

Prairie UU Society, 2010 Whenona Drive, Madison WI 53711-4843  
(608) 271-8218 prairieu@execpc.com  
Located off the south frontage road (West Beltline Hwy Rd.) near the Seminole Hwy exit.



# 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 Bond of Union)

**March 26, 2004**

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

President: Ken Skog; (608) 273-4813

Editor: Dan Proud, prairieu@execpc.com; (608) 661-0776

## **PRAIRIE CALENDAR**

### **Saturday, March 27**

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

### **Sunday, March 28**

☞ 10:00 a.m. "A Celebration of Spring in Prose, Poetry, Music, and Art," coordinated by Marcia Johnson.

☞ 11:45 a.m. Secret Friend potluck, letter exchange and party.

### **Sunday, April 4**

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Reasonable Religion," presented by the Rev. Sarah Oelberg.

### **Sunday, April 11**

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Spring Renewal Meditation" presented by Judy Skog.

### **Friday, April 23 to Sunday, April 25**

☞ Central Midwest District Annual Assembly, Lisle, Illinois

### **Sunday, April 25**

12:30 p.m. Annual Prairie Spring Business Meeting

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

**Next Prairie Fire Deadline: April 4**

## **DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Sunday, March 28**

Marcia Johnson has set up a program of delights to herald the arrival of spring. Prairie poets, musicians, artists, and raconteurs will set the mood for the joyful occasion. Of special mention will be the artwork of Prairie members and friends that will be on display just for this Sunday.

The Secret Friends potluck and party will take place after the service.

### **Sunday, April 4**

Sarah Oelberg is a UU minister and humanist, who spent many years on the prairie of Southern Minnesota before moving to Wisconsin. She will speak on the topic, "Reasonable Religion."

### **Sunday, April 11**

Wonder what Zorba Paster did to get himself through the ordeal of his kidnapping? Experience the personal and spiritual renewal of meditation, or just come because it feels good. Join Judy Skog for a variety of meditations, including guided meditation and toning.

*March 26 is the birth anniversary of Zarathustra, or Zoroaster, one of the great teachers of the East and founder of the Zoroastrian religion. He was famous in classical antiquity as the founder of the widely renowned wisdom of the Magi. --Wikipedia*

## **OUR SOCIETY**

### **PLAYREADING MARCH 27**

Playreaders will gather at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker at 7 p.m. on March 27 to read Lynda Barry's *The Good Times Are Killing Me*, a moving play about the friendship between two girls of different races during the 1960s. This is an intergenerational play and has many roles for teens and adults. It includes music from that era, which we will be playing. Please let Paula or Carl know in advance if you will attend (call 273-4706).

### **NOTICE OF SPRING GENERAL MEETING**

Pursuant to Article V:B of our bylaws, this is to notify all members of the annual spring business meeting on Sunday, April 25, beginning not before 12:30 pm. There will be a potluck lunch that day after the meeting. Items of business may include but are not limited to: budgets, elections, appointments, revisions to the Bylaws, committee reports, and resolutions dealing with social issues. Other business may be raised at the meeting at the request of at least ten members, but if anyone has other business to place on the agenda, please inform Mike Briggs, preferably by e-mail at [briggslaw@earthlink.net](mailto:briggslaw@earthlink.net), on or before April 3, 2004. Thanks.

*Mike Briggs, Secretary*

### **SECRET FRIENDS REVEALED MARCH 28!!**

Just a reminder to adults and children who are Secret Friends: please bring a letter for your secret friend on Sunday, March 21. Also, don't forget that our Secret Friends party takes place on Sunday, March 28 after the service. This is a potluck for the secret friends (and their immediate families), so please bring *kid-friendly* food!!

*Anne Urbanski*

### **PARISH, BOARD, PLAN STEPS FOR NEW MEETING HOUSE**

On March 14, 2004, Prairie's membership adopted the resolution published in the last issue of *Prairie Fire*. The resolution authorizes the Board (or others designated by the Board) to negotiate a tentative agreement for a new meeting house at the Fitchburg Center, working with a building/planning consultant and choosing an architect. A tentative agreement with Fitchburg Center and a preliminary design for a new meeting house are to be brought to the

membership before November 30, 2004.

The congregation kept open the possibility of looking at other possible sites while negotiations are going on for a Fitchburg building.

On March 21, 2004, the Board named the Ad Hoc Fitchburg Committee, chaired by Larry Nahlik, to conduct negotiations with Fitchburg Center, to work with Bill Haney (a UU minister and former architect from Missouri who is a building/planning consultant) and to propose an architect.

*Mike Briggs, Secretary*

### **IN MEMORIAM**

Timothy Nash Fast, husband of Rosemary McMahan Dorney, died the morning of Thursday, March 18, 2004, at home as he wished.

