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. PRARIE'S BOND OF UNION

The Oldest and Largest Lay-Led Society in the UUA
World Wide Web

Development of Prairie's Web Page is proceeding rapidly. We need artwork (drawings, photos, etc.) to spice up the page. We are looking for images related to Upham Woods, RE activities, circle dinners, and other activities.

Another possibility is a Member Showcase which could include photography, drawings, or other types of art.

Jose Rodriguez has suggested we develop a list of Prairie folks who have e-mail addresses and distribute that list among those folks. If you are interested in contributing, please call me at 258-8269 or e-mail me at: arbanas@earth.execpc.com —— Anne Urbanski

Thanksgiving Intergenerational

We were delighted about the enthusiastic reception of the Thanksgiving Service. We want to give a big "thanks" to Carl Wacker for the music, to Lori Larson for preparing the craft, the gardeners for sharing their spectacular farm produce, and to all those who contributed to the harvest display. To everyone who attended, Thank You for The Memories! —— Paula Pachciarz & Mary Mullen

Winter Solstice Celebration at First Society sponsored by Circle Sanctuary

Friday Night, December 22, from 7-9pm will be a "Welcome of Winter and the New Solar Year." Includes, Winter Solstice lore and customs from different traditions and cultures, candlelight meditation and ritual for world peace and planetary wellness. Please bring at least 3 cans of food for charity food drive, a bell to ring, a votive candle and glass holder, and, if possible, wear something red, green and/or white. A donation at the door ($10) will benefit Circle Sanctuary Nature Preserve. For more details, call (608) 924-2216, or see the PF Bulletin Board.

Storytellers Needed

Please call Bob Reuschlein, 233-6031, if interested in presenting a five minute children's story at upcoming services (winter/spring).

Food Needs Are Always!
The Prairie Society member who transports our food gifts to Allied Drive Community Center has been embarrassed by the small amounts we have contributed lately. An easy way to fortify your good intentions to give: write "Pantry" on your weekly market list.

Social Action Committee Meeting
Because of the enthusiasm at the SAC workshop at Upham Woods, we tapped into that energy by meeting sooner rather than later. All who are interested, but were not able to make the 11/28 meeting, contact Bob Steinhofer (221-9417) or Paula Pachciarz (273-4806) to get current minuted or to state sub-committee preference.

Grateful Sensation?
Our thankful feelings can be expressed by our sharing good health: giving a pint of blood at the Sheboygan Avenue Red Cross Center, or at one of the local blood drives listed on the bulletin board. Linda Sheehy, Laurie Larson and Rick Ruecking gave in November. (Linda’s third donation this year!)

The Prairie Women’s Group

Prairie Women’s Group is an opportunity for Prairie women to eat, meet, talk and get to know each other better in an informal setting. The Women’s Group usually meets at the meeting house, at noon on the third Sunday of the month. All women (teenagers included) connected to Prairie are welcome.

Contra Dancing at Prairie Meeting House

December 15th, another third Friday of Contra Dancing. Beginner instruction at 7:30pm, Dancing from 8:00pm through 11:00pm. McDuff’s Ceilidh Band (Joe Laurence, Barbara James, Mike Briggs). $5. All welcome. For more information call: 238-1227.

Madison Death Penalty Prayer Vigils continue

The third Monday of each month, a half hour prayer vigil is conducting regarding the Legislative consideration of the reinstatement of the death penalty in Wisconsin. 6:00pm at the North Hamilton Street entrance to the Capitol. Sponsored by Madison Urban Ministry and the Wisconsin Conference of Churches. 256-0906 for more information.

Ski UUtah

The South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society is hosting a Unitarian ski vacation in Utah. Festivities are scheduled for January 13-17, 1996. The vacation includes lift tickets to Alta, Park City, and Snowbird. For more details call or write Janis Ries, Ski UUtah Chair, South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 6876 S. Highland Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84121; (801) 943-3676. The PF Bulletin Board also has the brochure that accompanied this letter. It has all the specifics.

TODAY’S MISPLACED QUOTES
"When there is fear, we lose the way of our spirit." —Gandhi
"No problem is too big to run away from." —Charles Schulz
UPCOMING PROGRAMS

December 10
"Let Every Little Light Shine" (George Caldwell)
This morning will be a celebration of the uniqueness and worth of "ordinary" folks like ourselves. George will present the third of his services of readings and dramatizations of reminiscence stories.

The presentations are: "Angles in Brooklyn," "Goodbye to Uncle Izzy," and "On Reaching 80"

NIFTY GIFTY
One of Prairie's traditions is Nifty Gifty. In this activity, all Prairie children are invited to make small gifts from recycled materials to give to parents/grandparents/friends. Since we like the gifts to be surprises, we need non-parent volunteers to sit at a table and oversee the children assembling the projects. Kathy Converse has made arrangements for the projects, materials, etc. Please call Erin Bosch or Kathy Converse to volunteer. People already committed: Barbara Rames, Metje Butler and Marilyn Peters. As a volunteer, you will need to be at Prairie by 9:30am.

December 17
WINTER SOLSTICE INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE
(and Annual Potluck of holiday cookies/treats!)
(erin Bosch and John-Brian Paprock)
The service on December 17th will include one of our long-standing Prairie traditions: the symbol tree. This tradition involves bringing an object to hang on the tree that symbolizes an event, or a memory, or anything else that you would like to share with our Prairie Community. In years past, the tree has held things like: a long awaited college diploma, a baby's rattle, an Upham Woods pine cone, a songbook, etc. The person placing the object on the tree explains its significance. Please give this some thought and bring a symbol for the tree. This is an important way we get to know each other. New members and friends are particularly encouraged to participate.

December 24
Christmas Carols (Bob Park and Mike Briggs)
Come sing and have a good time!

December 31
Reminiscences of the Year (Bob Reuschlin)
Bring your personal thoughts of the year past and resolutions for the future.

January 7
EMERSON (Barbara Ranes)
Third in the series on UU History and Thought
"If there is a single moment at which a conventional Christian parish ministry - even a liberal Unitarian one - could no longer contain and give to Emerson's life, it would be when he recognized that his proper response to the world must be astonishment; his proper expression, celebration." - Robert Richardson (from Emerson, The Mind on Fire)

A special "Thank You" to the choir for putting out chairs and getting the coffee going on Sunday mornings.

Long Range Planning
The Long Range Planning Committee held a focus groups discussion at Upham Woods regarding members' concerns, what Prairie is doing right and what we could do better. We received many good ideas and suggestions.

The committee has also arranged to have a Sunday service, probably late January, on the topic: "What Does It Mean To Be A Religious Liberal In Madison?" That program will serve as building up for an all day "visionary workshop" we hope to conduct on a Saturday in late March or early April. Please see future Prairie Fire issues for dates and times.

----- Anne Urbanski
"MY MAGIC WORDS"
Submitted by anonymous, who wrote: "If you need filler for the Prairie Fire, here's my 'magic words' for living a spiritual life everyday."

1. LISTEN
2. HEAL
3. HAVE FAITH
4. KEEP GOING
5. BE PATIENT
6. LOVE, LAUGH, AND LILACS.

AS ONE CAN SEE, THERE IS SPACE IN THIS NEWSLETTER! Ideas, poetry, stories, new year resolutions, announcements are all welcome for the next issue. Deadline is December 17th! --- the editor