

**Return to:**

Editor  
Prairie U.U. Society  
5213 Milward Drive  
Madison, WI 53711

Jack Jallings,  
4761 Schneider Dr.  
Oregon, WI 53575

Non Profit Org.  
**U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID**  
Madison, WI  
Permit No. 1604

# Prairie Fire



**Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society**  
2010 Whenona Drive, Madison, WI 53711

Jack Jallings, President ..... 835-3746      Anne Pryor, R. E. Director ..... 244-7099  
Julia Bonser, Treasurer ..... 274-3248      Meeting House ..... 271-8218  
To Change Address Or Cancel PRAIRIE FIRE, Call Richard Bonser, Editor.....274-3248

Production Assistant - Susan Hagstrom

## Vol. 30, No. 8, 4-14-92

The deadline for the next issue of **Prairie Fire** will be Sunday, April 26. Submit items for April 30—May 14, 1992.

# CALENDAR

### Thursday, April 16

7:00 PM

PRAIRIE MEN'S GROUP meets at the meetinghouse.

### Sunday, April 19

10:00 AM

"THE FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN THE SPRING, TRA-LA," an inter-generational service coordinated by Susan Hagstrom & Metje Butler.

### Monday, April 20

7:30 PM

PRAIRIE BOARD MEETS at the Meetinghouse.

### Tuesday, April 21

4:30 PM

PRAIRIE BAND PRACTICE at the meetinghouse.

7:30 PM

PRAIRIE PROGRAM COMMITTEE meets at the meetinghouse. All interested persons are invited to attend.

### Friday, April 24

5:30 PM

FISH DINNER CIRCLE MEETS at Rhode's Restaurant in High Point Commons (off of Mineral Point Road). Call Pat Watkins at 262-7960 (days) by Wednesday, Apr. 22 to make a reservation.

### Sunday, April 26

10:00 AM

"LET US REACH OUT TO TOUCH AND BE ONE WITH THE NATURAL WORLD, AND WITH ONE ANOTHER," presented by lay minister Peg Barrat.

11:30 AM

POTLUCK LUNCH at the meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share!

12:30 PM

ANNUAL SPRING PARISH MEETING at the meetinghouse. (See related stories)

3:00-5:00 PM

AYS CLASS MEETS at the Meetinghouse. Parents please note change of time!

### Tuesday, April 28

4:30 PM

PRAIRIE BAND PRACTICE at the meetinghouse.

### Wednesday, April 29

7:30 PM

Prairie Talespinners Meet at the meetinghouse. The topic for the meeting is Dreams. Come and join us if you like telling (or hearing) stories, both real and imaginary.

### Thursday, April 30

7:00 PM

PRAIRIE MEN'S GROUP meets at the

meetinghouse.

### Sunday, May 3

9:00 AM

PANCAKE BREAKFAST AT PRAIRIE—a fundraiser coordinated by Bob Nelson. Please call Bob at 255-8630 to volunteer your help!

10:00 AM

"ON THE OUTSIDE, LOOKING OUT," led by George Calden.

### Friday, May 22—

Sunday May 24

Memorial Day Canoe Trip and Campout at Wildcat Mountain State Park.

### Today's Quote:

"Cynic: *n.* A blackguard whose faulty vision sees things as they are, not as they ought to be."

—AMBROSE BIERCE



## The Flowers That Bloom...

The Easter service will be an intergenerational service based on springtime. We ask that everyone bring thoughts, stories, poetry, art, music, or slides relating to spring and flowers to share with the congregation. It can be your own work or just something you admire tremendously.

...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

The Oldest and Largest Lay-Led Society in the UUA

## Spring Parish Meeting!

Prairie's annual spring parish meeting will be held on **Sunday, April 26, at 12:30 PM**. The meeting follows the morning service and a **POTLUCK LUNCH at 11:30**. The agenda includes the report of the Committee on Committees; election of the Executive Board, three members of the Committee on Committees, and two delegates to the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly this summer; officers and standing committee reports; and consideration of two resolutions concerning the possible founding of a third U.U. society in Madison (see article below).

