



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."

May 25, 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

Sunday, May 27

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Giving 'the Last Full Measure of Devotion'" presented by the Rev. Ralph Tyksinski, followed by picnic at Prairie.

Wednesday, May 30

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Saturday, June 2

*9:00 a.m. Prairie Work Day II, ends at 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 3

9:00 a.m. No choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. Transition Service

*12:00 noon. Humanist Union potluck & program on religious propaganda, led by Andy Somers.

Monday, June 4

7:30 p.m. Membership and Hospitality Committee meeting

Wednesday, June 6

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, June 10

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Summertime Is Coming," presented by the Rev. Ralph Tyksinski

*11:30 a.m. Book Group discusses *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*

Wednesday, June 13

7:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, June 17

9:00 a.m. No choir rehearsals in the summer

10:00 a.m. "Another View of Iran" presented by Bonnie and Bob Block

Wednesday-Sunday, June 20-24

UUA General Assembly, Portland, Oregon

Thursday, June 21

7:00 p.m. Prairie Film Group

Saturday, June 23

*Prairie fund-raising trip to Milwaukee.

Friday-Sunday, July 6-8

Summer Spree at Prairie

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, JUNE 3

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, May 27

We explore at this Memorial Day holiday weekend service the spectrum of beliefs that UU's have regarding service to one's country, war, and peace, while honoring those who have given that "last full measure of devotion."

This year the Memorial Day picnic will be held at Prairie. Depending on the weather of the day, either the service or the picnic, or both, can be indoors or outside. In the case of rain, everything will be inside. If it's uncomfortably warm outside, we may have the service inside and flow the picnic outside.

But, if it's a gorgeous day, plan on spending the day outside! Please bring blankets to sit on and/or lawn chairs for outdoors, including any extras you might have to share.

Please bring along a substantial side dish to share for the picnic. "Sloppy Joe's" in the form of Boca Joe's and Turkey Joe's will be provided, along with juice drinks, coffee and tea. We will also have a grill set up for people that might like to bring something to grill.

If people have additional activities they'd like to participate in, please let Dorothy Krause (271-7532) know and we can set it up, or just bring along lawn games or whatever you have that you'd enjoy sharing with others. Or if you'd like to help with set up or clean up, please come early, or plan to stay a bit late... so far it's just Dorothy and whoever steps in to help. Thanks!

Sunday, June 3

Prairie will celebrate Transitions Sunday, an annual event which strengthens connections among Prairie folks. This special service marks the end of the Religious Education year for Prairie youth. On that morning we will fete the RE youth transitioning into high school, Gavin McFarlane and Seth Gutknecht, and honor the gift of time and commitment from our wonderful RE teachers. We will also hold a short ceremony dedicating the newer members of Prairie Society. Come prepared to take a quiz to find out just how much you know about Gavin and Seth, and to have fun / be joyful together!

OUR SOCIETY

FEEDBACK ON SHARED MINISTRY

How do you feel Prairie is doing in its shared ministry this year? What are areas of our ministry to each other as a congregation that you feel are supportive of our life together as a religious community? What are areas you feel need more attention? How is our partnership with our minister assisting in our shared ministry?

The Committee on Ministry consisting of Dean Schroeder, Sarah Lord, and Aileen Nettleton, working with Rev. Ralph Tyksinski, would appreciate your feedback. The committee is charged with providing feedback and support to our minister and to the Board. This year, instead of a formal questionnaire, we invite members to share highlights and concerns with committee members informally. The committee will keep specific information confidential while compiling general feedback and insights that can assist in a more productive shared ministry.

The committee wishes to thank the congregation for working together with Rev. Ralph this year in jointly addressing these areas outlined by the Board for shared ministry:

1. Work with us to develop a shared ministry. Work cooperatively with the lay leadership and existing programs to build a shared ministry based on Prairie's strengths.
2. Aid in leadership development. Provide help and guidance in fostering member participation and leadership in committee work.
3. Aid us in developing Right Relations as a means of building community.
4. Help us identify and foster conditions that support membership growth.
5. Help the congregation identify core values.
6. Contribute to Sunday programs through presentations with cooperative planning between the Consulting Minister and the Program Committee.

Please feel free to call members of the committee or talk to any of us. Aileen Nettleton, 238-6053; Dean Schroeder, 256-8813; Sarah Lord, 827-6562.

REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

At our May 13 service twenty-three persons from Prairie signed a petition to President Bush in the spirit of Unitarian Julia Ward Howe's Mother's Day Proclamation to "bring our soldiers home by the holidays". I wrote the following cover letter with the signed petitions and mailed it off last week.



May 16, 2007
 President George W. Bush
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
 Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

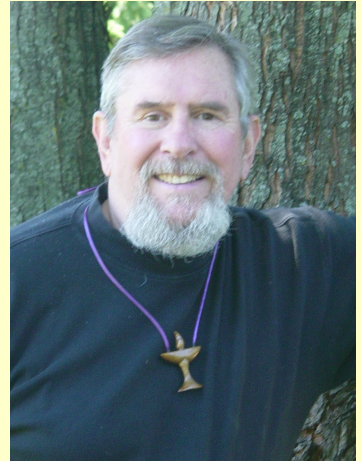
This past Mother's Day, May 13, I delivered a sermon on the burden and cost of war to mothers throughout the world. As Unitarian Universalists, while deeply committed to peace and justice, we have been willing to take up arms, though reluctantly, on behalf of justice and in defense of principle. Many Unitarians and Universalists have served and now serve in the military. In recent years, Elliot Richardson, a staunch birthright Unitarian, William Perry, another UU, and William Cohen, still another UU, have served our country in the office of Secretary of Defense.

My uncle (Maj. Stanley Tyksinski, Free Polish Army) served in World War II, and my brothers (Lt. Col. William A. Tyksinski, USMC; and Cpl. Terence J. Tyksinski, USA) have also served our country.

Like other religious leaders, I have spoken out and demonstrated for the use of restraint and temperance in the U.S. response to the terrorist attacks.

As Unitarian Universalists, we join other persons of religious faith in trying to be a healing presence in our society to the extent that we model listening patiently to one another's perspectives, speaking temperately, and respecting one another's ministries and rights of conscience. We are not a peace church. We are not a war church. We are a religious community of both pacifists and pragmatists, taking different spiritual paths toward a common goal: a world of greater justice, freedom and peace. In this spirit we respectfully submit the enclosed petitions, signed by members of our congregation, for your serious and prayerful consideration.

Sincerely,
 Rev. Ralph A. Tyksinski,
 Consulting Minister
 Prairie Unitarian
 Universalist Society
 2010 Whenona Dr.
 Madison, WI 53711



Happy to be journeying with you,
 Ralph

SECOND WORK DAY ON JUNE 2

Prairie Work Day II will be held **Saturday, June 2, 9:00–2:00**, rain or shine. Good weather will find us weeding, trimming, pruning, and digging in the garden. A rainy day will lead us inside for deep cleaning. Either way, we need to finish washing the windows. This work is lighter when there are lots of Prairie members and friends to help. Bring tools, cleaning supplies, and food to share for lunch. I'll provide beverages.

Al Nettleton, Housing and Properties Chair

HUMANIST UNION MEETS ON JUNE 3

Humanist Union meets next on **Sunday, June 3**. Andy Somers will follow up on his series of programs on propaganda at Prairie by leading a discussion on Religious Propaganda: How to recognize and deal with it. Potluck lunch at noon, presentation and discussion about 12:20 to 1:30 p.m. Future Humanist Union programs are posted at <http://humanist.madisonwi.us/events.htm>.

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simple ways to help your congregation grow

Developed by Art Brewer, First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto

- if you are a member of a small group, invite a non-member to one of your meetings
- invite a non-member to an adult program
- give a testimony, then give a copy of it to a non-member
- give a copy of a sermon to a non-member
- talk to non-members about your church

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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.

Sunday, June 10—*Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, by Lynne Truss and Bonnie Timmons. Try this critical review, which will make you want to read the book to see if you agree:

http://www.newyorker.com/critics/books/articles/040628crbo_books1?040528crbo_books1. 228 pp.

Sunday, July 8—Choose and read your own book on contemporary political thought. We'll each present and discuss our own book. Group discussion will consist of comparing and contrasting what we read.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS SOUGHT FOR H&P

Come and join the Prairie Housing & Property Committee! If you have skills in maintenance, aesthetics of design or decorating, gardening, cleaning, organizing, and discarding excess stuff, we need you on the committee. The next meeting is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on **Thursday, June 14**, to plan building improvements for the next year.

