

Prairie Fire

newsletter of

PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
2010 Whenona Drive Madison, Wisconsin 53711

... As the prairie stretches out until it becomes one with the sky, let us reach out to touch and be one with the natural world and with one another. —PRAIRIE'S BOND OF UNION

Prairie Smoke (Sieversonia flora)

Richard Bonser, Editor	274-3248
Rick Ruecking, President	238-2924
Alison McKee, R.E. Director	238-3302
Meeting House	271-8218

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WE NEED YOUR HELP

CALENDAR

Sunday, Nov. 23rd

- 10:00 - INTERGENERATIONAL THANKS-GIVING SERVICE. NO CHURCH SCHOOL. Child Care will be available.
- 11:30 - POTLUCK DINNER featuring foods from out ethnic heritage.
- 1:00 - ANNUAL FALL BUSINESS MEETING
- 4:30 - VESPERS SERVICE, at Prairie Child care provided. Finger food meal afterward.

Sunday Nov. 30th

- 10:00 - DARE WHEN THE NIGHT IS DARKEST - Poetry reading by Annis Pratt.
- 10:00 - Religious Education classes, baby & child care.
- 4:30 - VESPERS SERVICE, at Prairie Child care provided. Finger food meal afterward.

If you are getting this newsletter in the mail and are NOT pledging support for Prairie U. U. Society, we need your help. It costs us nearly \$10.00 per person per year to produce and mail PRAIRIE FIRE. We would appreciate your contribution of a similar or larger amount to help defray the cost.

ANNUAL FALL BUSINESS MEETING

WE WILL START PROMPTLY at 1:00 PM. Please review the enclosed Budget and the proposed resolution published in the last newsletter before the meeting. We will proceed expeditiously through the agenda and anticipate adjournment by 4:00 PM.

CAN WE TALK?

In early November the Board had the unpleasant task of cutting an already modest budget of \$25,000 for 1987 down to a skeleton budget of \$20,500. The budget for 1986 is \$23,650. Many people feel that this is definitely the wrong direction for a growing society which wants to improve its facilities. For various reasons to

be covered at the Parish Meeting, we do not have enough pledges either in dollars or number of pledgers (88 of 150 members pledged) to support the proposed budget. This forces us to cut spending for lay ministry, religious education and janitorial services and institute a charge for enrolling a child in Religious Education--nothing was sacred (if you'll pardon the expression). We will once again be relying heavily on volunteerism.

You may want to think about the last time you worked in the nursery or cleaned the john at Prairie and said to yourself "I'd rather give a little extra than do this" or think of occasions when you couldn't give the time to help out.

If you can reconsider your pledge decision and help us out of this quandary, please write or call Faye Glessner (251-5427) before the November 23 Parish Meeting.
-Finance Committee

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ALTERNATIVE LUNCH SITE

If you're looking for a change of scene from the Pizza Hut for Sunday Lunch, a group of adventurers will be going to PIZZARIA UNO at the corner of State and Gorham for seafood pizza after church on Nov. 30th. Everyone welcome.

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FRIDAY FISH CIRCLE

The Friday Fish Dinner Circle group will gather on Friday, Dec. 5th at 5:30 PM at Crandall's Restaurant (downtown). Call Pat Watkins at 262-7970 (days) if you wish to be included in their reservation.

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EAT FOR FREE?

That's right - free! Prairie folk will soon have the opportunity to buy "ENTERTAINMENT '87" books which will entitle the buyer to a free meal with the purchase of another of equal or higher cost at many local restaurants. For each book purchased through Prairie, we will earn \$4.00 for Prairie. Get one for yourself and give them as Christmas Gifts that give all year long! Better yet, sell some to your friends, neighbors, and co-workers and give our sagging budget a boost. Some of the fine restaurants included are the Ovens of Brittany, White Horse Inn, Cafe Palms, and The Second Storey. Other bonuses include fast food restaurants, movies, theatre tickets, sports events, hair styling, clothing and so on. Books are available from Faye Glessner and cost \$20.00 each.

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SOCIAL ACTION NOTES

FRIENDLY SUPPER CLUB:

On Monday, Nov. 3, about 25 people of various colors sat down to dinner together at the Ponderosa Steak House on S. Park Street. They had been asked there by a letter from a mysterious "Jack Smith", who was inspired by an article in an August Parade Magazine. It told of a monthly dinner gathering in Montgomery, Alabama, where black and white people had been coming together for 4 1/2 years just to meet and "break bread" - no agenda, no officers, no membership dues. "Jack" read how this simple action had done much to improve race relations there and thought "why can't this happen in Madison? Well, it now is happening on the first Monday of each month. So come Dec. 1, 6PM to the

Ponderosa (we may change locations in the future) and make friends with some COLORFUL PEOPLE! Call Lance Green at 249-5979 for more information.

