The deadline for the next issue of Prairie Fire will be Sunday, January 15. Submit items for January 20 and later.

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**Who's Calling The Shots?**

Often, there is a link between violence depicted on television and in movies and war toys. Children's programs that regularly depict violence often promote toys that encourage children to imitate the actual behaviours that they see on the screen. The problem is exacerbated by the increased availability and consumption of toy and media violence. TV is present in 98% of US homes. Video games that combine toy and entertainment violence are one of the fastest growing markets for children. Of children under the age of 10, 30% play video games.

**The Path to Creativity**

The last of Cinda LaMar's lay ministry series on "UU Principles through the Visual Arts" will include congregational participation in creating a three dimensional community sculpture through weaving. Children in our Prairie UU community are also invited to participate. Please bring bits of yarn, ribbon, leather, and thread—also objects such as shells, feathers, beads and so on that can be woven and added to the beauty.

**Cross-Country Skiing**

First Society once again invites Prairie to participate in the X-country skiing weekends to be held at Trees for Tomorrow on the weekends of January 20-22 and January 27-29. Contact Dave Welo at 273-2639 for additional information.

**Prairie Patter**

Friday I drove to Decatur, Ill. for the winter Central Midwest District Board meeting. We met for four hours Friday evening and for eight and one half hours Saturday at the Decatur UU Fellowship after which I drove back to Madison. Sunday I was at Prairie from 9:30 to 12:30. Today Anne Urbanski and I spent a few hours preparing for the service next Sunday. When it came time to write this column I had run out of steam to compose a coherent statement. So what you get is a series of impressions.

I enjoy visiting the UU societies in this District. The Decatur Fellowship meets in their own building, built a few years ago. They say they have 65 members and a part time minister which they share with the Springfield congregation. Their meeting space is smaller than our meeting room. It

...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
who was a famous orator and journalist. We heard a speech he gave for a 4th of July celebration in 1852. We wondered if he had contacts with Unitarians or Universalist during his career. Some of us seemed stimulated to do more research about his life and times. The closing words from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. remind us, “True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.”

Please be careful when walking into or away from Prairie this season. The sidewalks were shoveled yesterday however there was still some ice in patches. Carl Thompson had a bad fall leaving the meeting house, he cut his nose, knocked out a tooth, and has several cuts in his mouth. We wish him a speedy and complete recovery. He and Marion would appreciate your calls at 608/873-3616.

Blessed be-
-Juliie Baser
President

Denominational Affairs...

The Denominational Affairs Committee of Prairie is leading two services dealing with resolutions that are being studied by congregations this year. The resolutions will be voted on at the next UUA General Assembly. The first service (see “Who’s Calling The Shots?”) is about the role of television in promoting violence in our society and especially its impact on children. The RE program for children will also involve the children in activities to help them confront this issue.

The second service, later in February, will address Homelessness and Housing. If you are interested in helping with this service, please call Rachel Siegfried at 271-2173. Our thanks to the committee for involving the congregation in the study of these important topics.

CODA Programs

The new Central Midwest District Committee on Disability and Access (CODA) has begun its work. They began meeting in July and received official status from the CMD Board in September. CODA’s mission is to gather and disseminate information and to educate and support congregations in serving persons with disabilities. It also offers support and information resources on issues of disability and access for district activities.

As part of CODA’s mission to provide informational resources, it is developing a resource list. The publication that tops this list is the National Organization on Disability’s That All May Worship: An Interfaith Welcome to People with Disabilities. CODA has asked that this book be made available through both the CMD office and the UUA Bookstore. We are also preparing a packaged service on disability and access for the Church-in-a-Bag library.

CODA will present two workshops this year, beginning at the 1995 WomanSpirit gathering on January 28. On April 1 CODA will present an accessibility training worship service at the CMD Annual Meeting at Camp Alexander Mack in Indiana. Each Area Council and District Committee is urged to send a representative for this training.

