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Prairie Fire



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

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The deadline for the next issue of
Prairie Fire is Sunday, February 4.
Submit items for February 7 - 21.



Saturday, January 27
1:30 - 4:00 PM
Wild Wintering at Elver Park (see story)

Sunday, January 28
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"What It Means To Be a Religious Liberal" - Anne Urbanski

Sunday, February 4
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"How To Be a Good Ancestor: An Ecological Look at Life Being Trashed" (Fifth in "Wed of Life" ecology series) - guest speaker, Prof. Hugh Iltis (see page 2)

Monday, February 12
6:30 PM
Prairie Spanish-Speaking Potluck at the Meetinghouse (see page 2)

Sunday, February 11
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
Valentine's Day Intergenerational-
"Speak Out For Children" - Judy Skog (see page 2)
11:30 AM
Potluck Lunch at Prairie
7:00 - 9:00 PM
Channing Murray Progressive Dance Party at Prairie

Friday, February 16
7:00 - 9:00 PM
Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, February 17
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Shaarei Shamayim
7:30 PM
Prairie Playreaders at the Hagstrom's -
916 Shorewood Blvd., Madison

Sunday, February 18
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"Countering the Religious Right" -
Leona Balek (see page 2)
12:00 PM
Women's Group Potluck Lunch and Discussion

Monday, February 19
7:30 PM
Board Meeting at Prairie

Thursday, February 22
All Committee Night
5:00 - 7:00 PM
Potluck Supper
7:30 - 9:30 PM
Committee Meetings

Saturday, February 24
7:00 PM
Bosch Family Party at Prairie

Sunday, February 25
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"Community" - Gene Farley
(see page 2)

Saturday, March 2 or 9
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Visioning Workshop at Prairie

Editor's Note

Because of uncertainties concerning the availability of the Prairie Meetinghouse, Rick and I have decided to list all upcoming events at Prairie. You may have noticed these dates in the calendar section of the Prairie Fire.

On January 1, a new policy went into effect concerning the Prairie Fire: the due date is now the first and third Sunday of every month, not every other week.

I also think we should all thank John-Brian Paprock for doing a great job on the Prairie Fire for the last few months. I will do the next few issues, and by then we will hopefully have an Administrator.

—Louie Scrattish

...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



President's Column

Prairie will hold an "ALL COMMITTEE NIGHT" and committee Chairs chose Thursday, February 22 for this potluck social and all committees meeting. If you want to find out what committees do, or are just interested in socializing, plan to join us from 5:30 - 7:00 for a spaghetti dinner or come after dinner for the 7:30 - 9:30 breakout committee meetings. Put this on your calendar now.

Board reports from the January meeting indicate that Prairie has to make changes in 1996 to maintain well-being into the future. We are energized in the areas of Sunday programming, denominational affairs, long range planning, and social action. We are solidly based but want improvements in the use and condition of housing and property, and in the options for and delivery of religious education. We are not where we want to be in membership, level of volunteer activism, communications, or financial condition; but we can get there.

Step-by-step we are addressing problem areas. We are employing an accounting service to resolve complex tax accounting. We are hiring a new Administrator. We are trying to develop more volunteer activism and hope to provide more weekly programming in the coming year. The Board seeks your help and ideas for improving this Society generally and making it what you want specifically. The question for the new year is "What is your vision for Prairie?"

The Long Range Planning Committee has planned a "Visioning Workshop" on March 2 or 9 with Jim Kepler, President of CMD. Committees will be busy preparing for participation in that weekend. It is important for all of us to set time aside for this activity..

My apologies to the McDuff's Celidh Band contra dancers for double booking their time at Prairie on January 19. Everyone please check your forthcoming dates on the basement calendar. To reduce the chances of this happening again, we will try to print all scheduled building use in the Prairie Fire calendar.

Spanish-speakers Potluck

Spanish-speaking Potluckers will meet at the Prairie Meetinghouse (in the kitchen!) at 6:30 PM on Monday, February 12. We are a group of people with widely-ranging Spanish language skills, and a unified and abiding interest in Hispanic/Latino people and their cultures. Some of us have lived in Spanish-speaking countries, some have traveled extensively in Central America, and some of us learned all our Spanish in high school in the U.S. So, don't worry about your skill level. Just bring a dish to pass, (no it doesn't have to be "Hispanic,") and a desire to spend a couple of hours eating well and chatting in Spanish (más o menos.) For further information or a ride, call Kate Tucker at 221 - 4382 or Rosemary Dorney at 238 - 4382.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

January 28

"What Does It Mean To Be A Religious Liberal in Madison?" (presented by the Long Range Planning Committee) This service will serve as a prelude to our upcoming "visioning" workshop, planned for early spring. Please bring your ideas about how religious liberalism of the Prairie UU variety fits into the general Madison society.

