



# 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)

**September 24, 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

### Saturday, September 25

☎ 7:00 p.m. Playreaders at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker

### Sunday, September 26

☎ 10:00 a.m. "Coming Together," presented by Reverend Sarah Oelberg.

### Tuesday, September 28

5:00 a.m. Prairie cooks breakfast at the Grace Episcopal Church men's drop-in shelter  
☎ 1:30 p.m. Prairie Elders meet in the Great Room, first floor, Tabor Oaks building, Oakwood Village.  
7:00 p.m. Prairie Program Committee meets at 916 Shorewood Blvd.

### Sunday, October 3

☎ 10:00 a.m. "Church/State Issues in 2004," presented by Leona Balek.  
☎ 11:45 a.m. Prairie Book Club discusses Flash House by Aimee Liu.

### Sunday, October 10

☎ 10:00 a.m. "Woody Guthrie—How Does He Speak to UUs?" presented by Mike Briggs and Dan Proud

### Saturday, October 16

☎ CMWD Leadership Days – North Rockford, IL  
6:00 p.m. Prairie potluck with Nels Oas

☎ = Details follow in this issue.

**NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: OCTOBER 3**

### Sunday, October 17

10:00 a.m. "Public Issues, Politics, and the Pulpit," presented by the Rev. Nels Oas

### Saturday-Sunday, November 6-7

Fall Frolic Religious Education event at Prairie

## DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

### Sunday, September 26

As we gather for the beginning of a new church year, we might take a page from the Jewish celebration of Yom Kippur, which ends today, and communally forgive one another and begin again, in love.

### Sunday, October 3

In 1996, Leona Balek helped found the Wisconsin Chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State and now serves as the organization's president. She gave a well-received presentation at Prairie several years ago and will again share her considerable knowledge about current church/state issues that concern Unitarian Universalists.

### Sunday, October 10

Discover how the life and music of legendary folksinger Woody Guthrie speaks to UUs. Mike Briggs and Dan Proud present Guthrie's words and music in a celebratory program.

## PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

*Mondays 8-10 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 noon*

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Friday evening and Saturday, September 24–25, marks Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. It is the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, a day of fasting. Jews ask forgiveness and forgive others. The holiday begins on Friday at sundown.  
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## OUR SOCIETY

### PRAIRIE PLAYREADERS SEPTEMBER 25

"Black Comedy" was written by Peter Shaffer (who also authored "Equus" and "Amadeus") and has been chosen to kick off the Prairie Playreaders season on Saturday, September 25, at 7:00 p.m. This funny, fast-moving play is an ensemble piece and offers engaging roles for all readers.

Newcomers are especially welcome to join us at the home of Carl Wacker and Paula Pachciarz, 4709 Sherwood Rd. in Madison. You may come to read or to listen, but all who wish to read will get the opportunity. Beverages and snacks are provided by the hosts so you need bring only yourselves and your reading glasses.

Please call or email Paula (273-4806, [pachwack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pachwack@sbcglobal.net)) if you plan to attend or if you need directions.

### PRAIRIE ELDERS MEET SEPTEMBER 28

Prairie Elders, a group of Prairie members and friends over the age of 65, meets Tuesday, September 28, at 1:30 p.m., in the Great Room, on the first floor of the Tabor Oaks building at Oakwood Village. Contact Donna Murdoch or Doleta Chapru for further information.

### BOOK CLUB MEETS OCTOBER 3

The Prairie Book Club will discuss FLASH HOUSE by Aimee Liu after the church service on October 3. This novel is set in New Delhi in 1949. A woman who runs a refuge for young girls in the city's red light district sets out on a treacherous journey to Kashmir where her husband's plane has gone down. She is accompanied by her husband's best friend, a half Sikh, half Chinese orphan she has rescued. Barbara Chatterton recommends this love story and political thriller, having found it extremely thoughtful and engrossing.

## LETTERS

### A TIME TO RIDE: A TALE OF TWO GRANDMAS WHO TAKE ON THE RADICAL RIGHT



The remarkable journey of two married lesbian grandmothers, Carrie and Elisia Ross-Stone, who pedaled their bicycles from San Francisco to New York City to raise awareness of and support for equal civil marriage rights, was captured on film by award winning filmmaker, Keith Wilson (*Southern Family*).

The film, *A Time to Ride* ([www.atimetoride.com](http://www.atimetoride.com)), is a love story about two women with the courage and determination to take on the well-funded and powerful anti-marriage equality crusade. The 50-minute documentary is both a source of inspiration and awareness for the gay and lesbian community and a valuable tool to inform a much larger general public whose political and social support is vital.

Against a backdrop of the gay marriage media frenzy and election year politics, Elisia and Carrie boldly ride into America's heartland to meet with people face-to-face and tell their story. Riding into towns and cities, over mountains, across prairies, and deserts, they are greeted by cheers and face hateful protests and death threats.

The true power of this film is its ability to cut through the smokescreen to reveal the truth about the marriage equality issue so that one-issue voters will have the opportunity to reconsider their vote.

