



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."

March 9, 2007



Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at www.uuprairie.org.

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

SPRING AHEAD EARLY

Remember, Daylight Saving Time starts during the night of March 10-11. Set your clocks an hour ahead in order to get to Prairie on time!



Sunday, March 11-18

IHN Volunteer Week for Prairie

Sunday, March 11

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Universalism 101" presented by Rev. Ralph Tyksinski

*11:30 a.m. Book Club lunch and discussion of *Until I Find You* by John Irving

7:00 p.m. "Articulating Your UU Faith" Adult R.E.

Wednesday, March 14

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Thursday, March 15

7:00 p.m. Humanist Union hosts showing of film *Jesus Camp*

Saturday, March 17

*7:30 p.m. Playreaders meet at Nettleton's

Sunday, March 18

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "The History of Evolutionary Thought" presented by Kathy Converse

*12:00 p.m. Annual Prairie Service Auction

7:00 p.m. "Articulating Your UU Faith" Adult R.E.

Wednesday, March 21

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

7:00 p.m. Prairie Board Meeting

Thursday, March 22

*6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers at home of Kate Tucker, 4501 Camden

*7:00 p.m. Prairie Film Group meets to watch *The Gods Must Be Crazy*

Saturday, March 24

9:30 a.m. Left Hand of God Covenant Group meets at home of Susan and Dirk Herr-Hoyman

Sunday, March 25

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Molly Ivins, a Heroine of Our Time" presented by Paula Pachciarz and others

11:30 a.m. Bylaws amendment discussion

7:00 p.m. "Articulating Your UU Faith" Adult R.E.

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, MARCH 18

Tuesday, March 27

*2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meeting, Nakoma Room, Heritage Oaks Building, Oakwood Village West

Wednesday, March 28

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, April 1

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Foolish Feelings of Another's Pain," presented by the Rev. Ralph Tyksinski

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, March 11

In "Universalism 101," Rev. Ralph will explore the ways we can adopt and accept our identity as Universalists with historical background and contemporary descriptions. Hopefully, it will be of use to you if you are asked "What does the second U mean?" after you say I'm a UU.

Sunday, March 18

There is a long convoluted history of evolutionary thought that has developed over the past five decades. From the anatomists of the 1500's who dissected human bodies and discovered we were a different species through the work of paleontologists, theologians and naturalists (including Darwin) to our current researchers in genetic sequencing. We will explore some of the important contributions to our current understanding of evolution. Do you know how squirrels, birds and pinecones co-evolved, and why?

"The History of Evolutionary Thought" is the first of three programs in Kathy Converse's lay ministry.

Sunday, March 25

Paula Pachciarz and friends will remember Molly Ivins, who died on January 31, and Molly's passionate stand for her principles. Molly left behind this gem after 37 years of journalistic musings:

So keep fightin' for freedom and justice, beloveds, but don't you forget to have fun doin' it. Lord, let your laughter ring forth. Be outrageous, ridicule the fraidy-cats, rejoice in all the oddities that

freedom can produce. And when you get through kickin' ass and celebratin' the sheer joy of a good fight, be sure to tell those who come after how much fun it was.

Sunday, April 1

In the presentation, "Foolish Feelings of Another's Pain," Rev. Ralph will explore some implications of recent research on empathy and its neurological connection to the way humans interact with one another. It's April Fools Day and Palm Sunday in the Christian calendar. It should make for some interesting insights in how we behave in relationships.

OUR SOCIETY

UPCOMING BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

The Prairie Book Club meets monthly after the Sunday service at Prairie. Bring food to share. Anyone who has read the book or simply wants to listen to the discussion is welcome to attend.

Remember that there's a link to the poster of our book club selections on Prairie's Web site. See <http://uuprairie.org/NovDecBooks.htm> or find the page through the Prairie calendar entries for book club meeting. Prices are those current at <http://amazon.com> as of November 18, 2006.

Sunday, March 11. *Until I Find You: A Novel* by John Irving. Fiction, "the story of the actor Jack Burns—his life, loves, celebrity and astonishing search for the truth about his parents." 848 pages, \$1.00 & up.

