



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)

August 26, 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

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Editor: Dan Proud, prairieu@execpc.com; (608) 661-0776

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Saturday, August 27

12:30 p.m. Playreaders Organization meeting. Call Pat at 233-5795.

Sunday, August 28

10:00 a.m. "The Crisis in Darfur through a UU Lens," presented by Sarah Lord.

Wednesday, August 31

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Saturday, September 3

10:00 a.m. RE Teacher Orientation at Prairie

Sunday, September 4

*11:00 a.m. Labor Day celebration at Wingra Park.

Friday-Saturday, September 9-10

District training for teens and youth advisors, overnight at James Reeb UU Congregation

Sunday, September 11

*10:00 a.m. Ingathering and Sharing the Waters Communion, led by Barbara Chatterton.

Wednesday, September 14

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Friday, September 16 to Sunday, September 18

*Prairie Fall Retreat at Bethel Horizons Center

Saturday, September 17

*Book Club meets at Bethel Horizons

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: SUNDAY, SEPT. 4

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, August 28

Prairie member Sarah Lord presents "The Crisis in Darfur through a UU Lens." The atrocities and genocide occurring now in Darfur, Sudan are undoubtedly among the worst humanitarian crises we are currently facing. As a religious denomination, the UUA has been visible in its efforts to spur governments and non-governmental organizations to action in Darfur. President Sinkford even got arrested last August demonstrating in front of the Sudanese embassy.

As you may have read in the last Prairie Fire, the delegates at General Assembly in Fort Worth recently passed an Action of Immediate Witness urging UU's to help end crimes against humanity in Darfur, Sudan. Toward that end, Sarah Lord will be presenting a service about the crisis in Darfur this Sunday.

Sarah will present background information on the crisis and updates on the current situation. She will reflect on how we might respond to this crisis as UU individuals, and as part of larger UU organizations. Finally, she will share thoughts about how crises such as that in Darfur give us an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to our UU principles.

Sunday, September 4

Join in the fun Sunday, September 4, celebrating Labor Day at Wingra Park. It all begins at 11 a.m. with a potluck followed by canoeing/paddle boating/row boating (available rentals or bring your own),

frisbee, (softball anyone?), badminton, or bocci. Bring some food, drink and tableware, bring a game, bring family or friends and let's party! Be sure to let us know if you are coming by calling Susan Herr-Hoyman at 250-0559 and leave a message or sign up at Prairie.

To get to the park, take Monroe Street to Knickerbocker and turn south towards the lake and the park.

Sunday, September 11

This Sunday's service is traditional, the sharing of water from our summer travels, and a time of welcoming and connecting within the Prairie community.

The first Religious Education classes start with their own water communion. Regular classes will begin on Sunday, September 25.

OUR SOCIETY

PRAIRIE RETREAT SEPTEMBER 16-18

The annual retreat at Bethel Horizons is the best Prairie social event of the year! It is a time to let down your hair, kick back your heels, take your shoulder off the grindstone, and just get down and dirty! Fun and games, long conversations with nature and with friends old and new, mental exercise, creativity, and lots of food: these are good reasons to escape for the whole weekend to Wisconsin, Prairie style!

To attend for the whole shebang, Friday night to Sunday noon, or for only part of the time, you must fill out a registration form. The form was inserted in the last Prairie Fire issue and also available online on the Prairie UU Society Web site.

Registration deadline is this Sunday, August 28. If you forget or have some reason to be late, please call or e-mail Robin Proud at 661-0776 or prouds (at) tds.net.

Bring games, snacks, and something to share for the talent show on Saturday night! And don't forget, you have to bring your own linens.

For those who are thinking of not going because of the cost, please talk to Robin Proud. There are partial scholarships available.

Directions to Bethel Horizons: Take Highway 18/151 (Verona Road) west to Dodgeville. Turn right on Hwy. 23 and go north, past Governor Dodge State Park, until you reach County Road ZZ. Go right (east) on ZZ for a mile and follow signs on the right leading to the retreat center.

BYLAWS AMENDED IN SPECIAL MEETING

A parish meeting on amending the Society bylaws was held after the Sunday program on August 14 at Prairie, led by Mike Briggs, President. A large majority voting accepted a change for the members of the Ministerial Relations Committee to have terms not to exceed three years.

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).

NEXT BOOK CLUB MEETS AT THE ANNUAL RETREAT

The Prairie Book Club will discuss the following book at the Prairie Annual Retreat: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. This is a novel about a privileged boy of Afghanistan who emigrates to the United States to bury the memory of a tragic event involving his good friend who is his servant's son. Success and love in his new country isn't enough to make him forget, and he returns to Afghanistan to try to make things right. The author was born in Kabul and his family emigrated to the U.S. in 1980.

For more details about the story and a study guide, consult http://www.penguinputnam.com/static/rguides/us/kite_runner.html.

PRAIRIE MEMBER SEEKS WORK

I furnish hard work, such as mopping and vacuuming. You furnish transportation, instructions, equipment, supplies, ample work space, and a sturdy banister on basement stairs. Please, no ladders, furniture moving, or heavy lifting. References available on request. Call Phoenix at 608-271-8365.

WANTED: A ROOMMATE TO SHARE RENT

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

READY? AN EXCITING RE YEAR IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!

We are at the brink of the RE year and hope you are as enthusiastic as we are about what is coming up. On Saturday, September 3, from 10 a.m. to noon, new and returning RE teachers will meet at Prairie for an orientation. We will discuss RE policies and curricula, share ideas for the RE year, and spruce up our classrooms. Bring your questions and concerns, as well as suggestions and ideas. If you can't make that session, we will arrange an alternate time.

