

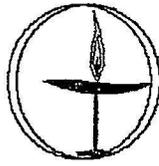
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Prairie Fire



Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
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Editor: Arleigh Birchler To Change Address Or Cancel PRAIRIE FIRE, Call Arleigh Birchler (608)273-9811

Production Assistants – Marilyn Peters
Vol. 34, No. 8, 4-21-96

The deadline for the next issue of
Prairie Fire is Sunday, May 5 Submit
items for May 9 - May 23

CALENDAR

Friday, April 26
7:00 PM
Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, April 27
9:00 AM
Shaarei Shamayim
9:00 or 11:00 AM
Dunn's Marsh - Allied Drive Annual
Clean-up (See Story)
5:00 PM - 9:00 AM
Spring Fling

Sunday, April 28
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"Beltane: Celebrating Passion and
Partnership" - Nancy Vedder-Shults
12:00 Noon
Annual Spring Meeting and potluck
(See Story)

Thursday, May 2
7:00 PM
Program Committee

Saturday, May 4
6:30 PM
Salad Bar Movie (See Story)

Friday, May 3
5:30 PM
Ethnic Dinner Circle
China International - Hilldale
Pat Watkins - 233-5795

Sunday, May 5
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"Uncle Tom's Cabin" - Betty Jalling

Sunday, May 12
10:00 AM
"Nature & Spirituality" - Mike Sheehy
NOTE: Program will be held at
PICNIC POINT

Friday, May 17
7:00 PM
Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, May 18
9:00 AM
Shaarei Shamayim

Sunday, May 19
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"Transitions" - Erin Bosch
Intergenerational Service - NO R.E.
Potluck after Program

Monday, May 20
7:30 PM
Board Meeting

Sunday, May 26
NOON
Memorial Day Picnic - Potluck
At Marion and Carl Thompson's

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

If there is a number "1" in the top-right corner of your mailing label, you may be in danger of being taken off of the Prairie Fire mailing list by mistake! Please call Arleigh at (608)273-9811 if you wish to continue to receive the prairie fire.

NEW DIRECTORIES:

The temporary directories will be available at the Sunday program, April 28, for those of you who have completed your directory update card (See Story).

Monday, May 27
7:45 - 11:30 PM
Homeless Shelter (See Story)

Tuesday, May 28
5:00 - 8:00 AM
Homeless Shelter (See Story)
7:00 PM
Social Action Committee (See Story)

Sunday, June 2
9:00 AM
Choir Practice
10:00 AM
"Weather, Wealth, and Wars" - Bob Reuschlein

Thursday, June 20 -
Tuesday, June 25
UUA General Assembly
Indianapolis, Indiana

...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

The Annual Spring Meeting and elections will be after church on April 28. To speed that meeting along, I am asking the Committee Chairpersons to prepare written reports summarizing the activities of 1995-1996. The Committee on Committees has prepared a slate of candidates (See Story). Among the characteristics which I have always loved about our Society has been the chance it afforded me to use my talents and have them recognized and appreciated. We hope that those of you who are not accepting board positions will be making service commitments to the committees or making other concrete service plans. There are many ways in which our Society may be enriched and your many efforts can be appreciated.

Bring a dish to pass and your enthusiasm for new beginnings. The Society still needs a volunteer to chair the Membership Committee (See Story). We realize this position is very complex, but there are already several members who are active on the committee and can show you the ropes. Please consider taking this important leadership role in Prairie Society.

Prairie is taking a position with other liberal Madison-area churches against the intolerance recently promulgated by an extremist religious group — The Wisconsin Christians United. We are supporting tolerance and love within our wider community that transcends religious belief.

The Board is endorsing another all committee night at Prairie in coming months. This is an opportunity to share a meal with other friends and members, to learn about the standing committees, and then divide into small groups to conduct the business of running the Society. Our past experience has shown this to be fun and productive. Watch for the date. You don't have to be on a committee to attend!

Directory Update

The temporary New Directories will be available after the program on Sunday. We are offering several options: small or large print; complete listing or only active friends and members. Make sure our information about you is current. Please help us make sure that we don't delete anyone from our list of friends and members by mistake. Call Arleigh at (608)273-9811 with any concerns or updates.