In addition to what we hope will be a very active discussion, this service will also include the distribution of a survey. Please take one, fill it out, and return it to the address indicated by February 15. Survey results will help the committee prepare for the upcoming workshop, our first large planning effort in over 10 years.

Quote of the day:

"There are more than a hundred sects (in America) and religions, and some of them are very strange, I assure you. The Unitarians are without a doubt the best of them. They are characterized by good behavior, tolerance, and their simple doctrines: they believe in only one God, not in the Son and the Holy Spirit."

—Ole Bull, Norwegian violinist, 1844

- discovered browsing in Borders by Warren Hagstrom

February 4

"How To Be a Good Ancestor: An Ecological Look at Life Being Trashed"

Dr. Hugh Iltis, a former member of Prairie, is Emeritus Professor of Botany at the UW-Madison, director of the UW Herbarium, and a well known fighter for nature preservation and population control. He will speak on the impending collision of both human population growth and excessive living habits with the earth's finite carrying capacity.

February 11

"Speak out for Children" - Valentine's Day Intergenerational Service.

Most of us know the depressing statistics about children - poverty rates, amount of TV viewing, alcoholism, abuse, drug use, neglect. But there is a brighter side. Come prepared to take credit for what you have done to make things better for children. It may be something as big as collecting medicine to take to Cuba or something as small as smiling at a child you see on the street or in a shop. Since this is an intergenerational service, please help your children think of some examples of their own. Maybe they gave up the swing at school, even though it was their turn, or shared a Tator Tot, or said something nice to another child.

We all give gifts from the heart, and it's important to give ourselves credit for that. So, this Valentine's Day, let's share our stories with each other.

There will be an intergenerational potluck following the service.

— Judy Skog

February 25

Dr. Gene Farley was head of Family Practice Medicine at UW Hospital until he retired this year. He is currently running for a spot in Congress. His wife, Linda, won "Doctor of the Year" award in 1995 for her efforts supporting single payer medicine.

UU SINGLES

UU singles will be meeting every Friday at 6:00pm at the Sunporch Restaurant on University Avenue. Contact Jeff Nelson at 249-2414 for more information.

HOMEcomings INTERNATIONAL

Homecomings International, Inc., the bed and breakfast travel directory for UU's, offers travel and socializing opportunities. This travel network serves thousands of travelers with over 400 hosts in 45 states and 9 countries. Applications for Host Listings in the April 1996-97 edition are due January 31. Contact Homecomings, Box 1133, Fairfax, VA 22030, or call (703) 425-8259.



S. A. Committee - Status Report

"To understand and express our common values, to enrich our community." With this principal as a guide, your Social Action Committee presented the following progress report to the 1 - 21 - 96 service:

Plan and Progress

Meet on Issues

bi-monthly meeting (February 22 next meeting)

Ask Prairie Members

Social Action Survey - Act Locally! results of survey:

- #1 - ecology/population
- #2 - health
- #3 - peace/disarmament

Educate

Upham Woods workshop follow-up reports to members

Organize Action Projects

form project committees

Fundraising

independent of Prairie Budget, donations accepted

Volunteers and donations for future Social Action Committee projects are needed. Contact Bob Steinhofner at 221 - 9417.

Administrator Wanted

Prairie UU Society needs a part-time administrator. This person would work 10 hours a week at the Prairie Meeting House. S/he would need to keep scheduled hours. S/he would be responsible for handling Prairie communications such as mail, telephone calls, and occasional letters. Other duties include scheduling building use and rentals, publishing and mailing the newsletter, maintaining the mailing list, and preparing the order of service for Sunday. Skills necessary to do these tasks include good written and oral communication ability, computer skills with word processing, desktop publishing and mailing labels. Please phone Julia Bonser at 274-3248, if you are interested or would like to recommend someone. You may also mail an application or resume ASAP.

Send to:

Prairie UU Society, Attn: Julia Bonser
2010 Whenona Drive
Madison, WI 53711

INTERWEAVE CONVO '96

Interweave, a continental UU group, is an organization of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and their heterosexual allies.

Our 12th annual convocation (Convo '96) is in Madison this year, Feb 16-18, with most activities at First Unitarian Society.

We are looking for home hospitality hosts to provide 1 or 2 overnight accommodations for our guests from all over North America. One or more beds, a couch, even floor space, are good options. Sue Dorumsgaard is coordinating home hospitality. Give her a call at 242-9099.

Call Nancy Graham (244-6595) or Jonalu Johnston at James Reeb UU for further information.

Flyers, workshop schedules, and registration info are also posted on the Prairie bulletin board. We hope to have it available on Prairie's Internet Web Site as well. (Nancy Graham)

When choosing between two evils, I always like to try the one I've never tried before."

—Mae West

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.



RE Class updates:

Preschool attendance fluctuates from week to week, but Robin and Louie seem to be going with the flow and have managed to have focused activities.

