The deadline for the next issue of Prairie Fire is Sunday, September 10. Submit items for September 14 through 28.

**President's Column**

*Chant of the seasons:*

Summer was hailed in last Sunday's program, organized by Barb Park, Rosemarie Lester, and Doleta Chapru. They brought together a terrific cast of Prairie characters to salute summer, and we salute them all.

Prairie summer will end with a potluck picnic at Carl and Marian Thompson's on Labor Day. Bring all the tomatoes and sweet corn you have grown.

*Into the Fall:*

The "church year" begins with the full moon on September 9. Our new lay ministries begin as does the religious education program led by the new DRE, John-Brian Paprock.

Among the best activities that Prairie presents during the year is thought by many of us to be the fall retreat at Camp Upham Woods. Prairie will convene there November 10 to 12 for a full weekend of program opportunities. I am hopeful that your family will participate in both the planning and presentation of programming.

Prairie will need two volunteers—a registrar and a program coordinator—to assure an exciting yet problem-free weekend. Let me know of your interest, as we have past files and program designs to assist your efforts.

*----* "The road ... taken," presented by Michael Sheehy. First in an ecology-based lay ministry series. (See story.)

*11:30 AM* WOMEN'S GROUP meets, potluck lunch.

*Monday, September 18*

7:30 PM PRAIRIE BOARD MEETING, at Prairie.

*Tuesday, September 19*

7:30 PM SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE meets, at Prairie. All welcome.

*Sunday, September 24*

9:00 AM Choir Practice

10:00 AM "VIETNAM: HEALING AND RECONCILIATION," presented by Mike Boehm, Vietnam veteran and peace advocate. (See story.)

*Saturday, September 30*

7:30 PM PLAYREADERS, home of Al and Aileen Nettleton, 645 Sheldon Street, 238-6053. All welcome. (See story.)

TODAY'S QUOTE

"I take a breath when I have to." ----*Ethel Merman*

**Production Assistants**——Marilyn Peters and Dick Bonser

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...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

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The Oldest and Largest Lay-Led Society in the UUA
The Road...Taken

"There are many paths to the summit," according to a wise saying from India. On Sunday, September 10, Barbara Rames will present a personal sharing of experiences and messages along her path, in a service entitled, "The Road...Taken." This is the first in a series of different, yet interconnected lay ministry presentations in which she will provide what promises to be a very enriching perspective on UU history and thought. She calls the series "Harvest."

Web of Life

On September 17, Mike Shoehy begins a six-part, lay ministry series called, "Web of Life." The ministry, which evolved out of Mike's interest in land stewardship, will deal with major ecological issues of our day. It has been scheduled for one Sunday a month throughout the fall, and on into 1996. Programs planned so far include:

- September 17: The Ecological Theater and the Evolutionary Play. The title for this service comes from a book by the same name written by Dr. G. Edlyn Hutchinson. Mike will discuss "theater-play" and other powerful metaphors for the ecosystem, pointing out how these colorful phrases serve as philosophies of life, describing the dynamic nature of the ecosystem/universe and our role in it. He will also offer a potpourri of recent ecological news.
- October 8: Can Humans Save the Earth from Humans? This program will be based on Al Gore's book, Earth in the Balance.
- November 5: Wisconsin State Representative Spencer Black will speak on a topic of his choice, possibly current ecological issues in the legislature.
- December 3: Robert Dahl of The Nature Conservancy will talk about that organization's work in purchasing and protecting land of key ecological importance in Wisconsin and elsewhere.

Several ecological topics for the remaining programs are currently under consideration.

Vietnam Healing

Vietnam veteran and peace advocate, Mike Boehm, will discuss two important Vietnamese peace projects on Sunday, September 24, in a program titled "Vietnam: Healing and Reconciliation." He will describe the creation of the Vietnam Peace Park, 30 miles northeast of Hanoi, and modeled after The Wisconsin Peace Park. Boehm will also discuss the rotating small loans program for Vietnamese women which has proved successful in helping Third World families. He will illustrate his talk with slides of both projects.

Choir Rehearsals

Choir rehearsals will begin again at 9:00 am on September 10. If you always wanted to sing, this would be a great time to join. No previous choral or singing experience is necessary. Come and sing with us. If you have questions, call Barb Park at 273-8775.

Playreaders

Prairie Playreaders meet once a month at members' homes. Everyone is welcome to attend, whenever the spirit moves you. Theatrical experience is not necessary; neither is a commitment to the group. All you need is an enjoyment of literature and theater, an enjoyment of open discussions, and the desire to get together for a social evening. Information on play titles, dates and locations will be printed in the Prairie Fire about two weeks before each meeting. Please join us if you can.

