



# 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)

**May 7, 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)*

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## **PRAIRIE CALENDAR**

### **Sunday, May 9**

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Is My World Threatened by Islam?"  
presented by Bob Lawrence

### **Sunday, May 16**

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Give Me Your Tired...But Not Yet!"  
Presented by Andrew Somers

### **Monday, May 17**

6:30 p.m. WOW potluck and photo demonstration  
at Prairie. Bring photos to share.

### **Wednesday, May 19**

7:00 p.m. Prairie Board Meeting at Prairie

### **Sunday, May 23**

☞ 10:00 a.m. Transitional program put on by the  
Religious Education Committee

### **Sunday, May 30**

☞ 10:00 a.m. Memorial Day Picnic at the Briggs'

### **Friday, June 11**

☞ 5:30 p.m. Prairie Playreaders Annual Fish Dinner,  
followed by reading of a one-act play at the home of  
Pat Watkins

### **Saturday, June 19**

☞ Prairie Bus Trip Fund Raiser to Milwaukee

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

## **DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS**

### **Sunday, May 9**

This is the first of a series of programs on Islam by Bob Lawrence, a Prairie member who has spoken before. He is well-informed about the Muslim world and will share his interesting insights.

### **Sunday, May 16**

The program, "Give Me Your Tired...But Not Yet!" will be presented by Andrew Somers, Prairie member and President of the Irish American Unity Conference, a human rights organization based in Washington D.C. He will review current dilemmas faced by the stranger coming to our shores in hopes of starting a new life.

The new immigrants are faced with racism and hatred fueled by the tragedy of 9-11. Judge Somers will discuss a few cases he has worked that involved "deportees" and people subject to extradition struggles. The battles took place in our courts as well as in the halls of Congress trying to obtain asylum for "political offenders." The current administration wants to follow GWB's father's attempt to remove the "Political Offence" exception to the removal of people from our land. We will also review current efforts to gain votes by easing our laws to allow "illegals" to gain valid status.

**Next Prairie Fire Deadline: May 16**

## **OUR SOCIETY**

### **SPRING PARISH MEETING APRIL 25**

At the parish meeting on April 25, the membership elected the slate of officers for 2004-2005 nominated by the Committee on Committees, and also elected new members of that committee (Norma Briggs, Rick Ruecking and Mary Mullen). Susan Hagstrom will carry over from last year's committee. The incoming board will appoint one of its members to the committee.

Sarah Lord and Nancy Schraufnagel will be Prairie's delegates to General Assembly.

In other action, the membership decided:

- \* To establish the position of Corresponding Secretary;
- \* To seek a part-time temporary minister;
- \* Not to establish a committee to work with an architect to determine if our present building could be modified to meet growth needs.

Finally, the membership adopted a resolution supporting the legalization of same-sex marriage.

*Mike Briggs, Secretary*

### **CHORISTERS TO REST VOICES**

Our choir director, Barbara Park, has suspended choir rehearsals until the fall. A summer get-together is being planned for early June for choristers and prospective members of the choir. Details will be announced in a forthcoming issue of *Prairie Fire*.

### **PLAYREADERS ON JUNE 11**

A Prairie Playreaders Annual Fish Dinner will be held at the home of Pat Watkins on Friday, June 11, starting at 5:30 p.m. The dinner will be followed by the reading of a one-act play and dessert. Save the date; more information to come in the next issue.

*Wesak (on May 4) is the most important day of the year for Buddhists. Coming on the full moon, it marks the triple celebration of the Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment, and Final Demise. --Multifaith Calendar 2004*

### **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WALK MAY 23**

The high school and middle school classes from Prairie have put together a 5K walk as a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. The older students are also working on a building project. We've been working hard, and have a planned date for the walk on May 23, around 1 p.m. If you would like to pledge, contact any of the students.

Walkers will be circulating pledge forms at Prairie the next two Sundays and amongst their friends; all the money raised will go directly to Habitat. Brian has planned the route through the Arboretum; it should be beautiful. Any interested adults are welcome to join us, as well as any of the RE kids' friends. If you are interested, please contact any of the Middle School/High School Teachers---K.K. Anderson, Brian Kudzas, Rachel Long, or Larry Nahlik.

*Reuben Arnold*

### **AUCTION ITEMS AVAILABLE**

At the Prairie Annual Auction, five items were not bid on and were held in reserve. We have placed a notice for silent auction on each item at the Prairie welcoming table for five Sundays. The items are child care and adult (respite) care.

If you are interested in more information on the child or respite care or want to bid and cannot attend Sunday services, contact Kathy Converse at [conversekrtn@msn.com](mailto:conversekrtn@msn.com) or 608-238-1856.

### **PRAIRIE BUS TRIP FUNDRAISER JUNE 19**

On Saturday, June 19, we will travel to the Rose Show at Boerner Gardens in Whitnall Park (and the peonies will probably still be in bloom), followed by lunch at Mader's German Restaurant in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward. Then, it's off to the Milwaukee Public Museum for the I-Max film on Egypt, followed by the Egyptian exhibit "The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt" (audio guide included).