The coming together of RE youth and teachers for the first time will happen on September 11. As the adults participate in the ingathering upstairs, we will be enjoying our own water communion downstairs. You may bring your own water and story, plus we will provide a starting reservoir. We will share water in a ritual ceremony, using it to talk about how we each contribute to the mighty flow. We will do a fun activity. RE youth will get to know each other, their teachers and our new Director of Religious Education, Bob Radford. Everyone will join in his or her class near the end of the morning.

Keep checking this space in upcoming issues of the newsletter. We will keep you posted about special plans and events. Fall Frolic in October! High school YoUuth overnight! Nifty Gifty and more! Looking forward to seeing you all on September 11 and when classes begin on September 25.

Bob Radford, Director of Religious Education

MEMBERSHIP

Please note the following member updates:

Patricia Cautley

6201 Mineral Point Road, Room 235
Madison, WI 53705

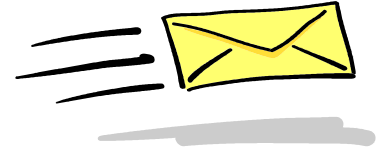
Bob and Kelly Radford (Bob is new DRE)

504 Melody Lane, Verona, WI 53593
845-3523

Mary Somers

marysomers44 (at) charter.net

LETTERS



MELISSA HANDS OVER

THE R.E. REINS TO BOB RADFORD

Hi, Everyone!

Well, today (August 21) was my official last day at Prairie. I have so many wonderful memories to bring with me! I am truly going to miss you all and I will especially miss seeing the kids! It is sad not to get to see them grow.

August 31 is the last day of our lease, and then we are off to North Carolina. I'll send a postcard or maybe a picture of us in our new apartment once we get settled in. I'll have to let you know what kind of job I get. It's going to be hard to find one that measures up to this one! You have all really spoiled me!

Thanks again for all of your kindness through my year of being DRE. We wouldn't have had such a great program this year without all of your help!

Please give a warm, warm welcome to the new DRE, Bob Radford. I can tell that he is going to be amazing! Introduce yourself to him if you haven't already, so he can get to know all the lovely faces that go with the names on his class lists! He is a very friendly, caring, extremely competent person, and I look forward to reading his Prairie Fire articles to see what you are all up to! Please add his email address to your address book.

Well, I'd better get packing! Thank you for all of your kind words during this transition. Best of luck and many blessings in your futures!

In Peace,

Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: prairie.madison.uua.org

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

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

Social Action: socialaction.madisonwi.us

Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

Long Range Planning: www.execpc.com/~prairieu/planning (no space)

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Board of Directors of the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office, announces the appointment of Jim L. Nelson as new Executive Director, effective July 25, 2005.

Jim brings longstanding dedication to and comprehensive knowledge of the United Nations, especially its NGO partnerships. He also has proven leadership experience involving non-profits, in higher education, and within UU congregations.

Personable, warm, and engaging, he enjoys teamwork, "particularly ... seeking points of collaboration among organizations and across issue-sectors." Further, his extensive international travel (personal, educational, work-connected, and conference-related) to all 50 states, D.C., and every continent except Antarctica, has strengthened his versatility and cross-cultural sensitivity.

Margaret Montgomery
President, UU United Nations Office, New York

OTHER NEWS

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

Did you know IHN is a part of United Way's Housing in Action Leadership Team (HALT) plan to reduce the number of homeless children in Dane County? IHN Director Rachel Krinsky served on the leadership team and IHN is working with United Way and other agencies to implement the strategies identified, including successful case management that will help families remain in stable housing.

Case Management has been very helpful to "Jessica" who recently was graduated from the Second Chance Apartment Project. During two years of work with her case manager and mentors she completed a Certified Nursing Assistant course and quickly obtained and has retained employment in that field. Jessica and her case manager worked out budgets and made repairs to her credit. In addition, work on parenting and school connections helped her children improve their grades. Two years ago this family could not be accepted for any housing. Now they have now moved into permanent housing they can afford, and can maintain on their own.

MADISON PAGAN PRIDE DAY OCTOBER 1

Madison Area Pagan Pride Day happens on Saturday, October 1, 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Lakeview Park in Middleton (on the side of Allen Boulevard away from the lake, at Mendota Ave.).

Please plan on joining us for a day of education, activism, and community. During the day there will be a wide variety of vendors, workshops, entertainment, and rituals. See <http://GWPPD.org> for more information, or write to GWPPD@GWPPD.org. (I'm at the other end of that address, so no fear!)

Dorothy Krause

MADISON INSTITUTE FORUM ON NEO-CONSERVATISM PLANNED FOR OCT. 1

You are invited to the next open forum at the Wisconsin Historical Society, Saturday, October 1, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Do you wonder about the influence of conservative policies on this country? Then come hear "Gulliver in Lilliput, American Foreign Policy in a Neoconservative Age," given by Professor Shadia Drury of the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Professor Drury has given intense scrutiny to Leo Strauss (1899-1973), commonly considered the force behind the current neo-conservative movement. This is a good opportunity to become well informed about the many influences on American foreign policy.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD SHORTAGES CRITICAL

The American Red Cross is now facing significant shortages of blood nationwide and locally in Madison. Without more blood on the shelves, the American Red Cross cannot ensure that hospitals will have the blood they need to treat all patients.

West Donor Center hours (4860 Sheboygan Ave.)
M-T-Th: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; W-F: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Sat: 8 a.m. to Noon

East Donor Center Hours (5133 W. Terrace Drive)
T-W-Th: 1 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.; F: 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Sat: 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.