



# 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)

**June 25, 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**

### **Thursday–Monday, June 24–28**

General Assembly, Long Beach, California

### **Sunday, June 27**

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Favorite Books to Share for Summer Reading," led by Galen and Rose Smith.

### **Tuesday, June 29**

☞ 5:00 a.m. Prairie cooks breakfast at Men's Drop-In Shelter at Grace Episcopal Church

☞ 7:00 p.m. Discussion on Iraq War, held every other Tuesday at Prairie. Led by Nancy Graham.

### **Sunday, July 4**

☞ 11 a.m. Independence Day Picnic at Hoyt Park

### **Sunday, July 11**

☞ 10 a.m. "Nothing Left to Lose: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin" presented by Susan Urban.

### **Sunday–Sunday, July 11–18**

☞ Prairie volunteers with the Interfaith Hospitality Network

### **Sunday, July 18**

☞ 10 a.m. "Pledging Allegiance" presented by the Rev. Sarah Oelberg.

### **Sunday, July 25**

10 a.m. "Same-sex marriage: a Unitarian-Universalist perspective" presented by Mike and Norma Briggs.

**Next Prairie Fire Deadline: July 4**

### **Tuesday, July 27**

5:00 a.m. Prairie cooks breakfast at Men's Drop-In Shelter at Grace Episcopal Church

### **Saturday, August 7**

☞ Prairie Fundraiser Trip to the Chicago Field Museum for the exhibit entitled "Splendors of China." See flyer on Bulletin Board, or call Pat Watkins at 233-5795 for further information. Cost of \$52 is due by June 26th.

### **Saturday, August 14**

1:30 p.m. Prairie Playreaders Organizational Potluck Lunch.

### **Friday–Sunday, September 17–19**

Annual Retreat, at Bethel Horizons

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

## **DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS**

### **Sunday, June 27**

For our program on summer reading, please bring books you are prepared to talk about for a few minutes. If you have any that are inspirational to help us through these difficult times, we would love to hear about them.

### **Sunday, July 4**

Independence Day Picnic (at Hoyt Park, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) is our traditional picnic to enjoy fellowship and the outdoors. Please bring a dish to share and your own plates, cups and utensils and, if you wish, something to grill. As the shelter is in a woody place mosquito repellent would be good to have.

Near the parking lot are bathrooms and a playground with swings and structures to climb, a basketball court, and a big grassy space for frisbees (ultimate frisbee anyone?) etc. The park includes some nice walks through the woods. The shelter will protect us in light rain. If the rain is hard or cold, we will retreat to the meeting house.

Directions: Go west on Regent Street past West High School, Speedway, and Franklin to Hoyt Park on 3902 Regent Street. There is a drive-in entrance and spacious parking lot less than a block west of Glenway and Regent.

We have reserved the stone shelter surrounded by trees at the bottom of the hill below the parking lot. The shelter is handicapped accessible but there is no parking beside it. Walk from the parking lot a short distance on the gravel drive downhill around the curve to the shelter, which is not visible from the parking lot.

### **Sunday, July 11**

In the course of her short, tempestuous life, (1943-1970), blues-rock singer Janis Joplin pushed back the boundaries that kept women "in their place" for hundreds of years. Without conventional beauty or "proper" feminine restraint, she sang from the depths of her soul, and showed women everywhere that they could be who they were and win. But she suffered from the self-doubt and loneliness often experienced by those who are light-years ahead of their time.

This service will explore, from a Unitarian Universalist viewpoint, the musical and cultural legacy that this remarkable woman left for us.

Susan Urban is a Unitarian Universalist songwriter and singer. In 1987, she began creating services for her then home congregation, Second Unitarian Church of Chicago. In 1997, Susan started to present services for other UU congregations on a regular basis, and is now what might be called a "UU circuit rider." She is a member of the Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, although she still lives in Chicago.

*For Buddhists, June 27, Wassana, marks the beginning of the three-month "Rains Retreat" for monks and nuns.  
---Multifaith Calendar 2004*

### **Sunday, July 18**

The program talk "Pledging Allegiance" will be given by the Rev. Sarah Oelberg. Summer is the time of festivals and celebrations. Many are meant to be patriotic. The Milwaukee festival board has decided all should include a "Christian element" in order to draw more people. We find ourselves repeating the pledge many times - from sports events to community picnics. What are we pledging allegiance to?