Arrangements for a memorial service will be announced at a future date.

We extend our warmest sympathy to Rosemary. We will miss Tim and his positive view of life.



## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **CLASSROOM NEWS**

Brian and K.K. have gotten two teens from the senior high class registered to go to a weekend "Con-ival" organized by James Reeb. This will be a great way to get to know some other UU teens in this part of Wisconsin. We would also like to take some teens down to the District Con in St. Louis at the end of April....any high school teenagers who can put up with the six-hour trip in Jeanie's van get in exchange an unforgettable experience.

[ "con" = convention ]

The middle-school class has been brainstorming ideas for service projects with Larry. They're leaning toward designing bumper stickers with clever sayings on them about Unitarian-Universalism and peace. If anybody out there has ideas, send them along in an e-mail to Larry or Brian. Maybe we can connect with some people out

there who are actually UUs but don't know it yet! The middle-school class also would like to volunteer at the Humane Society.

The intermediate class and their sub, Robin Proud, didn't let the cold wind deter them from picking up litter in the neighborhood with their hands protected with plastic bagel bags... How's that for reusing!

The primary class celebrated the vernal equinox with Kristi by making lovely clay sculptures that were displayed dangling on delicate strings from a branch near the door of the meeting hall last Sunday.

Our youngest participants are always in good hands with Asmita and Ritika. With the individualized attention, they frequently are able to join the activity the primary kids are doing, especially if it involves painting!

We have a number of exciting things coming up that we need to get scheduled. Friends have graciously invited all the RE kids over to swim in their indoor pool. It's very tempting to just have all the kids bring their suits and towels some Sunday and carpool over there. Maybe for our spiritual/ educational experience, we could spray water on each other like the Buddhists observe the coming of the rainy season in Thailand. Somebody who's up on this could enlighten Jeanie!

Also, Norma and Mike have offered their place, with the meadows and woods, for a cookout for the teens over an open fire. This would be a good night to bring friends. Hopefully we could also get the Quaker teens to join us who almost came to Wild Wintering, but felt a little too shy at the last minute.  
*Jeanie Trigg*

### **Prairie Web Sites**

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

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

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

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

### **Office Hours for the Prairie Office Administrator**

Mondays 7-9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 noon

## **SOCIAL ACTION**

### **BREAKFAST BUNCH**

Dave and Marcia Johnson, Jeni Savage, Maggie Siegfried, and Judy Wacker lost a little sleep Tuesday, February 24, but gained a lot of appreciation for their labors in the kitchen of the men's drop-in shelter. The usual staff wasn't there so all ten hands were needed to provide a plentiful, hot breakfast of bacon and eggs for the shelter guests. At the March 23 breakfast, Dave Johnson and Dan Proud repeated the duty.

### **INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK**

Erin Bosch, Dave and Marcia Johnson, Paula Pachciarz, Molly Plunkett, and Judy Wacker helped Midvale Lutheran host homeless families the second week of February. Individually, they shared meals, accompanied families on a shopping spree at Target, helped with child care, and stayed overnight at the church. The next volunteer training for IHN will take place at the IHN Day Center on March 17, 7-9 p.m., and Prairie's next shift with Midvale Lutheran will be April 25-May 2.

### **GUEST AT YOUR TABLE: ANOTHER SUCCESS**

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee acknowledged receipt of over \$500 in contributions from Prairie UU Society members in the recent Guest at Your Table drive. Thanks again to those families and individuals who participated.

## **LETTERS**

### **HOST FAMILIES SOUGHT**

Dear Prairie:

I am a representative of Reflections International Inc. and am searching for families willing to house German high school students for 5 to 10 month stays in Madison. Students will arrive in August this year. We need placement for girls and boys in this area. Any responsible person or family can apply.

Call Gloria Miller at 1-608-647-3688 or write for more information to 311 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Richalnd Center, WI 53581.

Thank you,  
*Gloria Miller*

## CREATING VISIBLE COMMUNITY

Dear All at Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society,

My name is LeAnne Ray and I am writing to you on behalf of a new statewide coalitioning group called Creating Visible Community.

It is our goal to reach across the boundaries of race, religion, class, ethnicity, political viewpoints, etc., and create more opportunities for members of our lgbt community to add to the spiritual, intellectual, social, and creative richness of our community by being more visible to each other and to our many straight allies. We believe that, with increased visibility as a large population of tax-payers, voters, and ordinary citizens who contribute to Wisconsin culture, we will achieve greater mobilization statewide and, as a result, gain more social and political recognition. As MLK said, "Where there is injustice for one, there is injustice for all."

The power of homophobia creates divisions within our lgbt community and many of us are ignorant of the Wisconsin lgbt community's rich diversity. Creating Visible Community is as much a networking organization as an educational force. We also act as a model for those still in fear and isolation to find safety and support.

