Volume 25, Number 5  —  March 10, 1987

CALENDAR

Saturday, March 14

7:00 PM - Playreaders meet at Pat Meller's home, 4526 Crescent Road, Madison.

Sunday, March 15

10:00 AM - "HEALTH AND THE HOLISTIC APPROACH": Dr. Alan Levine


Thursday, March 19

12:00 AM - Channing-Murray brown bag lunch - Memorial Union.

Sunday, March 22

10:00 AM - "HANDEL'S BIRTHDAY" orchestrated by Warren Hagstrom, with music by Prairie folk.

11:30 AM - Parish Poll - The issues are printed in the UU World

11:30 AM - Vernal Equinox Potluck Dinner


Thursday, March 26

12:00 AM - Channing-Murray brown bag lunch - Memorial Union.

Sunday, March 29

10:00 AM - "THE HOMELESS AND THE HUNGRY" Ms. Clare Stapleton-Concord, UW Madison researcher


7:00 PM - Orientation to UU & Prairie at the Meeting House

Holistic Health

On Mar. 15th, Dr. Alan Levine, physician, will speak on "Health and the Holistic Approach". Dr. Levine is Board Certified in psychiatry and Family Medicine. He pioneered Holistic Medicine in Madison and began practice in this field in 1971. Dr. Levine is the Director of the Center for Holistic Medicine.

Dedication of Children

The Program Committee would like to include a ceremony for Dedication of Children on Easter Sunday. The Ceremony generally includes music, poetry, and readings welcoming the child to the Prairie community. Anyone who would like to participate with their child should contact Barbara Park at 635-7519.

Playreaders

**NOTE CHANGE OF PLAY!**
The Prairie Playreaders will meet on Mar. 14th at 7:00 PM at the home of Pat Meller, 4526 Crescent Rd. The play will be The Hollow, by Agatha Christie. New members are welcome - no previous acting experience necessary! Call Pat at 271-1214 for directions or to let her know you are coming.
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The following have signed up for kitchen cleanup - our thanks to them for caring for the rest of us...

Mar. 15th - Cinda LaMar, ??
Mar. 22nd - Judy Skog, ??
Mar. 29th - ?? , ??

A lot of these names have been here many times... it isn't fair to these people to force their 'volunteering' by our inaction. Why don't YOU and I sign up for one of these blank spaces next Sunday? Whoever you are - Prairie needs you - and I'd like to get to know you better!

Blood Donors' Club

We more than made it! Over a dozen Prairie members have volunteered to join our Red Cross One-A-Week Club. Clara Barton, Unitarian and founder of the American Red Cross, would be proud of us. You may donate blood at any bloodmobile or at the ARC headquarters at 4860 Sheboygan Ave. Call 233-9300 to arrange a convenient appointment. Be sure to tell them you are a member of the Prairie U-U Society Club whenever you register to donate blood. Call Lynda Lewis (271-2173) for information about giving blood.

Inner Journey Workshop

On Mar. 26th, Inner-Vision, Inc. will offer a workshop entitled "An Inner Journey". Neal Ewers, who is totally blind, will take you on a journey through an imaginary forest of smell, touch, taste, and sound. He will narrate this journey from the perspective of someone who is totally blind. There is no charge for the workshop, but donations are welcome.

New Members

Please welcome new members Jennifer Parker and Anne Wiecki. Jennifer's address is: 5 Walter Street, Madison, WI 53714, and Anne's address is 501 Clemons Street, Madison, WI 53704. Please add these names to your directory.

Prairie/UU Orientation

Orientation sessions to Unitarian Universalism and Prairie Society will be held during March and April. If you are interested in learning about our denomination and Society, please contact President Rick Ruecking at 238-2924 (evenings).

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, April 26th, at 1:00 PM at Prairie. Proposed Bylaw amendments must be submitted by Sunday, March 22nd for inclusion in the agenda. All proposed Bylaw amendments received by that date will be published in the Prairie Fire.

Bylaw Amendments?

If you have a proposed Bylaw amendment you want to be considered at the Annual Meeting in April, please submit your proposal, typewritten and double spaced, to the Prairie Fire editor by Sunday, March 22nd. If it is a change in an existing paragraph of the Bylaws, include the entire paragraph for context. Please submit your changes as early as possible to avoid overloading the newsletter typist on the 22nd. No special Bylaws Committee will be called.