PRAIRIE PROGRAM ON THE ROAD

In a reprise of her March 25 program at Prairie, Paula Pachciarz took *Molly Ivins, A Heroine of Our Time* to the Socialist Potluck at the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center on April 14. There she once again received musical support from the Raging Grannies of Madison. Shown behind Paula in the photo below are four Prairie members of the Raging Grannies, Barbara Park, Rosemarie Lester, Metje Butler and Doleta Chapru.



Photo by Bob Park

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

RE YEAR ENDS

Classes for the 2006-07 RE school year officially ended last Sunday, May 20. As the program comes to a close we still have fun activities planned for the summer.



This Sunday will be Kids Game Day. RE students will gather at the nearby park for fun outdoors playing various games. Maybe we'll have a game of Ultimate Frisbee or maybe a rousing game of Soccer either way, it'll be a good time for us all.

June 3 is our annual Transition Service. This coming of age program is a time for us to acknowledge the milestones in the lives of our youth. We'll recognize our two middle school students making the transition to high school: Gavin McFarland and Seth Gutknecht. We'll also be saying "good-bye" to Mei-Lien Converse who will be attending college this fall at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. She won't be leaving us just yet, but this will be a time to congratulate her on graduating and going to college.

We'll also be recognizing new RE students and new members to Prairie. This is also a time to say "thank you" to all of our hard-working teachers. They made our program possible this year and were a joy to work with. I hope they plan on returning but many of them have been doing this for so many years, some no longer have children in the program. If you are interested in becoming a teacher next year and shaping the religious education of our youth, please let me know.

July 6-8 will be our annual Summer Spree retreat. This year the students will be revisiting the Friendship Center Camp in Dodgeville. This small, secluded camp provides two bunk houses and a main building used for eating and activities. Students and adults who have visited the camp in the past found it to be a wonderful experience so we're looking forward to another enjoyable summer weekend!

Now just because classes have ended doesn't mean there won't be activities planned each Sunday this summer. We will have our two day

care providers, Isha Shrestha and Erin Birmingham, watching infants and toddlers. They will play games, read stories and just have fun with the children.

I'm sad to be ending the current RE year but this summer will be an enjoyable time for everyone and I look forward to August when we'll start the 2007-08 school year with our World Religions program.

Thank you to all students, teachers, parents and volunteers for making this another successful RE school year!

Rebecca Malke (YREC)
youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBER PROFILE: HEIDI HUGHES

Heidi became a Prairie member recently. She tells us here a little bit about herself and her family.

We have recently moved to Madison in October of 2006. This was actually a very deliberate quality of life move that we have thought about for the past 5 years. We moved from Villa Park, IL (a western suburb of Chicago), where we were members of the UU congregation at Unity Temple in Oak Park.

We have come to Prairie after exploring all the UU congregations in Madison. Somehow it just felt right here – warm, welcoming and comfortable. At their very first visit, my son said, “Mom, let’s go to this church,” and my husband was impressed as well. As we’ve attended several services in the past four months, I always leave feeling I’ve learned a bit more about the people that make up this congregation and it keeps me coming back! I am intrigued by the history of this community, by the personalities that make it up, and by the sheer energy that drives it.

My husband and I were both raised Catholic. When the children were born, it forced us to think about how we were going to influence their spiritual grow. As we had many discussions, I decided I couldn’t raise them Catholic, because there were far too many questions I wouldn’t be

able to answer honestly for them. I knew that I’d end up saying stuff like, “This is just the way it is done, I can’t explain it, but please do it.” That felt awful and Paul agreed that he couldn’t raise them Catholic on his own. So we found Unity Temple with the help of a dear friend. It felt so right for us and the kids loved the RE. Paul has remained Catholic but fully supports the kids and me in our growth as UU’s. (He is truly a UU at heart. He just isn’t ready to give up his Catholic tradition. As some of you are aware, that Catholic guilt runs very deep.)

I am looking forward to becoming more involved. I feel it is important spiritually for me and my family to do some sort of humanitarian outreach – helping us grow spiritually through helping others. I have been searching, especially since the birth of my children, for more awareness – the true task of being present, for authenticity, truth, for growing the transformative power of love, which I feel is the essence which binds us all together, allows us to communicate intimately, create, and feel true joy. I am hoping Prairie will help me in this search.