I invite you to become involved in this group. We are in the process of forming subcommittees which will reach out to a wide variety of allies and already existing groups of lgbt folks. We very much want our youth to participate in this vision of strength and hope as well. I am interested, as chair of Creating Visible Communities, in eventually setting up a meeting with you so that we may brainstorm on other ways to achieve this kind of coalition work. Please feel free to respond with any ideas, comments, or questions. All are welcome! I look forward to working with you on this.

Sincerely,  
LeAnne Ray  
246-1887

### **Shaarei Shamayim Calendar**

Tuesdays 3:45 – 6:15 and Saturdays 8:45 – 1:15

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933

[CelestialR@charter.net](mailto:CelestialR@charter.net)

## **PROGRAM**

We were moved, and amused, by the statements members wrote and said about their religious paths at the Sunday, March 21 service. I think almost everyone in the congregation had an opportunity to express themselves. We learned much about one another. We will summarize and list some responses and post them next Sunday. But the details are fascinating, and we will place some of the questionnaires at the back of the hall next Sunday. You might agree with us that the whole collection merits publication as a pamphlet, with names excluded.

*Warren Hagstrom and Doleta Chapru*

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **OUR NEW PRAIRIE DIRECTORY**

The new membership directory is ready to pick up by members at Prairie!

Please make the following corrections to the Directory listings:

Kim Truog (608) 835-6397

List of Officers: Vice-President – KK Anderson  
Secretary – Mike Briggs

Additional staff: Religious Education Director –  
Jeanie Trigg 301-0289

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Please welcome these new Prairie members:

Judy Packer

Patty Stockdale

Dirk and Susan Herr-Hoyman

## **DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **CMWD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY APRIL 23-25**

The Central Midwest District Assembly online registration site is up and running! It is an easy way to register for this year's big event. To register, go to [www.regonline.com/?12577](http://www.regonline.com/?12577) (If you have any problems with the site or questions, please contact Carol Hosmer.) This year's Assembly theme is "Walking Our Talk: Our Proud Heritage and Present Challenge," with keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Michael Schuler.

## **REQUEST FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY DELEGATES**

We are looking for individuals who have knowledge of the Prairie congregation and who are willing to vote at the Business Meeting or plenary sessions, and who will share GA information with the Society. Selection will be based on Denominational Affairs Committee policy. People who have not experienced the Assemblies are encouraged to apply. Prairie provides registration fees for GA and some money for expenses.

Please notify Mary Somers at [asomers@execpc.com](mailto:asomers@execpc.com) or call 276-8397 after April 2, if interested. Or you may call Nancy Schraufnagel now at 273-3195. It would be nice if we could approve the delegates at the April Board meeting.

Featured programs at the GA: Immigrants, the New Civil Rights Movement, This is What Democracy Looks Like, Creating a Progressive Pro-Family Agenda, Responsible Consumption, Signature Project (celebrating the interconnectedness through the arts), Reason: Why Liberals Will Win the Battle for America. Holly Near, entertainer and activist, will give the Ware Lecture.

## **VOTING ON GA STUDY ACTION ISSUES**

In April, the Denominational Affairs Committee will poll Prairie members on the following Study/Action Issues for General Assembly Action poll:

- S1. Civil Marriage Equality (from First Unitarian Universalist Church, Columbus, OH)
- S2. Oppression of Women World Wide (from Community Unitarian Church, White Plains, NY)
- S3. Stopping Mass Extinction (from First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, VT)
- S4. Threat of Global Warming (from Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, Walnut Creek, CA)

## **Commission on Social Witness**

The Commission on Social Witness (CSW) met in Boston, MA on January 22 - 25, 2004. The Commission is charged by the bylaws (Bylaw 4.12 (b)) of the Unitarian Universalist Association with selecting not more than ten Study/Action Issues for inclusion in the Congregational Directives for General Assembly Action poll (Rule G-4.18.3). Congregations or districts submitted four proposed Study/Action Issues (SAI). The selection process attends to the criteria of History, Principles,

Significance, Timeliness, Focus, Clarity, Practice, and Benefit. All four proposed Study/Action Issues are being placed on the poll. Keeping with the Commission's longstanding policy on ordering items on the polls, in odd-numbered years they appear in reverse alphabetical order, and in even-numbered years the Study/Action Issues appear in alphabetical order.

The congregational vote enables the General Assembly to choose a Study/Action Issue for two years of study and action. Study/Action Issues receiving a majority of positive votes, will be placed on the final agenda of the 2004 General Assembly meeting in Long Beach, California on June 24 - 28, 2004. During the Saturday morning plenary session, delegates will select one of these four issues as the 2004-2006 Study/Action Issue.

