



Prairie Fire

Newsletter of

Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
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Volume 19, Number 8, April 20, 1982

CALENDAR

Friday, April 23

7:30 p.m. - Singing practice at Nettleton's
645 Sheldon St.

Sunday, April 25

10:00 a.m. - "History of the UU Movement in
America" Lionel Barker-see story

10:00 a.m. - Religious Education Classes

6:00 p.m. - Executive Board meeting at Prairie

7:30 p.m. - Spring Parish Meeting at Prairie

Sunday, May 2

10:00 a.m. - Kites for Everyone - Family
service - Peg Stevenson-see story

10:00 a.m. - Child care for pre-schoolers

11:30 a.m. - Picnic at Marlborough Park (1
block south of Prairie) or at
Prairie if rained out.

Sunday, May 9

10:00 a.m. - "~~Conviction versus Toleration~~"
Barbara Park

Saturday, May 22

8:00 p.m. - Play Readers at Mona Birong's
509 Glen Dr., play to be
announced.

LIONEL BARKER, SPEAKER FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 25

The speaker for next Sunday is Lionel Barker who has been an active U.U. for over 30 years. He is a retired highschool teacher and the father of one of our members, Gail Ostler. The Barkers live near Minneapolis and are members of both the St. Cloud Unitarian Church and the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. He will speak on U.U. history in the United States.

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: MAY 2

R.E. CORNER

What a gorgeous spring day last Sunday was! The children felt like celebrating spring's arrival at last, so after hearing a 400 year old Japanese legend--with "meanings" we will talk about next week--both the K-2 and 3-4 grade groups went to the arboretum to see what signs of spring they could find. We feel really fortunate to be so close to the Grady tract! And the pre-schoolers made cookies, after helping Susie roll the dough very carefully and cutting out various shapes with the cookie cutters. Then they, too, had to investigate the outdoors!

Some of you may be especially interested in the collection of myths written by the 3-4th graders, after spending a number of weeks learning how the ancient Greeks interpreted some events in their world. This collection is in a notebook on the literature table.

Mike Briggs' conversation with the Middle Schoolers was a very serious discussion not only of Ground Zero, but of what each would have done if faced with the decision to be made by President Truman, or with the problems faced by President Reagan.

Pat Cautley

HELP NEEDED FOR PRAIRIE'S PRAIRIE PLANTS!

John Lewis has seeds and is very willing to help plant the site, but we need someone who is willing to maintain it for the summer and the remainder of the year. Once established the grasses and other plants will fend for themselves. If you are interested in helping, please contact John at 238-4809 (home) or 266-9263 (work) before May 15.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Kathy and Dan Laux have signed our membership book after attending Prairie for six weeks or so. Welcome!

GO (COME) FLY A KITE!

A fun program for young and old Sunday, May 2, will feature kites and kite making. Materials will be provided for adults and children to work together on making kites. Anyone who has a favorite kite is invited to bring it to show. After the program we will have a pot luck and a kite flying. (If the weather does not cooperate, we'll have an indoor picnic.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

A number of people spoke to me after the Tchaikowsky program saying they liked the program but thought I should not have said I morally disapproved of homosexuality. It raises lots of interesting ethical questions, such as the distinction between matters of taste and matters of morality, and when we should express our moral judgments. After some reflection, I have concluded that I was wrong. One of the messages of the program was that homosexuals should not be punished. That message is inconsistent with a statement that homosexuality is morally wrong. If the statement means anything, it means that homosexuals should morally condemn themselves. But I don't want them to. Tchaikowsky probably suffered more from his own self-condemnation than from fear of punishment or from being blackmailed. So I take it back; I don't morally disapprove of homosexuality.

Besides, public moral judgments like that are alien to the spirit of Prairie. We don't make moral judgments like that without giving people who disagree the right to talk back on the same occasion. (At least we usually try to act that way.)

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

Let's make sure Prairie is well represented this Sunday (April 25) afternoon at the "Freeze the Arms Race" walk, rally, and festival at the Capitol. The walk will start at 1 p.m. from James Madison park. The rally, at 2 p.m. at the Main and Carroll corner of the Capitol square, will feature speakers, music, theater, information tables, etc. Bring a sign or banner if you can, and don't forget to wear your blue ribbon as a sign of support for the arms freeze and disarmament.

THERON CALDWELL RIS ART EXHIBIT

Theron Caldwell Ris' "Self Portrait in Irons," featuring 10 oil paintings and five lithographs, is currently on exhibit through May 15 at the Upper Crust, 14½ E. Mifflin St. Theron is a long time member of Prairie.

BEFRIENDER TRAINING PROGRAM

Applications are now available for the 1982-83 Befriender Training year. The program trains lay persons in Madison churches and organizations to provide counseling service to families in transition, new residents, shut-ins, youths, and convalescents. Training includes practice in communication skills and a study of life situations and crises. The year begins with a retreat at St. Benedict's Center on Sept. 10-11 and continues through 22 weeks of course work and practice in visitation. Fee for the year is \$70. For more information, call Alice Schacht, Program Coordinator, at 256-3862, or attend a general information meeting on Thursday, April 29, 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Mineral Point & Westmoreland, in Madison.

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Prairie has received a note from President Reagan in response to the giant valentine taken to the White House by Bob Nelson in February, expressing our feelings about the risk of war. Mr. Reagan says:

I was happy to hear from you. You were very nice to think of me, and I send you my thanks and my good wishes always.
Ronald Reagan

Ground Zero week seems an appropriate time to express a concern that we have had for a long time.

If a freeze on nuclear weapons were to be accomplished this week, and if all missiles were destroyed next month, we would still be in peril of a conflict more deadly than World War II. Since that war the super powers have continued to improve and multiply all kinds of infernal devices.

What is needed before any of the nations will even consider disarmament of any kind is some attempt at understanding the point of view and the problems of the adversary by the opponents of each side. We go to negotiations with the statement that the other side must accept our position on the very questions we are attempting to resolve before we will begin to talk. The Soviets are not a different species; they are human beings with the same problems and the same fears that plague us. We happen to have different economic and political systems. Their denials of human rights seem barbaric to us. Have we forgotten 300 years of slavery and near slavery, of centuries of ravaging the original inhabitants of this land? Some expression of good will by either side or by our side only might do as much as the call for "freezes."

Alice and Leland Bullen

