



Prairie Fire

October 22, 2010

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The full-featured **Prairie Fire** is published on the 22nd of every month. The **Prairie Fire Bulletin** is a calendar-only newsletter that is published on the 6th of every month. Both are published by Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at www.uuprairie.org

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Calendar

Sunday, October 24, 2010

- 8:45 Choir rehearsal
- 10:00 Service: "Tai Chi as a Form of Spirituality," presented by Randy Converse.
- 10:00 Service Sunday for Religious Education classes.
- 11:45 Service Auction! Lunch and childcare will be available.

Tuesday, October 26, 2010

- 1:30 Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood. Topic is "Preparing written and audio memoirs."
- 7:00 Adult Ed, part 2, "Designing a Rain Garden," with Judy Skog

Sunday, October 31, 2010

- 8:45 Choir Rehearsal
- 10:00 Service: "A Mexican Celebration of the Day of the Dead," presented by Dorothy Krause.

Monday, November 1, 2010

- 7:00 Finance Committee meets upstairs at Prairie; Religious Education Committee meets downstairs.

Thursday, November 4, 2010 7:00 Prairie Board meeting.

Saturday, November 6, 2010

- 9:00 WOW (Prairie's women's group) will meet at Prairie for breakfast potluck and conversation.
- 10-12 Adult Ed, "What it Means to be a UU" with Rev. Jane Esbensen.

Sunday, November 7, 2010

- 8:45 Choir Rehearsal. New singers always welcome.
- 10:00 Service- "Respect for the Web of All Existence: How Wicca Affirms and Promotes Our 7th Principle," presented by Rev. Selena Fox.
- 11:45 Humanist Union - Potluck lunch 11:45 am, 12:30 pm presentation.

Tuesday, November 9, 2010 7:00 Caring Committee meets.

Sunday, November 14, 2010

- 8:45 Choir rehearsal
- 10:00 Service - "Words, Words, Words," presented by Rev. Jane Esbensen.
- 11:45 Fall Parish Meeting and Potluck

Upcoming Programs

Sunday, October 24, 2010, 10:00 am: "Tai Chi as a Form of Sprituality," presented by Randy Converse . Randy has been studying Tai Chi for four years. He will be sharing how Tai Chi conforms to his definition of spirituality along with Tai Chi's roots, health benefits, and connections to UUism. There will be audience participation along with intellectual engagement! Randy Converse is married to Kathy Converse, and they have 2 adult children, Mei-lien and Tara.

Sunday, October 31, 2010, 10:00 am: "A Mexican Celebration of the Day of the Dead" presented by Dorothy Krause. This year, as part of our ongoing focus of immigration, the Day of the Dead service on October 31st will include members of the local Mexican community. We will have an altar to which everyone will be invited to add mementos of loved ones they have lost. In addition we will have a potluck where we will honor our loved ones by providing a dish that they favored.

Prairie Web Sites:

Society Home Page
www.uuprairie.org

News Group
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_news/

Views
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_views/

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

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

Input Deadlines:

Calendar items and program descriptions are due on the 1st and 15th of each month.

Feature articles for the full *Prairie Fire* are due on the 15th of each month. Please send to Kate Liu at admin@uuprairie.org or call 271-8218.

Sunday, November 7, 2010, 10:00am: "Respect for the Web of All Existence: How Wicca Affirms and Promotes Our 7th Principle," presented by Selena Fox. This is the first in the lay series: How the world's religions use their beliefs and practices to care for our environment. Wicca is a nature-based religion that celebrates the cycles of nature with believers who seek to live in harmony with Mother Earth. Internationally known Wiccan priestess, Selena Fox, will tell us how followers of the Craft respect and care for our ecosphere. Selena is founder and co-executive director of Circle Sanctuary in Barneveld, WI, a 200 acre nature preserve.

Sunday, November 14, 2010, 10:00 am – "Words, Words, Words," presented by Rev. Jane Esbensen. One of the things that can be said without dispute about UUs is that we talk a lot! One of the other things that can be said about UUs is that we are very particular about the words that we use, especially in our Sunday morning services. This Sunday will be a service about the power of words, and how they can open hearts and minds, or turn us away from the greater causes that lie before us.

Religious Education News

Pumpkins, Witches and Leaves - Oh my!

