



# 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." (Bond of Union)

**June 10, 2005**

*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](http://www.prairie.madison.uua.org)*

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## PRAIRIE CALENDAR

### Sunday, June 12

\*10:00 a.m. Ideas for Summer Reading, led by Galen and Rose Smith

\*11:45 a.m. Book Club discussion and potluck

### Monday, June 13

Reservations due for the August 13 bus trip to the Chicago Art Institute: "Toulouse Lautrec and Montmartre." Reservation and \$61 fee must be delivered to Pat Watkins (233-5795).

### Wednesday, June 15

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

7:30 p.m. Prairie Board Meeting at Prairie

### Friday, June 17

\*5:30 p.m. Playreader's Annual Fish Dinner, starting at Quivey's Grove (the Stone House) and ending at the home of Pat Watkins. Call Pat (233-5795) for your reservations.

### Sunday, June 19

\*10:00 a.m. Summer Solstice at Picnic Point, led by Dorothy Krause

\*11:00 a.m. Potluck picnic at Picnic Point

### Wednesday, June 22

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

### Sunday, June 26

\*10:00 a.m. "And So, How Are the Children?" led by Peggy Haack and Cindy Rudd

(\* = Details follow in this issue.)

## **NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: JUNE 19**

## DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

### Sunday, June 12

Have you read any good books lately? Here is your chance to tell others about your latest find. Rose Smith will lead our summer reading program, in which we share recommendations of fiction and non-fiction books.

### Sunday, June 19

The Sabbat of Midsummer/The Summer Solstice/Litha is the longest day of the year. It is a time to celebrate vitality, creativity, vigor, health and abundance. All over the world, people gather to honor and acknowledge this time of Light and Energy and to connect with this Solar tide of abundance, health, and the beginnings of the fruits of their labors. Please join us at Picnic Point as we celebrate the summer ahead and share information about the season.

Since we'll be in such a nice setting, let's also plan a potluck picnic at the site!

Info available by calling Dorothy at 271-7532 or email [dorothyk@charter.net](mailto:dorothyk@charter.net), or, on the Prairie Email lists.

### Sunday, June 26

In "And So, How Are the Children?" we pay tribute to young children and envision the world we want to create for them. Presenters are Peggy Haack and Cindy Rudd, active members of the James Reeb Congregation, and childcare providers in Madison.

## OUR SOCIETY

### BOOK CLUB MEETS SUNDAY, JUNE 12

The Prairie Book Club meets on Sunday, June 12, to discuss two books: Louise Erdrich's *The Master Butcher's Singing Club*, and Tenaya Darlington's *Maybe Baby*. The July 17 selection is *Red-Gold* by Allen Furst.

We meet on Sundays after the Prairie service. Bring food to share. Even if you haven't read the entire book, you are welcome to come for the discussion.

*Mary Mullen*

### ANNUAL FISH DINNER AND PLAYREADERS ON FRIDAY, JUNE 17

The Playreader's Annual Fish Dinner is open to anyone who would like to join us at Quivey's Grove (the Stone House), 6261 Nesbitt Road, on Friday, June 17 at 5:30 p.m. The only requirement is that you phone Pat at 233-5795 **by Monday, June 13**, to place your names on the reservation list.

At the end of each church year, the playreaders have this special night. Anyone in Prairie is invited and welcome to attend the fish dinner. Prices: Fried Cod=\$ 9.95; Baked Cod=\$10.95.

Then, at 7:30, those who wish to do so will adjourn to the home of Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane, to read a one-act play and have dessert. You may attend the entire evening's events, the dinner only, or the playreading only.

### WILD OUTSTANDING WOMEN SET FOR JULY 21

Hi everyone, the women of Prairie WOW will meet Thursday, July 21, at 6 p.m. for a potluck supper. We decided to meet this summer and, those of you who teach or have winter commitments, please try to join us and bring a friend. You do not need to be a member of Prairie to come. Mark your calendars for July 21.

