



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."

July 18, 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, July 20

*10:00 a.m. "Bioethics: Cases and Conundrums"
presented by Marcia Marino
11:45 a.m. Prairie Board meeting

Tuesday, July 22

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

Friday-Sunday, July 25-27

*Summer Spree weekend for kids in grades 6-12

Sunday, July 27

No service at Prairie

*11:00 a.m. Joint service at Free Congregation of
Sauk County, 307 Polk St., Sauk City

Sunday, July 27 to Sunday, August 3

*Interfaith Hospitality Network Week for Prairie

Monday, July 28

*9:00 a.m. Witness Against War walkers

Sunday, August 3

*10:00 a.m. "The Prairie in My Soul" presented by
the Rev. Sarah Oelberg

*11:45 a.m. Prairie Book Club meeting, potluck

*12:00 noon. Humanist Union potluck followed by
presentation by Sarah Oelberg

Sunday, August 10

*10:00 a.m. "This I Believe" with Dirk Herr-
Hoyman, Robin Proud, and Heidi Hughes

Monday, August 11

*6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers meet at the home of
Jean Matos for potluck and conversation

Sunday, August 17

10:00 a.m. "The World According to Dave
Johnson" presented by Dave Johnson

Friday-Sunday, September 5-7

Fall Retreat at Bethel Horizons, Dodgeville

Saturday, September 20

Prairie rummage sale

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

INSIDE

- RE News and Summer Spree
- Rev. Ralph's Ruminations
- Strategic Planning update
- Registration form for the Annual Retreat

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, AUGUST 10

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, July 20

Science and health care technology are advancing at a rapid pace. Sometimes rapid advances cause patients, families, and physicians to find themselves in a quandary about the ethics of situations in hospital settings. Rev. Dr. Marcia Marino will draw from her experience in serving on the Bioethics Committees at three hospitals in presenting several real life cases, and will invite your thoughtful reflection on the complexity of bioethics in the modern era.

Rev. Dr. Marcia Marino recently completed a consulting ministry at the United Unitarian & Universalist Society in Mukwonago, Wisconsin. On August 1, she will begin her ministry as the Interim Minister at Unitarian Church North in Mequon. Marcia has 20 years of experience as a hospital chaplain and chaplain administrator. She is a Board Certified Chaplain with the Association of Professional Chaplains. Before entering local congregation UU ministry, Marcia was the Regional Director of Pastoral Care for Aurora Health Care in Milwaukee, serving as the administrator for 22 chaplains in 8 hospitals in southeastern Wisconsin. In that role, she served on three Bioethics Committees and one Institutional Review Board.

Sunday, July 27

You're invited to join UUs from First Unitarian Society, James Reeb, Rock County, and the Free Congregation of Sauk County at a Summer Sing at 11 a.m. at the Free Congregation of Sauk County historic meeting house in Sauk City. Plan to arrive anytime between 9:30 and 10:30 to enjoy a tour of Park Hall, view their congregation's archival music materials, and share some coffee. The program will focus on music and the special role its played in each congregation's history.

Members of the Free Congregation will sing their anthem "Die Gedanken Sind Frei," and each congregation will bring one song that is especially meaningful to them, which we'll all sing together.

Special musical guest will be mezzo-soprano Kathleen Otterson, Music Director at Christ Presbyterian Church in Madison and voice

instructor at Edgewood College, who will perform three pieces.

A potluck lunch will follow. Bring a dish to pass and your own plates and utensils.

Free Congregation of Sauk County is located at 307 Polk Street in Sauk City, Wisconsin.

Meet at Prairie at 9:30 a.m. if you would like to carpool.

Sunday, August 3

Dr. Oelberg's sermon will be a personal kind of story about her love of the prairie, and what has happened to it, to our great detriment. She had Prairie congregation in mind as she wrote it, and although she has delivered it elsewhere, she wanted to do it at Prairie.

Dr. Oelberg is active in many humanist groups, particularly the Humanist Institute, where she was the mentor of the last graduating class. She is also the author of the current UUA pamphlet on Humanism. Prior to becoming a UU minister, Dr. Oelberg was a college professor training teachers of psychology and special education.