- Rick Ruecking

Free Weatherization

The Dane County Housing Authority has a program that provides no cost weatherization services if the household income falls within the guidelines or if the household has received AFDC or SSI in the last year. Income guidelines are:

one person $6,700
two persons $9,050
three persons $11,400
each additional person add $2,350

A variety of services are available, depending on the needs of the home. For more information, call 266-4173.

Building Keys Available

For people who need to get into Prairie at odd times, two people nearby now hold keys. First try member Mary Mullen (271-5192) at 4337 Milford. That's just a quarter of a block south of the meeting hall at the end of Whenoan Drive. The other person is Brad Matthiesen, President of the Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association. (The DMNA shovels snow for Prairie all winter in return for use of the building for neighborhood meetings.) Brad lives at the corner of Whenoan and Sheffield, just kitty-corner from Prairie at 4330 Sheffield (273-3459).

This is NOT a wholesale invitation to ask for the use of the keys, and does not constitute permission to use the building. Building use must be arranged with Fran Remelka (845-7252). Building rental is handled by Rachel Sieglried (271-2173).
Social Action Notes

Interracial Dinner
People of all races will "break bread together" again at the sixth monthly gathering of the Friendly Supper Club. Join them on April 6th at 6:00 PM at McKee's Family Restaurant, 1414 S. Park St. Make a friend of a different color!

Action Alert!
Please read the Action Alert inserted in Prairie Fire. If the IRS rules proposed become law, they could result in the Service Committee losing its tax exempt status when they comment in their mailings on any legislation before Congress. We are being asked to write to our Congresspeople urging that these rules be withdrawn. The rules will become effective April 3rd unless they are withdrawn. The UUSC would like to have an indication of what we are doing. If you write letters, I would appreciate your calling me (838-8055) with that information. We will set up a table and have stationery available next week for those who wish to write letters after the service. The two Senators addresses are: Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Our Congressman's address is House Office Building, Washington, D.C. If you use the facts in the Alert to write a letter to the newspapers, that, too, would be very useful.

- Lee Bullen

I. A. R. F.  
IN  
U. S. A.

Once in every decade, the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) meets in Congress in the USA. The IARF is the international "umbrella" organization to which liberal religious groups from around the world - Unitarian (Universalists) from overseas, Buddhists and Shintoists from Japan, Hindus from India, members of African tribal religions - belong. This is a splendid opportunity for meeting members of these religious groups and experiencing their worship first hand. The keynote speaker will be the novelist Maya Angelou, and many events and tours are scheduled in connection with the Congress, which will be held in Palo Alto from July 31 to August 7, 1987. Details and registration forms are available from President Rick Ruecking.

Service Auction Checks Lost!
Attached to this issue of Prairie Fire is the list of services and buyers from last fall's service auction. A few people have paid the donor of the service, and these payments have been indicated. Others have paid by check at the auction and these payments are listed as not paid. The reason is that the checks were lost. If you purchased a service at the auction and paid by check, please check your bank statements to find out if your check has cleared. If not, please make out a new check to Prairie and mail it to Faye Glessner. If your check has cleared, or if you paid another way, please let Faye know how and when that payment was made. If the checks are ever found, they will be destroyed, unless no replacement check has been received in the meantime.

The Last Word...
(Ed. note: I have called this the last word because I don't intend to print any more 'personal concerns' on this subject. Prairie Fire is not the appropriate vehicle for interpersonal debate.)

I understand that Bob West's expression of personal concern in Prairie Fire was aimed at me. In response, let me quote from my book "THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN". Page 2- "It is the purpose of this book to look at the struggle for equality of men and women through the eyes of a man...". Page 3- "In no way should this book be viewed as a backlash against feminists' criticisms of women's disadvantages. Rather my writings are an attempt to show another side, another perspective, so as to help us to understand the whole picture better." Page 11- "I assume that people are really equal, not superior-inferior, but different. This means to me that we must reexamine our society's basic attitudes when we encounter, as we regularly do, attitudes of superiority-inferiority," If you're seriously interested in gender equality, you should read my book with an open mind.

- Roy U. Schenk
N. C. A. C. Annual Meeting

The North Central Area Council annual meeting will be held in Appleton, WI at the Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on April 11 and 12, 1987. The focus of the conference will be on celebration in life and the ways we incorporate it in our religious activities. There will be three workshops on various aspects of celebration, and the keynote speaker will be Mr. Tom Madison, Assistant Professor of English at UW Oshkosh. The conference will be followed by a potluck dinner and cabaret, sponsored by the Fox Valley Fellowship. Cabaret performers are welcomed! Registration deadline is March 25th, and the fee is $5 per person or $15. Registration forms are available on the information table at Prairie.

