

PRAIRIE FIRE

Newsletter of the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

Volume 13, Number 13
February 28, 1977

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CALENDAR

- FRIDAY 7:30 PM PRAIRIE WOMEN'S GROUP (postponed from last week) will meet at Rosemary Dorney's home, 2127 Regent St. Her phone number is 238-4382
4 March
- SUNDAY 10 AM WHERE I COME FROM IS WHAT I AM: FIVE GENERATIONS OF A BLACK FAMILY. Led by Pat Watkins.
6 March
- WEDNESDAY 7:30 PM "WHAT DO I LIVE BY?". Philosophy discussion group at the Calden's, 4606 Waukesha Street, 233-5717 (see next page for details).
9 March
- FRIDAY 6 PM Deadline for newsletter, Address is 5059 Marathon Drive, Madison 53705
11 March
- SUNDAY 10 AM WARM FUZZIES AND FRIED RELIGION. Skits, music, and readings. A family and youth service led by Y.U.M.
13 March
- MONDAY 7:30 PM BOARD MEETING at John Lewis's home, 2145 Commonwealth. All welcome.
14 March
- SUNDAY 10 AM THE ART OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN: AS SEEN BY AN AMERICAN INDIAN. Led by Truman Lowe, UW-Madison asst. professor of art and coordinator of native American studies.
20 March
- SATURDAY 7:30 PM THE PLAYREADERS will meet at the home of Henry and Annis Pratt, 2725 Chamberlain. Phone: 231-2183
26 March
- SUNDAY 10 AM RHUBARB AND ROSES: PRAIRIE LOOKS AT THE ORCHID AND ONION AWARDS (and comes up with some of their own).
27 March
- Also at 10 this Sunday, a required meeting for parents of middle schoolers taking Ann and Fred Feidl's class, "About Your Sexuality."

"If the vexatious world of people were the whole world, I would not enjoy it at all. But it is only a small, though noisy, part of the whole; and I find the natural world as engaging and as innocent as it ever was. When I get sick of what men do, I have only to walk a few steps in another direction to see what spiders do. Or what the weather does. This sustains me very well indeed, and I have no complaints."

Letters of E.B. White p. 334

At the February board meeting: April 17th chosen for the annual meeting; discussion of a joint meeting with Sauk City Unitarians for sometime in late May or early June; word that a bishop of the Unitarian Church of Rumania will visit the Chicago area on May 1st, and that Ric Masten could come to Madison April 28 and 29 if a sponsor could be found to arrange a couple of campus appearances for which he would be paid, since he is no longer being subsidized by the UUs as a minister-at-large. The board is appealing for someone to volunteer for the job of sponsor.

Lilo Koehl has found a bedroom with bath in the home of a woman whom she likes, and can't believe her luck to be privy to so much sunshine and warmth as is provided in Phoenix, Arizona. Her address is, 6123 West Rose Circle, Phoenix 85033

"What, then, do I live by? That is the question, and in its grip every one of us stands on the same ground, forced to be truthful about himself and face the day that opens before him. Looking back, what fragments have I saved out of my life to shore up its meaning? What rituals, charms, incantations, or loves help me forward? In the end these may be more real to us than any of our imposing and grandiose ideas."

These words are from an article by William Barratt entitled "On Returning to Religion" in the November 1976 issue of Commentary. Like some of us, Barratt finds solace and sustenance for daily living in nature. David Lisman will be using this article as a springboard for discussion. Come and share your ideas and experiences Wednesday, March 9, at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Ruth and George Calden, 4606 Waukesha Street, 233-5717

Next year our long-time religious education director is taking a leave of absence (see last newsletter). In her place will be a relatively new face at Prairie--Veda Melvin. Veda and her boyfriend Dave Nomura, cooked with our youth as one of the 1977 interim activities. We have seen the twinkle in Veda's eyes and we look forward to a splendid year in 1977-78. We give you our welcome and our support, Veda.

Paula Elkins
Religious Education Chairwoman

Veda writes: "Hi. My name is Veda Melvin and I'm going to be Religious Education director next year. I'm excited about it and am interested in any ideas you may have for programs. I moved to Madison this past fall from Minneapolis with Dave Nomura. Dave is attending graduate school at UW in computer science.

I graduated from the U. of Minnesota in occupational therapy and am now working at the Central Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled with retarded and disabled children.

Some interests of mine include sewing, weaving, and quilting. Dave and I have a mutual interest in cooking and have worked at Campu Unistar (Unitarian camp in northern Minnesota) for the past few summers. We also cross-country ski (when the weather is warm

enough!) and would be interested in getting a group of Prairie people together to ski.

Any suggestions for new RE programs would be great. I'm looking forward to a fun year!

A Note From The New Lay Minister: The program for March 6th on the Black Family will be my first as lay minister. The theme for this ministry will be relationships and dependencies, and what better way to begin than with the relationship to and dependency upon our families--where we came from and what we are--or, as both Mike Briggs and Alex Haley put it--roots. However, I also chose this topic for my first program to commemorate Negro History Month, which ends just one week before my ministry is to begin. In keeping with that commemoration, and also with the topic of the first program in March, I offer the following poem which I wrote, and which was first read at a Prairie service several years ago.

For My Black Sons

I heard you talking just the other night,
Saying "Negro" wasn't black, just a different shade of white.
Well, I been "Negro" for five lives long,
And though I may have paid the piper,
I helped to change his song.
 Oh, Lord, remember me;
 Yes, Lord, remember me;
 Do, Lord, remember me,
 And give them light
 So they can see.

Your grandmother was a black old woman,
Wore white handkerchiefs 'round her head,
Served her time cooking white man's chicken,
Puttin' white starched linen on the white man's bed--
 But in a hidden, secret place,
 Her soul was edged in fine Black lace.

Your granddaddy was a tired old begger;
From mornin' till night they called him nigger;
He toted that barge, and he lifted that bale;
Built a stairway to heaven with a mop and a pail.

Your dad and your uncles were steel and thunder;
Took life's chains, and tore 'em asunder;
Rode life's stallions and made 'em holler--
They blazed the trail that you now follow.

Your old granny was white man's plunder,
But she forged those sons into steel and thunder;
And your granddaddy took his mop and his broom,
And held up the sky to give them room.
 Oh, Lord, remember me;
 Yes, Lord, remember me;
 Do, Lord, remember me;
 And give them light,
 So they may see.

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Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
3980 Plymouth Circle
Madison, Wis., 53705

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Permit No. 1604

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