PRAIRIE FIRE

... 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. From Prairie's Bond Of Union

The Prairie Fire is the newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society and is published semi-monthly.

e-mail version available: http://www.execpc.com/~prairieu

President: Nancy E. Schraufnagel (608) 273-3195
Editor: Kate Heiber-Cobb (608) 250-6512; prairieu@execpc.com

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, August 9
10:00 AM; "A Day in the Life of a Western Monk in Thailand", presented by Larry Nahlik.

Before & After Program: Denominational Affairs Committee will be collecting donations to continue funding of the Prairie announcement on WHA for 1998/99. See Ruth Calden and/or Pat Watkins.

Monday, August 10
7:30 PM; Prairie Board Meeting at Prairie.

Saturday, August 15
3:00 PM; Denominational Affairs Committee meets at the home of Pat Watkins. Please phone 233-5795 if unable to attend.

Sunday, August 16
10:00 AM; "Why We Go To War", presented by Bob Reuschlein.

Sunday, August 23
10:00 AM; Nikki Bromberg will discuss "Vipassane Buddhism".

Sunday, August 30
10:00 AM; "If I Were a Rich Man...(or Woman)", presented by Pat Watkins.

Saturday, September 5
One day canoe trip down the Sugar River, putting in near Attica about 10am. Call Warren Hagstrom at 238-4970 if you are interested.

Sunday, September 6
10:00 AM; "Putting Labor Back in Labor Day", led by Betty Jallings and Karen Gross.

Wednesday, September 9

7:00 PM; Spanish Speakers' Potluck, at the home of Betty French, 4111 Twin Valley Rd., Middleton, 831-5224.

Sunday, September 13
Chalice Lighter sign-up in Prairie lobby, before and after the service. See Rachel Siegfried and/or Pat Watkins.

October 9-11
Upham Woods Retreat for Prairie Members and friends.

October 16-18
Creating A Jubilee World: A Regional Anti-Racism Conference, hosted by the Racial Justice Committee of the James Reeb UU Society. Save these dates now and plan to attend. There will be a special emphasis on the participation of district teens. More details later in future Prairie Fires.

Saturday, November 7
Chicago Art Institute Bus Trip to the exhibit "Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman." We will be asking Prairie members and friends to display posters for this fund-raiser at their places of business or other locations they frequent. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

OUR SOCIETY

Upham Woods Retreat Oct. 9-11
Thinking about the wonderful days of fall? Thinking about the special times of Upham Woods? Well, it's time to volunteer - adult program leaders, talent show coordinator, children's program leaders, teen program coordinator, dining room supervisor, etc.. Please
Thought of Teaching in R.E.?
If you have considered being a teacher in the religious education program of Prairie Society, I want to encourage you to do it. It will be a growth experience for you. When first such a responsibility was thrust on me, years ago, and I had to read and question others to prepare, one quotation impressed me as so true: "Whenever any program of enrichment is planned, it's the one who does the planning that gets the enrichment." -Barbara Rames

One In A Million? Well, One In Twenty!
It is estimated that everyone who reaches 72 years of age will need blood at some time in they're life. Only five per cent of the population gives blood! Will you be one of that wonderful one in twenty? Latest Prairie donors are Aileen Nettleton, Barbara Park, and Laurie Larson, and each has given a pint many times in the past. Hours of the Sheboygan Avenue Red Cross donor center are on little cards that you can pick up at our greeter's table, and a list of special donor sites this month, at various locations, is on our bulletin board.

Food Pantry Donations Needed
Have you written "food pantry" on your market list? Our donations have been slight because we have not been in the meeting-house every Sunday, but our neighbors' need for food still is great.

Volunteer Schedules
Grass Mowers:
Aug. 9-15: Larry Nahlik
Aug. 16-22: Al Nettleton
Aug. 23-29: Rick Ruecking

Hospitality Helpers:

Greeting Visitors:
Aug. 9: Need Volunteer
Aug. 16: Need Volunteer

Coffee Set-up:
Aug. 9: Pat Cautley
Aug. 16: Need Volunteer

Coffee Clean-up:
Aug. 9: Betty Jallings & Need Volunteer
Aug. 16: Pat Cautley & Need Volunteer

Member Biography - Shannon Hayes
"A life of service" would be one way to categorize Shannon Hayes' professional career…but it is interesting for several other reasons!