## Nominations Report

The following is a list of nominations for each office on the Prairie Board as proposed by the Committee on Committees. This slate will be voted on by the Parish as a whole at the coming Spring Parish Meeting.

- President: Julie Bonser
- Vice President: Al Nettleton
- Secretary: Jennifer Parker
- Treasurer: Susan Hagstrom
- Finance Chair: Jim Harvey
- R.E. Chair: Dean Schroeder
- Program Chair: Mike Briggs
- Soc. Action Chair: Sharon Scrattish
- Housing & Prop. Chair: Karen Gross
- Long Range Plan. Chair: Mary Mullen
- Denom. Affairs Chair: Beth Lovern
- Membership Chair: Heidi Oliverson

## The Annual Retreat

Several weeks ago 45 Prairie members completed a questionnaire on annual retreat choices while waiting for the potluck after the Sunday program. Here is a summary of their responses.

- 45 wanted Prairie to continue its annual retreat weekend.
- 34 agreed that the actual location of the retreat was not important if the program met their needs.
- 30 said they were interested in a weekend retreat at both Bethel Horizon and Upham Woods.
- 7 said that they were only interested in a weekend retreat at Bethel Horizon.
- 7 said that they were only interested in a weekend retreat at Upham Woods.

Members were asked to rate on a scale from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important) various weekend program elements.

- 37 rated companionship as being

most important to their weekend.

- 31 rated musical activity (listening or doing) as very important.
- 27 listed satisfying nutritious foods.
- 24 listed children's activities.
- 23 listed physical exercise.
- 22 listed time out for themselves.
- 20 listed nature activities.
- 27 stated that lodging (other than in a sleeping bag in a tent or in a bunk bed) was of lesser importance.

A number of members took the opportunity to volunteer comments as to how the annual retreats could be improved. Here are some of the comments about Upham Woods:

- "It is becoming a desert from overuse. The island is over-run by deer and people. Wild flowers have become very scarce."
- "A very special place."

Eight members volunteered negative comments about the Upham Woods dining room staff—three others urged Prairie to be more understanding of the staff's point of view. Four members offered negative comments about the food, ranging from "mediocre and costly" to "I want more fruit, vegetables, and whole grains" and simply "brunch."

Comments about the annual retreat program were more positive. Three said that the program balance was generally satisfactory; four wanted to keep or expand folk dancing and there was one request each for more singing, music, icebreaking activities, mask making, and a break from activities.

Some chose to comment on the idea of the 1992 annual retreat taking place at Bethel Horizon: "an interesting change," "a fine facility (though I'd miss the river and the island)," "the trails are accessible to the handicapped!" (very important to a few of us), "I'd like the retreat at a time of the year when we could swim," lastly, four members commented positively on the opportunity to camp in tents or trailers and several pointed out that this would make the weekend a less expensive proposition for them.

Bethel Horizon is a non-profit retreat developed on an old farm adjacent to Governor Dodge State Park by the Bethel Lutheran Church. It is available to Prairie for the Labor Day Weekend.

- Norma Briggs

## Board Action on Retreat

Since our application to Upham Woods

had to be received by April 15th for the only weekend open, October 16-18, the Executive Board was polled by telephone prior to its regular meeting on April 20th. In light of the survey response reported above and the fact that the Upham Woods staff could not guarantee that we would get that weekend (someone else might apply for it before our application was received), a strong majority voted to have the retreat on Labor Day weekend at Bethel Horizon this year. More details about the program and arrangements will be reported if future issues of **Prairie Fire**.

## A Third Society?

A committee of members of First Unitarian Society and myself as a representative of Prairie is exploring founding a third U.U. congregation in Madison. With the current growth at First Society, it seems this is the time to plan for future UU growth in this area. The denomination, through its offices in Boston, is supportive of expanding and developing new congregations interested in employing a minister.

