



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." Bond of Union)

February 6, 2004

Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. The two most recent issues may be seen at <http://www.prairie.madison.uua.org>

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Saturday, February 7

☞ 4 p.m. Wild Wintering sleepover, serenade at Arbordale, sledding, and other Religious Education activities at Prairie.

Sunday, February 8

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Criminal Injustice: A UU Approach to the Crisis," presented by Sarah Lord.

☞ 11:45 a.m. Book Club on *The Tipping Point*.

February 8-15

☞ Interfaith Hospitality Network volunteer week

Sunday, February 15

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. Valentine's Day intergenerational program, "Gifts from the Heart."

☞ 11:45 a.m. Potluck meal and a discussion of the Fitchburg site and other building alternatives.

Friday, February 20

7:00 p.m. Human Rights Film Series at First Unitarian Society: "The Farm - Life Inside Angola Prison." Showing in the West Living Room of the main building. Refreshments, discussion follow.

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

Next Prairie Fire deadline is

Sunday, February 15, 2004

Sunday, February 22

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Cindy Haq will discuss her recent trip to Afghanistan.

Sunday, February 29

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. "The Living Tradition III," presented by Al Nettleton. Al continues his UU hymnal series.

11:45 a.m. Potluck lunch and a session for greeter training.

Sunday, March 7

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. "Reconstructing Eden: Hope for the Iraqi Marshland," presented by Richard Beilfus.

Sunday, March 21

12:00 noon. Annual Prairie Auction

Saturday, March 27

7:00 p.m. Playreading at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker. Intergenerational reading of Lynda Barry's *The Good Times Are Killing Me*.

DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, February 7

Wild Wintering for kids features a sleepover at Prairie and a bunch of special activities. Students will congregate at Prairie at 4:00 p.m. and put their sleeping bags in the room indicated on their permission slip.

OUR SOCIETY

We'll start off by making our own submarine sandwiches and rehearsing songs that we will be singing for the residents at Arbordale Assisted Living Center on Todd Drive. The nursing home director said that this event will be special to the people who live there because they don't get many visitors. We will drive over to Arbordale at 5:35. If you come later than that, just have your parent drop you off at Arbordale or wait at Prairie with chaperones until we get back. We will return from Arbordale about 7:15.

Afterwards, we will go over to the park (one block away) to go sledding...so **bring your sled or inner tube** with your name on it. Other activities include flashlight tag (each child should **bring a flashlight** that has her/his name on it), making old-fashioned fudge (the kind you need to beat after its been cooled outside), and an obstacle course designed by none other than our very own Carl Wacker!

Permission slips are needed for all kids, including guests. If you missed getting a Wild Wintering brochure and permission slip, send Jeanie an e-mail (jeanietrigg@sbcglobal.net) and she'll forward it to you, or call her (301-0289) and leave a message.

Sunday, February 8

Criminal Justice and Prison Reform was chosen as the new Study/Action issue at the 2003 General Assembly. As part of Prairie's study of this issue, this program will explore both the sources and scope of the crisis in the criminal justice system, as well as possible responses to it. In particular, attention will be paid to guidance the UU principles can offer as we consider this important issue.

After the Prairie service, the Prairie Book Club will discuss *The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell. This is an easy-to-read, non-fiction book that compares commercial successes with the model of epidemics. It is available in paperback at Borders with a 20% discount when you mention to them that this is a Prairie Book Club selection.

Sunday, February 15

We will have a multi-generational program that will include a skit and a project in which we send our love and support to Tyson strikers one more time. Please bring food and personal hygiene articles for Tyson striking families.

THANKS TO GAYT DONORS ☺

17 Families donated to A Guest at Your Table, helping the crucial work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). Those who intended to contribute can contact me right away before I send in the money or send checks to "UUSC" at their headquarters: UUSC, P.O. Box 845259, Boston, MA 02284-5259.

Dan Proud

DOROTHY WETHERBY MEMORIAL FUND

Dorothy Wetherby was a member of Prairie and was born around Valentine's Day. In memory of Dorothy, a memorial fund was set up at Prairie for the purpose of providing small cash awards to active members and friends who temporarily lack housing, food or clothing. If you have such a need, please contact Ken Skog (273-4813).