Born in Pasco, Washington, and growing up in Vancouver, WA, she attended University of Oregon, majoring in Community Service. "Fresh out of college" she was married to Arleigh Birchler, and remained in Salem, Oregon, working as program coordinator for a group home for mentally retarded adults and children.

Shannon had "grown up Unitarian" --- that's rare in our Prairie Society --- and after three years of marriage she and Arleigh decided to go to Starr King School of Theology, the Unitarian school in Berkeley, California. In that city, she again worked with developmentally disabled, as Support Services Coordinator in a workshop program. Both Shannon and Arleigh hold degrees as Master of Divinity, but neither one filled a pulpit for our denomination. Shannon worked in crisis intervention, by phone and personal contact, for Lancaster County, Nebraska, while Arleigh served an internship there, part of his Starr King curriculum. They returned to the Bay area for another seven years, and their three children were born.

In 1991 Shannon and Arleigh moved to Madison so that she could attend the University here; she earned her Master's degree in educational psychology with a focus on gifted children in 1994. She had begun to work for the Salvation Army as a social worker for families. Divorced from Arleigh in 1995, she has all three children living with her in a house near Midvale Plaza.
Her daughter, Andria, who garnered much attention when she played football, is now 17 and she attends Memorial High School, as does Todd, 15. Kevin is 13 and is in the Accelerated Learning Academy. All three have been active in service projects of Prairie young adults. Shannon's volunteer activity is representing the Salvation Army on the Board of Madison Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, encouraging churches to cooperate in setting up overflow shelter for homeless families. Here at Prairie she is Co-Chair of the Social Action Committee with Paula Pachciarz.

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

Denominational Affairs Committee Members for the 1998/99 Church Year are:

Ruth Calden, Mary Mullen, Barbara Park, Debbie Phelps, Sharon Scratthish, Rachel Siegfried. If anyone else is interested in serving on this committee, please phone Pat Watkins, Chair, at 233-5795, or come to our August 15 meeting (see calendar).

WHA Radio Announcement

Have you caught the Prairie announcement on Wisconsin Public Radio? Since last December, it has been aired on the Sunday afternoon program To the Best of Our Knowledge on the first and third Sundays of each month. In August you can catch it at 2:59pm and in Sept. it can be heard at 12:59pm. One month the announcement comes during the "Culture" segment of the program and the next month during the "Science" segment, hoping this way to reach different listeners. The announcement reads, "Contributors to Wisconsin Public Radio include Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society -- a lay-led liberal religious voice in Madison" and costs twenty-five dollars per announcement. Last fall Prairie raised $450.00 for these announcements, which will cover us through the month of September. The Board, at the last Board meeting, approved the continuation of this announcement through the coming year and our congregational support of Wisconsin Public Radio. We will have a table in the lobby of Prairie on Sunday, August 9th to collect contributions to continue Prairie's announcement on WHA-AM. Committee member Ruth Calden has volunteered to handle this aspect of the committee's work, and checks may be given or sent to her. Please make sure that the memo space on your check states that it is for the WPR announcement.

Chalice Lighters

Chalice Lighters did not receive the number of sign-ups that we had hoped it would get for the coming church year. This will begin Chalice Lighters third year of operation, and so far over 800 members in the Central Midwest District have contributed over $16,000 to help financially support congregations in the district in their commitment to membership growth. Grants are awarded three times a year by the CMD Growth and Support Committee, of which Jonalu Johnstone of Madison's James Reeb Society is this year's chair. Chalice Lighters make a $10 pledge three times a year. Won't you become a Chalice Lighter? Rachel Siegfried is Prairie's Chalice Lighter liaison, and looks forward to signing you up. The first call letter will be sent out on November 1st, and we will have a table in the lobby on Sunday, September 13 to provide information and facilitate sign-ups.

The following is reprinted with permission from the Washington Spectator, March 15, 1998, and was written by David Shipler, author of A Country of Strangers: Blacks and Whites in America. Mr. Shipler is a former correspondent of the New York Times, and a Pulitzer Prize winner.