DROP-IN SHELTER:

Thanks to your response to my recent appeals, we have enough volunteers (8) to cover Monday Nov. 24. Four have signed up so far for Dec. 22. If you'd like to help, then or in future months, please call Lance Green at 249-5979.

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R. E. CORNER

INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE:

November 23rd will be an inter-generational service which all children are encouraged to attend. There will be no R.E. classes that day, but child care will be provided.

MENTORING GROUP:

Peg Stevenson's mentoring group will meet on December 7 from 10:00 to 11:00 at 4337 Milford Rd. (Mary Mullen and Fredrika Schilling's house).

WINTERIM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Winterim will be held on January 4th and January 18th next year. If there is anybody who would like to share an activity with our R.E. children for two Sundays, please contact Alison McKee at 238-3302 or on Sunday at Prairie. She is looking for four to five volunteers to help out on these two days.

TAPE PLAYER MISSING:

R.E. is missing a tape player. If you borrowed it, please let Alison know where it is. Prairie cannot afford to replace it due to budget cutbacks.

Y R U U CONFERENCE:

A Youth Conference will be held December 12th to 14th. Barb Park is willing to drive and supervise 3 of our youth members (7th to 12th grade). Anyone interested in attending please contact Alison at 238-3302 for further information. The Registration deadline is December 5th. Adults who would be interested in helping Barb are most welcome, and more Prairie youths could attend if there are more adults to help.

TOY SALE A SUCCESS!:

Arline Ferguson held a wonderful toy sale for us all on October 19th. She donated her profits (\$63.00 worth of toys) to Prairie R.E. Thanks to all those who purchased toys. The R. E. Committee will be selecting the toys from the Discovery Toy Catalogue in the upcoming weeks. Children in the R. E. program should look forward to new games/toys within the next few months.

UNICEF COLLECTION:

The children of Prairie's R. E. classes collected \$107.00 for UNICEF. Congratulations, kids!!

R. E. FALL CONFERENCE:

On October 18, I attended the CMD/RE Fall Conference in Rockford. The keynote address was delivered by the Rev. Ann Fields of Vermont. She spoke to us of "Living Our Principles and Purposes". Rev. Fields spoke of how we might live our U. U. principles and purposes in daily life by using conflict resolution skills. She mentioned the books "Raising Good Children" by Thomas Lickona and "Creative Conflict Resolution" by William Kreidler as excellent sources.

In Rev. Fields opinion, by using conflict resolution skills throughout our lives, we may be doing much to enhance peace in the

world. Kreidler believes that using the conflicts that come up in his classrooms (he teaches in a Quaker school) as times to teach about conflict resolution will, in the long run, have a lasting effect on the children he works with. He believes that in having the children deal with the issues at hand, instead of trying to impose resolutions upon them, will teach the children to learn how to talk their way through difficulties. Kreidler advocates that teaching children to work out their own differences goes a long ways towards teaching children about peace.

Rev. Fields had us look at the ways we usually respond to conflicts. She gave us a brief survey. It was apparent that everyone looked at conflicts in a different manner and that there is not one "best" way in which to settle them. Fields did, however, present ways in which she felt we could enhance our roles as responsible U. U. adults, and noted that by taking some of these steps, we would have a greater and more lasting positive impact on the children we deal with on a day to day basis.

- Alison McKee

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MUSICAL BUREAUCRACY
(or Bureaucratic Music)

A Prelude to my Lay Ministry, 1986

ABOUT ME

My name is Barbara James, and this will be my second Prairie Lay Ministry. The first was in 1973, which was a long time ago. In fact, it was the very first Lay Ministry Prairie ever had, under its brand new "Whirling Dervish" or "You Can Stand Anything for Three Months" system of leadership.

I had kids in the church school and the youth group then; I had a "stable" marriage and brown hair; and I was just beginning law school. Now I am grey and remarried; my children are far away; and I practise law for a living.

In all this turnover, there is one change which still causes me grief, and that is the dispersal of the Prairie Chicken Pluckers. I have other music in my life, but there is nothing like the Chicken Pluckers. Ask any old timer.

Many of you who are newer Prairie people probably do not know me. One reason I accepted the Lay Ministry was to get reacquainted with Prairie, because Joe and I have been only sporadic attenders since we moved out to the farm, and we need to reestablish our connection to the Prairie community.

My ministry will be on the two subjects that occupy much of my attention these days. I hope that people who can't stand one of them will at least enjoy the other. You can stand anything for half of three months.