Sunday, April 8. *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* by John Perkins. Non-fiction, "a former respected member of the international banking community describes how as a highly paid professional, he helped the U.S. cheat poor countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars by lending them more money than they could possibly repay and then take over their economies." (Democracy Now) 320 pages, \$6.44 & up. See http://www.amazon.com/Confessions-Economic-Hit-John-Perkins/dp/0452287081/sr=1-1/qid=1163862031/ref=pd_bbs_1/103-2391547-8734245?ie=UTF8&pi=1&pf_rd_p=103-2391547-8734245

WELCOME TO PLAYREADING

All are invited to join us in reading a play together at 7:30 p.m., **Saturday, March 17**, at the Nettleton's home, 645 Sheldon St. Each person is given a character part and we read the play "cold," but with enthusiasm. Treats will be provided by the hosts. Join us for good home-made, late-winter drama. For details about the play to be read or directions, please call 238-6053.

SERVICE AUCTION PLANNED FOR MARCH 18

Sunday, March 18 is the date of this year's Prairie Service Auction. Orange Schroeder will again serve as our auctioneer, and there will undoubtedly be bargains galore.

Please start thinking about what you would like to contribute. Past contributions have included food, entertainment, household services, professional services, artwork, weekend getaways, and more.

Contact Robin Proud with the following info:

- item name
- description
- preferred date (for an event)
- number of people who can purchase
- value
- minimum bid (if applicable)

SPANISH SPEAKERS SCHEDULE MEETING

The Spanish Speakers will meet next on **Thursday, March 22**, at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Kate Tucker, 4501 Camden. For questions or directions, call Kate at 221-2168 or call Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

FILM GROUP TO MEET MARCH 22

On **Thursday, March 22**, at 7:00 p.m., the Prairie Film Group will view *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, the 1980 classic comedy written and directed by Jamie Uys. The story has to do with the fallout resulting from a Coke bottle delivered from the heavens. The finder believes that the gods must be crazy to give such a gift to the world. Bring snacks or beverages to share and enjoy this classic.

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEET TUESDAY, MARCH 27

2:00-3:50 PM, NAKOMA ROOM, Heritage Oaks Building, Oakwood Village West.

The room is open at 1:30 for those who wish to come early for casual conversation. After 2:00 we introduce newcomers and share personal information. The meeting lasts until around 3:40. Participants are welcome to come and go as necessary for appointments, rides, etc.

TOPIC: UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND STORIES. We use a round-robin format.

REFRESHMENTS: Please bring snacks to pass, if convenient. Hot and cold beverages are furnished. *NOTE: Bring your own cup if you can.*

DIRECTIONS: Oakwood Village West is in the 6100 block of Mineral Point Road, several blocks west of Whitney Way. Follow the main entrance road veering left and up the hill. Heritage Oaks is the new building on the right. Its visitor parking entrance is directly across from Oakwood's one-story Resale Shop. The parking lot's automatic door is to the right of two yellow posts and marked by a yellow arrow on the driveway. Drive in and find a spot near the clearly marked elevator shaft. The Nakoma Room is on the first floor. From the elevator go to the right and past the mail boxes. Turn left by the reception desk.

A few handicapped stalls are farther up the hill in front of Heritage Oak's main entrance. Inside, turn right immediately past the receptionist's desk.

For directions, rides, parking and further information, contact Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER AVAILABLE

Electronic Funds Transfer is here! No more searching for a pen during the offertory or trying to remember when you paid your pledge and how much.

Your pledge will be automatically paid from your checking or savings account. It takes 1-2 weeks to get this set up. Forms will be available in the lobby or can be sent to you. Please return them to Robin Proud (661-0776), and see Robin with any questions.

REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

March is National Women's History Month. I feel a special appreciation for the Unitarian,



Fannie Farmer, born on March 23, 1857 (d. 1915) because she was the author of the famous cookbook, originally published as "The Boston Cooking-School Cookbook".

The edition that I learned so much about cooking and food nutrition from was just titled *The Fannie Farmer Cookbook*. The chapters on "Success with Recipes" and "Planning Meals" still yield a treasure of important information. "Aunt Fannie's" original work included accurate and specific ingredient measurements and for the first time in printed form, became our standardized cooking measurements.

In preparing for my presentation, "Universalism 101", I became better informed about Judith Sargent Murray, who was born in 1751. Judith Sargent never had the kind of formal schooling she longed for, but still read everything she could get her hands on, and wrote her first little book when she was eight years old.

In 1770 Judith's father read the work of James Rely, an English Universalist who taught the idea that all people would be saved—that everyone would eventually go to heaven and no one to hell. Winthrop Sargent gathered together a group of people to explore these ideas, creating the first Universalist congregation in the United States, in Gloucester, Mass. Judith was one of these earliest Universalists, and she wrote the First Universalist Sunday school book for children.

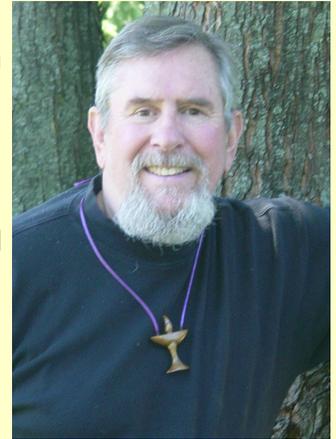
In 1784 Judith published the first of what became a whole series of essays arguing for the rights of women—that women deserved the same education as men, and opportunities to use their brains and not just take care of households.

"On the Equality of the Sexes," in 1790, in the *Massachusetts Magazine*, she wrote:

I would calmly ask, is it reasonable, that a candidate for immortality, for the joys of heaven, an intelligent being, who is to spend an eternity in contemplating the works of Deity, should at present be so degraded, as to be allowed no other ideas, than those suggested by the

mechanism of a pudding, or the sewing [of] the seams of a garment? . . . Are we deficient in reason? We can only reason from what we know, and if opportunity of acquiring knowledge hath been denied us, the inferiority of our sex cannot fairly be deduced from thence.

In 1788 Judith married John Murray, now known as the "Father of American Universalism". The two were happily married for 27 years. Judith was an intellectual as well as emotional support to his ministry. Although Universalism continued to change its beliefs even during



Judith's lifetime, her contributions to the beginnings of Universalism and Universalist religious education are important, as well as her writings on the rights and abilities of women.

Both Fannie Farmer and Judith Sargent Murray made valued contributions to society and are a remarkable part of our cherished UU history, deserving of our attention during this Women's History Month.

Blessed Be,

Rev. Ralph

CALL FOR DELEGATES

You can represent Prairie UU Society and join the larger UU community at the District and National Assemblies. Delegates will vote at business meetings, as well as attend educational sessions and network with other UU's. The Central Midwest Assembly, with the theme "Congregations Alive!" will be **April 13-15** in Oak Brook, Illinois.

General Assembly will take place June 20-24 in Portland, Oregon. If you are interested in attending either of these events, please contact Nancy Schraufnagel, Denominational Affairs Committee, at 273-3195 or schraufnancy (at) hotmail.com by **March 18**.

Delegates must be appointed by the Board, but any UU is welcome to attend these conferences.

I ONCE WAS LOST BUT NOW AM FOUND

It's the time of year again when hats, scarves, gloves, and even coats get left behind at Prairie. By the time we get ready to leave from church, it sure does seem like a nice day, doesn't it?

April 15—Tax Day—is the day when owners get their last chance to reunite with those castoff clothes. We've got a really nice black leather coat. Come and get it.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2007 UUSC HOLIDAY CARD CONTEST

Creative UUs of all ages are invited to submit original designs for 2007 UUSC holiday cards. Create an original design that reflects the joy of the holidays, and justice, equity, and compassion. Please visit www.uusc.org/ia/holiday_cards/2006/contest2007.html for submission guidelines and to the 2006 award-winning card. Submissions must be received by **April 27**, 2007. Mail submissions to UUSC Holiday Card Contest, 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 or use E-mail: volunteerservices@uusc.org

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST NEWS

UU CHURCHES HOST VACATION TRIPS

April 13–15 D.C. Annual Cherry Blossom Festival: www.cedarlane.org/cbfestival.pdf.

June 24–July 3 Northcentral Alaska: www.wuurld.org

July 3–12 Southeast Alaska: www.wuurld.org

July 15–17 Niagara Falls: <http://www.uunex.net/> or (716) 791-4453

July 16–30 Alaska: www.wuurld.org

UU B&B DIRECTORY UPDATE

For a copy of the 2007 directory, send a check for \$20 (or \$25 and your e-mail address for a year's access to the Web site as well) to UU're Home, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806.

JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS NEWS

Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge Hurricane Effort Builds Right Relations

Immediately following the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the Gulf Coast and the inadequate relief response of federal, state, and local agencies, the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge (UCBR) established a Hurricane Relief and Social Justice Project. They hired a project director and began connecting volunteers with service providers and rebuilding projects.

The scope of relief needed was broad and the institutional hurdles huge. Those hurdles included institutionalized racism, and as the congregation grappled with the inequities of hurricane relief on the gulf coast, they broadened their efforts to include advocacy. UCBR intentionally partnered with community groups led by people of color including ACORN, ACT (All Congregations Together), Neighborhood Housing Services, the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, and People's Hurricane Relief, with the goal of acquiring adequate resources to aid a just recovery in the Gulf region. In addition to advocating for resources, it became clear that they would also need to organize for policy change to make a just recovery possible. To read the rest of the article, please see:

http://www.uua.org/news/2007/070222_blackhistory.html

Spirit in Action Leadership Training, May 9-13

Join the UUA's partner organization Spirit in Action for their next leadership training. This training has been participated in and comes highly recommended by UUA Advocacy & Witness, Identity Based Ministries and Congregational Services staff and consultants.

In 1870, Mothers dedicated a day to peace. Mother's Day sounded a true call for peace and disarmament—a call to action that is still relevant today. Join us for Spirit in Action's leadership program and spend this Mother's Day the way it was meant to be spent: five days dedicated to peace, community, and re-energizing our work. There has never been a more important time to make every action count.

TIERRA LEARNING CENTER, LEAVENWORTH, WASHINGTON, MAY 9-13, 2007 (3 hours from Seattle--www.tierralearningcenter.org)

Build lasting relationships and co-create community among a diverse group of people who value:

- Community Building
- Movement Building
- Collective visioning for a positive future
- Working in a heart-centered way
- Action for deep and lasting change

For more information about the Circle Leadership Network contact Pamela Freeman at pfree12334@aol.com or 215-844-7566 or visit our website at www.spiritinaction.net

*Susan Leslie, Director
Congregational Advocacy & Witness, UUA*

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: <http://uuprairie.org/>

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

Views: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairievews/>

Social Action: <http://socialaction.madisonwi.us>

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

OTHER NEWS

MADISON HARP ORCHESTRA MARCH 15

The Madison Harp Orchestra will perform its second annual benefit concert on **Thursday, March 15** at Monona Terrace at 7:30. Tickets are \$25, with proceeds going to the Access Community Health Center. Over 30 harp players, including Prairie's own Orange Schroeder, will perform, in addition to Irish dancers and the Celtic band Stone Ring. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at www.harpsinger.com.

ARBORETUM COHOUSING SEEKING MEMBERS

Arboretum Cohousing (Arbco) is now actively looking for new members to join its community. Arbco will be located close to beautiful natural settings, including Lake Wingra, Vilas Park, and the UW Arboretum.

Would you like to live in a place where people are seeking a balance of privacy and sharing in each others' lives? Are you interested in taking care of the environment and living in an inter-generational community? How about living in a consensus-based community where the inherent worth of everyone's opinion is a natural part of decision making? If so, Arbco may be just the place for you!

The cohousing movement in the US has typically seen many UUs involved. Arbco is no exception. We see 3 UUs involved out of our 20 households. It would be great to see more members from our UU community. Read this article "Cohousing: What's so UU about it" in the UU World Forum <http://www.uuworld.org/2004/04/forum.html>.

Arbco is nestled in an interesting urban and natural context, being directly next to the Zoo, Wingra Beach, and the Arboretum. This is a wonderful place for kids and their parents. A veritable kids' paradise! Many areas to explore, safely, for many ages as you grow up. It's also a wonderful area to explore for the "young at heart" too!

Twenty homes have already been reserved, so if you have an interest in living in a cohousing community in the heart of Madison, consider attending an Information session soon. These sessions are being held every other Saturday @ 11 a.m., generously being hosted by Village Cohousing at 1104 Mound St. See the Arbco Web site arboretumcohousing.org or call 229-7906 for more details.

Dirk Herr-Hoyman