Following is the schedule of meeting dates and hosts for the 1995-96 year. We hope it will help you avoid conflicts when planning other events. September 30, Al and Aileen Nettleton; October 21, Paula Pachiarz and Carl Wacker; November 18, Shirley and John Grindrod; December, no playreading; January 13, Rachel Siegfried; February 17, Susan Hagstrom; March 23, Pat Watkins; April 20, Rosemary Dorney and Tim Fast; May 24, annual fish dinner.

Editor Sought

The Prairie Fire needs an editor to begin within the month. This function has been most recently performed by Fran Zell, our administrator, who has resigned. The newsletter takes about 8 to 10 hours every two weeks and is an essential church function. Experience with the Macintosh operating systems is helpful. If you are interested in this position or know of someone who is, please call Rick Ruecking at 238-2924. The Board will take up the question of replacing the administrator at its next meeting.

Upham Woods

Plan on attending our fall retreat November 10 to 12 at Camp Upham Woods near The Dells. Put the dates into your family calendar now. Retreat activities require two volunteers: a registrar and program coordinator. If you have attended in the past and have not filled one of these positions, we have an opportunity for you! There are files from past years to guide your efforts.

Circle Dinners

We need someone to organize circle dinners for the 1995-96 year. It's a simple task which involves seeking participants, then assigning them to various groups. It's your chance to determine who will be in your circle dinner group this year!

Membership

Prairie needs a new chairperson for the membership committee, as Kerry Beheler-Amass has resigned. The committee works to incorporate new members into the Society and organize existing members into regular Society functions. It's an important job!

From the DRE

It looks to be an exciting year ahead. For me, it will be filled with new experiences. Religious Education will begin September 10 this year. Please plan to come a half hour early (9:30 a.m.) to register and visit.

Almost all of the annual special events and occasions are planned, including the parent-teacher coffees following the service on specific Sundays. This is a great opportunity for parents to talk with teachers and for building strength in religious education. The tradition of "Spirit Circles" for all students will continue monthly. Due to the unique
schedule this year, the K-8 service project Sundays will take place in the spring.

As reported last issue, we will be introducing a teen program this year. A regular Sunday curriculum will be coordinated by K. K. Anderson, with help from Randy Converse and myself. We are coordinating with First Society and James Reeb to include their teens as well.

Almost all of the teachers needed for the '95-'96 year have committed. There is only one spot to fill: Preschool. So if you are called over the next weeks, we need you.

It will take a little time to become familiar with the names and faces, processes and procedures at Prairie, but I have been assured that I won’t be alone.

Until next time, may the God of your understanding grant you peace and blessings.

John-Brian Paprock

Upcoming Events

September 10: 1995-96 RE Program begins

November 21 or 22: Fall Frolic (We need some help planning this annual event.)

October 27-29: MADCON 4 (Central Midwest District teen conference)

November 10: Nifty-Gifty (Start now to save natural items and recyclables for this annual winter event.)

Broken Hoop

Does anyone know how the basketball hoop downstairs broke? It’s a popular toy, and it would be nice to have it replaced by whoever was involved in its breaking. Contact John Brian-Paprock about it, or just fix/replace it on your own. Thank you.

Social Action Survey

The Social Action Committee is alive and well and no longer living in Brazil. We need your input. Please take some time to fill out the questionnaire enclosed with this issue of the Prairie Fire. We value your opinions and will use them in designing Social Action activities that reflect the interests of the congregation. Return the survey by mail to Prairie, c/o Social Action Survey, or bring it next time you come and leave it in the Social Action box in the basement-level office. We will keep you apprised of the results. If you would like to be involved further, come to the next Social Action Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Prairie.

And, oh yes. Mom says, "Send money." (The Social Action Committee receives no funding for its activities from your pledge money.)

—Bob Steinbock

Food Pantry

The Prairie Society member who transports our food gits to the Allied Drive Community Center has been embarrassed lately by the small amounts we have contributed. An easy way to fortify your good intentions to give is to write "Pantry" on your weekly market list, then put the contribution into your car for your next trip to Prairie. Keep 'em coming!

Homeless Shelter

Thank you, Prairie members and friends. You have responded enthusiastically to our renewed call for volunteers to staff the Grace Episcopal Homeless Shelter on our fourth Monday of the month shift. Special thanks to the following people who volunteered in August: Barbara Rames, Rick Owens, Orton Gray, and Bob Nelson. Call Fran, 233-0213, if you can take a turn. The shifts are 7:45 to approximately 11:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday and 5:00 to 8:00 a.m. the following Tuesday morning. The evening shift includes serving dinner and bringing a gallon of milk, and the morning shift includes serving breakfast and bringing milk and cereal.