Sunday, August 10

This is the fourth in the series, "This I Believe," which has been incredibly popular at Prairie this year. Dirk Herr-Hoyman, Heidi Hughes, and Robin Proud will share their spiritual journeys and their beliefs.

These programs are part of a lay ministry organized by Anne Lundin and inspired by the NPR radio series.

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>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SUMMER SPREE AND OTHER NEWS

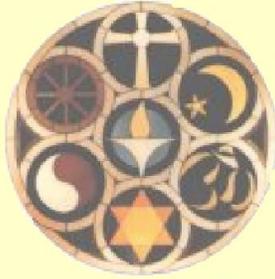
Summer Spree is fast approaching. Our young people ages 12 and up are invited to spend a weekend at the Ruecking farm from **Friday, July 25th to**

Sunday, July 27th. There will be games, food, campfire (weather permitting) as well as reflection time. If you haven't turned in your form, please do, we are in the processing of buying food for the event. Visit our Web site for more information. We have two months left before classes resume. In the meantime parents and friends have been signing up to volunteer on Sunday morning. We've had games, crafts and snacks. I would like to thank those who have been helping out this summer: Patty Stockdale, Paula Pachciarz and Karen Deaton. If you would like to do an activity with our youth either sign up on the board in the meeting house or let me know.

I would also like to welcome our newest childcare employee, Xena Anderson. Many of you may remember Xena from classes several years ago. She's now back at Prairie and we couldn't be happier. Xena has had experience taking care of infants and toddlers and has had her babysitter training at Meriter Hospital. If you have a chance, stop on by downstairs and say hello.

The RE committee has been working on the curriculum for the next school year. Our theme is social justice and we'll have our students working hard next year. They will learn about various local and global causes and will be involved in a lot of service projects. We have two teacher openings left. If you would like to take your turn teaching this year please let me know. Classes will begin **Sunday, September 14th.**

Speaking of September 14th, we will have our RE rummage sale **Saturday, September 20th.** If you have items to donate please get them to Prairie by September 14th. This will be our first rummage sale so let's start off with a bang! If you would like to help out that day please let me or RE chair, Karen Deaton, know. We are also hoping to sell



some items made by our students. Take a piece of Prairie home!

I hope you are all enjoying your summer and are able to get some quality time in with family and friends. I look forward to hearing about your vacations!

Rebecca Malke (YREC)
youthcoordinator(at)uuprairie.org

OUR SOCIETY

STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Our planning process is on track with the completion of our third workshop, on Facilities Needs, on May 31st and a review session on Sunday, June 29.

At the review session on June 29 we

- 1) Reviewed and obtained input on the top six priority actions that were identified by previous voting (shown below along with previously identified priority outcomes),
- 2) Obtained input on benchmarks we should have achieved before we look for a new building, and
- 3) Discussed and voted on top facilities needs to accomplish priority action items and priority outcomes.

Further Steps in the Strategic planning process:

- Refine the list of top six priority action items based on June 29 input
- Refine the list of benchmarks needed to start looking for a new building
- Report the top facilities needs as identified by the votes
- The Board will work on ways to implement the priority action items, and top facilities needs at a strategic planning meeting on July 20th
- The Strategic Planning Task Force and Board will present a draft report at the Bethel Horizons retreat on how we will implement our Strategic plan – and ask for input on the plan.

- The Strategic Planning Task Force and Board will present a final report at the Fall Parish meeting.

Top Six Priority Outcomes

(as identified at the Review Session II, 4/27/08)

- Participants at Prairie will share in a culture of inquisitiveness in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. A diverse array of beliefs and opinions will be encouraged and supported through open and respectful discussion.
- Prairie will offer opportunities to engage in a wide variety of activities that encourage development and growth, including services, educational offerings, lay leadership, and discussion and musical groups.
- Prairie will be a welcoming and joyful community filled with fun, humor and laughter. Strong bonds of friendship and community will be encouraged, across age and social group.
- People seeking a community like ours will have many ways to discover us.
- Prairie will foster personal and spiritual development of our youth, including education in Unitarian Universalist values.
- Members will be well-informed about social justice and environmental issues that affect the wider community and the world, as well as opportunities for action.

