



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 9, 2008



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 11

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Our Moms, Other Moms, and Apple Pie" presented by the Rev. Ralph Tyksinski

Saturday-Sunday, May 17-18

*6:30 p.m. Spring Fling begins

Sunday, May 18

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Ecology of Wisconsin Prairies" presented by Rich Henderson

*5:00 p.m. Memorial service and potluck at Prairie to celebrate the life of Rachel Siegfried

Thursday, May 22

*7:00 p.m. Movie Club views *The Horse's Mouth* at Prairie

Saturday, May 24

8:00 a.m. to Noon. UU Blood Drive at James Reeb UU Congregation, 2146 E. Johnson St.

Sunday, May 25

*10:00 a.m. "Birth Options in the Madison Area" presented by Aszani Kunkler

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, May 18

Tuesday, May 27

*1:30 p.m. Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood West

Saturday, June 14

*2:00 p.m. Memorial service for Betty Jallings, Grand Hall, Meriter Retirement Community

June 25-29

UUA General Assembly, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

INSIDE

- RE News
- Rachel Siegfried memorial service

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, May 11

We celebrate this Mother's Day by exploring the difficult but valued roles that our mothers and other mothers play in our lives. We use the symbol of the "lanyard" as in the poem, "The Lanyard" by Billy Collins to explore the many and varied kinds of roles our moms and other moms have and do serve in our lives.

Sunday, May 18

Rich Henderson is an ecologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Integrated Science Services (formerly Research). Rich has 33 years of experience in natural area inventory, assessment and management of prairie, sedge meadow, oak savannah and oak woodland ecosystems. He is also an active volunteer with the Wisconsin Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and The Prairie Enthusiasts, and is current vice-president of TPE.

Sunday, May 25

"Birth Options in the Madison Area" is being presented by Aszani Kunkler. Although most women give birth in hospitals and under the care of physicians in the United States, this approach to birthing is not shared by the rest of the world. Care by midwives, and birth at home or in birth centers is the norm for virtually every other country in the world. Countries using midwifery care consistently have better outcomes, lower costs and higher satisfaction rates than the United States.

Join Certified Nurse-Midwife and Madison Birth Center Director Aszani Kunkler as she examines the culture and politics of childbirth in America. There will be ample time for discussion after Aszani's presentation. Bring your stories and questions for lively dialogue!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SPRING FLING AND OTHER NEWS

Two weeks ago we had our spring Sunday Service project. This year our RE students raised money for the children in Nepal. Our childcare provider, Isha Shrestha, is from Nepal and will spend part of her summer helping poor children attend schools and receive proper school supplies. Children baked cookies and sold them along with homemade gourd birdhouses. We



were able to raise \$100!

I would like to thank all the students and volunteers who helped that day. I would also like to thank the people at Prairie for all their generous donations. If you didn't get a chance to donate to Isha's cause there is a box upstairs by the greeting table where you could place a donation. \$1 goes a long way!

May 17-18 is our annual Spring Fling event. We'll have dinner at Prairie starting at 5:30. We'll have cheese, fresh vegetables and various kinds of sandwich meat ready for students to build their own sub sandwich. We'll then head out to the UW Arboretum for a Twilight Walk. All are welcome to attend.

Karen Deaton and I will be visiting families before and after this event to go over our new behavior policies. We hope to meet with all families by the end of the summer. This informal meeting will take about an hour. We'll be going over expectations for children as well as adults. We also hope to gather information on what families want to see in our program.

On **May 18** students in grades 4-12 will be visiting the Deer Park Buddhist Temple in Oregon as part of their study of Buddhism. Students will attend the service and then have a chance to have their questions answered by one of the monks at the temple: Venerable George Churinoff. Buddhism is the final religion in our world religions program for grades 4-12.

Many different religions are represented in the Dane County area. Students had the opportunity to listen to people of many faiths: Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity (Catholic and Mormon). They also visited a mosque, church, synagogue and a Hindu and Jain temple.

By studying the world's religions I hope students obtained a better idea of the beliefs, customs and culture of people in our community. This knowledge helps to eliminate fear and religious intolerance and I think the world could use a little more of that.

