

# 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 it and be one with the natural world and with one another. PRAIRIE'S BOND OF UNION

Prairie Smoke (Sieversia flora)

Richard Bonser, Editor	274-3248
Mary Mullen, President	271-5192
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Meeting House	271-8218

Volume 25, Number 24 - Dec. 1, 1987

DEADLINE for the NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE will be SUNDAY, DEC. 13TH. Submit notices for the period Dec. 18th - Dec. 31st.

## CALENDAR

### Thursday, Dec. 3

12:00 AM - CHANNING MURRAY LUNCH at the Memorial Union.

### Sunday, Dec. 6

10:00 AM - "SEARCHING FOR RELIGION": Lance Green's lay ministry begins (see story and encl. questionnaire).  
11:30 AM - BUILDING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION  
5:30 PM - SPANISH SPEAKERS' POTLUCK meets at Prairie meetinghouse (see related story)  
5:30 PM - CHANNING-MURRAY MEETS at the First Society Hearth Room.  
6:30 PM - YRUU (7th-12th graders) at First Unitarian Society West Living Room; call Diane Derouen, 238-3766, for info.

### Monday, Dec. 7

7:30 PM - BUILDING FUND COMMITTEE at Prairie meetinghouse.

### Tuesday, Dec. 8

7:30 PM - LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE at Prairie meetinghouse.

### Thursday, Dec. 10

12:00 AM - CHANNING-MURRAY LUNCH at the Memorial Union.

### Friday, Dec. 11

5:30 PM - ETHNIC DINNER CIRCLE will meet at the Saigon Restaurant (see story) Call Pat Watkins for reservations by Dec. 9th.

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TO CHANGE ADDRESS OR STOP PRAIRIE FIRE,  
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### Sunday, Dec. 13

10:00 AM - "SECULAR HUMANISM - WHAT IS IT?": second in a series by lay minister Lance Green.  
11:30 AM - BUILDING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION  
11:45 AM - SOUPer Sunday Brunch (see related story).  
6:30 PM - YRUU (7th-12th graders) at First Unitarian Society Annex: Christmas Party! call Diane Derouen, 238-3766, for information.

### Wednesday Dec. 16

6:00 PM - PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING at the home of Dorothy Wetherby potluck meal - bring a dish to pass. All are welcome!

### Thursday, Dec. 17

12:00 AM - CHANNING-MURRAY LUNCH at the Memorial Union.

### Saturday, Dec. 19

7:30 PM - PLAYREADERS MEET at the home of Lynda Lewis, 5209 Tolman Terrace. (See related story)

## A Humanist Search for Religion

Lance Green's Lay Ministry--

SECULAR HUMANISM - What is it? Many fundamental questions arose as I tried to answer this one. Unitarian Universalism has been called a "religion of secular humanists". Is this what I am as a Prairie member? My ministry will help us all begin to answer these and other questions.

We'll start by "getting grounded" - to know ourselves better, both individually and as a "religious community", whatever that may be. To begin that process, I ask each member to complete the Views on

Religion questionnaire (more copies will be available at Prairie). We'll discuss the meaning of religion from both personal and group perspectives.

Then we'll dig into the words 'secular' and 'humanism'. How have their meanings evolved, both separately and when used together? Is secular humanism a religion? What do people who apply this term to themselves think and say? We'll spend one Sunday with a long-time fundamentalist minister who recently "self-converted" to secular humanism, and enjoy his free-thinking songs. On another Sunday, a local lawyer will give us historical perspectives to help us understand "What's all the fuss?"

Scotty Meek, Interim Minister at First Society, will join us to offer insight into our larger religious community - How did the principles of U-U evolve? Are U-Us indeed secular humanists? A panel of members of other religions will then show us that humanists need not be secular, that we can all share many important beliefs.

Finally, I'll help us to summarize what we've learned and celebrate our beliefs. Of course, I'm no expert on any of these topics, but I do intend to "...expand our intellectual horizons, enrich our sensory experiences, and deepen our emotional sensitivities...". Teens are specifically invited to and welcome at these services.

- Lance Green  
Lay Minister

### Building Design Feedback

Two special feedback sessions are scheduled on Dec. 6th and Dec. 13th after the morning services for Prairie members and friends to offer criticisms, comments, suggestions, petitions, or demands concerning the design of Prairie's remodeling plan. If you are unable to sit in on either session but have a suggestion, please mail it to Al Nettleton no later than Dec. 15th. Anything received after that date will probably be too late to be considered for incorporation into the final plans.

### Prairie Member Exhibits

Eric Hagstrom has an exhibit of his prints at the A-Space Gallery, in Steep & Brew, 544 State Street, until December 16th. All Prairie folk are invited to stop in and look it over!

