

PRAIRIE FIRE

Newsletter of the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

Volume 13, Number 16
April 8, 1977

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CALENDAR

- SUNDAY 10 AM FAMILY SERVICE AND CEREMONY TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS,
10 April POTLUCK BRUNCH. Bring any kind of food as long as
it can be eaten with fingers.
- MONDAY 8 PM Board meeting at Pat Cautley's house, 4805 Regent St.
11 April Anyone may come.
- SATURDAY 8 PM Play reading at Linda Plum's house, 4124 Keewatin Trail,
16 April 831-5547. The play will be Agatha Christie's "Ten Little
Indians." Everyone is welcome.
- SUNDAY 10 AM EVERYTHING YOU HAVE EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HOMOSEX-
17 April UALITY BUT HAVE BEEN AFRAID TO ASK, led by a panel from
the Gay Center and the Lesbian Switchboard, and
involving small group discussions.
- SUNDAY 7 PM Annual Parish Meeting and Election of Officers for Next
17 April Year. Portal Foster.
- WEDNESDAY 7:30 PM Philosophy Club will meet at Lois Hagstrom's house,
20 April 916 Shorewood Blvd., 238-4970. They will be discussing
Rainer Maria Rilke's Letters to a Young Poet.
- FRIDAY 6 PM Newsletter deadline.
22 April
- SUNDAY 10 AM MAN, PLANTS, AND LAND: AN EXCURSION IN LATIN AMERICAN ETHNO-
24 April BOTANY: The concept of natural beauty in the eyes of the
Indians. Hugh Iltis promises lots of "pretty" pictures.
- SATURDAY 8 PM Social Action Committee's Annual Auction. It will be held
30 April at Theron Caldwell's house, 1228 Sherman Avenue. Ted Clark
will be the auctioneer. Start now collecting items to
sell and money to buy. Call Dean Schroeder (255-8813) or
Betty Jallings (835-3746) if you have questions.

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR PLEDGE TO PRAIRIE

As of April 1st, of about \$7,000 pledged for the year 1976-77 (October 1 to September 30) about \$2,900 has been paid. The finance committee is not too alarmed about this, knowing that most people do pay their pledges in the end. Still, there are only two more months before Prairie services cease and summer begins, and for most of us it's pretty certainly easier to send money now than it will be in July or August when the mountains and rivers beckon. The finance committee is sending out (postage be damned) half-yearly statements.

MICHAEL BRIGGS MADE ALDERMAN

In the April 5th, 1977 elections, Michael Briggs was elected alderman for the eleventh district of Madison. It was one of the last counts to come in, but many of us waited up to listen, and then went to bed happy.

MUSICIANS -- ATTENTION!

Dodie Chaprue and Warren Hagstrom were delighted with the reception given to the Schubert service, and they would like to coordinate a service on another composer sometime next fall. They would like to do it next time on Johann Sebastian Bach, feeling confident that he has written music for all performers, and that his life has sociologically significant aspects. Dodie and Warren hope that this announcement will stimulate someone to revive the choral singers in our midst, and set all you pianists, violinists, flutists, cellists, mandolin players, and singers to practicing this summer.

WH

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

Once again we need to consider the amount of our UUA Annual Program Fund contribution. For the last four years, our contribution has remained almost constant (from \$200 to \$250). The current suggested share of \$6 per member from every society would mean that Prairie's contribution for 1976-77 would be \$630 (for 105 members), or approximately twice what we have previously budgeted. The six dollars per member actually represents only half of the program fund support, as each fellowship or society's contribution is matched dollar for dollar by the North Shore Unitarian Society (Plandome, New York).

In addition to the Religious Education materials we receive (including the current course on human sexuality), there are adult programming aids, financial services, all-encompassing growth programs (both for personal and numerical growth), leadership packages, etc., available for our use. The program fund is also used to help new fellowships to organize, giving people in other communities the kind of opportunity that we have had to form a fellowship to fit our own needs.

If we consider all of these services to be valuable aids from the UUA to individual societies (and to Prairie in particular) perhaps we should consider increasing our pledge.

George Hall, Chairman

LAST SUNDAY'S PROGRAM ON SEXUALITY

Fred and Ann Seidl began their program on The Human Sexuality Sunday School Curriculum, last Sunday, by posting around the room large sheets of paper with terms such as "Male Genitals" "Breasts" etc. written on them and asking members of the congregation to go up and write under each as many substitute terms as they could think of for each. Afterwards they announced that we had produced the longest lists they had ever received. We were then asked to list subjects we thought should be covered in a program on sexuality for adolescents, and shown a film that their students would be shown. The discussion was sparked off by the question (paraphrased), Wasn't a teenage group on sex led by adults a bit like Little League baseball? Should adults organize everything? In the end, one thing was clear--that a number of parents of adolescents would welcome some help or discussion on dealing with the new sex mores of their children.

ON LOVE

And here is what Rainer Maria Rilke has said about young people and love:

To love is good, too: love being difficult. For one human being to love another: that is perhaps the most difficult of all our tasks, the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work for which all other works is but preparation. For this reason young people, who are beginners in everything, cannot yet know love: they have to learn it. With their whole being, with all their forces, gathered close about their lonely, timid, upward-beating heart, they must learn to love. But learning-time is always a long, secluded time, and so loving, for a long while ahead and far on into life, is--solitude, intensified and deepened liveness for him who loves. Love is at first not anything that means merging, giving over, and uniting with another (for what would a union be of something unclarified and unfinished, still subordinate--?), it is a high inducement to the individual to ripen, to become something in himself, to become world, to become world for himself for another's sake, it is a great exacting claim upon him, something that chooses him out and calls him to vast things. Only in this sense, as the task of working at themselves ("to hearken and to hammer day and night"), might young people use the love that is given them. Merging and surrendering and every kind of communion is not for them (who must save and gather for a long, long time still), is the ultimate, is perhaps that for which human lives as yet scarcely suffice.

But young people err so often and so grievously in this: that they (in whose nature it lies to have no patience) fling themselves at each other, when love takes possession of them, scatter themselves just as they are, in all their untidiness, disorder, confusion....And then what? What is life to do to this heap of half-battered existence which they call their communion and which they would gladly call their happiness, if it were possible, and their future? Thus each loses himself for the sake of the other and loses the other and many others that wanted still to come.

Letters to a Young Poet, p. 55
(Paperback, Norton Library)

(AND FROM A YOUNG POET)

"April Woods: Morning"

Birth of color
out of night and the ground.

Luminous the gatherings
of bloodroot

newly risen, green leaf
white flower

in the sun, the dark
grown absent.

Wendell Berry, Openings

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