Upcoming Programs

April 28 - Beltane: Celebrating Passion and Partnership

Nancy Vedder-Shults will guide participants in a service based on this ancient Celtic celebration. Beltane, the celebration of the fertile fullness of spring, is an appropriate holiday to reflect on female-male relations. In ancient time, this festival marked the crowning of the May King and Queen and the celebration of the sacred marriage of the goddess with the god. Today we will explore new ways of relating to the opposite sex, in partnership with one another.

May 5 - Uncle Tom's Cabin

Betty Jallings will continue her "Books That Made a Difference" series. We will discuss Harriet Beecher Stowe's classic novel of slavery. Abraham Lincoln considered this book to be an important impetus for Civil Rights and the Freedom Movement. (The author was the daughter of a "liberal Calvinist" minister.)

May 12 - Nature and Spirituality

This program, the sixth and last in the "Web of Life" series, led by Mary Mullens, Cindy Haq, and Mike Sheehy, is intended to be an experience of nature and spirituality, not merely a program about nature and spirituality. We will also have a time for reading of nature poems or singing of nature songs written by Prairie members and friends. Weather permitting, we will meet outdoors, at Picnic Point (125 paces directly up the hill from the brown sign inside the entrance). Assistance will be available for persons needing help to walk that distance up a slight incline. If you want something other than the ground to sit on, please feel free to bring it. If in doubt about the weather, please call Mike, Cindy, or Mary by 9:30 AM. If it is too miserable out, we will meet at Prairie Society, as usual. After the "Story for all Ages", an alternative activity, probably a hike, will be available for the younger persons.

May 19 - Transitions

Our traditional transitions intergenerational service will be led by Erin Bosch. We will honor our graduating 8th graders. This is an important time in the life of a young person. A potluck will follow the service.

May 26 - Memorial- Day Picnic - Potluck

The short drive to Marian and Carl Thompson's home south of Oregon will be well worth the time! Marion and Carl's lovely home is secluded in the country with beautiful views of the refulgent spring days. This will be a great chance to get to know other Prairie friends and members better. Detailed directions will follow in the next Prairie Fire.

June 2 - Weather, Wealth, and Wars

Weather, wealth, and War are three examples of major events that follow a 54-year natural cycle. What is causing this Earth-wide cycle of natural and people-made events? What is the common cause of major droughts, floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, blizzards, economic depressions, inflation, unemployment, stock-market collapses, social upheavals, and wars? Come to this service to find out how Mother Nature effects whole generations at a time. Bob Reuschlein will explain it all!

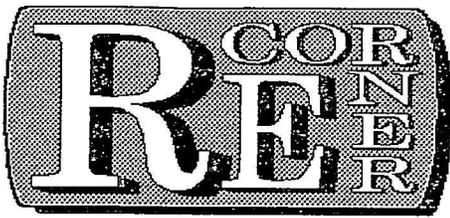
Saturday Night Salad Bar at the MOVIES

Join once a month for a lively evening with friends, food, and a good movie. The next Salad Bar Movie will be at the home of Shirley Grindrod, 5235 Harbor St, Madison, on Saturday, May 4. Join us at 6:30 PM and bring a salad to add to the salad bar. Bread and beverages will be provided.

Please call for the title of the movie and to sign up.

Movie will start about 7:00 PM with discussion to follow.

Call: Shirley Grindrod at 238-4422 or Susan Prest at 232-9919.



Spring has definitely sprung. Perfect timing for Earth Day (Week) events. Last week all of R.E. went to pick up trash at Marlboro Park as R.E. Service Sunday focused on the Earth Day messages. For such a "clean" park it was amazing how much garbage there was.

The final four weeks of the Religious Education Year at Prairie will be full:

On Saturday the 27th, will be the Spring Fling (call Erin Bosch 238-6285 for more info)

Sunday, the 28th, will be "regular" classes.

The first Sunday in May (the 5th) will be the Spirit Circle lead by members of the R.E. Committee. As it happens, I will be in an AYS training outside of Chicago as preparation for our RE weekend that is being planned (and I was just starting to understand how to run the Spirit Circle). The teens will be wrapping up the L.I.F.T program.