Before proceeding further, however, the committee asked whether Prairie Society might be interested in significantly expanding and becoming a ministerial congregation as a way to serve more people in the community. This was discussed with the Prairie Board and it was decided to give Prairie members the opportunity to explore this option and vote on it at the April Annual Meeting of the membership.

The Board was clear in its support for the growth of Unitarian Universalism. The question is whether the members of Prairie as a society wish to continue as a lay-led "fellowship" as it has for most of the twenty-five years of its existence or become a larger, ministerial "church." If Prairie decided to continue as a fellowship, the committee will proceed to begin planning for another U.U. congregation in Madison. We hope all members will give this question their serious consideration. Talk about it with other members, especially in circle dinner groups, ask questions, and come to the Annual Meeting to give your input and vote.

The membership will be asked to vote for one of two options as a referendum. The first states that Prairie supports the creation of a third U.U. society. This

implies Prairie would maintain its present organization. The second states that Prairie would be interested in becoming a part of an expanded ministerial society. The preamble to each resolution would be the same. The texts of the resolutions are:

Whereas Madison Unitarian Universalists have identified potential for growth in the community, and whereas First Unitarian Society has established a committee and invited Prairie's participation to explore the creation of an additional Unitarian Universalist congregation in Madison, and whereas there is potential for support of a "ministerial" congregation, A. Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society supports in whatever way possible the creation by Madison Unitarian Universalists of a third congregation in Madison. OR B. Prairie wishes to further explore the potential for Prairie itself becoming part of an expanded ministerial society.

Please call me at 238-6053 if you have questions or comments.

- Aileen Nettleton

## On the Outside, ...

If you enjoyed the service "Prairie Stir Fry" presented a year or so ago, you'll appreciate "On the Outside, Looking Out." Come celebrate the uniqueness of our Prairie Society through song, humor, inspiration and especially through group discussion of issues of rational, emotional and spiritual significance.

- George Calden

## REnaissance Module

The UUA has training seminars for Religious Education Coordinators called REnaissance Modules. These are a series of intense and in depth 20 hour long sessions on a variety of topics: teacher training, worship, UU identity, curricula, UU history, administration, and youth. The module "Ministry with Youth" is a newer one and was offered for the first time in the Central Midwest District at the beginning of April. I attended and was rewarded with a new and more complete understanding of what a society's and the denomination's youth program could and does include. I also came away with many ideas that could be valuable to Prairie's youth program and to the whole of our RE program.

I will be attending my fifth REnaissance module (UU identity) this summer at Lake Geneva Summer Assembly. Five modules is the goal the UUA has for DRE's and typically (but not consistently) recognizes their completion of five modules with a pin and note of congratulations.

- Anne Pryor, DRE

## Teacher Recruitment and Super-Training

The RE Committee is currently in the process of recruiting leaders for the RE sessions next year. The curricula will be: "A Place of One's Own" ("Haunting House") for the primary grades, "Holidays and Holy Days" for the intermediate grades, and "The Church Across the Street" for the middle school. If anyone has an interest in leading an RE section next year or in being an advisor for either the junior or senior high youth groups and would like to find out more of what's involved, please contact either Lindy Sheehy or Dean Schroeder.

For those who will be working in the RE program as leaders or advisors next year, there is a district-wide training that will take place on May 16 in Naperville, IL. I will be contacting you with specific information, but until then, try to keep that date open! Prairie has received funding from the district to send people to this training, so a sincere thank-you to them!



## R.E. Spring Fling

Flashlight tag, face painting, stories, games and a giant sub were the highlights of the (first annual?) RE spring party. Fourteen children, plus two neighborhood kids who joined us for a while, and five adults enjoyed each other's company and the clear-skied, warm night.

## In Our Hands

The results of the society-wide survey were such that this group has decided

to adopt a dolphin through the Oceanic Project Dolphin, and a section of South American rain forest, via the Rain forest Action Network. They will need to raise \$60 for these projects, \$35 and \$25 respectively, so come on Sunday mornings prepared to purchase and enjoy donuts and baked goods.