To learn more about CODA, to propose projects, or for information on an issue of disability or access, contact CODA’s chair, Susan Grider, 215 Rockford Ave., Forest Park, IL 60130 (312-753-3286 days).

From the CMD Messenger, January 1995

Our Deepest Sympathy...

Is extended to Bonnie and Larry Miller-Murdock on the recent death of Bonnie’s mother after an extended struggle with cancer.

Seeking Ten Good (Wo)Men

I wish to bring to the Spring Parish Meeting an amendment to the Bylaws of Prairie. In view of the continued shortage of money, and the awkwardness and difficulty of determining who our members truly are when we are called upon for the church audit, I believe it is time for us to look once again at adding a financial obligation to the definition of membership. This was debated by a Bylaws revision committee a number of years ago, and was turned down by the committee.

Let’s reassess the logic of such a change. The present Bylaw requires that members need only to be sixteen years old, and have signed the membership book. I would like to see added to that: “and have paid, by November 1st of each year, the fees required for each member by the national U.U. office (or requested in writing that these be paid for them).” This would mean that every member would have to make a minimum pledge of these fees, which would save us from submitting fees for those who do not wish to assume the obligations of membership, and would give us the added assurance of who our members are and how many of them we have. I would appreciated hearing from those of you who would favor such an amendment to our Bylaws—or, who would strongly oppose it. Please call me at 233-5795.

Thanks: Pat Watkins

Prairie Service Auction

Run for your calendars, Prairie’s eagerly awaited Service Auction is scheduled for Sunday February 19, 1995 at noon at Prairie. There will be food to purchase for lunch. There will be lots of bargains on great stuff, and lots of fun as well (thanks to our auctioneer extraordinaire, Orange Schroeder).

We are looking for donations of services and goods (baked goods or things too good for a rummage sale). Please consider your skills, talents, and interests. Something that you do well, and enjoy doing may well be something that someone else hates doing and is willing to pay to have done. What skills or talents do your children have? Would they be interested in donating some babysitting or yard raking? I’d love for someone else to wash my windows! Is there a service you are particularly interested in buying? Maybe we can find someone to do it?

Please contact Judy Skog before January 29 with your services, goods or wish list to buy. I will compile them for the next Prairie Fire so that people will have a chance to submit bids by mail or phone before the auction.

Then plan to come to the auction to catch all those great bargains. Bring a friend, bring your mother, bring your co-worker, but come! Challenge yourself to bring one new person to Prairie.

PYGs

On Saturday, January 7 the PYGs met to play broomball. The air was cold, the river was frozen, only one broom handle broke, and Gary Giorgi made lots of points for his team. It was a lot of fun.
The next social gathering will be on February 4 at Elver Park, weather permitting, to cross country ski and sled. If the weather isn’t good for those activities, then we’ll go bowling instead. More details will follow.

The 7th and 8th graders of Brookfield, WI’sUU Church West will be hosting a junior YRUU conference on March 11-12. The focus is Native American ways and spirituality. Workshop topics will include: bead weaving, cornhusk dolls, wolf teaching, music, acting, story telling, dream catchers, meditation and leadership. See Anne Pryor for registration information if interested in attending.

Honehe-Con is Next

The Madison Brass will hold a Benefit Concert for the Dane County Jail Ministry on Sunday, February 12 at 2:00 PM at Luther Memorial Church, 1021 University Ave. Adults: $5.00, Children 10 and under free. To order advance tickets send SASE to MALC, 4503 Baxter Rd. Cottage Grove, WI 53527. Free parking is available under Grainger Hall or the parking lot at Johnson & Mills. Call 839-5686 for information.

Volunteers Needed...

For the Homeless Shelter, Prairie is responsible for staffing two shifts on the fourth Monday of each month at Grace Episcopal Homeless Shelter. The shifts are 7:15 PM to midnight, and 5 AM to 8 AM. The evening shift includes serving dinner and bringing a gallon of milk, and the second shift includes serving breakfast and bringing a box of cereal.