Top Six Priority Actions (draft)

(as identified by survey, shared with the Parish 6/29/08)

Top Two:

- Include in our programming offerings for a wide range of learning styles and ways to touch peoples' hearts, such as poetry, art, music, movement, sensory connections with nature
- Convene groups and hold events that promote bonding.

Next Four:

- Provide small group activities to increase community & provide opportunities for growth
- Increase offerings and outreach to the general public
- Provide social action projects / activities (youth)
- Focus on becoming a "green" congregation by the process in the Green Sanctuary manual

Ken Skog

PRAIRIE ELDERS

Prairie Elders meets **Tuesday, July 22**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. in the Nakoma Room of Heritage Oaks, Oakwood Village West. Or come at 1:00 for informal conversation.

JULY TOPIC: Issues in the 2008 Presidential Campaign. Share your knowledge of an issue and, if you wish, bring a summary to hand out. Or just come, listen and enjoy the company. This is our second session on the campaign with the possibility of a third session closer to election day.

Typically we alternate between personal topics and important issues. In June we welcomed back a First UU member and two Prairie members who wisely fled last winter's snows. Thirteen of us shared humorous and serious personal accounts, including a job scraping mold off sausages, sacrificing tenure to preserve a natural treasure, and the wrenching fortune of being saved from possible battle by the dropping of the A-bomb. We will welcome Fran Remeika's return and hope to hear about the bubble pipe manufacturing operation she shared with her late husband.

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. 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 Rose Smith 233-3363.

IHN AND PRAIRIE VOLUNTEER WEEK

Recently I became the coordinator for Prairie's role in the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). Paula Pachciarz was the previous coordinator for a long while. Since I need to let you know of this change in coordinators, and the dates of our next session, I thought I would also take the opportunity to raise some awareness of IHN and Prairie's role. You can go to this Web site for lots of info: <http://ihnmadison.org/main.cfm> .

I will just briefly tell you that IHN is a program that coordinates temporary housing for homeless families by helping various churches house the families in their church buildings for one week on a rotating basis. The Prairie building is not large enough to house the families, so we are a "buddy" church with Midvale Lutheran (ML). The families stay at ML and Prairie has agreed to provide volunteers for many of the jobs that are needed throughout the week. IHN provides "tours and training" for the volunteers, and that is a good thing to do, but it is not absolutely necessary in order to help out, especially if you go with someone who has already been a volunteer. You can go to this Web site for an explanation of the volunteer jobs:

<http://midvalelutheran.org/ihnjobs.htm> and you can sign up online at this address:

<http://nordengs.com/ihn/group.asp?eg=8&u=true>.

Our next commitment is for the week of **July 27 to August 3**. IHN is a wonderful organization and we should be proud of Prairie's association with it. It would also be good if we could increase the number of volunteer jobs Prairie covers in a given session.

There are some exciting things afoot for IHN and I will be sending out more info on Prairie News in the near future. If you don't have a computer and are interested in IHN news, let me know and I will call you.

Erin Bosch

SPANISH SPEAKERS TO MEET

The Spanish Speakers will congregate at the home of Jean Matos, 324 S. Mills St., on Monday, August 11 at 6:30 p.m. for potluck and lots of good conversation. Participants are welcome at any level of language skill.



BOOK CLUB SUMMER MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

The Prairie Book Club meets after the Sunday service on specified dates, usually starting at 11:45 a.m. Participants bring food to share and meet in the couch room downstairs. Everyone is welcome, whether you have completed the book or not. For more information, contact Mary Mullen, 298-0843, or [mmullen \(at\) chorus.net](mailto:mmullen@chorus.net).

Upcoming Prairie Book Club selections:

Sunday, August 3, *Beyond Culture* (320 pages) comes highly recommended by Gladis Benavides who mentioned this book in her presentation on cultural diversity at Prairie on February 10. 320 pages. Read about Edward T. Hall and his proxemic theory at www.csiss.org/classics/content/13.