Selection as the SAI is the first step of a two-year process leading towards an issue becoming a UUA Statement of Conscience. The proposed 2004 UUA Statement of Conscience is entitled, "Civil Liberties." The General Assembly will consider adoption of this proposed UUA Statement on June 26. Last year, the 2003 General Assembly selected "Criminal Justice and Prison Reform" as the 2003-2005 Study/Action Issue. It is anticipated that the 2005 General Assembly will consider adoption of a Statement of Conscience on this issue. You can find copies of these various documents along with detailed information about how to participate in the SAI/SOC process on the UUA Web site: [www.uua.org/csw](http://www.uua.org/csw).

## **UUSC HOLIDAY CARDS CONTEST 2004**

We urge creative UUs of all ages who are passionate about human rights and social justice to submit a design for a new Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) card for the 2004 holiday season. The winning card designers' names and congregations will be printed on their cards, which will be purchased and shared by UUs nationwide.

Submissions deadline: **April 15, 2004**. For submission guidelines, see [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

Mail submissions to: UUSC Holiday Card Contest, 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139-1845  
E-mail submissions to: [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org)  
*Rachel M. Binderman*  
*Associate for Member Development, UUSC*

**WUURLD ALASKA DEADLINE EXTENDED**  
Five Alaska UU fellowships have extended to April 15 the early reservation deadline for their June, July and August eco-spirituality programs—seventh year! Reservations close May 1. See Web site [www.wuurld.org](http://www.wuurld.org), phone toll-free 1-888-998-8753, or e-mail [info@wuurld.org](mailto:info@wuurld.org) for a brochure.

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **RAINBOW FAMILIES WISCONSIN 4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



#### **"Learn, Connect and Rejuvenate to Continue the Fight for Our Rights"**

RFW Mission: Rainbow Families Wisconsin (RFW) works towards building a strong community for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) parents, prospective parents, and our children.

Childcare and Teen Program on site.

Dates: April 2 - 4, 2004

Workshop Day: Saturday, April 3, 8:30- 4:30

Location: J.F. Friedrich Hotel and Conference Center, UW-Madison Campus, Madison, WI

#### **Special Raffle Prizes**

Raffle tickets sold at the conference and a winner will be drawn during the dinner and family dance. Prizes:

- 1.) R Family Vacations, Rosie and Kelly O'Donnell's gay family friendly travel agency, has donated a 7-day cruise (\$5,000 value) with balcony view on their maiden voyage in July from New York to the Bahamas and Key West. Family Pride Coalition will host glbt workshops and discussions throughout the trip.
- 2.) Olivia Cruises and Vacations donated a weeks stay at the Sandpiper Resort in beautiful Port Saint Lucie, Florida. Parents and children alike raved about the amazing sense of community and the 400 acres of family fun. Club Olivia also offers daylong excursions to popular ecological and cultural centers like Walt Disney Magic Kingdom, SeaWorld or the Kennedy Space Center.

### **Why Come to the Conference**

In these politically tense times, when our rights are not only being denied, it is being proposed to ban them forever, it is extremely important to gather for our continual education, support, networking, renewal and don't forget -- FUN! GLBT parents, prospective parents, allies of GLBT families, extended family members, educators, social workers, community and political leaders, and those who care about diversity are encouraged to attend this special day. Explore and expand your understanding of family diversity, diversity within families, parenting, creating families, and building powerful communities across the state.

Children will be treated to a day of fun, crafts, sports, and music as they spend quality time with kids with families like theirs. Teens will spend the day working with the staff of Diverse and Resilient to discuss the intricacies of being teens in their families in today's world. This weekend is designed for families to spend a weekend relaxing with like minds in a hotel and conference center next to beautiful Lake Mendota. Start your spring break week with this important event!

#### **Conference Web Site**

[www.geocities.com/rainbowfamilieswisconsin/](http://www.geocities.com/rainbowfamilieswisconsin/)

#### **Conference Chairperson**

Patti Thompson: [pattithompson@charter.net](mailto:pattithompson@charter.net) or 244-5258

### **(RE)CONNECT WITH YOUR INNER POET Sunday, April 25, 3 – 5 p.m. at James Reeb**

Please join a poetry workshop at James Reeb UU for a fun and welcoming time to get your poetic juices flowing for Spring! People with all levels of poetry experience and confidence are welcome to participate. The workshop will involve individual and group exercises. Please call Paul at 251-3187 or email [pterranova@mindspring.com](mailto:pterranova@mindspring.com) to register and bring a check for \$16 payable to James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation for each participant.

*"Flags are bits of colored cloth that governments use first to shrink-wrap people's minds and then as ceremonial shrouds to bury the dead."--Arundhati Roy*