Dorothy Lee Wetherby was a vital, creative Prairie UU member who understood that maintaining one's dignity is important to surviving serious challenges. She preserved that dignity in many whose lives she touched.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF PARISH MEETING

There will be a special parish meeting on March 14, 2004, after the Sunday service and potluck. The only item of business so far is the following resolution:

(DRAFT) BE IT RESOLVED that the Board, or such person(s) or committee(s) as the Board may designate, shall negotiate an agreement for the construction of a new Prairie meeting house on a site at Fitchburg Center.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board shall solicit and choose among proposals from two or more architects for the design and construction of the new meeting house at the Fitchburg Center, and may authorize the expenditure of such monies from the Growth Fund as may be necessary for the presentation of proposals from architects.

BE IT FURTHER AND FINALLY RESOLVED that the Board shall present the draft agreement with Fitchburg Center, and a preliminary design for the new meeting house, for approval by the members of Prairie at a general or special parish meeting to be held not later than November 30, 2004.

VIDEOTAPE OF FEBRUARY 1 SESSION

Thanks to Carl Wacker and Paula Pachciarz, we have two copies on videotape of Sunday's presentation by Archie Nicolette. I will keep track of who has them, and make sure anyone who wants to see them has a chance to see them.

There has been no decision on a more public viewing at Prairie. Stay tuned.

Please phone or e-mail me to check out a copy.
Larry Nahlik
274-6870
lnahlik@wisc.edu

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UUA URBAN MINISTRIES CONFERENCE

The UUA's Conference on Urban Ministries carries the theme, "Resistance and Rebirth: Cities and the Future of Our Faith." It will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Boston, adjacent to the Hynes Convention Center from March 18-21, 2004. A variety of workshops on topics including faith-based community organizing, community partnerships, youth in the city, and many others will be offered.

For registration information, go to www.uua.org/urbanuu/resistanceandrebirth.pdf.
Deadline for registration: February 13, 2004.

LETTERS

BLANKET DRIVE FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

I am a member of the Madison Mennonite Church and am coordinating a blanket drive that is in response to the earthquake in Bam, Iran. Blankets and financial donations will be sent to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) which is working together with the Iranian Red Crescent Society to provide relief for the approximately 100,000 people who have been left homeless. MCC is providing blankets (50,000 of which they had in stock), powdered milk, field showers, and is planning intermediate and long-term reconstruction efforts. MCC is in need of new blanket donations for Iran, and to replenish their depleted stock.

We invite you to participate, and to spread information about this drive.

Thank you,
Bonnie Berger-Durnbaugh
pbe@terra.com.net
236-0998

BLANKET DRIVE FOR IRAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

In response to the recent earthquake in Iran, Mennonite Central Committee is sending blankets and collecting donations for relief supplies. Madison Mennonite Church will hold a blanket drive.

**Blankets should be new, winter weight, twin.
(dark colors preferred)**

**February 15, 2004
3 - 5 PM**

at Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ
1501 Gilbert Rd, Madison

For more information:
MCC Web site: www.mcc.org
Local drive contact: telephone 236-0998

Directions:
Corner of Gilbert Rd & Tolman Terrace,
a few blocks south of intersection of
Whitney Way & Gilbert Rd.

To send a donation: mail checks to Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron PA 17501. Designate donations "Iran Earthquake Response".

Prairie Web Sites

Prairie UU: <http://my.execpc.com/~prairieu/>

PrairieNews Group:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>

PrairieViews Group:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>

Social Action: <http://socialaction.homestead.com>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Exclusive: From the Desk of Our Roving Reporters

[This is part of a series of interviews focusing on people involved with the R.E. Program. Drawing by Toby Wacker.]



ANNE URBANSKI

Anne Urbanski has been Chair of the R.E. Committee for two years, and on the committee since 1998. Before that, she taught classes several times at Prairie. She has been a member of Prairie for about 20 years.

Anne likes being involved with Prairie R.E. because the program gives kids a chance to develop their UU faith in ways of their own choice and in a small, friendly setting. Her favorite activities are the overnights and Nifty Gifty.

Originally from New Orleans, Anne came to Wisconsin to attend college and just stayed on. She misses some things about New Orleans, but not the hot summers! Anne is married and has one daughter, Maya, who is seven years old and in second grade.

Anne's interests include reading and writing, and her favorite subject for both is Harry Potter. Right now she is looking forward to being a helpful resource for whoever becomes the next R.E. chair.

Robin Proud

AS BUSY AS LITTLE RED HENS

Three weeks back the two youngest groups, everybody from age 6 down to age 2 and our babysitters, Asmita and Ritika, made sun gods or goddesses out of salt dough. The kids were great at measuring all the ingredients and kneading the dough. They discovered that salt dries out our skin, though! Then they rolled out the dough, cut it out, and we baked them.

The next week we painted them and now that they're dry, Jeanie has to remember to have the kids choose a cord or a ribbon to string them on so they can wear them home. The kids made neat posters to put up at the Arbordale Nursing Home advertising the upcoming Prairie Youth visit. They didn't have much on the wall over there, so I'm sure each poster

will be studied carefully in the intervening time, by the residents.

If you have a child this age and miss any of these projects that take more than one week, we always will make extras, so no child is left behind...to quote an infamous American! Don't feel that you need to come every single Sunday or not at all...we are very flexible so we fit into everybody's busy lifestyles nowadays.

The other three classrooms have been using the **In Our Hands: Peace & Social Justice Curriculum** developed by the Unitarian Universalists. We will have more news about some of their activities next newsletter.

Note from the D.R.E:

I've been told that it's best if everybody is assigned to a car ahead of time. Once I know who is driving, I will assign a teenager large enough to handle an accidental airbag deployment to be in charge, in front, next to the driver. If a child needs a car seat, let me know ahead of time. They will be assigned to newer cars in which the seatbelt can be locked in place.

Jeanie Trigg, Prairie UU D.R.E.

SOCIAL ACTION

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK TRAINING IN 2004

Our first shift this year with the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) is February 8-15. IHN is the network of churches that take turns hosting homeless families while they seek housing and better employment. Prairie helps out at Midvale Lutheran, the host church for next week and the site of the volunteering.

Those who wish to sign up or find out more may contact Paula Pachciarz (pachwack@sbcglobal.net or 273-4806).

Upcoming training sessions:

- February 15, Sunday 12:00–2:00 p.m. McFarland UCC, 5710 Anthony St., McFarland
- February 17, Tuesday 7–9 p.m. Day Center, 1121 University Ave.
- March 17, Wednesday 7–9 p.m. Day Center
- April 1, Thursday 7–9 p.m. Day Center

- May 3, Monday 7–9 p.m. Day Center

UUSC E-MAIL BULLETIN

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee: advancing human rights and social justice in the United States and throughout the world.

Shareholders focus on getting "Big Pharma's" drugs to world's poor

UUSC has joined with a group of other investors affiliated with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility to press America's pharmaceutical companies to increase access to anti-retroviral AIDS drugs in the developing world. As a human rights organization, UUSC has watched inaction by "Big Pharma" rob people of their health and dignity and decimate communities. As a participant in shareholder advocacy, UUSC is also making business aware that the costs of inaction are enormous in terms of a company's brand strength, public relations and future profits. Visit www.uusc.org/info/article122303r3.html

Action alert! Support survivors of Guatemala massacres in quest for justice

UUSC and one of our partner organizations in Guatemala are concerned that arrest warrants issued months ago for four of the persons directly responsible for massacres in the Rabinal region of Guatemala have not been carried out by the Guatemalan police.

For more information about how you can urge the Guatemalan government to bring those responsible to justice, visit <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert011404.html> Many in Rabinal, including UUSC's partner organization, celebrated the closure of the army base there. For an update, visit <http://www.uusc.org/info/article010604.html>

New online election center aids voter registration and information on candidates

As part of our Defending Democracy 2004 drive, eligible voters can now register to vote quickly by using our online registration forms. In addition, all visitors to our site can receive relevant information about elections and candidates in their states and communities, as well as up-to-date positions on important issues by all of the presidential candidates. To register to vote now, visit <http://www.uusc.org/info/article010804.html> To learn about UUSC's Elections 2004 initiative, visit www.uusc.org/info/article122303r4.html

UUSC partner says women are essential to bringing peace to Central Africa

People for Peace in Africa is one of the leading peace-building organizations in East Africa. Established in 1989, PPA seeks ways to bring peace and reconciliation to Africa through the empowerment of people at the grassroots level. UUSC has supported PPA's peace building and human rights awareness program for Burundian and Rwandan women.

For an update written by Joseph Adero Ngala, director of People for Peace, visit http://www.uusc.org/info/article013004_2.html

You can sign up to receive your own copy of the entire UUSC E-mail Bulletin at: <http://www.uusc.org/info/emailbulletin.html>

<p align="center">Prairie Office Administrator Office Hours Mondays 7–9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.–12 noon</p>
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<p align="center">Shaarei Shamayim Calendar Tues. 3:45–6:15 p.m. & Sat. 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m. Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249–5933 CelestialR@charter.net</p>
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