Vespers Notes

One who has a man's wings
And a woman's also
Is in himself a womb of the world
And being a womb of the world,
Continuously, endlessly,
Gives birth:
One who, preferring light,
Prefers darkness also
Is in himself an image of the world
And, being an image of the world,
Is continuously, endlessly
The dwelling of creation:
One who is highest of men
And humblest also
Is in himself a valley of the world,
and, being a valley of the world,
Continuously, endlessly
Conducts the one source
From which vessels may be usefully filled;
Servants of the state are such vessels,
To be filled from undiminishing supply.

- Lao Tzu

R. E. Corner

Nursery and Preschool

Katie, Barbara, Katrina and Yasmine will continue to explore the question "Who Am I" with you on March 15 and 22nd. On Mar. 22nd, you may see a special movie.

Many of you made full sized pictures of your selves to take home. Have you had a chance to share them with your parents and tell them about the things you like about yourselves?

Grades K-1-2

On Mar. 15th, you will have a break from your regular classes and see a video and munch on popcorn. Come prepared to relax and have fun with your friends.

On Mar. 22nd, Lindy and Shari will begin sharing with you the history of Black Americans and their influence on our culture. Can any of you think of any contributions the Black Americans have made to American culture?

Grades 3-4-5

On Mar. 15th, you will be viewing a video and munching on popcorn as a way of breaking the routines of Sunday R.E. classes. Come and relax with your friends. It should be a fun time.

On Mar. 22nd, Linda and Mary Beth will share with you the life story of another famous UU, Rosiah Wedgwood. Can any of you who attended the intergenerational service at Christmas time remember who he was?

Grades 6-7-8

On Mar. 15th, you will be having a visitor in your class. Joe Elder is a peacemaker who lives here in Madison and has had much experience working toward world wide peace. He will share with you his experiences in working toward peace.

On Mar. 22nd, you will work, once again, on your video. This project is quite along time in the making! Do you think you might like to share it with the rest of Prairie some time in the future?

Holidays and Holy Days

Holidays and Holy Days is a curriculum used in R. E. for the intermediate grades (3, 4, and 5). The last time the curriculum was used was, according to any of the information I have, in 1984-85. I have been unable to locate the first semester of the curriculum. If anybody still has this material filled away could you please give me a call at 238-3302.

R. E. Committee Concerns

In the Fall a notice appeared in Prairie Fire concerning the activities of R.E. children after services. The R.E. Committee is still quite concerned about the issue and has been taking steps to try to ease the problems. Specifically, the problems are that children seem to "run wild" after their classes are over. There have been some instances of children being hurt by other children. Parents are being asked to volunteer to monitor children for half an hour after the service. It is not clear that this is the best solution to the problem. The committee would like parents of children in R.E. to be aware of the potential for problems after class and to monitor their children during this time.
<table>
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<td>Chuck Vetzner</td>
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<td>Anne Forbes</td>
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<td>D. &amp; B. Haglund</td>
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<td>Dancing</td>
<td>Faye G. &amp; Bill F.</td>
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<td>Dorothy Weatherby</td>
<td>Will or codicil</td>
<td>Faye Glessner</td>
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<td>Barbara Park</td>
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<td>Nettletons</td>
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<td>Bonsers</td>
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<td>Haglund</td>
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<td>Pat Cautley</td>
<td>Walk &amp; lunch for four</td>
<td>Bullens</td>
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<td>Fredericka &amp; Mary</td>
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<td>Haglund</td>
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<td>Sailing for four</td>
<td>Vetzners</td>
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<td>Bonsers</td>
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<td>Anna &amp; Sabrina</td>
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<td>Fran Remeika</td>
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FACT SHEET ON NEW IRS REGULATIONS TO MUZZLE CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

- New regulations have been proposed by the IRS which would severely limit the rights of voluntary organizations to communicate with members of Congress, other legislators and public officials.

- The new rules are being proposed under section 1307 of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, P.L. 94-455. That legislation clarified and expanded the lobbying rights of nonprofit groups to encourage responsible participation in public debate on policy issues. The proposed regulations do the opposite. They introduce ambiguity regarding what constitutes lobbying by nonprofits, broadening the definition to include a wide range of educational activities.

