



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 25, 2005

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

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

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, February 27

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Creativity...The Best Medicine,"
presented by Metje Butler

*12:00 noon. Lunch and annual Service Auction

Sunday, March 6

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. "Libre Software: Issues on Intellectual
Property," presented by Dirk Herr-Hoyman

Saturday, March 12

7:00 p.m. Prairie Family Dance, at Prairie

Sunday, March 13

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Let Justice Flow," presented by Dan
Proud

*11:45 a.m. Book Club discussion of *The Murder
Room*

Wednesday, March 16

7:00 p.m. Board Meeting at Prairie

Saturday, March 19

*7:00 p.m. Playreaders reading of "Black Comedy"
at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker

Sunday, March 20

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Earth Day celebration with Galen Smith

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: MARCH 6

Tuesday, March 22

*2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meeting at Oakwood
Village West

Thursday, March 24

6:00 p.m. Spanish Speakers potluck and meeting at
Prairie

Sunday, April 10

12:00 noon. Parish Meeting

Friday-Sunday, April 15-17

*UUA Central Midwest District Assembly,
Arlington Heights, Illinois

(* = *Details follow in this issue.*)

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, February 27

For the program, "Creativity...The Best Medicine,"
Metje Butler speaks on experiences she has had
using creativity as an implement for healing.
Several of her art works will be on display.

Sunday, March 13

We each have the power to help stop injustice in the
world. On Justice Sunday we will celebrate the vital
role that we as UUs can play to support the work of
the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
(UUSC), with a focus on defending the human right
to water. Dan Proud, local UUSC rep, leads the
program. Wear international clothes to church if
you can. Children will have a chance to model their
costumes.

OUR SOCIETY

PRAIRIE MEETING OFFERS FEEDBACK ON CONCEPT DRAWINGS

Thank you to all who met Sunday, February 20 after the Prairie Program to hear Bob Shipely of BWZ Architects present 3 new concept drawings for a building for the site next to Eagle School and provide comments to guide further planning.

The drawings each presented a building design to meet the “program statement” also shown in this Prairie Fire.

Comments indicated general agreement with the “program statement” and with some modification and suggestions for points to emphasize:

- Emphasize green features in the building but be careful not to include those that require notable maintenance.
- Use a design that allows walking out of Religious Education (RE) rooms directly to the lawn in back and provide an outdoor area where we could offer outdoor environmental education
- Use a design that helps enhance spiritual links to nature – use of circular design elements used by Native Americans
- How we accommodate for parking needs is a concern. Do our best to arrange to share with Eagle School to limit parking spaces needed on our lot.
- Given the large expense, work to fund both phases of the project now rather than just a phase I that is only 50% larger than our current space. Do Phase I alone only as a fallback case.

The 3 new concept drawings, and documents showing the size of spaces and estimated Phase I costs will be put on the Long Range Planning Web Site. A note will be sent to PrairieNews when they are available.

Ken Skog, Chair, Long Range Planning Committee

PROGRAM STATEMENT FOR A NEW PRAIRIE BUILDING

This program statement was drafted February 20, 2005. It is an explanation of the activities and principles that the building design is intended to implement and support.

The new building is intended to provide space for Prairie Sunday programs, Sunday RE classes, Adult RE classes, potluck meals, social events for large groups including weddings, receptions, memorial services, and musical or other performances.

We would like to eventually be able to accommodate Sunday program meetings and other events for up to 300 people.

But we envision that we do not initially need a main meeting room for 300 and the design should allow for two building phases. The first phase would provide a main meeting room for programs for groups up to 150 (50% larger than the current Prairie meeting room).

The design should allow for expansion to a main meeting room to accommodate 300 in Phase II and also allow for adding RE classrooms and other meeting spaces.