### Spanish Speaker's Potluck

Everyone is welcome to come to the potluck dinner on Sunday, Dec. 6th, at 5:30 PM at Prairie. No great linguistic or culinary ability is necessary. Call Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382 or Faye Glessner at 251-5427 for more info.

### Ethnic Dinner Circle

This informal group meets once a month in a restaurant for food and fellowship. It is ideal for those who do not cook or have no place to entertain, but wish to be part of a dinner circle. The next meal will be at the Saigon Restaurant, 6802 Odana Road, on Friday, Dec. 11th, at 5:30 PM. For more details, see the last issue of Prairie Fire.

Reservations are due by 4:00 PM on Wed. Dec. 9th. Call Pat Watkins between 10:30 and 4:30 at work (262-7960).

### SOUPER Dooper Sunday

On Sunday, Dec. 13, Jim Novak will prepare his annual Soup Brunch for the Society. Jim will provide three (3) tasty soups, and asks the members to bring beverages and breads to go with the soups. (Ed. Note: Don't miss this one - Jim's a terrific soup cook!)

### Ebony Fashion Fair

The Ebony Fashion Fair will be held on Sunday, Dec. 13th, at 6:00 PM in the Sheraton Hotel on John Nolen Drive. Attendees may win a trip to any destination served by American Airlines, or a glamorous Ebony Fair outfit! Tickets are \$18.00 and are available from Carolyn Dejoie at either 274-2152 or 262-2730.

### Khoren Arisian to Speak

A cordial invitation is extended to the members and friends of Prairie Society to attend the seventh Minns Lecture, to be held at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, on Tuesday Dec. 15, 1987, at 7:30 PM. An informal reception will follow to meet with Khoren Arisian, the Minns Lecturer for 1987. The title of the lecture is "Beyond Modernism: Science and the Human Imagination in a Planetary Age".

Scotty Meek, First Society's interim minister, says "Khoren, in my opinion, is one of our more scholarly ministers, as well as an outstanding speaker." Mr. Arisian has been Minister of the

First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis since mid-1979, is a distinguished scholar, and has published over 80 articles on humanism, social ethics and liberal religious philosophy.

### Holiday Fun With Playreaders

An appreciation of plays is your ticket to join the Prairie Playreaders. We plan to meet at 7:30 PM on Dec. 19th, at Lynda Lewis', 5209 Tolman Terrace. Call Lynda at 271-2173 if you want information or directions.

Our play will be Quartermain's Terms, a 1981 award-winning comedy by British playwright Simon Gray. The play is set in the 1960's in a school teaching English to foreigners. Playreaders have previously read Gray's Butley and Otherwise Engaged.

### For Members Only... THE WORLD

"THE WORLD" is the journal of the Unitarian Universalist Association. It is published bi-monthly in a magazine format. It should come automatically to all members of Prairie. If you are a member, and have not received your copies this past year, please call Sharon Scrattish at 437-5915 so she can followup on the problem.

Members who have back issues of "THE WORLD" which they have finished with are asked to bring them to Prairie for members or friends who have not been receiving them. Please put the back issues on the table at the rear of the auditorium.

### Entertainment Books

Don't overlook the terrific bargain represented by the coupon book Entertainment '88 - fine dining, casual dining, theater, sports, retail discounts. The books sell for \$25 each and Prairie keeps \$5 for each one sold through Prairie.

You can help Prairie's operating budget by buying one yourself, giving one for Christmas, and selling several to your co-workers and neighbors. Books are available from Faye Glessner (251-5427).

### Room Needed

Karin Plum (daughter of member Linda Schaldach) is in need of a "room of her own" or an apartment to share. Karin is 24 and works in the Madison area.

If you have, or know of, a place for her, please call her at 251-0730.

- Rachel Siegfried

### Cross-Country Skiing Weekend

First Society has invited Prairie people to join their cross-country skiers in a skiing weekend to be held in Eagle River from Feb. 5th to the 8th. If you're interested in details, check Prairie's Bulletin Board under EVENTS or call Gordon or Vera Cunningham at 271-1246. Families are welcome.

\*\*\*\*\*  
CHANNING-MURRAY NEWS  
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### STIR FRY AND HOLIDAY SINGING

Channing-Murray will meet in the Hearth Room at First Unitarian Society at 5:30 PM on Dec. 6th for a stir-fry dinner and holiday singing. Bring a veggie and songs you'd like to sing! Come about 5 PM if you'd like to help with the cooking. We'll also have a short planning meeting for next semester. Hope you can come - all ideas and suggestions are welcome. If you need a ride or more information, call Cinda at 238-9884.