Last Saturday was our annual Fall Frolic event. Six families got together and celebrated Fall at Schuster's Playtime Farm in Deerfield. There was a huge play area for the kids to play in and a petting zoo for the little ones. We all took a hayride to the pumpkin patch to pick out pumpkins. Jessie Garst made sure Indy and Kiran Eliganti had fun by helping them play on all slides and the huge wooden cars. At our bonfire Lynn Pawelski cooked up some hot dogs (one made it into the fire, the other on the ground) while James and Paul Hughes braved the tractor ride through the haunted forest. It was a great time! Many thanks to Karen Deaton for arranging the event.

This coming Sunday is Service Sunday. Service Sunday's are a time for our youth to give back to the community. We'll be raking leaves for two



elderly people in our neighborhood. Our littlest UU's will be raking the leaves in the front yard of Prairie. If you would like to lend a helping hand please let me know.

Middle and high school students have been spending the month learning about Wicca. Last week we had a speaker from Circle Sanctuary give a talk to the students and several adults. According to their web site www.circlesanctuary.org, Circle is "a non-profit organization dedicated to networking, research, spiritual healing, community celebrations, and education," in Barneveld. We are lucky to have such a valuable resource so close to home. The speaker talked about the Craft, how he practices it and the many misconceptions of his faith.

After class I asked middle school student James Hughes what he thought of the speaker and he shrugged and said, "It's just another religion that someone practices and believes in". To me, that was the perfect response. He didn't think the speaker was weird or that the religion is evil, it was just simply another way of thinking and believing. I wish everyone could look at the world's religions in that way. To see their beauty and use and simply say, "this is just another way of believing".

Coming up is a field trip to Circle Sanctuary to attend the annual Samhain or Halloween event on Sunday, October 31st. We'll spend the day walking around the 200 acre nature site, attending workshops, merchant booths and viewing their new green cemetery.

If you are interested in joining the students on any of their field trips or listen to a speaker you are most welcome! After Wicca students will learn about Christianity and make a trip to Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton (Benedictine Women of Madison). Next semester they will learn about Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism.

As always, see you on Sunday!

Rebecca Malke
Director of Religious Education

Our Society

Prairie Elders meetings

Prairie Elders is a group of over-65 Prairie members who meet once a month (generally on the 4th Tuesday) at Oakwood, in the Nakoma room, Heritage Oaks building, Oakwood Village West, for conversation and mutual support. The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 26. Call contacts below for directions, parking or a ride. If convenient, bring your own beverage cup and a few snacks. Newcomers welcome.

This month's topic: Preparing Written or Audio Memoirs. Lots of options here. Share how you did it. Read a snippet of your writings or play a brief audio. Talk about another person's memoirs. Relate what you learned in a reminiscence writing course. Give tips for triggering your memory. Or just come and listen. This promises to be a fascinating session.

Prairie Elders aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65 and UUs living at the facility where we meet. Our “round robin” format makes it easier to hear and gives all the option of speaking. Topics alternate between general issues and personal interests. Contacts: Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Gordon Cunningham 230-3367, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363. Call Donna to add your name to the mailing list.

Doleta Chapru

WOW News

WOW – Prairie's wild, outstanding women, meet once a month for breakfast potluck and conversation. Our usual meeting time is 9am on the first Saturday of the month, sometimes at Prairie and sometimes at a member's home. In November we will meet on the 6th, and in December we will meet on the 4th, both times at Prairie. In addition to our regular check-in, in November we will talk about how we celebrated holidays in our childhood, and in December we will make gift baskets.

Any questions or emails to add to the email group call 276 8397 or email marysomers44 (at) charter.net

Mary Somers, WOW coordinator

Prairie Book Club Update

The Prairie Book Club meets monthly, usually the 3rd Sunday of the month after the service at Prairie, at about 11:45 a.m. Bring potluck food to share. This is an open book club. You may come whether or not you have read the book. For more information, contact Mary Mullen, 608.298.0843 or mmullen(at) chorus.net.

Sunday, November 21 - [River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey](#) by Candice Millard. This one is about Roosevelt's journey to the Amazon after his defeat for a third term. Said to be a “gripping account,” it also gives “marvelous amount of detail ... on the wildlife that Roosevelt and his fellow explorers encountered on their journey.” The author was a writer for National Geographic.



Sunday, December 19 – [White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son](#) is a non-fiction book by the anti-racist writer and educator Tim Wise. It is a personal account of how he became aware of white privilege and racism in American society through his experiences with his family and in his community, and how this led him to become an activist and writer against discrimination and racism.

