



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)

October 22, 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, October 24

9:00 a.m. Choir practice

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Have There Ever Been Examples of Tolerant, Creative, or Progressive Islamic Civilizations?" presented by Bob Lawrence.

11:45 a.m. Prairie Book Club discusses *Flash House* by Amie Liu. Bring food to share.

☞ 11:45 a.m. Parent-teacher coffee (grades 3 through high school)

Monday, October 25

☞ 6:30 p.m. Prairie Humanist Discussion Group meets at Prairie to plan future topics.

Sunday, October 31

9:00 a.m. Choir practice

☞ 10:00 a.m. All Souls Day service led by Orange Schroeder.

Monday, November 1

☞ 6:00 p.m. Women's Group at Prairie

Saturday-Sunday, November 6-7

Fall Frolic Religious Education event at Prairie

Saturday, November 6

☞ 7:00 p.m. Evening of music with Susan Conant and Friends at the home of Norma and Mike Briggs.

Sunday, November 7

9:00 a.m. Choir practice

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Susan Conant and Friends: A Participatory Music Program"

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 7

Wednesday, November 10

7:00 p.m. Prairie Board meeting at Prairie

Sunday, November 14

11:45 a.m. Annual Parish Meeting

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, October 24

Bob Lawrence, in the second of his series on Islam, poses the question: "Have there ever been examples of tolerant, creative, or progressive Islamic civilizations?" The talk will discuss Medieval Spain and Baghdad, and point to these communities as probable seeds for the Renaissance in Europe.

Sunday, October 31

Prairie's annual Day of the Dead Celebration will be led by Orange Schroeder. You are invited to bring a photograph or other remembrance of a family member or friend who has passed away, and to say a few words. Those who don't wish to speak may light a candle in memory of a loved one.

Friday, October 22, is the Hindu holiday Dassehra, or Vijay Dasami, celebrating the victory of Good over Evil, of Lord Rama over the demon Ravan, and the Goddess Durga over a demon. It follows the 9-day celebration of Navaratri (nine nights) and Durga Puja, when other goddesses also are worshipped.

Saturday, November 6

An evening of music with Susan Conant and friends begins at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Norma and Mike Briggs. The musician guests, from the UU Society of Geneva, Ill., will present the Sunday service the next day at Prairie and would like to take fullest advantage of their time here and invite the Prairie membership's participation. Desserts are welcome.

Sunday, November 7

A group of eight musicians from Geneva, Illinois presents musical selections and readings that encourage the congregation to meditate, celebrate, and "make a joyful noise" together. Their service will end up with everyone up on their feet and fully engaged. They will sing, add harmony, instrumentals, movement and percussion "to really make the place vibrate." Susan Conant, a friend of Michael and Norma Briggs, will lead.

OUR SOCIETY

UNICEF PERSON NEEDED

Prairie needs a volunteer for the UNICEF cards project. We need someone who can pick up some supplies from the local coordinator, arrange them in the lobby, and sell them to members before and after the Prairie service.

If you would volunteer for this project, please see Linda Sheehy.

Linda Sheehy

WANTED: PAID LABOR AT FUS

First Unitarian Society is looking for a few people to do setup and takedown for the many weekend events at the Meeting House. Each member of the setup team will work between 40 and 80 weekend hours each month at \$10-13 per hour, depending on qualifications.

In addition to preparing for events, the position involves providing assistance to users of the building and includes some incidental event-related cleaning. The job requires the ability to lift 50 pounds.

To apply, send resume or a description of relevant experience and qualifications along with the names of at least two references to Susan Koenig, Interim Administrator, First Unitarian Society, 900

University Bay Drive, Madison, WI 53705, susank@fusmadison.org. Questions may also be directed to Susan at 233-9774, ex. 15.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

R.E. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Hello everyone! I would like to invite all parents of students in our Religious Education program to upcoming parent/teacher coffees. This is an opportunity for parents to meet the RE teachers, find out what they are planning for the year, ask questions, meet other parents and students in the class, and of course have coffee and snacks! The parent/teacher coffees:

- K-1-2 students: Sunday, October 17, after service.
- Grades 3-4-5 and middle school and high school: Sunday, October 24 after the service.

Please join us!

In Peace,

Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky, DRE

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

BILL SCHULZ SPEAKS IN MADISON

The Rev. William Schulz, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA, will visit Madison on October 23-24, 2004.

Having recently returned from an international, non-governmental mission to Darfur, Sudan, Schulz will share his observations at the Anderson Auditorium on the Edgewood College campus on Saturday October 23, at 7:00 p.m. His talk also will touch on the danger facing human rights in the post-9/11 era. There is no charge for the event.

In 2003, Schulz wrote, *Tainted Legacy: 9/11 and the Ruin of Human Rights*. The New York Review of Books has described Schulz as the person who "has done more than anyone else in the American human rights movement to make human rights issues known in the United States." *Tainted Legacy* furthers that reputation by offering a clear road map

to a world in which human rights and national security are not mutually exclusive.

The Rev. Schulz will also serve as a speaker for the national conference on criminal justice and prison reform for Young Adult Unitarian Universalists and members of the Unitarian Universalist campus ministry occurring at First Unitarian Society.