Sunday, August 24, *La Linea* by Ann Jaramillo tells the story of a teenage brother and sister who undertake an illegal border crossing to join their parents in California. The author is a middle school teacher in a Texas border community who wrote the story for her students. This book was suggested as an all-Reeb read by the James Reeb Congregation.

Saturday, September 6 (at the Prairie Retreat, Bethel Horizons), *Born on a Blue Day: Inside the Extraordinary Mind of an Autistic Savant* is a memoir by Daniel Tammet, a high functioning man with Asperger's Syndrome, born in England in the 1970s. Daniel sees numbers as shapes, colors and textures and can perform extraordinary math problems in his head. He also learned to speak Icelandic fluently from scratch in a week. Read a fascinating call-in discussion with him at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2007/04/11/DI2007041100813.html>

He says he enjoyed a novel about an autistic boy, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*, that our book club read. But he doesn't agree that Asperger's is incompatible with having religious faith. 256 pages. Suggested by Barb Park.

BREAKFAST WITH THE WALKERS

You are invited to a breakfast at 9:00 a.m. on **Monday, July 28**, for Witness Against War walkers, sponsored by the Social Action Committee and featuring French toast by Rev. Ralph. Join us for breakfast and meet the 15 Voices for Creative Nonviolence (<http://vcnv.org/>) walkers on their way from Chicago to Saint Paul.

'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@yaho.com), or Karen Deaton, [karendeaton \(at\) tds.net](mailto:karendeaton@tds.net)

Karen Deaton

HUMANIST UNION TO HEAR SARAH OELBERG

The next meeting of the Humanist Union will be on **Sunday, August 3**, with a potluck lunch at noon and a discussion led by Rev. Sarah Oelberg from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. She will report on the World Humanist Congress 2008 which she attended in Washington DC last month and the General Assembly of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (<http://www.iheu.org/>) which it included. She will also engage in an informal Q&A session with us on topics such as Humanists and the UUA. The group got together with her last in July 2005.

SUITCASE LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

Dave Zakem left a new large black Samsonite nylon suitcase, 12" by 32" which he no longer needs. It has no wheels but has inside and outside compartments and would make an excellent storage trunk. It's yours with a \$20 donation to Prairie UU. Call Ruth Calden, 233-5717 or [georu2\(at\)tds.net](mailto:georu2(at)tds.net)

REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

Last year Prairie had two delegates and one alternate who attended the UUA General Assembly in Portland, OR (Mike Briggs, Norma Briggs, and Barb Park). This year Prairie had no one attending.



The GA was held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, June 25-29. There were a little over 3000 in attendance. This number was about half the number of those who attended last year's GA. (It was reported that the high heat and humidity in June in south Florida, the high cost of gasoline and travel, and the strict security restrictions at the Ft. Lauderdale Convention Center were main factors in this year's low attendance. Next year's GA will be in Salt Lake City, Utah.

As a denomination the UUA grew out of a merger 47 years ago of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. We can now count our membership as approximately 221,000, with this number of members belonging to 1,042 congregations in the US and Canada.

This year's GA focused heavily on our Youth and Young Adults.

Thus it would not appear to be a coincidence that Prairie has also been focusing some of our long range planning efforts on these same areas of concern.

I share the following as reported on the UUA Web site.

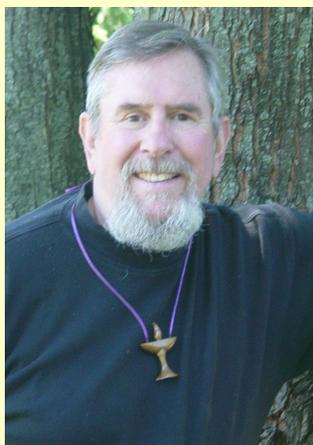
In the closing minutes of General Assembly three Responsive Resolutions were passed. (A Responsive Resolution is a resolution created in response to a substantive portion of a report by a UUA officer or committee, requiring a two-thirds vote of those assembled to be passed.)