Sunday, January 16 - [Rabbit Redux](#), by John Updike. This one is the sequel to [Rabbit, Run](#). It follows Harry “Rabbit” Angstrom, working a dead-end job in Brewer, PA. His wife leaves him and his 12-year-old son. During this chaotic time when the nation is also in chaos (1969), Rabbit and his son are joined in their household by an African American Vietnam vet and a wealthy white teenager, Jill. Published in 1971.

Mary Mullen
Book Club Coordinator

Outdoor Workday Thanks

8 Prairie members turned out on a beautiful Saturday to help wash windows, clean gutters, and trim shrubs. Thanks go to: Wayne Hammerstrom, Heidi Hughes, Gordon Cunningham, John Eliganti, Rebecca Malke, Barb Park, Jim Carpenter, and of course, Al Nettleton.

Green News!

The adult education class on rain gardens on October 19 and 26 by Judy Skog will fulfill an additional religious education project for our green sanctuary action plan. This effort will replace our proposed rain garden that we will not be putting in at PUU at this time due to landscaping maintenance and water retaining issues.

Through sales of Chalate gifts from El Salvador, the Green Committee (Randy Converse) collected \$75 that was given to the My Lai micro-loan fund project.

Green Power Today at Prairie: Prairie now subscribes to 100% renewable energy electrical service as part of our commitment to decreasing our carbon footprint.

You may have noticed that Prairie replaced the refrigerator earlier this year, removing a 30 year-old one. What you probably didn't know is that the change saves us about \$50 in electrical costs each year. The new refrigerator consumes only about \$19.65 in electricity per year and will save more than it cost during its life span. Focus on Energy recommends that all refrigerators built prior to 1993 be replaced. And even newer ones can be extremely inefficient.

The Prairie Housing and Property Committee has purchased a Kill-a-watt meter to measure the efficiency of different electrical appliances in the building. The simple-to-operate meter is now available for Prairie members to borrow for measuring usage of appliances in their homes. If you would like to use the meter, please contact Al Nettleton.

*Kathy Converse & Al Nettleton
Green Committee*

A New Look to Our Meeting Place!

In September, the front of our sanctuary space was rearranged, placing the piano on the right and the speaker on the left. Then, in early October, Rev. Jane and Rebecca were visiting the Holy Wisdom Monastery garage sale and found us some spectacular new chairs. The chairs are solid oak with a blue seat cushion. The benches which used to reside at the back of the room are now up front on the sides, and a new rug and pillows were purchased for our children to enjoy during story time. The overall effect is very warm and welcoming. If you haven't been to Prairie in a while, come in soon and see our beautiful space!



Humanist Union News

The Humanist Union normally meets at Prairie on the first Sunday of each month. Our next meeting will be on November 7, starting as usual with a potluck lunch at 11:45 am followed by presentation and discussion 12:30 to 1:30 pm. Our presenter will be Prairie member Susan Hagstrom and her topic is "Humanism and the Federal Government: Pro's and Cons". She will discuss positions taken so far by the Obama administration on issues of interest to humanists. All with an interest in humanism are invited to attend.

*Bob Park
Humanist Union*

New feature: Notes from your board

Want to know what your board is talking about? Look no further: it will be right here every month. Here are the condensed notes from the board's meeting in September 2010:

- Minutes from August 16th approved
- Immigration issues touch many groups and is the Social Action focus of the UUA. A cross-committee team will meet to see how to integrate this topic into programming and activities. Christina, Aileen, Kathy, Rick, Nick, Dorothy to meet on this topic.
- The design for a new sign is approved within the allocated \$3500 budget.
- The current budget includes a once a month lunch as a fundraiser. First lunch will be September 12th sponsored by the board.
- The board agreed the Strategic Plan is still relevant and a lot of good work went into it in 2008/2009. The Board will continue to use it as a guide for updates at parish meetings.
- The Board approved \$300 toward advertising in Fitchburg for the Oct 10th service – the first one that will feature Jane as the speaker. A general discussion ensued about how to best spend advertising funds to attract new members.
- Dorothy Krause is organizing the order for 'Stand on the Side of Love' materials. The Board OK'd moving forward with placing the order.
- The Adult Education brochure is available.

*Christina Klock
Denominational Affairs chair*

Ponderings From Atop a Prairie.....

November? How is this possible, when only a few days ago, it seems, it was summer and I was newly joining your ranks? Ah time.....the fleeting of time and of the days in our lives. Best to pay attention as best we can, for there is no redoing of things missed, or undone...or unsaid.