See you Sunday,

Rebecca Malke (YREC)
youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD IN MAY

11—Pentecost (Christian)
18—Trinity Sunday (Christian)
20—Buddha Day / Visakha Puja (Buddhist)
22—Corpus Christi (Catholic Christian)
23—Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)

OUR SOCIETY

HUMANIST UNION TO HEAR CONFERENCE REPORT MAY 11

On April 17-18 Christina Klock and Kathy Converse will be attending the 7th Annual International Bioethics Forum, which this year is addressing the topic of evolution. An impressive array of speakers will be approaching the topic from a variety of perspectives during the 2-day conference, to be held at the BioPharmaceutical Technology Center (Promega building), Fitchburg. (You can see the schedule of speakers at <http://www.btc.org/bioethics/schedule08.html>.) The Humanist Union will hear their *Evolution in the 21st Century: Forum Report*, on **Sunday, May 11**. We will start with a potluck lunch at noon, with the report and discussion from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Anyone interested in evolution is invited to join us.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY REPORT

The Committee on Ministry and Ralph Tyksinski have met monthly throughout the year to support the shared ministry of Prairie. We have discussed the health of the congregation, ways our minister is working toward achieving Focus Areas, problem solving with the minister, and supporting the minister's professional growth.

A Focus Group of seven other members of the congregation also met to give feedback to the committee to help assess the work of both the minister and the congregation. The committee presented a full report to the Board. Our thanks to those individuals for their assistance.

We would especially like to thank our minister, Ralph Tyksinski, for his gracious, generous, and professional service to our congregation during

this year. We have appreciated his calm assistance in working with the congregation through celebrations and struggles. He has demonstrated the value of having a Consulting Minister help Prairie develop a shared ministry.

If you have concerns or feedback about the minister or our shared ministry, you may contact any member of the committee and your concern will be addressed by the committee and held in confidence, if need be. The committee members are Aileen Nettleton (Chair), Dean Schroeder, and Sarah Lord.

MAY 18 CELEBRATION: RACHEL HELEN MCCUTCHEN SIEGFRIED

There will be a celebration of the life of Rachel Helen McCutchen Siegfried (1/10/25 – 1/2/08), a founding Prairie member, on

May 18 at 5 p.m.

Per her request, a good ole Prairie potluck will follow.

MOVIE GROUP GATHERS ON MAY 22

The Movie Group will meet at Prairie, 7:00 p.m., **Thursday, May 22** to view *The Horse's Mouth*. Alec Guinness wrote the screenplay and starred in this 1958 comedic film based upon the novel by Joyce Cary. Guinness plays Gulley Jimson, an artist with the single-minded purpose of finding the perfect wall for his eccentric versions of the Bible stories, usually without the wall owner's consent. At least one critic has labeled this "one of the best films ever about a painter." Guinness received an academy award nomination for the screenplay. The film starts at 7:00. Bring snacks to share. And mark your calendars now for the **June 26** Prairie Movie Group evening.

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEET ON MAY 27

Prairie Elders Meeting, Tuesday, **May 27**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. in the Nakoma Room of Heritage Oaks, Oakwood Village West. Or come at 1:00 for informal conversation.

Newcomers welcome.

TOPIC: CREATIVE AGING. Define "creative" in your own way. Among us are creators of

paintings, sculpture, photography, fiction, poetry, music, handwork, gardens, doggerel, letters to the editor, speeches, puns, web forum commentary, organizations and characters on stage. We also have people with creative ways to keep their minds active or entertain lively grandchildren. Tell about your creative side, bring a creation or come to listen and share good times with friends. We use a round-robin format for the benefit of those with hearing loss.

SNACKS: If convenient, please bring a few snacks to pass and your own beverage cup.

ABOUT US: Prairie Elders aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU members and friends over 65. We welcome other UUs who live in the facility where we meet. Come and go as necessary for appointments, etc. Let us know if you need directions or a ride to Oakwood.

CONTACTS: Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Doleta Chapru, 238-4970.

SAVE YOUR RUMMAGE!

This summer the RE Committee will sponsor a rummage sale to raise money for the RE department. If you're doing a little spring cleaning and discover some items you would like to donate please let the YREC, Rebecca Malke, or RE chair, Karen Deaton, know. Because of limited space we ask that you keep your items at home until it is time for the sale. A date has not been decided so stay tuned for more details.