- Instead of limiting the reach of "lobbying" to explicit efforts to affect legislation which was the intent of the 1976 lobby law, the proposed regulations use broad and uncertain terms. For example, they would treat as lobbying any statement that "pertains to" any pending legislation that "implies" a view on the desirability of such legislation, or that reaches a policy decision that would take legislation to implement. All would be lobbying even though no request was made to a legislator.

- Material and activities that aren't lobbying even by the proposed regulations' sweeping terms can become so if they run afoul of other rules about why they are prepared or how they are distributed. For example, a statement that refers to legislation but does not express a view on its desirability is deemed to express a view (and thereby constitute lobbying) if the organization disseminates it "selectively" to people "reasonably expected to share a common view" of the issue.

- The ambiguity of the proposed regulations and the new limits will severely restrict the flow of information from voluntary groups to legislators. Many non-profits will cut back sharply on their lobbying, or they will cease lobbying altogether to not risk exceeding the tight new limits, or risk tax penalty or loss of tax exemption.

* Information from Independent Sector, a coalition of non-profit organizations

**WHAT YOU CAN DO**

Please call or write your Representatives in Congress and Senators urging them in turn to communicate with IRS Commissioner Lawrence Gibbs. The message:

Withdraw the proposed new lobbying regulations before April 3.

Appoint a committee including representation of non-profit groups to redraft the regulations.

The Honorable ___________________________ The Honorable ___________________________
United States Senate + House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510 Washington, DC 20515
Redefining ‘lobbying’
could mean the end of ‘good citizen’ groups

Some days it seems as if the Internal Revenue Service goes out of its way to make trouble. Right now, for example, they propose to redefine “lobbying” in ways that could put certain private charities and community groups out of business for the crime of being good citizens. They’ve issued 131 pages (double-spaced) of regulations for a six-page section of tax law that defined “lobbying” a decade ago.

Most private charities and non-profit organizations (like Mothers Against Drunk Driving, environmental groups, Boy and Girl Scouts, churches, non-profit hospitals) depend on charitable donations from individuals and foundations who need to be assured that the group is a true non-profit, with tax-exempt status, so their donations can be deducted.

Many non-profit groups are treasure troves of information. Want to know whether a pesticide is harmful to birds? Call the Audubon Society. Puzzled about “Medigap” insurance policies? Call a senior citizen group. Need to know about services for retarded children? Call an association for retarded citizens. Every day millions of Americans get useful information from the non-profit groups in their communities. So do city councils, county officials, state legislators, members of Congress and the media.

That’s why Congress encouraged non-profit groups to lobby and be active participants in public policy when they passed the “Lobbying by Public Charities Act” of 1976. As former Sen. Ed Muskie said at the time, “If we are to maintain a democratic form of government ... we must assure that every segment of our society is able to communicate with Congress. It makes no sense to decide that these (non-profit) organizations operate in the public interest and grant them tax-exempt status, and then silence them when they attempt to speak to those who decide public policy.” While setting out clear limits on the amount such groups could spend on lobbying, his colleagues agreed.

Now, 10 years later, the IRS disagrees. The proposed rules would redefine “lobbying” virtually any reference to anything that is or may become the subject of a law, including any public debate that implies a legislative solution. Non-profit groups could lose their tax-exempt status — and thus the ability to raise money — just for speaking out on the subjects they know best. Some 330,000 non-profit organizations and the foundations that contribute to them may be affected.

If the new rules are adopted, a fundraising appeal on behalf of a senior organization might count as “lobbying” if it mentions any laws important to senior citizens. If MADD takes out an ad with information on drunken driving that mentions their support for stiffer sentences, the costs of the ad would count as a “lobbying” expense. If a children’s hospital reports a successful new procedure which the press links to an upcoming legislative battle, the hospital would find the costs associated with the study counted against its grassroots “lobbying” limit — because of how the media had used it. Private universities and research institutes might face a similar risk if their research were cited in a legislative debate.

Any group which exceeds its lobbying limits under these new rules (retroactive in some cases to 1976) could be subject to fines, or loss of their tax-exempt status — which effectively puts the democratic process “off limits” to most organizations that depend on donations. Trade associations, business groups, and unions do not come under the new rules.

Sanity could still prevail. The public has until April 3 to comment on the proposals, and Independent Sector, a coalition of over 600 corporate, foundation, and voluntary organizations members, is heading an effort to get the IRS to modify, or withdraw, their proposed regulations. But unless those who decide public policy, as well as those who contribute to it, speak up now, they may not get another chance.

Nancy Amidei is a free-lance journalist.