The next Sunday (12th), Prairie will be meeting at Picnic Point. It is the traditional wrap up Sunday for R.E. So....we'll be wrapping up the classes at Picnic Point. Teachers, be prepared. There, we will have the annual picnic/pot luck.

On the 19th will be the traditional Transitions Intergenerational Service led by RE Committee Chair, Erin Bosch.

And finally, what I understand to be a growing tradition, Memorial Day Weekend includes a picnic and a canoe trip? Details will be forthcoming.

An RE Review and Questionnaire will be sent to all teachers and parents (who could include their children if they wish). Please fill it out and return (either by mail or dropping it off). Your thoughts and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

In the next Prairie Fire, an RE Recap and acknowledgments. It's been a great year!

—John-Brian Paprock

Spring Fling

Saturday, April 25 — 5:30 PM to 10:00 AM

All Prairie young people are invited to the Annual Spring Fling. We will play lots of outdoor (weather permitting) and indoor games. We'll sleep over in the Prairie building (this is optional, young ones can always go home to sleep), clean up in the morning, and be ready for R.E. classes on Sunday.

For dinner we'll have a "pasta bar." Prairie will furnish the noodles and some sauce, but you can bring your favorite sauce, or some bread (garlic?), or some treats, or munchies to share.

Don't forget your sleeping bag and pillow!

Any parents who would like to volunteer to help are welcome. Call Erin Bosch (238-6285), Carl Wacker (273-4806), or Dean Schroeder (256-8813).

Prairie Annual Spring Meeting

The Annual Spring Meeting is scheduled for April 28 following services and potluck at Prairie. Committee reports, elections of officers, and GA delegates, and by-law amendments are on the agenda.

CANDIDATES FOR PRAIRIE BOARD

The Committee on Committees is pleased to submit the following slate of nominees for approval of the Society at the Annual Meeting on April 21:

President	Rick Ruecking
Vice President	Barb Park
Secretary	Jan Howe
Treasurer	Judy Skog
Finance	Aileen Nettleton
Religious Education	Erin Bosch
Program	Bob Reuschlein and Mike Sheehy
Social Action	Bob Steinhofner and Nancy Graham
Housing & Property	Rick Owens
Long Range Planning	Anne Urbanski
Denominational Affairs	Pat Watkins
Membership	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>

!!VOLUNTEER TO CHAIR MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE!!

John-Brian Publishes Book

Our Director of Religious Education, John-Brian Paprock, has published a new book. On the spiritual road of life it is helpful to have informed guides. A GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS RESOURCE — 1996 is now available. This inclusive and insightful guide is more than a directory. It contains short descriptions and essays honoring and celebrating the rich diversity of our area. Every religious and spiritual tradition represented, over 1500 listings indexed.

Available at: Borders, Frugal Muse, Barnes & Noble, Canterbury's, Shakti, Willy Street Co-op and Microcosm.

Good going, John-Brian!

Membership Committee

- Greets visitors
- Maintains Society membership list
- Prepares biennial parish directory
- Provides coffee at services and arranges for cleanup
- Organizes Circle Dinners and other social events
- Hosts orientation programs

CHAIR IS VACANT!

Proposed By-Law Amendments

The following amendments to the By-Laws are being proposed by Pat Watkins.

Amendment #1:

Article VII, A, 7

Denominational Affairs. This committee shall maintain for Prairie Society relations with other Unitarian Universalist organizations and will act as the contact and liaison to the Prairie Board for persons wishing to represent Prairie at denominational meetings and affairs.

Amendment #2:

Article VII, C, 2, c, (1): to be added after the first sentence

Also, verify Prairie's representation on the Channing Murray Board of directors and recommend, when necessary, representatives for appointment by the Prairie Board.

SOCIAL ACTION

Cereal Drop-off

Please note the addition to the Prairie foyer of a Homeless Shelter drop box. Please fill it with boxes of breakfast cereal and other breakfast staples. We are trying to make work easier for our AM shelter volunteers, who are required to bring food for the morning meal. Even if we are eventually forced to discontinue our morning shift commitment the Social Action Committee would like to remain committed to providing food.

Shelter Update

Based on feedback from a few very committed members, Social Action has decided to continue staffing both PM and AM shifts at the Grace Episcopal Homeless Shelter for as long as possible. Volunteers are desperately needed to help the homeless!

Thanks especially go to Barbara Rames and Pat Cauley for expressing willingness to work the AM shift on a frequent basis. Thanks also to Barbara and the Thompsons (Carl and Marian) for recent financial contributions to the Social Action Committee

Now that warm weather and vacations are on the way perhaps you, too, can find time to take a turn at the shelter.

I will continue to coordinate our efforts and maybe even set my clock radio for an AM shift, too!

Thanks for your support.

— Fran Zell

Allied-Dunn's Marsh Clean-up

The annual Allied Drive - Dunn's Marsh neighborhood clean-up will be on Saturday and Sunday, April 27-28. Contact Scott at 273-0904 for more information. They especially need help with prairie burning and restoration at Marlboro Park.

Allied Neighborhood Center Spring Spruce-up

THANKS to everyone who helped with the Neighborhood Center clean-up. The melting snow revealed all the accumulated debris of the winter. By 3:00 PM the area was looking great, and everyone got to know are neighbors better and enjoy an old-fashioned barbecue.

Summary of Proposed General Resolutions

G-1 Breast Cancer Prevention

Especially in view of new suggestions of environmental causes of breast cancer, increased funding for breast cancer research is essential. The results of this research should be disseminated widely to the medical community and to the public.

G-2 Earth, Air, Water, And Fire

Protection of the environment — the earth, air, water, and sustainable energy — requires new and renewed support and advocacy. The first Unitarian Universalist conference on ecology and justice will be held at Meadville/Lombard Theological School in Fall 1997.

G-3 Support For People With Mental Illness

Budget cuts are threatening programs for the mentally ill. More and more mentally ill are homeless. We must provide increased funding for research and care of the mentally ill, and we must provide leadership to assist congregations in supporting people with mental illness.

G-4 Total Ban On Anti-Personnel Landmines

Long after their initial deployment and the cessation of hostilities, anti-personnel landmines are killing civilians. The 1977 Protocols to the Geneva Convention must be ratified in order to outlaw attacks on noncombatants. We must work for a total ban on the manufacture, shipment, and deployment of anti-personnel landmines.

G-5 Toxic Threats To Children

Seventy thousand new, mainly untested chemical compounds have reportedly been added to our environment since 1950, potentially threatening especially to children. Unitarian Universalists must work to reduce toxic threats and to get corporations to become more environmentally responsible.

G-6 Working For A Just Economic Community

The common wealth of our country has been intentionally re-directed into the pockets of a very small wealthy minority at the expense of the greater majority of American families. A living wage, single-payer health care, full employment, an equitable tax system, corporate accountability and labor law reform are necessary in order to fulfill our democratic ideals in the 21st century.

General Assembly

The 35th Annual General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association will convene in Indianapolis, Indiana on Thursday, June 20, with the Opening Plenary Session and Banner Parade at 8:00pm. The meeting will end by noon on Tuesday, June 25, with a Plenary Session and Worship Service. Our fellowship is entitled to two (2) delegates, plus alternate delegates. Observers are also welcome. If you'd like to know more about General Assembly and how to be a part of the excitement in Indianapolis, talk with Pat Watkins at 233-5795. She was our delegate in Spokane in 1995.

You can reach Indianapolis via car, rail or air. Room rates range from \$75 to \$104 for single or double. Registration for the full six days is \$195 for adults and \$100 for youth (14-22), theological students and retired ministers. Or come for the weekend and register for \$130/\$65. We'll be selecting delegates and alternates soon, so if you're interested, talk to Pat and plan to join over 2500 UUs from across the country in Indianapolis from June 20 to 25.

All Unitarian Universalists are encouraged to attend the annual convention and participate in a variety of programs and business meetings. Postmark your registration before May 10 to receive the lowest registration fee. Check the March/April issue of the World for detailed fees and hotel information.

The General Assembly theme in 1996 will be The Future is Now, and this theme will focus on the youth in our denomination and will explore the wonderful gifts they have to offer our congregations. There will be youth-led workshops throughout GA at every time slot, and multiple opportunities for socializing and interacting with the three hundred youth across the United States who are expected to attend. It is a wonderful opportunity for young people and we encourage parents to consider bringing or sending their youth to GA.

The best laid
plans of mice
and men oft
times gang
awry