## **OUR SOCIETY**

### **PRAIRIE ELDERS MEET**

A new "Prairie Elders" group has been formed for fellowship, mutual support and good times. It is primarily for seniors over 65. Younger seniors are not excluded but, at the request of some people in their 80s, this group is geared toward Prairie's most senior "elders" and those who are headed that direction in a few short years.

Meeting times will alternate so more people can be involved. To avoid conflicting with Prairie services and after-service events, we will not meet on Sundays.

Contact Doleta Chapru at [dchapru@aol.com](mailto:dchapru@aol.com) or 238-4970 if you wish to be contacted about the next meeting. Give her your preference for meeting times.

Co-organizers are Nancy Graham, Warren Hagstrom, and Doleta Chapru, assisted by Prairie residents of Oakwood Village and Meriter Heights where gatherings will be held.

### **STUDY SERIES ON TUESDAY NIGHTS**

The Adult forum on Iraq will meet on Tuesday, June 29 at 7 p.m. at Prairie. This group not only gives news, but serves as a support for these troubled times. Please join us. For more information, contact Nancy Graham at 244-6495.

A second series, "Challenge Corporate Power/ Assert the People's Rights," is a 10-week study course that begins Tuesday, May 25. This course, assembled by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, focuses on the root causes of corporate and state oppression, and on ways to

direct efforts for change in law and culture. The materials provide pieces of the largely untold story of how corporations have come to dominate our lives in the name of profit and at the expense of people and the planet. For more information, call Nancy Graham at 244-6595.

### **PRAIRIE BUS TRIP TO CHICAGO'S FIELD MUSEUM**

On Saturday, August 7, we will sponsor another fundraiser to the exhibit entitled *The Splendor of China's Forbidden City: The Glorious Reign of Emperor Qianlong*. This exhibit explores China's forbidden city at the height of its glory in the 18th century, and features 400 objects, one third of which have never been on public view.

Make checks out to Prairie UU Society for \$52 and mail to Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane, Madison 53705, **to arrive no later than June 26.**

### **PRAIRIE BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS**

Sunday, June 13 -- *TORTILLA CURTAIN*, by T. Coraghessan Boyle, a novel that contrasts the haves and have-nots in the form of two couples living in California's Topanga Canyon: "agnostic liberals with a passion for recycling and fitness" and an undocumented couple from Mexico.

Sunday, July 18 - *READING LOLITA IN TEHRAN* by Azar Nafisi is a nonfiction memoir of a teacher's life in Iran.

Sunday, August 15 - *A FINE BALANCE*, by Rohinton Mistry, a novel set in India in 1975. It follows the fortunes of 4 characters who form an alliance during chaotic times.

For longer descriptions and discussion guides, see the Web site [www.readinggroupguides.com/guides/](http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides/).

## **PROGRAM**

### **PRINT YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Don't forget, you can submit your announcement for the Sunday program until Saturday morning. Please consider whether your announcement will have better effect being carried home on paper than being forgotten amid the competition of conversations, other announcements, and the day's activities. Send your announcements to [prouds@tds.net](mailto:prouds@tds.net).

## **LETTERS**

### **PRAIRIE GETS A MAKEOVER**



Did you see the 2 big piles of brush that were at the curb after our outdoor work day on June 5? Did you notice that there is no more dead stuff in our Prairie? Are you missing the wasp nests that were starting on the stucco? Or the squirrel hole in the overhang? Or the bushes that push up against the building and overhang the RE door? Or all the other vegetation that makes it a challenge to even get to the RE door? Where did the stuff go that was growing in the storm grate outside the RE door?

A big thank you goes out to Ruth, Donna, Jeanie, Judy, Ken, Al, Larry, Dirk, Galen, Mary, Dan and Kathy. And an extra big thanks to Jeanie's friend Paul who single-handedly tamed the backyard bushes. We also worked on the outdoor lights, sanded and primed the railings, planted prairie plants (thanks Galen), composted the stuff from the prairie (thanks Mary for donating your compost pile), and threw out a bunch of stuff from behind the shed. In the process, Ken found a small chain saw under one of the bushes that he was trimming. Who says work days don't pay off!

### **EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR EX-COPPS**

Dear Friends of Social Justice:

You have probably heard or read about the 46 Latino employees at Copps Food Centers in Madison who were suspended without pay and then laid off. While the Workers Rights Center and its Legal Committee is investigating discrimination charges and legal remedies that might be available, meanwhile 46 Latino employees and their families are in crisis now, wondering how to feed their young children and infants, obtain medical care, and pay their rent.