*Mary Somers*

### ROOMMATE NEEDED

Have apartment, need a roommate. Any age, gender, or ethnic or religious background is acceptable. Please call Phoenix at 271-8365.

## ARCHIVIST NEEDED

Prairie is currently without an archivist, and records keep propagating! If you are interested in collecting and organizing artifacts that will make up the history of our Society, please contact Mike Briggs (835-0914) or K.K. Anderson (255-3596).

## MEMBERSHIP

Directory changes:

### Donna Murdoch

6235-A Charing Cross Lane, Middleton, WI 53562

Telephone: 238-3802

E-mail: daylight55 (at) sbcglobal.net

### Rachel Siegfried

6175 Mineral Point Rd., Tabor Oaks #303,

Madison, WI 53705

Telephone: 274-4535

## DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

### SUMMER WOMANSPRIT RETREAT

The Central Midwest District (CMWD) Women and Religion Committee is pleased to announce the 12th annual summer retreat at Camp Ronora in southwest Michigan, August 5-7, 2005.

Summer WomanSpirit at Camp Ronora provides a time and a place to connect with the elements of land, sky, fire, and water, as well as with each other, and with our inner selves. As we play and dance under the sun, moon and stars, we synchronize with the Dance of the Universe. We acknowledge our power and worth, and the power and worth of all. We find and become the joy of creation.

Registration and brochures are available online at [www.womenandreligion.org](http://www.womenandreligion.org). We offer a special maiden program for girls 7-16 and childcare for younger children.

For more information, call (269) 369-1114.

## INVITATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UUUs are invited to the General Assembly, June 23-27, 2005, in Fort Worth, Texas.

*“General Assembly is the coming together of the delegates of our Unitarian Universalist congregations to do the business of the Association: to make real the covenant that binds us. We want to use our time at GA to shape the direction for our future, to witness to our values, and to forge the relationships that are at the heart of our faith. We want to invite you to join us from June 23 to 27 in Fort Worth, Texas. Make your plans now. We need to see you in Fort Worth this June.”*

—The Rev. William G. Sinkford, President,  
Unitarian Universalist Association

### What's in it for me?

More than ever, your voice needs to be heard. By sending its leadership to GA, a congregation makes an investment in itself. GA is an opportunity to give your congregation a voice in the Association. There are numerous opportunities to learn information that will benefit you and your congregation. A myriad of workshops on topics including religious education, growing healthy and relevant congregations, leadership, stewardship and hospitality (to name but a few) will be presented. General Assembly business encompasses a wide range of issues from civil liberties and gay rights to peace and racial justice. GA is an opportunity to share ideas and experiences in effective congregational advocacy, organizing, education, service, and public witness as well as participate in the Association's work toward inclusiveness and diversity, multiculturalism, anti-racism and anti-oppression.

In June 2003, the General Assembly of the UUA selected "Criminal Justice and Prison Reform" as the issue suggested to congregations for two years of study, action, and reflection. The Commission on Social Witness has prepared a draft Statement of Conscience that has been placed on the final agenda of the 2005 General Assembly.

*"The magnitude of injustice and inequity in this system stands in stark contrast to the values that our nation—and our faith—proclaim. We are compelled to witness this dissonance between what America proclaims for criminal justice and what*

*America practices. We offer an alternative moral vision of a justice system that operates in harmonious accord with our values as a community of faith."*

The Final Agenda is available at [www.uua.org/ga/business.html](http://www.uua.org/ga/business.html).

### Isn't it too late?

If you haven't yet registered, you may pre-register until June 10 or register onsite in Fort Worth at the same rates. GA registration materials are at [www.uua.org/ga/reg.html](http://www.uua.org/ga/reg.html). Adult full-time registration is \$305. The Association is offering reimbursement of up to \$260 to Congregational Presidents (one per congregation, see [www.uua.org/ga/congres.html](http://www.uua.org/ga/congres.html) for details).

For housing, first try the GA Housing Bureau at (888) 221-9425 or [www.uua.org/ga/housing.html](http://www.uua.org/ga/housing.html). Even if you aren't able to find space in the GA housing block, plenty of affordable housing opportunities remain. Visit [www.uua.org/ga/housing.html](http://www.uua.org/ga/housing.html) for more information.

### What's on the program?

Over 300 workshops, worship services, lectures and meetings are on the program. Highlights include:

The Ware Lecture will be delivered by Elaine Pagels, a preeminent figure in the theological community. Her New York Times bestseller, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* (May 2003), focuses on religious claims to possessing the ultimate "truth."

Pete Seeger and Friends Celebrating Our Tradition Sing with the man who has led the musical charge for social and environmental justice over six decades; marched, spoken, sung and lived the principles that are the foundation of our faith.

Sharing Progressive Family Values with the World Cognitive linguist George Lakoff, author of *Don't Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*, and *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, shares the most powerful "frames" through which progressive religious people can speak our own truths.

Jerusalem Women Speak: Three Faiths, One Vision  
UUs for Justice in the Middle East, in collaboration with Partners for Peace, bring three women from Israel and Palestine, one Muslim, one Jew, one Christian, to speak as a panel about their fears and hopes in the midst of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Healing Earth, Healing Ourselves: Choices for a Sustainable Future

Global warming is one component of today's synergistic environmental, social, and spiritual crises. Duane Elgin articulates the extraordinary opportunities for an "evolutionary leap" to new patterns of living and relationship that are inherent in these challenges. He invites UUs to choose a future that sustains life while deepening our faith.

More Voices, More Choices: Why We Need Media Reform

Our media system represents the antithesis of what Unitarian Universalism stands for. Instead of a diversity of voices engaged in a "free and responsible search for truth and meaning," a few multi-national conglomerates control most of what we read, see and hear. Learn from Robert McChesney how you can help change the system.

The Exonerated

This play by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen is based on actual interviews, court transcripts, and other documents. Actors relate true stories of wrongful convictions leading to death row and incarceration for as long as 22 years before exoneration.

The full program is available online at [www.uua.org/ga/ga05/2005CompleteProgram.pdf](http://www.uua.org/ga/ga05/2005CompleteProgram.pdf)

It's not too late to participate... please join us.

Visit [www.uua.org/ga.html](http://www.uua.org/ga.html) or call (617) 948-4209.

**COFFEE PROJECT SEEKS VOLUNTEERS FOR GA BOOTH**

Choose Justice: Equal Exchange and the UUSC Coffee Project is seeking volunteers for our booth at GA!

Equal Exchange's Interfaith Program will be at UUA General Assembly in Ft. Worth June 23-27 to promote the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Coffee Project!

We have several opportunities for folks to volunteer at the booth, assisting with the following tasks: brewing coffee, serving sample cups of coffee, and selling Fair Trade products. Those of you who are already participating in the Coffee Project can really help us promote Fair Trade to your fellow UUs!

The exhibit hall is open noon to 6 p.m. on June 23-26, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on June 27, so the more volunteers, the merrier! Ideally, volunteers would work a 2-hour shift, but we welcome any time that people are able to give!

If you or someone from your congregation is interested in volunteering, please contact Kalista Popp at [kpopp@equalexchange.com](mailto:kpopp@equalexchange.com) or 774-776-7418. Feel free to stop by the booth (#525) to sign up for a volunteer shift!

To learn about UUSC's activities at GA, visit [www.uusc.org/ga](http://www.uusc.org/ga)

In peace,

*Kalista Popp*

*Equal Exchange Fairly Traded Coffee, Tea, Cocoa and Chocolate Interfaith Liaison*

*774-776-7366*

*fax 508-587-5955*

[kpopp@equalexchange.com](mailto:kpopp@equalexchange.com)

**REPORT FROM THE UU-UNO OFFICE**

The UU-UNO reports that they had a very successful Spring Seminar on April 14-16 on "HIV/AIDS: Defusing a Biological Time Bomb" in New York City.

The UU-UNO reports that its efforts to end the genocide in Darfur has been well received by UU congregations, more than 70 of which have celebrated Darfur Sundays, and more than 2500 faxes and letters have been sent to the U.S. Senate, which has passed the Darfur Accountability Act. But, the bill still has to be passed by the House.

The UU-UNO has started a new project to increase congregational involvement in the UN and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). It has teamed up with The Southwest Indian Relief Council to provide baskets of baby supplies to Native American mothers of newborns who have attended 75% of their prenatal appointments and at least two parenting classes. So far, this program has

increased prenatal care from 20 to 80% in some areas. This project directly supports MDGs #4 and #5, which are to "reduce child mortality" and "to improve maternal health." Congregations are being asked to collect supplies for these baskets.

Donations can be as small as a single pacifier or as large as one wishes, giving all members a chance to participate. The pilot project was done at the First UU Church of Dallas on the first two Sundays in May and resulted in over 500 basket items plus \$250 in cash. For additional information, check the UU-UNO Web site, [www.uu-uno.org](http://www.uu-uno.org). This seems like a project that Prairie could easily take on, and I would be very interested in your thoughts and reactions to the idea. E-mail me at: [pwatkins \(at\) wisc.edu](mailto:pwatkins@wisc.edu).

If you plan to attend General Assembly, you might consider checking into one or more of the five workshops which will be given by the UU-United Nations Office, and perhaps bring back some information which could be used in our UN Sunday program at Prairie.

And, lastly: if you have an interest in the United Nations, consider checking out the Dane County chapter of the UN-USA, which has some very interesting speakers on international news and events. Also, look for the annual UN-USA local dinner which is held each year in October.

*Submitted by your UU-UNO Envoy, Pat Watkins*

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Thursday, June 16, commemorates for Sikhs the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji (1563-1606). Arjan was the first Sikh martyr and the fifth Guru. In the town of Amritsar he built the Harimandir (Temple of God), in which Sikhs could meet for worship. To emphasize that the Sikh way was open to all, regardless of caste, he constructed the temple with doors facing all four directions. Sikhs remember Arjan for contributing to and compiling the Sikh Scriptures.

From the *Multifaith Calendar*

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## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE (UUSC) NEWS BULLETIN

*The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC): advancing human rights and social justice in the United States and throughout the world.*

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### **Urge Congress to end restrictions on Cuban-American families**

On May 25, Rep. Jim Davis, D-Fla., re-introduced legislation to reverse regulations imposed in June 2004 by the Bush administration which undermine families and jeopardize the well-being of innocent Cubans who rely on visits from their Cuban-American relatives for their livelihood. Urge your representative in Congress to co-sponsor H.R. 2617 to reverse the restrictions on Cuban-American travel rights. For an action alert, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert053105.html>.

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### **Join the Call for Justice weekend to speak out against torture**

Speak out with one voice against the use of torture by the United States by joining UUSC's Call for Justice weekend, Sept. 24-26. Join us in Washington, D.C., for a series of events highlighting the role of the U.S. government in sanctioning torture around the world. On Saturday, Sept. 24, we will offer a series of workshops and panel discussions about the relevant legal, humanitarian and security issues. On Sunday, Sept. 25, we will hold our Citizens' Trial, and on Monday, Sept. 26, we are asking that all participants proceed to Capitol Hill to speak with their representatives and senators.

If you wish to attend, please sign up with us as soon as possible! For more information and to register, visit: [www.uusc.org/programs/STOP/trial.html](http://www.uusc.org/programs/STOP/trial.html).