"Today, when explicit discrimination is prohibited and blatant racism is no longer fashionable in most circles, much prejudice has gone underground. It may have diminished in some quarters, but it is far from extinct. Like a virus searching for a congenial host, it mutates until it finds expressions in a belief, a statement, or a form of behavior that seems acceptable. The camouflage around such racism does not make it benign. It can still damage life opportunities…Many institutions that look integrated are often segregated within, for integration has largely meant the mere physical mixing of people of various races, not the sharing of power and the blending into an integral whole. Therefore, blacks who enter mostly white institu-
tions often feel like invited guests—and not always very welcome ones. Rarely do the blacks attain ownership, authority, or the standing to set agendas. They are confronted by glass walls that whites often do not see. A black man worked for IBM for three years before learning that every evening a happy hour was taking place in a nearby bar. Only white men from the office were involved—no women, no minorities. Had it been strictly social it would have been merely offensive. But it was also professionally damaging, for business was being done over drinks, plans were being designed, connections made. This is a common experience among blacks and women who have integrated the workplace, and it raises questions about possible remedies. The difficulty is that one has to perceive the problem in order to embrace the solutions. One of the great divides in this country is between those Americans who see only blatant racism and those who see the subtle forms as well. (And, it is this difference that) has shaped much of the current debate over affirmative action. Affirmative action is designed in principle to require that the best candidates be recruited from groups that have suffered discrimination. Nothing in the concept calls for the acceptance of unqualified people. But, polls and focus groups have found that while most whites think that under affirmative action less qualified blacks are hired and promoted over more qualified whites, most blacks think that without affirmative action, less qualified whites are hired and promoted over more qualified blacks. Few white Americans reflect on the unseen privileges they possess or the greater sense of worth they acquire from their white skin. In addition to creating the traditional alignments of power in America, negative beliefs about blacks tend to enhance whites' self-esteem. Many conservatives these days urge us to make an optimistic assessment of the racial situation. At the same time, they refuse to see the pernicious racism that persists. That blindness does not justify optimism. Legitimate optimism comes from facing the problems squarely and working to overcome the insidious subtleties of bigotry that still abide in the land."

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar
Aug.15 - Sabbath morning service. 9am-2pm
Aug. 28 - Sabbath evening service. 6:30-9:30pm
Sept. 5 - Class on Contemporary Modalities. 1:30-4:30pm
Sept. 12 - Selichot service. 7pm-10:30pm
Sept. 13 - Siyyum Torah. 2-6pm
Sept. 20 - Rosh Hashanah service. 5-10pm
Sept. 21 - Rosh Hashanah service. 9:30am-2pm
Sept. 22 - Rosh Hashanah service. 9:30am-2pm
Sept. 29 - Yom Kippur service. 5-10pm
Sept. 30 - Yom Kippur service. 8:30am-10pm

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, August 9
"A Day in the Life of a Western Monk in Thailand!", presented by Larry Nahlik. Larry spent a week in the Buddhist monkhood in June 1998. He will describe his experience with journal readings and slides.

Sunday, August 16
"Why Do We Have Wars?", presented by Bob Reuschlein. People go to war for many reasons: economics of the war industry and the need for resources; politics drives leaders to war to rally support and distract from failed policies; religious and ethnic differences fuel many conflicts. Is it due to the nature of mankind ("testosterone poisoning"), the state, and the system of states? Is it Ego and the need to establish a clear peck order among nations? Is it timing and the life cycle of leaders? Is this celebration of the state religion ("Unconstitutional!") the last form of religion using mass virgin sacrifices? I have my own ideas and models, but I really hope the congregation brings ideas and examples to more fully discuss this important archaic institution.

Sunday, August 23
"Vipassane Buddhism", presented by Nikki Bromberg.

Sunday, August 30
"If I Were a Rich Man...(or Woman)!", led by Pat Watkins. You've just won the lottery (or otherwise come into a lot of money), and now you've got to decide who to give it away to. We'll take a look at the charities and organizations which get our largess, find out which ones Prairie folks think are most deserving (as well as least deserving), and even get to put in a plug for your favorites to get other folks to consider them. Bring a notepad with you if you can.

Next Prairie Fire deadline is Aug. 16th.