This group is planning to keep the society members informed about the adopted dolphin and forest through a bulletin board and **Prairie Fire** articles. Prairie members are invited to bring in related articles for the group to read and possibly display. This group is led by Kate Tucker and Bob Nelson.

## Time Travels

Hindu beliefs and practices are still the focus for this group. In the April 5 session, they watched sections of the film "Gandhi" and discussed civil disobedience, nonviolence and strength through nonviolence. This group is led by Sita Bhaskar and Cindy Haq.

## Caring Hands

this group focused on the theme of nature and the web of interdependence. This was illustrated by drawing a web of interdependence on an apple tree and by making dream catchers, to signify the webs of the children's own interdependence. All had an excellent grasp of why we all need each part of nature. This session was led by Heidi Oliveresen.

## Pre-School/Nursery

Currently, the favorite game among these youngest Prairie folk is "What's Missing?," a type of picture lotto. Other activities enjoyed are modeling with play-dough, painting with watercolors at the easel, listening to/looking at picture books, and setting up the marble track. Emilie Dickson is the primary care giver for this group, assisted by Nora Bosch and Lili Sandler. Due to these three high-schoolers being at a YRUU Conference (Emilie & Nora) and at the abortion rights rally in Washington (Lili) last weekend, two fathers took their place. Thank you to Carl Wacker and Jim Harvey for filling in.

## SOCIAL ACTION

### Alternative "High"

Why do people give blood? Each donor may have a little different explanation for an answer, but most often, people say "because it feels good." When we find it hard to give financially to many helpful causes, it's great to know we can give blood, the marvelous gift of life—for free. Join our One-A-Week Club... and be sure to sign the Donor Book on the "Unitarians" page at the clinic or blood drive location, so Prairie Society is credited with your donation.

### Grass Roots News

The Social Action Committee is pleased to announce that we will be publishing in the **Prairie Fire** monthly reports of what's happening currently on various committees, boards, etc. around town—as gleaned by the Democracy Watch observers. (Democracy Watch was described in the 3-17 issue of **Prairie Fire**) Democracy Watch monitors these meetings because of past decisions made before there was even public awareness of an issue.

Democracy Watch is pleased to have us use their material, and I feel it will be very advantageous to have "in progress" news rather than "after the fact" news which is already widely available. Most Democracy Watch observers are attending meetings about environmental concerns such as pedestrian/bike paths, light rail and expansion of John Nolan Drive. Nancy Graham will be writing up the Democracy Watch reports, and I will be her alternate. The next Democracy Watch meeting is at 11:00 AM Saturday, April 18th, at 425 W. Mifflin Street.

- Sharon Scrattish  
Social Action Chair

## MISCELLANY

### Coffee Service Volunteers

The following persons have volunteered to set up the coffee service on Sunday mornings.

Apr. 19 Heidi Oliverson  
Apr. 26 Barbara Rames  
May 3 ??  
May 10 ??

The following have volunteered to wash dishes after Sunday services.

Apr. 19 Aileen Nettleton & ??  
Apr. 26 Rick Ruecking & ??  
May 3 ??  
May 10 Alice & Lee Bullen  
and Julia Riley

The following have signed up to greet visitors on Sunday mornings.

Apr. 19 Jaen Andrews  
Apr. 26 Barbara Rames  
May 3 ??  
May 10 ??

Any volunteers who cannot work on the day they've signed up, please let Anne Urbanski know so she can locate a substitute.

### MATC Supershow!

The Community Swing Choir and the New College Singers will present an All Broadway Program on May 1st and 2nd at MATC. See Barb Park, one of the participants, for tickets—only \$5 each!

### Voice Recital

Barb Park will sing at Oakwood Village auditorium on May 20th at 7:30 PM. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### Change of Address

Karen Gross has a new address. It is:  
843 Williamson Street, #7  
Madison, WI 5703  
Phone: 259-0556  
Please update your directories.