The remaining nitty gritty facts about us are: I am 43 years old. My husband is 39. My children are James, who is 9, and Rachel who is 6. I am a physician assistant in Family Practice with UW Health. I work 20 hours a week in a small clinic in Horicon. My husband, Paul, owns a Matco Tools franchise. He sells high-quality tools to mechanics and the like. We live on the north side in the Cherokee Park Neighborhood.

We look forward to building great friendships!



THE FUTURE FOR PRAIRIE

I've been attending Prairie for several years and have been a member for several months. I'm perfectly content with remaining in the current building but worry that my sons will not be part of a thriving religious community in a few years if we do.

It took me several years to get around to discovering Prairie, in part because its location is relatively obscure. One can decry my lack of geographical acumen, but I don't think I'm the exception. Simple matters like this do have major consequences.

Those who have been attending Prairie for some time may not realize the discomfort associated with entering a "new" church for the first time. It involves some tremendously personal decisions conducted in full public view. Visitors want to enter unobtrusively yet want to feel welcome. They want the luxury of anonymity yet the possibility of finding a place where they can belong.

This is enormously difficult to achieve at Prairie. The lack of space means many interactions occur near the entrance. When I walked in, I felt as if I were intruding on a private conversation occurring in someone's living room. It took more than a year before I felt at ease. I don't think my feelings are unique.

Then, too, the dated and cramped facilities create the impression of eccentricity. Considering how we have been barraged with messages of religious intolerance, those who are unfamiliar with UU may harbor misconceptions that it's a fringe or somewhat subversive moment. The trappings of the current building can inadvertently lend credence to this perception. Again, this shouldn't be important—but it is.

In short, I doubt whether Prairie will attract a significant number of new members as long as it remains at its present location, whether it redecorates or engages in greater outreach.

I understand (and share, to some extent) the reluctance to move to a "suburban" location. As a resident of Fitchburg and editor of the local paper, I often decry the lack of community and other deficiencies of Fitchburg.

But most residents of Fitchburg reside there for the same reasons most of us selected a place to live—affordability, security, etc. There are few, if any, intrinsic differences between residents of Madison and Fitchburg and it's difficult to notice any differences between the "new" areas of Madison and the surrounding suburbs. In fact, in several respects, Fitchburg has done a better job of planning than has Madison.

Many of the most objectionable features of Fitchburg, such as huge apartment complexes and lack of a central urban core, occurred when Fitchburg lacked full control over its destiny; this powerlessness was a major impetus for Fitchburg's decision to become a city.

More residents of Fitchburg and surrounding communities are interested in crafting a sustainable future and in addressing the deficiencies of American culture. To be sure, it is a nascent movement and it will suffer setbacks. It will not be easy.

Fitchburg is no longer a bedroom community. It will be an increasingly important part of the Madison-area's economic and cultural landscape. Some of its deficiencies—such as lack of a central space for cultural events—are opportunities for Prairie. Creating such a center in Fitchburg would naturally attract residents from surrounding areas, such as Verona, Oregon, Dunn and McFarland.

A liberal religious organization that is willing to engage the community can be an extremely visible and influential presence. Prairie could make a real contribution.

I am not a fan of growth for growth's sake, but I do want to be part of a religious tradition willing to be part of the contemporary dialogue. I want Prairie to attract a new generation of members willing to confront religious intolerance, and in large enough numbers to influence the larger community.

I am not qualified to evaluate the financial feasibility of such a move and have limited financial resources to contribute. Nonetheless, I think the status quo holds much greater risks for Prairie than the alternative.

The urban fringes are where much of the growth is occurring and where potential new members reside. If they will not come to Prairie, then Prairie should consider coming to them.

Kurt Gutknecht

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWS

JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS NEWS

Mother's Day Witness Draws Crowds and Media

The Congregation of First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco gathered on the church's steps on Mother's Day morning to issue a 2007 Proclamation for Peace, rekindling the original spirit of the holiday started in 1870 by Unitarian Julia Ward Howe.

Moderator Linda Enger, Reverend Greg Stewart, and MC Dolores Priem were in the spotlight at the event which included Gold Star Mother Karen Meredith, Assemblyman Mark Leno, and peace activists Camilo Mejia, Pablo Paredes, Sean O'Neill, and Agustin Aguayo.