**Please help us distribute *A Time to Ride* before the election and consider organizing or hosting a screening in your home or community.**

To more about the film or to organize a screening, write to [info@RainbowLaw.com](mailto:info@RainbowLaw.com) or call (716) 435-0965. To watch a three-minute preview, log onto [www.atimetoride.com](http://www.atimetoride.com) and click the link "view the trailer."

The importance of our civic duty as Americans to participate in the electoral process has never been more vital, and *A Time to Ride* profoundly illustrates the political motives behind the senseless cultural war against gay and lesbian families.

*Elisia & Carrie Ross-Stone*  
(716) 435-0965  
[info@RainbowLaw.com](mailto:info@RainbowLaw.com)

## DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

### DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING

You can sign up for one of the Fall Leadership Days being sponsored by the Central Midwest District:

- North - October 16 - Rockford, IL
- South - October 30 - Bloomington, IL

**Goals:** To equip congregational leaders with knowledge and skills to further your work for vital, growing congregations. To further a vision of robust, transformational congregations addressing the needs of both church and currently unchurched in the 21st century. To decrease the isolation and increase the connection of UU congregational leaders.

**Schedule:** 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Coffee and registration at 8:30 a.m. Worship at 9:00. Morning session with Angela Merkert and Dori Davenport on Leadership and Vision for our UU Congregation; How will you lead into this new church year?; What's important in your congregation now?; Tools to assess your congregational system.

Afternoon workshops: (1) Practicing Pluralism—Engaging Conflict during Change; (2) Growing our Congregations—Practicing Radical Hospitality, PR Strategies and More; (3) Volunteer Management; and (4) a workshop for congregational presidents.

**Cost:** \$35 per person/\$90 for team of 3 persons

#### Registration:

Request a registration form from the District Office by e-mail: [chosmer@cmwd-uua.org](mailto:chosmer@cmwd-uua.org), or register online:

- Rockford: [www.regonline.com/15799](http://www.regonline.com/15799)
- Bloomington: [www.regonline.com/15800](http://www.regonline.com/15800)

*Angela Merkert  
Dori Davenport*

### PRAIRIE WEB SITES

*Prairie UU Society:*  
<http://prairie.madison.uua.org/~prairie/>

*Prairie News Group:*  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>

*Prairie Views Group:*  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>

*Social Action:*  
<http://socialaction.homestead.htm>

## SOCIAL ACTION

### MUUYACM TO HOST PRISON REFORM CONFERENCE

On the weekend of October 22-24, MUUYACM (Madison UU Young Adult Campus Ministry) will be hosting a national young adult conference on prison reform and prisoners' rights, following through on the overwhelming enthusiasm of youth and young adults at last year's General Assembly for this issue. Their special guest will be the Rev. Dr. William Schulz, Executive Director for Amnesty USA and the former President of the Unitarian Universalist Association. This is going to be a really big production, so block this weekend off in your calendar and think about how you can participate in what looks to be a really transformative experience.

### ANNUAL SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS TRIP PLANNED FOR NOVEMBER

The MUUYACM annual trip to protest at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia will be the weekend of November 19. This is an opportunity to join thousands of others, including many religious and spiritual groups, in non-violent demonstrations against the US funding and torture training of many military groups that have gone on to commit horrific human rights abuses, especially in Central and South America. It's a long road trip, but a really powerful and inspiring weekend with justice-seekers from around the world. Find out more about the SOA protest at <http://www.soaw.org>.

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### INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

Did you know that every child at IHN is assured educational continuity? By federal law, homeless children must have access to school and be allowed to remain in the same school throughout the year. In cooperation with the Madison Metropolitan School District, IHN transports all of our shelter kids to school and ensures that no child remains un-enrolled for even a day.

Many homeless families manage to make school a priority, despite their stress and instability. Two of the kids who stayed at IHN last spring had such a successful experience that the school personnel didn't want to let them go. The kids had high

grades, good friends and a strong connection with both the counselor and the principal, and the Mom also felt supported and connected. The family has arranged cross-town transportation to remain at that school and the Mom is planning to move back to the neighborhood when her lease is finished.

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## **OTHER NEWS**

### **COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD**

Noon musicales at First Unitarian Society:

- Friday, September 24, The Crossroads Trio (chamber music for flute, cello, and piano)
- Friday, October 1, Guitarist Nathan Wysock
- Friday, October 8, Nils Bultmann (music for viola)
- Friday, October 15, Soprano Rebecca Olthafer and Friends

### **ANNUAL RETREAT GALLERY**

*Photos by Dan Proud*

## **ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, AND SLANG, UU-STYLE**

Some of our oft-cited abbreviations, acronyms, and slang follow. Did we miss any?

**CMWD**=Central Midwest District

**con**=(youth) convention

**CSS**=Congregation Shaarei Shamayim

**CWD**=chronic wasting disease

**FUS**=First Unitarian Society (the big UU church)

**GA**=General Assembly

**IHN**=Interfaith Hospitality Network

**JRUUC**=James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation (east Madison)

**MUUYACM**=Madison Unitarian Universalist Young Adult and Campus Ministry (pronounced moo-YAHK-um)

**UUA**=Unitarian Universalist Association

**UUSC**=Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

## **SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR**

*Saturdays 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.*

*Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249–5933*