You can find information about this conference at: <http://www.fusmadison.org/prisonreform.shtml>

RELIEF TO VICTIMS OF CRISIS IN SUDAN

The government of Sudan has been accused of carrying out a systematic and deliberate campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against the people of Darfur in the western part of Sudan. Since February 2003, more than 50,000 lives have been lost and more than two million people have been displaced. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have fled to neighboring Chad, and others remain internally displaced in Darfur.

The United Nations has described this human travesty as "the world's greatest humanitarian disaster." While aid organizations have been diligent in providing relief to refugees and displaced persons, the overwhelming requirements for such an effort have left certain populations out of reach. There is an urgent need for support to help save the lives of millions of people who are deeply affected by this genocide.

UUSC is accepting contributions to provide aid to the victims of the crisis. All donations to the Darfur Relief Fund will be forwarded to the nonprofit organizations listed below that are working in Darfur to provide humanitarian relief. Although the UUSC is not currently working in Sudan, the choice reflects UUSC's history of working with the poor in that country.

To contribute to the relief effort in Darfur, please make your check payable to **Darfur Relief Fund** and mail it to:

Darfur Relief Fund
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
P.O. Box 845259
Boston, MA 02284-5259

You also can donate online through this Web site: www.uusc.org/programs/support_darfur.html.

Nonprofit organizations involved:

Darfur Peace and Development works in coordination with 34 grassroots organizations in Sudan and Chad to restore peace and achieve sustainable development and coexistence in the Darfur region of Western Sudan. Relief efforts include transportation and distribution programs for aid and medical assistance through schools, churches, masjids, and other organizations in the affected area.

Action by Churches Together (ACT)

International and **Caritas International** have put together a Darfur emergency response to continue the work of ACT members and partners **Norwegian Church Aid**, the **Sudan Council of Churches**, **Sudan Development Organization** and **Sudanaid** of the Sudan Council of Churches. They will provide shelter, water, sanitation, and basic sleeping and kitchen materials. They will also provide supplementary food to 50,000 children under the age of 5 and education for school-aged children and women rape victims.

For an action alert on how you can express your concern to U.S. policy-makers, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article071604.html>.

WINTER WITH UUs IN SOUTH FLORIDA

S.W.I.M., the Southeast Unitarian Universalist Winter Institute in Miami, is all about having fun in the warm Miami sunshine! S.W.I.M.'s annual intergenerational retreat for UUs and like-minded kids of all ages happens every year from December 26 through January 1.

S.W.I.M. offers south Florida hospitality, outdoor adventures (including tours, hikes, boating, and sailing), workshops (including spirituality and personal growth), special programs for youth, teens, and young adults, fantastic food, and a new community of friends from across the continent.

For more information, see www.swimuu.org. S.W.I.M. is a member in good standing of CU2C2, the Council of Unitarian Universalist Camps & Conferences, an affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

SHAPE NOTE SINGING SOCIETY FORMING

First Unitarian Society is forming a Shape Note Singing Society. The first meeting will be at the home of John Schweitzer, 4713 Regent Street, on Sunday, October 24 at 6:00 p.m.

SOCIAL ACTION

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

The lower your income, the less likely you are to vote. Did you know that IHN helps homeless and low-income people learn about political participation?

IHN sponsors the TAG group, a political advocacy group for people who have been homeless and/or lived in low-income housing. TAG teaches these community members how to advocate for themselves regarding homelessness and affordable housing issues. One member of TAG became so inspired to action that she organized a voter registration meeting for the group. Another member, who has never voted, got all dressed up in her "Sunday best" for the meeting and expressed her pride that she will cast her first vote for president this fall – at the age of 55.

MUUYACM TRIP TO SOA IN NOVEMBER

The MUUYACM annual trip to protest at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia is the weekend of November 19. Find out more about the SOA protest at <http://www.soaw.org>.

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Prairie UU Society:

<http://prairie.madison.uua.org/>

Prairie News Group:

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

Prairie Views Group:

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

Social Action:

<http://socialaction.homestead.htm>

OTHER NEWS

EMPTY BOWLS DINNER OCTOBER 23

Empty Bowls Madison will once again raise awareness and money for local anti-hunger projects with a fundraising dinner on Saturday, October 23, 2004 at the Madison Senior Center, 330 West Mifflin St., from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Empty Bowls Madison events in 1999, 2001, and 2003 sold more than 4,000 bowls donated by local potters, and raised over \$45,000 for three area programs: Madison's Community Meal Program, The Partner Shares Program, and the Dane County Food Pantry Network. This year's Empty Bowls event plans to repeat this success.

UPDATED LGBT 2004 VOTER EDUCATION GUIDE

Action Wisconsin has updated its 2004 Voter Education Guide for the November 2 general election. Download it here:

www.actionwisconsin.org/fall04/whosrunning.html

The guide details who is running to represent you in the Wisconsin Legislature and U.S. Congress, and where they stand on LGBT civil rights.

Find out more about the candidates and what you need to know to get out and vote on November 2nd:

www.actionwisconsin.org/fall04/whosrunning.html

The Voter Guide has general information about voting, but if you need additional information email us at info@actionwisconsin.org or call (866) 441-0143 x304 (toll free).

Please vote on November 2nd!

PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

Mondays 8–10 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