That being said, I wanted to say to you all how truly fortunate I feel to have landed in your midst. To have been invited to be a part of your lives for awhile. To be granted the freedom to have an opinion, to share my thoughts and ideas (to move furniture around!), and to feel even more welcomed as each new day passes. Your tenderness and your open hearts, your feisty spirits, your wonderful courage and your various histories, as UUs and as members of Prairie, inspire me more and more to help spread the Good News about this small congregation's existence here in Madison, and to the hinterlands that surround us, so that others who might not know of this congregation can find us. There is something rich and rewarding happening here, but it's like that light that's under that famous bushel we sing so boisterously about, asking and telling ourselves to "let it shine, let it shine, let it shine" ----- but we don't really do that. And those are moments missed, that would not only gladden our hearts by the inclusion of new people in our midst, but would be of great joy to those who find us.



So let us be resolved, as this church year marches so steadily onward, to invite our friends and neighbors to our Sunday morning services. Let us use our expansive creativity to think of ways to open wide the doors of this church, so that new faces want to peek in and see what is happening here. The holiday season is nigh upon us and these are the high days of our lives, these are the days and the months where we open our arms even wider than before, to friends and strangers alike, and invite them in to stay awhile.

I feel so welcomed here myself. It's like being in love: I just want everyone to know what a lovely home there is here at Prairie UU. Ours may be a small light, but like a lighthouse on the edge of a vast and dark sea, it beams brightly enough to show the way home. A home for the holidays.

With great affection,
Jane

New Member Profile

A big welcome to our newest member: Dave Wesley!!

There are some basic facts you may know already about Dave since he's been attending for the past year or so.

1. He was born and raised in Madison and very much likes it here.
2. He joined the Army after high school during the Vietnam years.
3. He has three grown children.

Now some interesting/fun facts you may not know:

1) He became a police officer and this is when he met Prairie's own Andy Somers. He was a young police officer; Andy was a young lawyer. He states, "That Andy was one heck of a lawyer. We were kept plenty busy with the riots in the late 60's and 70's."



2) He attended Central High School. He made 2nd team "All City" in football. He chuckles as he states, "I think I still have the record for the most passes caught." (Who would have known? Prairie has its own football star!)

He likes the spirituality of Prairie and the community he finds here. He very much enjoys socializing with people here because he feels they have similar beliefs. Mostly, in a community, such as Prairie, he states, "I always have the intention that I may find an opportunity to help someone."

Please take a moment to greet Dave on a Sunday morning.

Heidi Hughes
Membership Committee

UU News

Welcome a Guest at Your Table

Starting now, Prairie will be participating in the Guest at Your Table program. Guest at Your Table supports the human rights efforts of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC.) Families are encouraged to pick up a box and the booklet "Stories of Hope" which chronicles personal stories of people working with the UUSC. Every time you sit down to a meal together, put a little something in the box; then at the end of the collection period, bring your box back to Prairie and we will pool our collections together to make a donation to support the UUSC. If you have any questions, please contact Christina Klock, chair of Denominational Affairs, who will be organizing our participation. You can pick up your box on the table with the "Standing on the Side of Love" items, and the boxes will be due back to Prairie on December 19th.

The Prairie Service Auction is coming up, Sunday, October 24th!

Here is a list of the items which will be up for bid:

Private Yoga Lesson
Take the Night Off - babysitting
Dance lesson
Tarragon Dinner
Brownies!
A stay in the Herr-Hoyman B&B
Nature Photograph
Note Cards
Canned Goodies
Special care transportation
Computer help
More Brownies!
Family Entertainment
Handyman services
Chocolate Rose
Bike Ride and Picnic

Photo Collage
Soup!
Ride to the Airport - roundtrip
Weekend of Childcare
Sailing afternoon
Granola
Knit / Crochet Tea afternoon
Wild Alaska salmon dinner
Alaskan cookies
Chocolate Chip Cookies
Dinner with the Johnson's
Discussion at Christina Klock's
Barb's fabulous Soup
Charades and Popcorn
Accordion lessons
Guitar Lessons
Bicycle Maintenance
Karaoke Party
Orange Tree Imports gift certificates
French Lessons
Greek Dinner
Cranberry Cordial

Raspberry Cordial
Soup - Vegetarian
Chicken soup
Cheesecake
Indian language lesson
Beaded Necklace class
Planting or Weeding Help
Carved Jack-o-lantern
Balloon sculpting
Use of a pick-up truck
Tree Identification
Homemade vegan rhubarb pie
Pesto
Carrot-zucchini bread

If you can't make it to the auction, you can arrange for someone to bid by proxy for you. Call or email Kate (Prairie's admin) for help.

Lunch and childcare will be available - hope to see you there!



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