'TIS ALMOST FAIRY TIME

Sunday, **August 10**, meet new and old friends from James Reeb, First Unitarian Society, and Prairie as we carpool to American Players Theatre and picnic. Buy your tickets directly from American Players Theater for that night's 6:00 p.m. performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (<http://playinthewoods.org/> or 608-588-2361). Details on where to meet will follow or contact Liz Wessel, 238-9934 or [lizwessel \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:lizwessel@yahoo.com), or Karen Deaton, [karendeaton \(at\) tds.net](mailto:karendeaton@tds.net)

What could be better? Midsummer revelry and camaraderie and it all starts with a car pool!

"'tis almost fairy time"
—'Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Karen Deaton

FALL ALL-CONGREGATION RETREAT

Every fall Prairie members and their families and friends spend a weekend of playing, making music, walking, talking, learning, and rejuvenating ourselves and each other. Our 2008 retreat will be **September 5-7** at Bethel Horizons bordering Governor Dodge State Park near Dodgeville. Put it on your calendar now—this weekend for many of us is a highlight of the year. We always need volunteers to help plan the retreat. Please let me or another Board member know if you would be willing to help coordinate adult or youth activities or registration. You wouldn't be alone - folks who have gone before you will assist you. Thanks!

Rachel Long, President

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWS

UUSC-UUA CYCLONE NARGIS RELIEF FUND

UUSC and the Unitarian Universalist Association have joined to launch a humanitarian relief fund to help cyclone survivors in Myanmar (formerly Burma).

Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar on Saturday, May 3, 2008, with wind speeds of up to 120 miles per hour, devastating coastal and inland regions. State officials have estimated the death toll at over 22,000, but this number is expected to rise. In seven of the worst-affected deltas, communities are reporting 90-95 percent damage. Tens of thousands are missing, and millions more have been left homeless.

Transportation in Myanmar is expensive and insufficient for most of the population. People in isolated rural areas will not have a way to leave except on foot. Most water pumps are powered by electricity, and because the lines are down, people will not have access to running water.

With your generous support, we will provide humanitarian relief through groups in the affected region in an effort to help survivors, particularly

those at risk of being overlooked by mainstream relief.

While UUSC continues to encourage donations of \$252 for peace, we know you would expect UUSC to lead a response to this emerging humanitarian crisis—and provide a way for members and supporter to help.

Please donate to the UUSC-UUA Cyclone Nargis Relief fund:
www.uusc.org/info/support_cyclonenargis.html

Or mail donations to:

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
UUSC-UUA Cyclone Nargis Relief Fund
P.O. Box 845259, Boston, MA 02284-5259

To read more about the current situation:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7385662.stm>

UU'S IN TIME MAGAZINE

Check out the May 12 issue of TIME magazine on newsstands today! On page 48, amongst TIME's 100 Most Influential People in the World, you will find the second of two ads running as part of Phase II of Unitarian Universalism's National Marketing Campaign.

Thank you for your exceptional generosity!

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We hope to see you in Fort Lauderdale for an exciting and enriching General Assembly, centered on the theme of the “Common Threads” that weave together the fabric of our Unitarian Universalist faith and community.

Join us June 25-29, 2008 in Fort Lauderdale at the Greater Fort Lauderdale / Broward County Convention Center.

Amazing, inspiring, unique and uplifting Opening Worship centered around The Sources, a cantata setting of the UU Sources with music by Rev. Jason Shelton and text by Rev. Kendyl Gibbons.

Special Featured Programs on Friday and Saturday will address the issues of civil liberties and immigration policies, followed by Appreciative Inquiry sessions offering a chance to explore and wrestle with these issues in depth together.

Hear from award-winning authors and distinguished voices from outside our tradition: Eboo Patel on Interfaith Youth in the Age of Fundamentalism; John Dear on Peacemaking and the Questions of Jesus; and Karen Brodtkin on Wrestling with Whiteness; The Politics of Jewish Identity in a Multiracial America.

We'll blending advocacy and celebration and reaching out to the local community during a multi-generational public witness celebrating and defending the rights of Gay, Bisexual, Lesbian, and Transgender and immigrant families; Friday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in a Fort Lauderdale city park.

Explore <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/index.shtml>, call (617) 948-4209, or write gaoffice@uua.org.

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>