Media representatives from television, radio, and the Web covered the ceremony. The First Unitarian Universalist Society's public stand for peace led the hourly local news reports on KCBS-740 on Sunday afternoon. Film coverage was aired that night on KTVU (Channel 2) and on KGO (Channel 7), and the San Francisco Chronicle printed a story on May 14 as follow-up to the event.

See <http://www.uua.org/congregationallife/justicediversity/25480.shtml> and be sure to click on Related Content to read Rev. Greg Stewart's statement, view photos and media coverage.

For Memorial Day the congregation will be honoring the young Americans and innocent Iraqi and Afghani civilians who have died with a special memorial in their Gallery with pictures of a few of the fallen soldiers and a reading aloud of the names of the dead. The display also features a copy of Rev. Greg Stewart's very brave and powerful statement, along with the picture of his family.

Mother's Day for Peace Online Video

This year, Brave New Foundation honored the origins of Mother's Day in this short online video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtzAwo1HU2w>.

New Sanctuary Movement

The New Sanctuary Movement in solidarity with immigrants offers many ways for congregations to be supportive from hosting immigrant families, to providing support, to signing a pledge, and witnessing. The UUA was the first religious association to sign on and now others have followed. See <http://www.newsanctuarymovement.org/pledge.htm> for more information.

UUSC ANNOUNCES CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNEY

UUSC is excited to announce the 2007 Freedom Summer: A Civil Rights Journey, a JustWorks camp that will take you to the most significant sites of the civil rights movement.

Join UUSC for the fourth annual Civil Rights Journey to Atlanta, Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham, July 7-14, 2007. During this intergenerational trip, we will travel together by bus to visit historical sites that were significant to people who worked, often at great personal peril, to register new voters during Freedom Summer 1964. Participants will also hear inspirational stories of people who were there.

The Civil Rights Journey will conclude with electoral-related skills training that will equip participants to return to their communities and campuses as activists.

Freedom Summer 2007: A Civil Rights Journey (intergenerational 14 and over), fee \$500. For a flyer you can download and post in your congregation, visit <http://www.uusc.org/info/flyer07.pdf>

Join us for this or one of our other JustWorks camps, meaningful social justice experiences and action opportunities for people of all ages. For more information, visit www.uusc.org/justworks.

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

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

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

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

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

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

ALLIED PARTNER FAMILY STABILIZATION FUND

The Allied Partners is a group of area churches to which our congregation belongs. Our goal is to assist our neighbors in the Allied Drive area to build community and improve the academic, physical, spiritual and mental health of residents, especially children. One of the ways we work towards this goal is through our Family Stabilization Fund. The fund gives small grants to help with rent or utilities to families experiencing an unexpected emergency that disrupts their finances. Here are synopses of several recent situations in which we have made a real difference in the lives of real people:

- “John” and his daughter were homeless. We helped him put money together for move-in costs.
- “Jane” was laid off her job and was taken to eviction court for getting behind on her rent. We helped her to get caught up and get one more chance.
- “Jane” was in a violent domestic relationship. She has been unable to work because he broke her leg and she is in a cast, and so she got behind in her rent. We helped her keep her apartment.
- “John” lost his job and got behind in rent. He now has a new job but won't get paid right away. We helped him keep his home.
- “John” had a death in his family in Cambodia. He sent money there and then could not pay his rent. We helped him over the hump.
- “Jane's” hours were cut at the temporary agency she works for. We helped her stay in her home.

These are just a few of the kinds of problems we help out with every month thanks to your goodwill and financial support of the Allied Partners Family Stabilization Fund. Thank you!

DEATH OF A SALESMAN—HOW JERRY FALWELL HELPED ME FOUND HEARTSTRONG AND BECOME A UU

Twenty years after I watched friend after friend outed and expelled from Liberty University for being gay or lesbian, I feel hope. Twenty-two years after watching my friend Denise doubled over and dissolved in tears after being kicked out of Liberty University for getting pregnant, I feel peace.

Twenty-three years after watching my Old Testament Survey professor committing adultery with his sister-in-law on more than one occasion and virtually getting away with it, I feel honest.

Most people knew Jerry Falwell only by what they saw of him in the media. Most thinking people viewed him as a radical fundamentalist Baptist who spewed biblical venom for anything he perceived his god perceived as sin, including, but of course, not limited to, women's rights, women's role in the church, homosexuality, gambling, drug abuse, alcohol consumption, secular pop/rock music, homosexuality and a horde of other no-no's.

