

# PRAIRIE FIRE

Newsletter of the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

Volume 12, No. 24  
May 13, 1976

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256-2801

## PRAIRIE CALENDAR

- SAT  
MAY 15 8 PM PLAYREADING- Playreading group meets at Sue Cohen's home, 2005 Madison St. Everyone is welcome. 257-7762.
- SUN  
MAY 16 10 AM SERVICE-STRANGE THINGS THAT GO IN A CIRCULAR MOTION A slide show and discussion of artifacts, art work, and happenings, and planning of final Prairie Ritual for next week. If you have a quilt, please bring it for display. Led by Annis Pratt.
- MON  
May 17 4:30 PM SHAPENOTE SINGERS - Prairie Shapenote Singers are featured on Backporch Radio, WORT FM, 88.7 on the dial, from 4:30 until 6 o'clock, singing tunes from the Sacred Harp.
- TUES  
MAY 18 5:30 PM WOMEN'S NIGHT OUT at Festge Park. See below for details.
- SAT  
MAY 22 (starts) 9 AM WORK DAY - Prairie's day to do necessary maintenance and repairs on the building we share with Portal Foster. See below for details.
- SUN  
MAY 23 10 AM SERVICE. FINAL SPRING RITUAL AND PRAIRIE CEREMONY (at Portal Foster.)
- SUN (immediately  
MAY 23 after service) DISCUSSION - With Robert Tyler, sponsored by Social Action Committee, see details below.
- SAT  
MAY 29 8 PM PARTY = Annual Social Action Spring party and auction, at the Miracles', 3980 Plymouth Circle. See below for details.
- SUN  
MAY 30 10 AM PICNIC AT THE PRAIRIE SITE - Bring your lunch, drinks, and other necessities (blanket?) for your family, and come to the intersection of Gammon and Raymond Roads. A dirt road on the south side of Raymond Road leads up the hill to the prairie site. (The able-bodied are urged to park at the bottom and walk the short distance up, to reduce erosion. Ed.) Note: there are no toilet facilities. In case of rain, bring your picnic lunch to Portal Foster. Co-ordinator, Ruth Calden 233-5717.

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Work Day Planned May 22 (Saturday), beginning at 9 am, will be a joint Prairie Society-Portal Foster work day at Portal Foster Center. Eaves to be painted, (bring ladder) yard to be raked and trees and bushes trimmed, doors repaired, (carpenter tools?) plus miscellaneous jobs for all. Let's do our share to keep our quarters pleasant, at minimal monetary cost. Roland Parrish in charge.

Women's Night Out

Every Prairie woman is invited to join us for "Women's Night Out" Tuesday, May 18, at Festge Park, near Black Earth, about 5:30 for fellowship and frivolity. For a ride or any questions, call Rachel Siegfried 271-2173. Bring a sack dinner and leave the kids with Pop.

Discussion on DILHR

Sunday, May 23, after the service, the Social Action Committee is sponsoring a discussion with Robert Tyler, regular Prairie guest. Robert is embroiled in a controversy with the commissioners of the Wisconsin Department of Industry, Labor, and Human Relations, and the discussion will be concerned with the situation at DILHR.

Spring Party and Auction

The annual Prairie Spring Party and Auction will be held at the home of Diane and Marvin Miracle, 3980 Plymouth Circle, on Saturday 29 May at 8 pm. Snacks will be provided and a cash bar will be available. Bring valuables, home-grown, home-mades, and white elephants to be auctioned. (Start saving them up now!) Proceeds will go to the coffee fund and to other worthy causes. The Social Action Committee needs some help with minor details - please call Melinda Roznoy at 256-5308 if you are willing to lend a hand. This party has traditionally been a highlight of Prairie Springs, so be sure to save the date!

Call for Lay Ministers

The Ministerial Search Committee will meet soon to consider people for next year's lay ministry. Are you interested in being a lay minister? Do you have any recommendations for next year's ministry? If so, please notify any of these members of the search committee: Joan Hall, Beth Perry, George Calden, Terri Laurence, Aileen Nettleton or (ex officio) John Lewis.

Lois Hagstrom

Is recovering from surgery at Madison General, and can be visited in the afternoons.

Religious Education Department

Does anyone know where our Decision Making and Man the Meaning Maker kits are? Please return to storeroom or to Theron Caldwell as soon as possible.

We need construction toys: legos, Lincoln logs, erector sets, other. Contact Theron or Paula Elkins or just bring them Sunday morning.

Thank you does not seem adequate for all of the work, thoughtfulness, time spent and tender loving care which our Sunday morning teachers have given to Prairie's children, but we do thank you, one and all! It has been said that Christianity has done a much better job of teaching the "thou shalt nots" than the "thou shalt", but no one would say this about our religious education program, surely.

"A nation which sets its own growth and well being above the welfare of the world is no better than a cancer cell within our body." (Author?)  
Paula Elkins

Notes from the May 9 Parish Meeting

The membership met May 9 to decide how Prairie should approach its connection with the Prairie Site (see April 29 Prairie Fire for background.) The Board's recommended resolution, which would have essentially committed us to relinquish our option and seek a way to keep the site natural through municipal ownership, Nature Conservancy, or the like, if the members of First Society and the current joint owners would agree to such a move apparently did not suit the sentiments of the parish, and a substitute resolution, authored by John Smail, was adopted instead.

This resolution had five complex subprovisions, directed at Prairie's eventual acquisition of the site. Means and legal structure were delegated to the Prairie Executive Board, and protections for the interests of First Church and the present joint owners were incorporated. The first step, and one which is essential for any such plan to be even plausible, will be a canvass of the parish, to discover if there is, as some suspect, a sufficient number of people willing to put up (or guarantee to put up on call) a sufficient amount of money to assure the present joint owners that they can recover their investment at will, which, as of January 1, 1976, they have a right to. More will be forthcoming on this point after the Board meets Thursday May 13.

One disturbing fact was that of the three joint owners present at the parish meeting, two voted against the Smail resolution, for diverse reasons. This is a complex problem, and the meeting agreed that great care will be required if the resolution is to succeed and all interests are to be protected.

#### Editorial

(The editor promises equal space for any person wishing to express views on this, or just about any other, subject.)

I cannot but feel that it would be a sad loss to allow the prairie site to be handed over to some municipal bureau to administer without even asking ourselves what resources we can field to keep it. (I admit to a larger than average share of scepticism about the good intentions of municipal bureaus)

I do hope, though, that this action will not start off another round of the Great Building Controversy. There are many opportunities for religious uses of the site with minimal or no building attached. Did you know that our LRY uses the site for stargazing? Do you remember the snake-dance we had there one spring which included a serendipitous real snake? Where else do the kites fly so magnificently?

As for the legal problems, I think they can be handled, if it turns out that we have enough people who can commit the necessary money. Let's find out if we can hold it ourselves. Who will love it better than we do? Surely not the county, the town, or (God save us!) the developers.

Barbara Willard

#### Denominational Affairs

Since only six questionnaires on the issues to be voted on in the UUA national assembly were returned, Prairie has not sent in its vote. The Denominational Affairs Chairman did not feel that six replies gave any reliable sense of the parish's opinions.

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