NOTE: The price of the entire package and transportation is \$68, which is **due no later than May 15th**. (This corrects the price that was incorrectly reported in the last issue of *Prairie Fire*.)

For additional details, contact Pat Watkins at 233-5795.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **SPRING FLING MAY 15**

We will be wrapping up our traditional RE calendar year in May, although there seems to be interest in planning some summer field trips or activities so the kids can keep in touch with each other.

On May 15 we will be having our Spring Fling. Believe it or not, it has actually been three months since our Wild Wintering sleep-over. These sleep-overs at Prairie are unique because they are for all the RE kids, *of all ages*, and frequently the students bring close friends, as well.

The event will start on Saturday at 3:30 at Prairie. As we are waiting for everybody to arrive, those who are bringing tents can set them up in the side yard, unless you would rather sleep inside. Both places will be supervised by the RE teachers.

We will leave from Prairie at about 4 p.m. in a car caravan, organized by Robin Carre, to drive over to the house of three of our RE students. There we will have an indoor pool party and play some games. If you don't want to swim, no problem... you can just do the other activities. Also, if you have some other event going on and will be arriving late, a couple adults will stay behind at Prairie. They can take you over to the pool party.

After the swim we will go back to Prairie for Brian's cookout. Each kid should bring \$3 to cover the cost of supper and breakfast, and Brian will provide all the food. The youth can select whether they want a brat, hamburger, or veggie burger on their permission forms, which will be distributed next week. If you won't be there, send an e-mail to [jeanie.trigg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeanie.trigg@sbcglobal.net) and I will e-mail one to you.

After supper Erin will be organizing the games and activities. For those who are still awake, the last activity will be a movie that one of the teens will be bringing. If you have a child who isn't sure about the "sleep-over" part, tell her/him that it's okay to just come for the other activities and go home to sleep, or even better, talk Mom or Dad into bringing their sleeping bag to keep you company.

The next morning, we will wake up to the aroma of Dean cooking our breakfast again...the "rise and shine" man. After breakfast, the kids will need to

roll up their sleeping bags and pack up their gear by the time the adult service and regular RE classes start. The end of another memorable sleep-over!

### **TRANSITION SUNDAY MAY 23**

The following Sunday will be Transition Sunday, May 23. This is when any RE students who are graduating from middle school or high school are honored in an inter-generational service. It's an opportunity for the congregation to become better acquainted with these students and celebrate their uniqueness. Robin Carre has agreed to lead this special event.

*Jeanie Trigg, Religious Education Director*

### **OFFICE HOURS FOR THE PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**

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

### **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)*

### **PRAIRIE WEB SITES**

*Prairie UU: [my.execpc.com/~prairieu/](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>*

## **DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **NCAC SPRING WORKSHOP JUNE 5**

The North Central Area Council, part of the Central Midwest District, is planning a June 5 spring workshop at the Green Bay Fellowship as it was last year. The focus will be on religious education: "Faith Development as a Key to Growth." Dori Davenport and possibly Ann Barker will be presenters.

There will be a small fee to cover costs. Details will be announced in the coming weeks. For questions in advance, you can call Gail Slaughter, NCAC Coordinator, at 920-901-1168.

**EXPLORE OUR UU ROOTS: TRY  
TRANSYLVANIA**

Second Unitarian Church of Chicago is organizing a trip to Transylvania September 21 to October 4, 2004. The church is opening up the trip to other people in the district who are interested in Transylvania and would like to visit, but don't have a congregational trip planned. It's also a great opportunity for the District folks in general. There is a brochure about the trip at Prairie.

For more information, you can contact Kimberly Bares, 2U/Partner Church Council District Networker, Central Midwest District, at 773-508-5885.

**UUSC E-MAIL BULLETIN**

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

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**Action alert: Urge Congress to balance social needs against the rising cost of Iraq war**

With Congress now debating federal budget priorities for the next fiscal year, it is imperative for social justice activists to urge policy-makers to balance pressing social needs against the ever-increasing costs of the war in Iraq.

Contact your members of Congress to urge them to reject a budget conference report that offers little help to millions of American families and especially hurts low-income families. To learn more about this pressing issue and to find out how much the war and occupation of Iraq is costing you, visit:

<http://www.uusc.org/news/alert041604.html>

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**Defending Democracy is among UUSC highlights at General Assembly 2004**

Make sure your schedule at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, held this year in Long Beach, Calif., June 24-28, includes UUSC events. Join us to learn about our Defending Democracy get-out-the-vote campaign, attend the premiere of a documentary film about the U.S. government's attack on our civil liberties, and meet courageous human rights activists from Burma and Guatemala.