- 1 Youth and Young Adult Empowerment Resolution.
- 2 Advocating a consultation on ministry to young adults.
- 3 Asking the UUA to leverage its power through socially responsible investing to achieve affordable health care for all.

The first Responsive Resolution called for accountability for the Youth and Young Adult Empowerment Resolution. The original resolution, passed Friday, called for ministerial support of youth and young adults through inclusive worship and intentional presence; financial support for youth and young adult leadership programs; support for youth and young adult staff; and special attention to the needs of youth and young adult constituents with marginalized identities. The Responsive Resolution instituted a system of accountability asking each congregation, each district, the UUA administration, the UUA Board of Trustees, the Nominating Committee, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee; and the General Assembly Planning Committee to report back annually for the next three years on their progress in implementing the above. The UUA administration would be charged with creating a reporting mechanism and presenting these reports at the next three GAs.

The Responsive Resolution, which was presented by Victoria Mitchell, one of the authors of the Youth and Young Adult Empowerment Resolution, was created in response to criticism that the original resolution lacked a structure of accountability. "This Responsive Resolution will allow us to monitor progress at all levels as the UUA moves toward youth and young adult empowerment," she said.

The second Responsive Resolution called for the continuation of the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth, also calling for a similar process for young adult ministries. The Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth was a multiyear survey process resulting in a series of recommendations for improved youth ministry. Several speakers pointed out that youth and young adult ministerial needs were very different and that young adults warranted their own survey. "We need to support young adults as the leaders of the next generation," said Frank Wells.



The responsive resolution requesting the UUA support affordable health care through corporate shareholder activism was proposed by the Rev. Sydney Morris in response to Financial Advisor Dan Brody's report on Friday. Morris is chair of the UUA's Committee on Socially Responsible Investing. The resolution says that "in accordance with the 18 resolutions of the UUA, from 1961 to 2007, and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UUA will leverage its power through shareholder engagement with the corporate world to further and create avenues for the realization of the right of all people to high-quality health care."

The GA delegates also passed five Actions of Immediate Witness (AIW) with little or no discussion in the sixth and final plenary session on Sunday afternoon. One AIW, on ending present-day slavery in the fields, had passed at the morning plenary.

According to the UUA bylaws, Actions of Immediate Witness are resolutions "concerned with a significant action, event, or development, the timing or specificity of which makes it inappropriate to be addressed by a UUA Statement of Conscience." They should be focused and urgent enough to require immediate action. At last year's GA in Portland, OR, the AIWs included: Pass the Employment Non-discrimination Act with Transgender Inclusion and Protection; Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education; Support Immigrant Families; and Repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

The following AIWs were endorsed this year:

The first AIW, Single-Payer Health Care, was the only one to engender discussion. H.R. 676, the United States National Health Insurance Act (Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Bill), advocating a single-payer system was submitted to Congress in April. The AIW urges UU congregations to lobby their representatives to co-sponsor and pass HR 676. "It's time our nation, founded on promoting the common welfare, promoted health care for all," said the Rev. Lucy Hitchcock Seck of Miami, Fla.

Single-payer health care is a system in which doctors, hospitals, and pharmacists are paid out of one pot of money, usually provided by the government.

Opponents said that single payer health care was not the same as universal health care. "The bill narrows down the possibilities for universal health care coverage," said John Harky of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville. "Single-payer peels away a lot of the support for universal coverage."

Despite objections, the AIW passed with a majority.

The following AIWs passed with no discussion: Oppose a U.S. Attack on Iran; Raise the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10 in 2010; Extend the Tax Credit for Wind and Solar Power; and Oppose the Florida and California Marriage Protection Initiatives.

At General Assembly six new congregations were welcomed into the UUA of congregations.

1. Prairie Circle Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Grayslake, Ill.
2. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Rocky Mount, N.C.
3. The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Tupelo, Miss.
4. The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Chesapeake in California, Md.
5. The Washington Ethical Society in Takoma, Md. (dually affiliated with the American Ethical Union)
6. WellSprings Congregation in Chester Springs, Pa.

My hope in sharing this information is that during the warmer, hazy, lazy days of Summer we may enjoy a more leisurely time to speculate/dream/meditate awhile on some of the implications of the resolutions passed at this year's GA for Prairie and its future.