Centro Hispano of Dane County, a tax-exempt 501 (c)3 nonprofit agency, is accepting donations to help these families through this crisis, while the legal process slowly turns its wheels. We encourage you to donate as generously as you can to this fund for the 46 families stricken with the sudden cutoff of their income and health insurance.

Checks can be made out to Centro Hispano with the words "Copps Employees Emergency Fund" on the memo line, and mailed to Copps Employees Emergency Fund, c/o Centro Hispano, 835 W. Badger Rd., Madison, WI 53713. All donations will be distributed entirely to the families.

We thank you for helping these families survive while they seek justice and reinstatement in their jobs. ¡Sí se puede! (Yes, it can be done!)

*Centro Hispano  
Centro Pastoral Guadalupano  
Communities United  
Copps Fired Workers Committee  
ICWJ Workers Rights Center  
Latino Support Network (LaSup)  
Latinos United for Change & Advancement (LUChA)  
Alfonso Zepeda-Capistrán, LUChA President  
Madison-area Urban Ministry  
Jim Cavanaugh, President, South Central  
Federation of Labor*

## **SOCIAL ACTION**

### **HOMELESS MEN'S BREAKFAST**

Prairie has been supplying a monthly breakfast for the hungry men at the Grace Episcopal Drop-In Shelter for about 15 years now. We should be proud of this continuing tradition. Tuesday, June 29, is the date of our next breakfast.

We rely on volunteers to buy and deliver the groceries (reimbursed by the Social Action Committee), and to arrive at the shelter at 5 a.m. and cook up turkey bacon and eggs for over a hundred men. We also rely on Prairie folks to donate to the breakfast fund when we pass the can on the Sunday before. Thank you to all who continue to support this community service.

Those who can shop or cook for June's breakfast, please contact Paula Pachciarz at (608) 273-4806 or [pachwack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pachwack@sbcglobal.net).

### **PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS**

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

### **INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK**

Summer goes by fast and Prairie's third volunteer shift this year with Madison's IHN is coming right up. The next week that we assist Midvale Lutheran in hosting several homeless families will be July 11-18. Those who have volunteered before and would like to do so again, please mark your calendars and let Paula Pachciarz know how you would like to help out.

Those who would like to volunteer but are new to IHN can contact Paula for more information at (608) 273-4806 or [pachwack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pachwack@sbcglobal.net).

There is also an information sheet on the Social Action bulletin board that describes the different ways one can support this wonderful community service. Our next and last shift will be in November, during Thanksgiving week.

## **DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS**

### **FULL MOON CIRCLE MEETS JULY 5**

The Full Moon Circle is a group of UU women and others who meet on the Moonday (Monday) closest to the full moon to celebrate our lives as women and our connections with the cycles of nature. Sometimes we chant or dance, drum or tell stories, read poetry, or create crafts that express our experiences, but we always create ceremony of some sort. We have found that ritual is a left-brain activity which creates real change in our lives.

So come to the Full Moon Circle and empower yourself! Our next gathering is Monday, July 5 at 7:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Society (900 University Bay Drive). For more information or to receive email reminders of our rituals, contact Nancy Vedder-Shults at 231-3362.

### **SUMMER DISTRICT EVENTS**

The Central Midwest District is offering two events that may interest you. The Lake Geneva Summer Assembly will be held July 4 - July 10 at Lake Geneva. The WomanSpirit Summer Conference at Camp Ronona, "Standing Like a Tree" is August 6 -8 with an extended day on August 9. Anyone needing more information may call Mary Somers 276-8397 or email [asomers@execpc.com](mailto:asomers@execpc.com).

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR SOUGHT AT JAMES REEB**

James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation is seeking a Religious Education Coordinator.

### **Position Description:**

1. Be at JRUUC on Sundays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to connect with parents, teachers, children.
2. Coordinate parent volunteers for classroom.
3. Sunday orientation of RE to new families.
4. Communicate with parents and teachers.
5. Track enrollment and attendance of the RE program.
6. Convene and attend the RE committee monthly.
7. Troubleshoot or problem-solve issues that arise on Sunday mornings, such as: no show of teachers/helpers; help with snack, keep lobby safe and clear, help with children in need.
8. Coordinate work with office staff and professional staff.

### **Qualifications:**

1. Good organizational skills
2. Good communication skills with adults and children.
3. Ability to work well with volunteers, office staff, and professional staff.
4. Child Development or Education background desirable.