### U. U. YOUNG ADULTS TO ORGANIZE

U. U.'S from 18 to 35 are invited to attend a meeting to plan a Spring Conference. The meeting will be held on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM at the home of Marty Heine, 537 1/2 Euclid, Oak Park, IL. Bring a bag lunch. For more information or to arrange overnight accommodation, call Marty Heine at (312) 524-0451 or Barbara Need (312) 667-1916.

\*\* NOTE DATE CHANGE \*\*

### Committee Members Still Needed

The Building Remodeling Committee currently includes Al Nettleton, Tom Robinson, and Rick Ruecking. This committee will work with the architect and contractors to carry out the remodeling plan. The views and skills of Prairie women are specifically solicited! If you want to be involved in the process, notify Al, Tom, or Rick, or call president Mary Mullen at 271-5192.

## Building a Dream...

The building renovation project approved in September will greatly expand our R. E. space and will make all major facilities in our building handicapped accessible. It will also provide us with a new kitchen and multi-purpose office/R.E. space on the first floor.

**OUR GOAL:** to raise as much as possible of the funds required (\$85,000) by January, 1988, so that the Board can negotiate a loan for the balance and get bids for construction during the summer of 1988.

**PROGRESS REPORT:** As of Nov. 29th, Pledges amounting to \$25,010 had been received by the Building Fund Committee! Watch for some exciting social events designed to make this fund grow!

**SPECIAL NOTE:** The taxes on personal income are higher this year than they are for next year. It might be more beneficial for you to pay your pledge on the building this year as a tax deduction. Think about it...

## To Make a Prairie...

A Prairie member has pledged \$100 to create the new "prairie plant" garden. This member has also PLEDGED TO MATCH OTHER "PRAIRIE PLANT" GARDEN PLEDGES (up to a maximum of \$500). If you are interested in re-establishing our symbolic prairie, your extra gift for that purpose will automatically double in size!!

## Report from C M D

On Nov. 7 and 8, the Central Midwest District had a conference at the Unitarian Church of Evanston, IL. Kay Montgomery of the UUA in Boston gave the keynote address. I thought that her speech was quite timely, considering our circumstances here at Prairie, and thus worth summarizing here.

Kay came to talk to us about the importance of spreading the message of our liberal faith. It is her belief that if we are miserly with our message, we will die as a religious body. We can only be an influential church if we grow, and yet growth is not enough.

Growth is the result of 1) having a sense of identity with the global world and 2) having a skill in managing conflict within your own community rather than avoiding it. In addressing the issue of having a sense of identity with the global world, Kay asked all U Us to look honestly at who we are and what our "neighborhood" is. Is our neighborhood only those people who live

on either side of us? Does it only include those who have similar beliefs? Does it only include those who look like us or speak like us? If these are the limits of our neighborhood, then we have cut ourselves off from the rest of humanity. If we U-Us boast about having a high level of commitment to social change, then why are there very few blacks and foreigners who can be counted among our numbers? Do we shut others out because they aren't liberal enough, because they don't think the exact things we do, because they don't live in the right part of town? Let us hope not. At the same time, this is something that we all must think about seriously. We have to always be open to spreading the message even though we may not wish to have all people join us...

Kay also said that growth is the result of having the skill to manage conflict within the group. None of us can grow as individuals without going through some inner conflict. The same is true for any community. All growing communities must learn to enjoy their diversity. All members, new and old, must have a feeling of being heard. If all U-U communities can develop the skills necessary to manage conflict, we will grow as a church. In the meantime, people leave U-U churches frustrated. Many are to "break into" the inner circle of the established "old timers". They are unheard by people who want their church to remain what it has always been without looking forward to what it can be.

I think it would be wise for all of us here at Prairie to consider this message as we look forward to our new building. If the success of this effort is dependent upon growth, do we, as a congregation, possess the qualities that will make this possible?

- Alison McKee

\*\*\*\*\*  
R. E. CORNER  
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## Preschool and Nursery

On Dec. 6th, you will have your own special Nifty Gifty, just like the older children. Susan, Anna and Yasmine will help you create three gifts to give to your family and friends. If you can bring two pine cones, a picture of yourself, popsicle sticks, and the top from a can of frozen juice Susan will show you how to make great things with them! Come and enjoy your own Nifty Gifty.

On Dec. 13, you will explore celebrations of the season through stories and crafts with Susan.

#### Grades K-1-2

On Dec. 6, come and enjoy Nifty Gifty with your friends!

On Dec. 13, Jennifer will share the story of Mary and Joseph with you. Did you know that Joseph was a bit of an old grouch? Jennifer has a delightful carol to share with you about Joseph and a cherry tree.