First, he wasn't that radical. While many people identifying as Christians don't see things the way he did, millions more do. In fact, the basis of his religious beliefs and theology are embraced by the majority of people who identify as Christian. (i.e., the Virgin birth, the Trinity, the physical resurrection of Jesus, his imminent return and the inerrancy of scripture).

Second, he wasn't a fundamentalist, he was a neo-evangelical. Which is why people like my parents and true fundamentalists like Fred Phelps viewed him and people like him as left-wing liberals.

I spent 3½ years as a student and employee at Jerry's university. I left during the middle of my senior year, not necessarily because I was gay, but mostly because I had begun my personal journey to wholeness and peace by challenging my fundamentalist Baptist Christian beliefs.

So many people that I knew struggled to survive in an environment that taught women they were to be submissive to men and gay and lesbian people that they were giving the devil pleasure by thinking about self-acceptance instead of self-hatred.

Bisexual and transgender issues were never discussed since most evangelicals do not see them as actual issues. This certainly doesn't mean that bisexual and transgender people are not attending these schools.

After a few years of seeing friends and others devastated by the theology of Jerry's Thomas Road Baptist Church and Liberty University, I began to question the things that I was taught as truth. Too many tears, broken spirits and lives forced me to choose my path. I could choose to continue the legacy of hatred, intimidation and shame laid out for me or I could choose to break the chains. In doing so, I could help provide healing to those devastated not just by Jerry Falwell, but by the millions who perpetrate the same physical and emotional life-ending message of self-hatred.

I chose the latter. And my life has never been the same.

For the first time, I found personal peace which gave me the courage, in 1996, to found HeartStrong (<http://www.heartstrong.org>) as a way to provide hope and help to the countless gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students persecuted at religious educational institutions in the United States and around the world.

Had I not grown up in the ridiculous home I grew up in and had I not attended Jerry's university and worked for him, I doubt I would care at all about my GLBT brothers and sisters struggling to survive in these schools. Jerry's hatred for what he calls the sin of homosexuality provided me with the inspiration and the ongoing energy needed to continue to provide hope and help to those injured by his former belief system.

His evangelical university and church was also a stepping stone for me to escape my self-hatred brought on by my fundamentalist Baptist beliefs and eventually find true peace as a Unitarian.

So, thanks Jerry, for the inspiration.

Marc Adams

*HeartStrong, PO Box 2051, Seattle WA 98111,
<http://www.heartstrong.org>, 206-388-3894*

*HeartStrong is a non-sectarian organization providing outreach to GLBTs and others persecuted by religious educational institutions and to educating the public.
UU mailing list: UnitarianUniversalist@heartstrong.org*

CARING FOR OUR LOCAL PLACE ON EARTH

Explore how each one of us is part of a larger collaborative effort to make the world a better place on **Saturday, June 23**, at Holy Wisdom Monastery, 4200 County Highway M, Middleton.

A full-day, interactive environmental conference featuring keynote speakers Calvin DeWitt and Richard Henderson. The conference is sponsored by Benedictine Life Foundation in partnership with Benedictine Women of Madison, Friends of Pheasant Branch, Natural Heritage Land Trust, Sustain Dane, The Aldo Leopold Foundation and The Prairie Enthusiasts—Empire Sauk Chapter.

- Learn about varying missions, motivations and accomplishments of local restoration and ecological management groups
- Engage in workshops that explore the many facets of the environmental movement in our area
- Reenergize your present efforts and be inspired to new actions

Registration is \$5 in advance and includes lunch.

For more information, visit www.benedictinewomen.org, or contact Merry Jorgensen at 836-1631 x121 or mjorgensen@benedictinewomen.org.

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

Did you know that 35% of all homeless people in Dane county are children? As we enter the busy summer season, the number of children without homes in our community will rise to as many as 200 in a night.

A true story from IHN: A 3-year-old girl staying in shelter told a staff member "My birthday is coming up. Do you know what I want for my birthday?" The staff member asked, "What?" and the little girl said, "It's a wish, so I can't say it out loud or it won't come true. But if you come here I'll whisper it in your ear." The little girl whispered: "a home". This little girl's daddy just got a full-time job with IHN's help, so she may actually get her wish!

Rachel Krinsky, MSW, IHN Executive Director