### **Hours and Pay:**

~4 hours/week three weeks/month 10 months/year

Stipend: \$120 month for 10 months

### **How to Apply:**

To apply, send a letter of interest by July 15 to:

James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
2146 E Johnson Street  
Madison, WI 53704

Attention: RE Committee

or to:

Jruuc@terracon.net

## **SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR**

Saturdays 8:45 – 1:15

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933

## **FREEDOM SUMMER WORKCAMP: A CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNEY**

In July 2004, UU youth and young adults will join the Service Committee on a civil rights journey to Atlanta, Selma, Montgomery and Birmingham. We will travel together by bus. During this trip, we will visit historical sites that were significant to young people who worked to register new voters during Freedom Summer, 1964. We will also hear the stories of people who were there. This trip will begin with inspiration and cause reflection. It will conclude with and electoral related skills training that will equip participants to return to their communities and campuses as activists.

For more information call 1-800-388-3920 and ask for Nguyen or email us at [justworks@uusc.org](mailto:justworks@uusc.org).

*Susan Leslie*

*Director of the Office for Congregational Advocacy & Witness, Unitarian Universalist Association*  
[sleslie@uua.org](mailto:sleslie@uua.org)

## **EXPLORE OUR ROOTS IN 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.

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WANTED**

The struggle for civil marriage equality is driving a major expansion of our work, and we're pleased to announce that the Action Wisconsin Education Fund is hiring a development director. Full details are downloadable here:

<http://www.actionwisconsin.org/jobs.html>

Applications are due before Tuesday, July 6. Our office will be closed Monday, July 5, but applications sent via email are acceptable.

*Chris Ott*

*Executive Director, Action Wisconsin*

## **SOULFORCE REPORT ON SOUTHERN BAPTIST ACTION IN INDIANA - ANTI-GAY RHETORIC CONTINUES**

*(Indianapolis)* For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Soulforce volunteers stood vigil outside the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting to confront the untruths perpetuated by Southern Baptist resolutions and teachings against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. The annual meeting, which took place in Indianapolis, attracted about 80 Soulforce volunteers, who gathered in Indy to try to help change the hearts and minds of the Southern Baptists and empower GLBT people to stand up against their own oppression.

For three days, in the heat and the rain, Southern Baptist messengers encountered Soulforce volunteers at the street corners and sidewalks, handing out literature and booklets, singing songs, and talking about the spiritual violence wrought by Southern Baptist rhetoric and policies.

Southern Baptist Convention passed resolutions supporting the anti-gay Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA), which is intended to write discrimination into the U.S. Constitution against GLBT couples and their children by defining marriage as between one man and one woman. Earlier in the day, President Bush spoke by satellite praising Southern Baptists for their conservative views, and urging them to support the FMA.

In addition, the Southern Baptist Convention pulled out of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) because the SBC felt the BWA was increasingly anti-American and too tolerant of liberal theology, by accepting the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship as a member in 2003.

On the final evening, Rev. Steve Gaines, pastor of First Baptist Church in Gardendale, Ala., railed against homosexuality, by saying, "God

characterized homosexuality as an abomination in Leviticus 18, and He sandwiched it right between adultery, child sacrifice and having sex with an animal." He urged Southern Baptists to contact their congresspeople to lobby for approval of the Federal Marriage Amendment.

"The SBC continues to be a primary source of spiritual violence against us. It saddens and sickens me that they are so full of fear and condemnation. I know God loves gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people just the way we are, and some day, full equality will happen, and the church will have to apologize to us," said Karen Weldin, former Southern Baptist, graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, and Director of Operations for Soulforce. "We will be in Nashville in 2005 for the next SBC annual meeting to continue our relentless confrontation of the shameful untruths.

"Our hope in changing the SBC lies with the youth," said Jamie McDaniel, co-chair of the Soulforce Southern Baptist Denominational Team. Soulforce volunteers distributed a 48 page study guide geared toward Southern Baptist youth, entitled: *Christian Youth – an Important Voice in the Present Struggle for Gay Rights in America*. The guide was written by Soulforce youth and young adults and is available at [www.soulforce.org/youth/youthstudyguide.pdf](http://www.soulforce.org/youth/youthstudyguide.pdf)

Pictures taken at the action can be viewed at [www.soulforce.org](http://www.soulforce.org)

*Soulforce is a national interfaith organization committed to ending spiritual violence perpetuated by religious policies and teachings against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. Soulforce teaches and employs the nonviolent principles of Gandhi and King to the liberation of sexual and gender minorities. For more information, see [www.soulforce.org](http://www.soulforce.org)*

### **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>*