UUSC members are invited to attend our annual meeting and volunteer recognition luncheon at 12:30

p.m., Saturday, June 26, in the Beacon B room of the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Tickets are \$20 and available in advance by calling UUSC at 800-766-5236 or, if space is still available, at the UUSC booth in the exhibit hall.

For more information about UUSC at General Assembly, visit:

<http://www.uusc.org/info/article042304.html>

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**Young activists can defend democracy at summer 2004 workcamps**

UUSC invites youth and young adults to combine learning and fun this summer. Join us for one of our voter-education workcamps that will provide participants with electoral-related skills to take back to their communities while being inspired, encouraged and motivated by community activists.

Participants in the Freedom Summer workcamp: A Civil Rights Journey will join UUSC for a civil rights journey to key Southern cities and will meet some of the activists from Freedom Summer in 1964. Defending Democracy workcamps will be held in Boston and New York City to coincide with the Democratic and Republican national conventions in July and August.

For more about these and other upcoming workcamps, visit:

<http://www.uusc.org/news/wcsched2004.html>

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**UUSC supports shareholder resolutions that promote responsible corporate behavior**

Building on more than a decade of work, UUSC continues to engage in shareholder advocacy, leveraging our role as an investor to advocate for more responsible corporate behavior on the part of targeted companies. We know that ownership in a company, as a shareholder, is a powerful vehicle for raising social justice issues within the corporate structure and then ensuring the development of policies and practices that promote human rights. To learn more about UUSC's shareholder advocacy, visit <http://www.uusc.org/info/shareholder.html>

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## Fair trade festival was "fun to the last drop"

Engaging in fair trade can be a fun and rewarding opportunity for your community even as it provides small farmers throughout the world with a fair price for their products. Just take the example of All Souls Unitarian Church in Washington, D.C., which held a Fair Trade Festival on April 10.

To read more about the Fair Trade Festival and learn about ways your congregation can support fair trade, visit [www.uusc.org/info/article042804.html](http://www.uusc.org/info/article042804.html)

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## Sign up for advocacy opportunities

You already receive UUSC's monthly e-mail bulletin but did you know you can sign up online for other advocacy opportunities? Human Rights Defenders receive regular e-mail alerts about opportunities to advocate for justice in select geographic regions or on specific issues. Media advocates are volunteers who use the media to promote our human rights programs and public policies. To become a Human Rights Defender or a media advocate, visit:

<http://www.uusc.org/info/emailbulletin.html>

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## Give the gift of justice online

UUSC has made it easier than ever to give a gift in honor of a loved one's special occasion or to honor their memory. You can now give the gift of justice online. For details, visit our new honor/memorial gift webpage at:

<http://www.uusc.org/info/vsmemorial.html>

## OTHER NEWS

### RADFEST 2004 MIDWEST SOCIAL FORUM

The Havens Center, UW-Madison, presents RADFEST 2004 at the Lake Geneva campus of Aurora University in Williams Bay, Wisconsin, on June 4-6, 2004. Over 50 panels and workshops will be featured, including the following keynote panel discussions:

#### *"Latinos and the Struggle for Political, Social, and Economic Justice"*

**Elizabeth Martínez**, Institute for Multi-Racial Justice; **Richard Moore**, Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice; **Christine**

**Neumann-Ortiz**, Voces de la Frontera; **Reneé Saucedo**, La Raza Centro Legal

#### *"Progressive Strategy for 2004, and Beyond"*

**Medea Benjamin**, Global Exchange; **Brenda Konkel**, Madison City Council; **Elizabeth Martínez**, Institute for Multi-Racial Justice; **Jamala Rogers**, Black Radical Congress

The weekend will include more than 100 speakers, musical entertainment, the award-winning play *One Wall Missing*, daytime recreational activities, and a major book signing session with authors Charles Derber, Robert Jenson, Robert McChesney, Jason Mark, and Thomas Ponniah.

For information on registration and directions to the conference site, call 608-262-0854, write to [info@havenscenter.org](mailto:info@havenscenter.org), or consult the Havens Center at [www.havenscenter.org](http://www.havenscenter.org).

Please note that **fees go up by \$10 on May 11 for overnight participants and May 21 for commuters.**

## PLANTS IN FLOWER ON PRAIRIE UU GROUNDS

On April 18, the following species of plants, most of which had been lovingly planted and cared for by Prairie members, were in flower on the grounds around Prairie UU's building. They were put to good use and greatly enjoyed by children of all ages in a treasure hunt that was part of our celebration of spring and Earth Day.

This is the first installment of a series calling attention to these superb aesthetic assets for which we have many people to thank.

--In the planted prairie: Prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*)

--Shrub in the lawn: Forsythia (*Forsythia* sp.)

--In the shade garden behind the building: Violets (*Viola* spp.); Wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*); Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginiana*); Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*); Red trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*); Greater periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)

--Weeds: Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*); Creeping-charlie (*Glechoma hederacea*)

Galen Smith

**ART FROM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**  
This features critters from the discerning eye of  
Daren.

Happy Spring!