MUSIC

Prairie has, in times past, fielded a shape note group and various ad hoc choral assemblages, usually short on sopranos. Why the fundamentalists and even the Mormons can grow sopranos and we can't has always been a mystery to me. But what I really don't understand is why we can't make more noise as a congregation than we do.

On a Sunday morning, a good church should bulge slightly from the intensity of the internal sounds. We don't do that. I have often

felt that this building is like an unplayed violin or an unworn string of pearls - it is losing its vibrance and life for lack of proper vibrations.

I would like to use part of the ministry to address this weakness. I am not particularly qualified to do this. I am an enthusiastic but not a good singer. I have a fine time trying, though, and if I can have a fine time with my meager proficiency, anyone can. (Ed. note: Meager my foot!) Besides, if you sing, you won't have to listen to me.

We have fine musicians in this group who can enchant the listener. The approach of my ministry will be to attempt to enliven the doer. I will also try to broaden our repertoire with some of the songs I am fond of.

BUREAUCRACY:

I became a bureaucrat relatively late in life and, ever since, I have been gnawing away in my mind at a series of interlocked puzzles about that status, both the concept and the relation of the concept to the actuality as seen from within and without. Why is there bureaucracy? Does society need it? What for? Is it more useful for some purposes than others? Which? Why is it a dirty word? Do good, kind, caring people who want to do works of social value become evil when aggregated under its banner? If not, why do other nice, well-intentioned people think it's OK to call the first group names, especially at election time? Does a bureaucracy develop subcultures? If so, can the subcultures help "humanize the system"? What's the system? What's human? Can a human be a functioning bureaucrat and vice versa? If this is possible, how is it achieved?

For one focus of my ministry, I would like to explore these and some similar questions. I will need help from friends. Several Prairie members are rumored to be (gasp) card carrying bureaucrats themselves, and I hope to induce some of them to come out of the closet and help wrestle with this stuff.

If this all works out, we should end up with a musical festivity in February in celebration of Elm Farm Ollie Day, which is a holiday observed in the bureaucratic underground of the State of Wisconsin with song, dance, sometimes juggling, general silliness, and invariably, food. This will, theoretically, tie the two themes of the ministry together in a Grand Synthesis of Bureaucratic Music, thereby proving that there was such a thing all along, if only we knew where to look.

-Barbara James

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NEW MEMBERS

We are proud to welcome two new members to the Prairie community:

Frank Iltis
926 Magnolia Lane, Apt. 4
Madison, WI 53713

Lora Mermin
321 Palomino Lane
Madison, WI 53705

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Bring this page with you to the Business Meeting. Copies will not be handed out due to the cost of copying.

PRAIRIE SOCIETY
RECOMMENDED BUDGET

OPERATING EXPENSES	1987		1986	
Program:				
Lay Ministers	\$ 850		\$1050	
Publicity	500		320	
Song Books	0		80	
Program Expense	300		300	
Extension Minister	0	\$1,650	600	\$2,350
Religious Education:				
Director's Salary	5,570		5,172	
Preschool Teacher	517		480	
Social Security	435		932	
Preschool Aide	0		240	
Curriculum	75		125	
Materials & Supplies	200		200	
Books for Library	40		75	
Travel & Conferences	0		200	
Chalises	120	6,957	120	7,543
Denominational Affairs:				
UUA Annual Program Fund	840		1,610	
CMD Dues	230		230	
NCAC Dues	25		25	
UU Service Committee	0		100	
UUA Pamphlets & Books	100	1,195	75	2,040
Membership:				
Directory (150 copies)	0		75	
Name Tag Holders	15		15	
Intro to Prairie Sheets	10		10	
Other	15	40	15	115
Office:				
Telephone	450		450	
Contingencies	0		50	
Minutes & Stamps	75	525	85	585
Housing & Property:				
Mortgage	4,286		4,286	
Utilities	1,700		1,700	
Insurance	1,200		769	
Maintenance & Supplies	410		1,435	
Janitorial	0	7,596	690	9,380
Other:				
Long Range Planning	25		50	
Ceremonies	0		60	
Finance	50		100	
Upham Woods Scholarship	100		150	
Prairie Fire	2,320	2,495		1,280
TOTAL BUDGET		\$20,458		\$23,653

REVENUE

	1987		1986	
Pledges	16,450		18,153	
Contributions	1,000		2,300	
Prairie Fire	200		200	
Building Rent	200		200	
Service Auction	1,500		800	
Interest	200		500	
T Shirt Sale	200		0	
Other fundraising	308		1,500	
RE Registration	400	\$20,458	0	\$23,653