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### **New Native American workcamp set with Lakota in South Dakota**

UUSC is pleased to announce an exciting Just Works opportunity for volunteers to learn about and work with the Lakota community on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. Workcampers will learn about the modern lives of the Lakota people and will work with members of the community on projects they have identified as priorities.

The workcamp will be held in two weeklong sessions, the first from July 30-Aug. 6 and the second from Aug. 6-13. For more information, visit <http://www.uusc.org/info/article041305.html>.

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**Join UUSC for General Assembly in Fort Worth, Texas, June 23-27**

At the 2005 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, held this year in Fort Worth, Texas, June 23-27, learn how UUSC is putting UU values into action to end U.S.-sanctioned torture, defend the human right to water and promote economic justice.

There are still tickets available for our Annual Meeting. Join us for food, fellowship, program updates and acknowledgment of UUSC's outstanding volunteers and annual award recipients.

To learn more about these and other events and workshops at General Assembly, visit [www.uusc.org/ga](http://www.uusc.org/ga).

At GA, UUSC will sponsor an Action of Immediate Witness, taking a stand against U.S.-sanctioned torture. UUSC will also call for support of a citizens' indictment of U.S. leaders, charging them with aiding, abetting, ordering and conspiring to commit illegal physical and psychological torture of detainees in U.S. Custody.

For more about the Action of Immediate Witness, visit <http://www.uusc.org/ga/aiw.html>.

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**Read UUSC Hotwire, a human rights weblog**

We've launched UUSC Hotwire, a human rights weblog, to capture the everyday experiences of our work at UUSC.

New this week: Read about the recent concert honoring Pete Seeger. The event, For the love of Pete!, was held in New York City on May 21, and was a resounding success. More than 750 UUSC members and supporters turned out for this musical tribute to a living legend. Check out this story on UUSC Hotwire by visiting: [www.uusc.org/blog/hotwire.html](http://www.uusc.org/blog/hotwire.html).

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**Tsunami update: Partner reports caste bias delays relief aid in India**

The December tsunami affected hundreds of families in coastal villages in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu, India. The Annai Theresa Welfare Trust is one organization that is responding to the needs of the survivors with support from the UUSC-UUA Tsunami Relief Fund. To learn more, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article053105.html>.

Thanks to an outpouring of generosity of our members and supporters, more than \$2 million has now been raised for the UUSC-UUA Tsunami Relief Fund. For updates on how donations to the fund are being used and to read other stories from the region, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/tsunami>.

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**Taco Bell boycott ends in major victory for activists, farm workers**

In a major victory for Florida farm workers and social activists, fast-food industry giant Taco Bell has agreed to support a wage increase and improved working conditions for farm workers in the Florida tomato industry. The agreement ended a four-year-long boycott organized by the Florida-based Coalition of Immokalee Workers.

UUSC joined other organizations in supporting the CIW by endorsing this boycott. To learn more, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article052205.html>.

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**Teen workcampers learn about Mohawk culture during spring vacation**

A group of teenagers from central Massachusetts spent their April school vacation learning firsthand about the life and culture of Native Americans in modern United States. Over the course of five days, the group learned about issues affecting a community of Mohawk people who have returned to the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York. To read more about this workcamp, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article052305.html>

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**Make a monthly pledge, become a First Responder**

When you pledge a monthly gift to UUSC—whether that gift is \$100 per month or \$10—you are making a commitment to advancing human rights wherever the need is greatest. It's easy to make such a pledge. To become a UUSC First Responder, visit: [www.uusc.org/monthlypledge](http://www.uusc.org/monthlypledge).

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**PRAIRIE WEB SITES**

- Society Home Page: [prairie.madison.uua.org](http://prairie.madison.uua.org)
- News Group: [groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/)
- Views Group: [groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/)
- Social Action: [socialaction.madisonwi.us](http://socialaction.madisonwi.us)
- Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>
- Long Range Planning Committee: [www.execpc.com/~prairieu/ planning](http://www.execpc.com/~prairieu/ planning) (no space)