K-1-2 continued the New Year celebration by learning to say "hi" and "happy new year" in different languages.

3-4-5 finished time travelling to ancient Israel, stopped in the US during the Civil Rights Movement, and then to Gaul 100 BC to visit the Druids.

6-7-8 continued to visit the "Church Across the Street" by visiting Prairie's neighbor, the Second Baptist Church; They then welcomed visitors Ananda Marga, Beth Wortzel and Jim Powell, who are also members of the musical group JAYA. They talked about Yoga and sang songs.

The Teen Group continued to investigate Life Issues with sex role stereotypes.

Wild Wintering will be a two-fold activity on Saturday, January 27. First, PYGs and teen advisors coordinated outdoor winter activities at Elver Park. Second, the RE Committee coordinated the overnight activities at Prairie. Look for a report next issue.

Secret Friends (a intergenerational activity) is getting closer. If you, as an adult, wish to be paired with a Prairie youth, please sign up before 2/1/96.

- John Brian Paprock

UU Internet Info.

I have been active on several UU discussion groups on the Internet for almost a year. I've put together some clippings from these groups in a red binder. Look for it at the back of the meeting room or else on the greeting table. I hope you'll enjoy some of the ideas presented, which range from whimsical to philosophical.

—Anne Urbanski

Theatre outing

On February 4 there will be a potluck at Prairie after the service which will be followed by the carpool departure for the matinee performance of the musical *Dracula* at Verona's High School Performing Arts Center. A block of seats, (the best in the house!) have been reserved for those who sign up by **January 28** at the meeting room bulletin board or by calling Rick Owens at 845 - 3884.

French Circle Dinner

Can you speak French with your mouth full? Explore this and other continental experiences with the new French Circle Dinner forming now. Beginners are most welcome! Contact Bob Steinhofner at 221 - 9417, or leave your name and preferred dinner day (Sat., Sun., Mon., etc.) and time.

Winter Institute

The Meadville/Lombard Theological School is offering a special price to Madison UU's interested in attending its Winter Institute on the UW campus in Madison from February 15 - 18. "Turning Back the Tide of Violence" is the theme of this year's program which will feature two gifted speakers, Geoffrey Canada and Thandeka. The "commuter fee" is \$265 plus \$80 more if you need housing. For further information contact Ellen Dodge Severson at 312 - 753 - 1324 or (by fax) 312 - 753 - 1323.

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Circle Dinners

Circle Dinner groups are currently being organized by Warren Hagstrom and Doleta Chapru. Each circle consists of a small group (6 to 12 people) that holds potluck gatherings in one another's homes on selected dates throughout the year. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know Prairie members and friends on an informal basis. To sign up see Doleta or Warren after the service on Sundays or call them at 238-4970.

ATTENTION PRAIRIE MUSICIANS!

Our music program this spring will be on **MARCH 17** and will feature the music of Felix Mendelsohn.

If you can perform, contact Doleta Chapru or Warren Hagsrtom (238-4970). They can suggest works to perform, if you are undecided.

We might include not only works by Felix, but also music by his sister, Fanny, and his archrival, Richard Wagner.

WomanSpirit '96

Womanspirit 1996 will be held January 26 - 28 at the North Shore Unitarian Church in Deerfield, Illinois. The special speaker is Rev. Shirley Ann Ranch, author of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*. See the PF Bulletin Board for more information.

CUUPS

COVENANT OF UU PAGANS

We have over 150 members on our mailing list and have had as many as 70 people attend our rituals.

If you have any questions call Julia Bonser at 274 - 3248

Below are the dates and times of the next meetings:

February 3, 7:30pm (Saturday)

First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Dr. (lower meeting house)
Full Moon Ritual

February 4, 3:00-6:00pm (Sunday)

First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Dr. (lower meeting house)
Brigid/Candlemas
Ritual celebration and potluck

P.Y.G.S!

Afternoon outing -

The January 27 Prairie Youth Group outing will take place at Elver Park beginning at 1:30 PM. Bring equipment for sledding, ice skating, or cross-country skiing, and a snack or drink to share. The P.Y.G.S outing will end in time for everyone to get to Prairie for the overnight.

Overnight -

All Prairie kids and friends of Prairie kids are invited to the annual "Wild Wintering" party at Prairie. The party starts at 5:00 PM, (right after the Elver Park trip.) Bring your favorite fruits, veggies, snacks, and \$1.00 to pay for pizza and drinks. After pizza we will have inside games, storytelling, and activities. (Bring a favorite game or music.)

At 9:30 PM the optional sleep-over will begin, (bring sleeping bags and overnight gear.) Parents are welcome to join in on the fun for part or all of the evening. If you have any questions call Dean Schroeder at 256 - 8813. See you Saturday!

"Great is the beginning, but greater the art of ending."

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow