

# Prairie Fire

November 2014

## Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)



- Sat. Nov 1 9 am **WOW@Prairie**  
Sun. Nov 2 10 am **Service - "All Souls Day Ribbon Ceremony"**  
11:45 am **Humanist Union**  
5:30 pm **Men's Group**  
Sat. Nov 8 5-7 am **Men's Shelter Breakfast: Prairie & Reeb**  
9am - noon **Orientation for Newcomers**  
Sun. Nov 9 10 am **Service - "Veterans Court" - Edward Zapala**  
11:30 am **Prairie Book Club**  
Sun. Nov 16 10 am **Service - "Animals and the First Principle" - Christina Klock**  
11:30 am **Soup Sunday**  
12 noon **Fall Parish Meeting**  
Sun. Nov 23 10 am **Service - "Guest at Your Table" - Intergenerational program**  
Tues. Nov 25 1:30 pm **Prairie Elders**  
Sun. Nov 30 10 am **Service - "The Gift of Nothing" - Rev. Sandra Ingham**

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**WOW@Prairie:** Women of Wonder meets every 1st Saturday of the month at Prairie. Bring a breakfast/brunch dish to share. Contact: Anne Urbanski, 221-4053; [anneu53714@gmail.com](mailto:anneu53714@gmail.com)

**"All Souls Day Ribbon Ceremony":** All Souls Day, The Day of the Dead, The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, whatever you call it. Prairie will commemorate it with a Ribbon Ceremony inspired by our own Linda Colletti's book, *101 Rainbow Ribbons: Helping Children Understand Basis Concepts of Dying and Death*. Linda will read her book for the Story for All Ages. The Unitarian Dance Fellowship will provide the prelude and offertory as another special treat.

**Humanist Union:** Our program, from 12:30 to 1:30 pm will be "*What is Evolution? All of Its Intricacies*" presented by Mara McDonald from the J.F. Crow Institute for the Study of Evolution at the UW-Madison. We'll start at 11:45 am with our usual potluck lunch. All are welcome.

**The Men's Group** meets the 1st Sunday of the month at Prairie. Bring a dish to pass. Contact: Dan Proud [derrproud@att.net](mailto:derrproud@att.net)

**Men's Shelter Breakfast:** If you can help make breakfast, please let Paula Pachciarz know. ([pjpchz@gmail.com](mailto:pjpchz@gmail.com))

**Orientation for Newcomers** is held twice a year in the spring and fall. (See Prairie News below)

**"Veterans Court"**: Edward Zapala, Justice Outreach Social Worker for the Rock County Veterans Court will tell us how Veterans Court gives veterans who faithfully served their country a second chance by offering them treatment for their substance abuse and/or mental health issues rather than incarceration. This is part of the TAD program (treatment alternatives and diversion program) promoted by MOSES.

**Prairie Book Club** will read *An American Family in Amin's Uganda* by Bert N. Adams, suggested by Mary Mullen. When Bert and Diane Adams moved to Uganda in 1970 they had no idea that a few months later General Idi Amin would overthrow the government in a coup and rule Uganda with brutal force in the coming years. In this book, Bert Adams, a sociology professor from UW-Madison, tells his family's story of their time in Uganda at the beginning of the Amin era.

**"Animals and the First Principle"**: "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: The inherent worth and dignity of every person..." Christina Klock will posit that the UUA should change "person" to "being" in our first principle. This proposed paradigm shift will likely provoke a lively discussion.

**Fall Parish Meeting** will focus on the 2015 budget for Prairie. (see Prairie News below)

**"Guest at Your Table"**: The Religious Education students will join us for an experience that will help us appreciate our privilege and give us some insight into the lives represented by the coin box at our dinner table. This is our annual program on the activities of Unitarian Universalist Social Justice.

**Prairie Elders** aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65. The topic this month is "Day Trips". **PLEASE NOTE:** We are meeting at Prairie instead of our usual place. If convenient, bring your own beverage cup and a few snacks. Newcomers welcome. Call for directions or a ride. Rosemary Dorney (238-4382) or Donna Murdoch (238-3802).

**"The Gift of Nothing"** is the title of my reflections, as well as the title of a book by Patrick McDonnell. 'Tis that season again -- you know, the one when we are expected to -- some would say pressured to -- spend lots of money on gifts. What if we all decided to give the gift of nothing instead of gifts that cost money? Would the economy come to a screeching halt? Is there a happy medium here? After all, there are things that I would like to buy for others and even for myself. And what about all the people who depend on our spending money on gifts at the holiday season? Shouldn't we remember them when we talk about the consumer culture and holiday spending expectations? We will tackle some of these questions and possibly others on this Sunday, two days after "Black Friday", one of the biggest shopping days of the year.

## **Message from the President**

**~ Gary Gates**

### **GOOD NEWS BAD NEWS**

The good news is that the Prairie community has performed fantastically this year in carrying on all of our normal activities while funding the purchase and remodeling of additional space at 2006 Whenona Way.

The bad news is that things aren't looking so good for next year. At this point it looks like we will have about a \$28,000 shortfall in 2015 in funding for carrying on our current program with modest adjustments to reflect the cost of maintaining an additional building. We have already received almost all of our expected pledges. Unless people choose to increase their pledges or we come up with some other brilliant fundraising scheme it appears we will have to make major cuts in our operating budget. Can you help?

## **Musings from the Minister**

**~ Reverend Sandra Ingham**

Recently, a friend from seminary days was working on her Sunday morning reflections using these three statements as a starting point: (1) The most amazing thing that has ever happened to me was...; (2) What amazes me most about the world is...; (3) My life has been amazing because... She asked me to respond to at least one of those statements. I asked her to define the word amazing. "Something that can not be described in words," she replied.

I have been amazed at how many times I have heard the word amazing used since my friend and I had this conversation, just four days ago. Oh no, I thought, there goes another wonderful, descriptive, powerful word, yet another victim of overuse! Those three statements are excellent food for thought, though, no matter how often we hear the words amazing and amazed. What do you mean when you use those words?

Although my experiences hiking in and out of Grand Canyon were what I thought of first, especially in response to "The most amazing thing that has ever happened to me was...", my next response was to the third statement: "My life has been amazing because...". My life has been amazing because of the existence of Unitarian Universalism. The fact that congregations of Unitarian Universalists exist and continue to thrive and persevere in a world that often seems hostile to what Unitarian Universalism is all about amazes me. We have something very precious here, an idea worth sacrificing for, worth the efforts to keep it alive, worth hundreds of years of struggle against rigid, dogmatic thinking.

Because it is the time of year when we are budgeting for the upcoming new fiscal year, I hope that you will be so amazed by what Prairie represents that you will give generously -- maybe even give more than you initially intended to give. I am going to attempt to do exactly that because "what amazes me most about the world is..." that despite lots of evidence that the world is too broken to be fixed, there is more to the human story than despair, sorrow and grief. There is also joy, hope and gratitude because there are places like Prairie and organizations like the Unitarian Universalist Association -- places where freethinking, fantastic, AMAZING people

gather to build community and to work together to help heal the world. Please, give as generously as you possibly can to support Prairie!

## **Prairie News**

**Orientation for Newcomers** is held twice a year in the spring and fall. It is held at Prairie and child care can be provided if requested. All newcomers are welcome to attend. Prairie members are also welcome, some of who will share their personal religious backgrounds and journeys and how they ended up at Prairie. Then the newcomers will be invited to share their journeys, but it's okay to pass if you would rather just listen. This is always the most interesting part of the session. Next, Rev. Sandy and Rick Ruecking will briefly share some UU history, some Prairie history, and how Prairie is currently organized and operates. A continental breakfast is served.

Please let me know if you would like to attend, and whether you will need child care.  
Erin Bosch, Co-chair, Membership Committee <hillfarms2002 at yahoo.com>

**The Fall Parish Meeting** will focus on the 2015 Prairie budget. Your pledges to Prairie make all the difference in programming for both adults and RE, upkeep of our buildings, planning for the future and caring for each other. Your participation in supporting and approving a viable budget is greatly appreciated! Child care will be provided. Hope to see you there.

## **RE Circle of Friends**

**~Holly Tellander, Director of Religious Education**

October has been a busy month in RE! Classes are off to a great start and we have so many PreK through 1st grade students we even had to switch rooms!

We spent the month working on gathering CROP walk pledges. Our students, together with online donations, raised over \$700! Well over our set goal of \$500! We had quite a few students actually participate in the walk as well, and we count the event as a great success, not only for Prairie but also for hungry families in Madison and further abroad!

By meeting our goal RE students earned their snack party - If you would like to participate in this with us please contact Holly Tellander at [holly@tellander.net](mailto:holly@tellander.net).

Plans for the Halloween party have been underway all month as well. We are looking forward to a good time and hoping for a great turnout! There will be games, crafts, activities as well as cider and snacks and goodie bags! It's going to be a lot of spooky fun!

Also - if you haven't done so yet, please consider 'liking' the RE Facebook page. You can find the link on the RE page of Prairie's website or by searching for 'Prairie UU Religious Education' on Facebook.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

**NOVEMBER** - RE students are making plans for a wonderful Guest at Your Table Inter-generational service. Expect thought-provoking discussions and entertainment.

**DECEMBER** - RE would like to propose a DROP & SHOP day on December 13th. This would be an RE fundraiser where for a small fee per child you would be able to drop off your student(s) for a day of holiday movies, crafts, games and fellowship and fun at Prairie giving adults time to finish holiday errands child-free. This is still in the planning stages. Suggestions can be sent to [holly@tellander.net](mailto:holly@tellander.net).

**JANUARY** - RE is gearing up for a big Social Justice campaign kick off in the new year with lots of exciting ideas in the works. If you are interested in forming a committee or just submitting input, please email Holly at [holly@tellander.net](mailto:holly@tellander.net)

**A Prairie Prelude**



John Wunderlin French horn; Aileen Nettleton, Piano;  
Nevenah Smith, Presider



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**Pub Date: 11/1/2014**