Thank you to Barbara Rames and Alice Schuman who worked the evening shift in December and Pat Cauley and Mike Briggs who worked the morning shift in December. We’re all extremely busy and shifts are difficult to fill, particularly the early morning.

Planning and Dreaming Potluck

All Prairie adults (not just parents and RE leaders) are invited to an informal dinner gathering on Saturday evening, February 4, at 6:00 PM. We will meet at the home of Cyndy Haq and Bob Lawrence, 2886 Stony Ridge Circle, between Madison and Verona. Bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share. The main course and beverage will be provided. We’ll enjoy each other’s company and share ideas on the Prairie RE program, present and future. Please come! Call 845-8065 for more information or directions. (Dean Schroeder

Wild, Wild Wintering!

The Wild Wintering party on January 7 was a huge success! We started by making and devouring six pizzas, then headed outside for an hour of sledding under the stars. Back inside, we played a series of group games including “Murderer” and “Wink” until midnight tolled, and we snacked on apples. In the morning we breakfasted on scrambled eggs, cereal, and toast, then cleaned up to “erase every trace.” Sixteen (16) kids spent the night and I was extremely pleased and proud to be with them.

(Many thanks to Dean and to Erin Bosch for their efforts that evening...Ed.)

Tatonka-Kon is Coming

January 20-22 at Eliot Chapel, St. Louis, MO, for 9th graders and up to 20 year olds. Anne Pryor has registration materials or call Rebecca at (314) 968-8841 for information.

Homeless Men Need Help

Prairie RE groups are having a drive for homeless men. They need our help getting supplies like: brushes, combs, toothbrushes, toothpaste, little bars of soap, winter hats, winter mittens, winter gloves, thick socks, razors, shaving cream, shampoo, conditioner, washcloths, and individually packed snacks.

So if you can, bring any of these things in to Prairie on Sunday, January 15, 22, and the last day the 29. Please bring in what ever you can. There will be clearly marked places where you can put your donations.

Thank you for being part of the RE drive for homeless men.

Food Pantry

Let’s not forget to bring those food items for the Food Pantry of the Allied Drive area. Make sure that your contributions are non-perishable and, if you forget the food, money is also useful.

Consider Homeshare

Looking for low rent or free housing, or know someone who is? If you or someone you know would enjoy providing some companionship and household assistance to an older adult, that person could qualify for free or reduced rent. Contact Independent Living at 274-7900.

Legislation Alert!

The new Republican majority is proposing a Block Grant for Nutrition Programs. This would mean putting an end to assistance from the Federal government to Nu-
These programs include Meals on Wheels for the elderly, reduced price and free school lunch programs, summer meal programs for low income children, WIC, and CACFP, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which provides reimbursement to day care providers for feeding children nutritious meals.

Without Federal government involvement, all nutrition programs would have to compete for state funds and would receive less money. Federal nutrition standards for food would be removed (for example, milk might not have to be served to children and ketchup would be a vegetable!). The loss of this program altogether would deter many day care providers from becoming licensed, resulting in less training and less adequate care for children.

Please write your Congress persons to say No to the Block Grant for Nutrition Programs. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 238-7090.

- Sue Howe

**Florida Hostel Program**

UU in the Pines, Inc. Retreat Center, Brooksville, Fl. requests we let our members and friends know about their Bed and Breakfast and Canoe Hostel Program held in Central Florida. Information will be in the turn rack in the back of the meeting room.

**Conference on Aging**

Wisconsin will convene a Governor's White House Conference on Aging on March 7, 1995 at the Dane County Forum, in Madison, WI. Conference members will participate in caucuses to discuss and prepare resolutions on specific topics related to national aging policy. The recommendations will be summarized in a report to be submitted in late March to the White House Conference on Aging and will be used in preparing material for the national conference to be held on May 2-5, 1995 in Washington DC.

Registration is $10.00 and includes lunch, breaks and materials. They will be accepted until February 17, 1995. Copies of registration forms will be in the turn rack at the back of the meeting room.