Glad to be journeying with you,

Ralph

ANNUAL PRAIRIE SUMMER READING LIST

Here is a list of reading suggestions by Prairie folks raised at Rose Smith's Summer Reading program held today (July 6) at Prairie:

Don't Murder Your Mystery by Chris Roerden

Dakota: A Spiritual Biography by Kathleen Norris

The Barn at the End of the World by Kennedy Fraser

An Omnivore's Dilemma and *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan

The Yoder Case: Religious Freedom, Education, and Parental Rights by Shawn Francis Peters

Dogs by Raymond W. Coppinger

This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession by Daniel Levitan

The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf by Mohja Kahf

Three Bags Full by Leonie Swann

Peace like a River by Leif Enger

Animal, Vegetable, and Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver

Sand County Calendar by Aldo Leopold

Our Inner Ape by Frans deWall

The Happiest Man in the World by Alec Wilkinson

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

The Coroner's Lunch by Colin Cotterill

Out Stealing Horses by Per Petterson

They Also Ran by Iving Stone

Windy City by Scott Simon

Murder in Amsterdam by Ian Burwma

How Can I Keep from Singing: The Ballad of Pete Seeger by David King Dunaway

People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn

ANNUAL RETREAT BRAINSTORMING

Greetings, Prairie Family:

I have signed on to be the retreat program coordinator for this year's Prairie retreat at Bethel Horizons, **September 5-7**, 2008. I'd like to get started right away to help build a great program for us. A few things from last year are already on the schedule, such as at least one session with the naturalist, the Prairie Talent Show, and the Prairie women's group (WOW) meeting.

If you have an idea for a program or activity you'd like to present, please let me know as soon as possible. Please tell me if it is intergenerational, adult-focused, or kid-focused, if it should be at a certain time of day, needs a certain type of room or space, or needs any special equipment.

If there's a program you attended in the last couple of years that you would love to see again, you can also let me know about that and I will butter up the past presenter to see if they'd be willing to do it again.

If there's a program or activity *you'd* like to see, but can't present yourself, you can also pass those ideas on to me and we'll put our heads together to think of who might be a good presenter.

I had an awesome time at the retreat last year. It was wonderful to learn more about the people I see every Sunday... and to see how talented we all are! All of you and your talents are what make these retreats such a great experience. So put on those thinking caps and start sending in your program ideas.

Thanks,
Kate

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Dear Readers:

For six years Robin and I have performed the duties of Office Administrator at Prairie, which includes editing and producing the *Prairie Fire* newsletter. We are going to move on to other endeavors (including work on a few Prairie committees!), and a new administrator and

newsletter editor will be found. Stay tuned for a formal position announcement.

Working on the newsletter has been a joy and a unique opportunity to get to know many members of the congregation, rapidly! A lot of activity takes place within our little community.

Robin and I would like to thank deeply the many regular contributors to the *Prairie Fire*, both for your excellent submissions, usually on time and without prodding (the dream of any editor), and for the commitment you display to the work of your committee, organization, or role at Prairie, which runs on your energy.

Warmly,
Dan Proud

2009 UUA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Greetings, fellow UUs!

Next year at General Assembly we Unitarian Universalists will elect a new president.

Given that we have two excellent candidates, the reverends Dr. Laurel Hallman and Peter Morales, who bring different conceptions for the future of our religious movement, I decided to create a neutral online forum where their platforms can be discussed publicly in a civil manner.

I created an open blog which uses the transcript of the first official candidate forum at GA 2008 with its mix of scripted remarks and unscripted answers to specific questions as a starting point. Other documents will follow as they become available.

Since this will be neutral territory, perhaps the candidates themselves will add clarifications or commentary. But most importantly, we hope for input from members of your congregation or fellowship!

Please visit this new moderated forum, and then post your opinions, or submit materials worth discussing. The forum came online today, July 8, with an introduction and the opening speeches of the candidates (scroll down for the first post).

The transcript and video links are available on:
<http://uuapresidentialdebate2009.wordpress.com>

Martin Voelker