If you can't give the shelter your time, perhaps you can help by contributing money and/or coupons for milk and breakfast cereal. Leave coupons and/or checks in the Social Action box in the basement-level office.

AIDS Walk

The 1995 AIDS Walk Wisconsin is set for Sunday, September 17, along Milwaukee's lakefront. Honorary co-chairs this year are Vice President Al Gore and Tipper Gore. The 10K walk benefits the Madison AIDS Support Network, the AIDS/HIV Ministry Task Force-Wisconsin Conference of Churches, and 15 other agencies that provide AIDS care and education in Wisconsin. Complete information, including how to register and obtain sponsors, is detailed in the flyers posted on the Prairie bulletin board. Take one and join the walk. Or call 1-800-348-WALK.

Literacy Walk

Get in shape for the AIDS walk by participating in Madison's fourth annual run/walk for literacy on Sunday, September 10 at 10:30 a.m. There will be a 5K walk, 5K run, and 10K run, starting on State Street at Gorham. It is scheduled in conjunction with International Literacy Day. Net proceeds go to Madison Literacy Council to provide training for volunteers and support for Dane County adults working to improve their literacy skills. Call 258-9911 to request a pledge collecting kit.

Barbara Rames has now given 16 gallons. Congratulations!
Hospitality

We need people throughout September to help with hospitality tasks on Sunday mornings at Prairie. Duties include greeting members and visitors; preparing coffee; and coffee clean-up after the social hour. If you can help, please sign up when the hospitality sheet is passed around on Sunday mornings. Or look for the sign-up clipboard in its permanent home on the wall at the back of the meeting room.

Interweave

Interweave, a national group of UUs for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender concerns, will hold its next annual convocation in February, 1996 in Madison. The event will draw some 250 people for a weekend of workshops, food, music, and worship. The local planning committee is seeking leadership and help for hospitality (housing and local transportation) and for in-house arrangements (decorations, greeting, and on-site registration). If you are interested in these functions or would like to work on other aspects of the gathering, please contact Jonalu, 242-8887, planning committee chair; or Nancy Graham, 244-6595. If you have suggestions for workshops, please contact Candace Peterson, 767-3014 or Jane Holdzmann, 233-6056.

Prayer Retreat

John-Brian Paprock, our new DRE, will lead a workshop/retreat on prayer and meditation, September 16-17 at St. Benedict Center in Middleton. The weekend is especially for those in 12-step recovery programs, but others will benefit as well. John-Brian has more than 15 years of experience working with individuals in 12-step programs. The retreat ranges in price from $50 for commuters to $85 for those who stay overnight at the Center. For further information call 274-4405 or speak to John-Brian.

Prairie Talent

Various Prairie members will share their literary and musical talents at the second annual Madison-area Booksellers Fair, which takes place Saturday, September 9 on Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd. and adjacent streets. George Calden and Fran Zell will read from their work and the Ethnic Connection, whose members include George and Ruth Calden, Rosemarie Lester, Doleta Chapru, and Lee Burkholder will perform. Their appearances are scheduled for Saturday morning on the Main Stage. There will be readings and performances at other locations throughout the day by other local talent.

Travel to India

Sanchari, an India Travel Institute led by the Rev. Dr. Sunrit Mullick, a Unitarian minister, plans its next tour this coming winter. This unique travel experience offers encounters with a wide range of Indian people and immersion in that country’s rich and diverse culture. Dr. Mullick is a UUA minister both in Boston and India. For further information contact Sanchari’s U.S. coordinator, J.N. Abhi Prakash, Meadville/Lombard Theological School, 5701 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637

Topeka Trek

The UU Fellowship of Topeka, Kansas is sponsoring a bed and breakfast weekend for those who wish to attend the "Treasures of the Czar Exhibit," a collection of royal Russian artifacts on display at the Kansas International Museum through December 31. A special weekend package is available September 29-30, and includes exhibit tickets, 2 nights B&B, Friday wine and cheese, Saturday dinner and entertainment, and Sunday brunch. Cost is $175 per couple; $90 per single; and $25 per child 12 and under. Through December, bed and breakfast alone will be available for $25, single, $30, double, and $5 each additional person. The fellowship notes that there are numerous other attractions in the Topeka area. For further information contact Carol Blizzard at 1-800-777-6415.

Work Wanted

Thomas Wordell is looking for work and welcomes all leads. He has a degree in Hospitality Management from MATC and has many computer and office skills as well. Talk to him after the service or call him at 271-8365 if you can help.