#### Grades 3-4-5

On Dec. 6, come and enjoy Nifty Gifty with your friends! Remember to come early.

On Dec. 13, Rick will be taking you on a U-U pilgrimage. You will be learning about the roots of our U-U traditions. Can any of you guess what some of them may be?

#### Grades 6-7-8

On Dec. 6, you are going to spend the morning at Nifty Gifty with your friends. Remember to come early.

What do humanists believe about people? Is every person unique? Does each one of us count? Do some of us have rights that others of us should not be allowed to have? Come on December 13 and explore these issues with Cinda and Al.

#### UNICEF Drive Results

Three cheers for the children of Prairie for collecting \$113.00 for UNICEF this year. Thank you all for participating. A thank you must also be given to adults who helped their children on Halloween. Thanks to you all!

#### Love and Help Badge, Anybody?

The UUA publishes a program called Religion In Life, which is designed for use as an emblem award program for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. The program is such that any child age 7-11 may earn this emblem whether or not they are involved in scouting. The material comes in a work book format and is designed with independent work in mind. I am willing to assist anybody who is interested in working on this emblem. If you want to work on this program, please call me at 238-3302 by Dec. 1st so that I can order the materials for you. The cost of the booklets will be \$5.00.

- Alison McKee

## Y R U U ACTIVITIES

Y.R.U.U. activities are open to all Madison area 7th to 12th grade U-Us and their friends. Regular meetings are on Sundays from 6:00 to 8:30 PM at First Unitarian Society Meeting House. The Dec. 6th program will include a presentation by Sarah Richardson, a 10th grade U-U, about her recent experiences at a U-U Youth Conference at the United Nations in New York and a discussion of Y.R.U.U. goals. There will be a Christmas Party on Dec. 13th, and Dec. 20th will feature a Skating Party. There will be no meeting on Dec. 27th.

### Nifty Gifty Helper Needed

An adult is needed to help with a soldering project for older children on the Nifty Gifty day, Dec. 6th. For more information, call Metje Butler at 244-3659.

### Scholarships Available!

The Stanfield Scholarships Program offers financial assistance to Unitarian Universalist students in law school or to U. U. art students preparing for art in painting, drawing or sculpture. For more information, contact Mary Mullen at 271-5192. Applications must be received in Boston by February 15, 1988.

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SOCIAL ACTION ISSUES  
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### Interracial Dinner

The Friendly Supper Club again invites people of all colors to break bread together at 6:30 PM on Monday, Dec. 7th at the Ponderosa Steak House, 1605 S. Park Street. Bring (or make) a colorful friend!

### A R C Fruit Basket Sale

The Association for Retarded Citizens is selling two sizes of fruit baskets for holiday giving. The smaller one weighs 8 pounds and costs \$11.00. The larger one weighs 13 pounds and costs \$16.00. Both baskets include one pound of mixed nuts and candy, and the price includes local delivery. Baskets will be delivered between Dec. 18 and Dec. 24th.

Orders must be prepaid by Dec. 14th, and may be placed with Barb Barley at 249-5979.

## International Human Rights Day

An Ecumenical service for International Human Rights Day will be held on Thursday, Dec. 10, at 7:30 PM at Pres House, 731 State Street. The service is being planned by representatives from Southern Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Philippines with the help of Madison Campus Ministries and other religious communities. For further information, call Leslie Oakes at 246-3969.

## Donors Recognized

Special holiday cheers for Prairie members who are donating blood to the Red Cross this year. The gift of life was shared by Richard Bonser, Barbara James, Lynda Lewis, Patricia Meller, Fredericka Schilling, Judy Skog, and Betsy True.

We organized our One-A-Week club during 1987, but since we didn't start signing the Club Book until late spring, not all of our blood donations were registered. Each of our seven donors averaged about three donations this year.

We need six new members to achieve our One-A-Week goal. If you need information, call Lynda Lewis, 271-2173, or the Red Cross, 233-9300.

## Madison Urban League

The Madison Urban League is seeking your support in order to continue vital services to single teen parents, high risk youth, the unemployed, and disadvantaged people in our community. Your membership and input will assist us in reaching individuals who have no other advocate but the Urban League.

Membership application and program details are available at Prairie. For more information, call the Urban League at 251-8550.

## Light a Light on the Tree of Life

HospiceCare, Inc. invites you to join them for a 'Tree Lighting Ceremony' on Dec. 3 at 7:00 PM at the Hilldale Shopping Center. HospiceCare is a non-profit agency providing supportive services to terminally ill patients and families in Dane County. A \$10.00 donation will light a light on the 'Tree of Life' outside of the Atrium Entrance. Each light represents a person or family important to them in some way. To make a donation, or for more information, call 238-3399.

