdays 7–9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.–12 noon

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR
Saturdays 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m. Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249–5933

OTHER NEWS

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD
[You can find more about these announcements on the information table in the fellowship hall.]

Saturday, August 21. Returning Prisoner Simulations, MUM, 2300 South Park St., middle of Villager Mall. Donations asked: $15 adults/$8 teens. 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

UUSC E-MAIL BULLETIN

International pressure is needed to end humanitarian disaster in Sudan
The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is appalled at recent reports of ethnic cleansing in Darfur, Sudan against the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa peoples. The Sudanese government backed by the Janjaweed Arab militia, has been accused of carrying out a systematic and deliberate campaign of terror against civilians in this western region of Sudan, on the border of Chad. The United Nations has described the current crisis in Darfur as "the world's greatest humanitarian disaster."

For more information, including action items on what you can do to help, visit: http://www.uusc.org/info/article071604.html

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**UUSC puts the spotlight on human rights at General Assembly**

UUSC members and supporters participated in many exciting events at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, held this year in Long Beach, Calif. Among the GA highlights were a presentation from Burmese pro-democracy activist, Ka Hsaw Wa, who spoke about the long history of human rights abuses he has documented that have taken place under the ruling military regime in his native country.

UUSC also sponsored a resolution that was approved by General Assembly delegates that puts the spotlight on the multinational corporation Unocal for human rights abuses committed by the Burmese military during the company's construction of a natural gas pipeline.

For a photo essay about UUSC's events at General Assembly, visit: http://www.uusc.org/info/article070904.html

**UUSC’s top awards for outstanding social activism and commitment to principles that promote human rights and social justice were presented at General Assembly. To read more about the recipients, visit:** http://www.uusc.org/info/article062604.html

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**Support the growth of democracy in Burma**

UUSC and its colleague organization, EarthRights International, have been working together to defend the Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA), a law which enables U.S. multinational corporations to be held accountable for the roles they have played in human rights violations in Burma and elsewhere around the world. On behalf of EarthRights, we are sending a message to our members and supporters about a way they can support democracy in Burma. By participating in an EarthRights Round-Up party, UUSC members and supporters can help EarthRights raise money for their lawsuit against U.S. company Unocal for abuses committed while constructing a gas pipeline in Burma, as well as for Earthrights' work to defend the ATCA.

For more information about the Round-Up program, visit http://earthrights.org/sept20roundup

This year, at General Assembly, participants selected UUSC’s petition on the Alien Tort Claims Act for an Action of Immediate Witness. To learn more about this, visit www.uusc.org/info/article070104.html.

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**India elections signal positive changes for UUSC partners**

The stunning victory of the secular Congress party during recent elections in India dealt a blow to the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that was welcomed by all progressive and secular forces in the country.

UUSC’s partners in India report that it will be liberating for the minorities and oppressed people with whom they work. In addition, voting in this surprising election was all done electronically -- no small feat in the world's largest democracy.

To learn more about the recent elections in India, visit: http://www.uusc.org/info/article072904.html

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**Youth and young adults can defend democracy at summer workcamp**

Youth and young adults: let your voice be heard during this crucial election year! There are still some openings for participants in our Defending Democracy workcamp from Aug. 29 to Sept. 3. Held in New York City to coincide with the Republican National Convention, this is a great opportunity for those who want to get involved in election-related activism. So far this year, dozens of youths have worked with UUSC to learn more about how to get involved in this year's election. You can, too!

For more information, visit http://www.uusc.org/news/v3b_flyer_WEB.pdf

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**PRAIRIE WEB SITES**

Prairie UU Society: http://prairie.madison.uua.org/~prairieu/

Prairie News Group: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Prairie Views Group: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action: http://loonfoot.com/prsac/FILES/home.htm