Phase I program needs:

1. A main meeting room for programs for groups of up to 150, at least 50% larger than the current meeting room
2. 5 RE classrooms, all with windows
3. RE space should allow for group RE meetings of all RE children.
4. Office space for administrative and other professional staff: 2 offices
5. A kitchen to prepare food, adjacent to a room for events that would provide food; at least as large as the current Prairie kitchen

Other features requested:

(Celebrate our relation to the natural world)

- Rooms with lots of natural lighting and a view of the natural area to the north
- Access to the lawn area north of building for RE and adult activities

(Concern to reduce environmental impacts)

- Building uses environmentally sensitive features
- Share parking space (interest has been expressed to Eagle School Board)
- Share/allow use of our building for Eagle special events (interest has been expressed to Eagle School Board)

Other objectives:

- Ample storage space

Ken Skog, Chair, Long Range Planning Committee

SERVICE AUCTION ON FEBRUARY 27

The annual Prairie UU Service Auction is next Sunday, February 27, at 11:45 immediately after the service. We will have subs and beverages for lunch and will have child care available.

We have a great selection of donated services again this year. Some examples are: knitting classes, music offerings, genealogy searches, CD mixes, pet sitting, bed and breakfast weekend, swimming party, bonfire and cookout, will preparation, portraits, Christmas card preparation and printing, scrapbooking, an evening of games, several special dinners for 8 people, and great home-baked breads, cakes, and cookies.

This is a very important fund-raising activity for us each year. Please join us to bid on some great services and also have lunch and lots of fun.

Kathy Converse

GOMER WHO?

Some of you may have read about "Gomeroke" when a feature article was in the newspaper about this phenomenon. The name is derived from karaoke and the name of a local rock band: The Gomers. Every Tuesday night at the High Noon Saloon, anyone can sign up to sing a song with the band. If you have ever longed to be a rock singer, here's your chance. A few Prairie folks are going on **March 8 at 9 p.m.** (take a nap beforehand)...Marty Drapkin, Erin and Richard Bosch, possibly Anne Urbanski...). Here are two Web sites that give more details. You can peruse the song list and sign up in advance online: <http://beefone.com/gomers.html> - <http://www.high-noon.com/index.htm>

Erin Bosch

PRAIRIE FAMILY DANCE

Prairie will host an Oldtime Family Dance on **Saturday, March 12**, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Music will be provided by Dark of the Moon Contra Band (Mary Mullen's group); the caller is Reid Miller.

This evening of dance will be easy, recreational fun for all ages (6 and up). The dances will feature simple reels and circles. Figures will be demonstrated. Partners are not required to attend.

Come to Prairie for an evening of good music and easy dancing. Invite your friends! Donation is \$3; under 12 is free. Receipts go to the Building Fund.

For information, call Reid (576-7529) or Marcia (276-8397).

Let's go dancing!

Reid Miller

PRAIRIE BOOK CLUB MEETS MARCH 13

The Prairie Book Club meets at Prairie on March 13, starting about 11:45 a.m. We will discuss *The Murder Room*, by P.D. James. Follow the adventures of Commander Adam Dalgliesh, the detective working on cases of murder done in an art museum in London that seem to parallel crimes featured in a museum gallery called The Murder Room. See reviews at

http://www.reviewsofbooks.com/murder_room/

Mary Mullen

MIDLIFE ORPHAN DISCUSSIONS STARTING UP AT PRAIRIE

Wednesdays, March 15 and 22, 7-9 p.m., Prairie hosts discussions about being a Midlife Orphan. Midlife orphans are adults whose parents have died and who often suddenly find themselves the elders of their families. A donation of \$5 per meeting is welcome.

Hosts for the meetings will be Erin Bosch and Reid Miller. Talks will include sharing of participants' experiences, sharing of resources on the topic, and discussion of topics common to midlife orphans, such as grieving the loss of both parents, inheritance and managing family finances, adjusting to changing family roles and finding new sources of strength.

Pre-registration is required. Anyone is welcome. To pre-register e-mail prairieu@execpc.com or call 271-8218.

PLAYREADERS ON MARCH 19

If you're in the mood for a little comic relief to the season and the times, join us for the March playreading event. *Black Comedy* is a fast-paced

ensemble comedy, written in the mid-sixties, which featured Sir Laurence Olivier in the London production. We encourage newcomers to join us for a fun evening. No previous experience is necessary. The reading begins at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker. For more information, or to let us know if you plan to come, call Paula at 273-4806.

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETS ON MARCH 22

Prairie Elders meets Tuesday, March 22, 2:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Exercise Room of the Oaks Building at Oakwood Village West. We will relate favorite travel stories, show interesting items from those travels, and share important happenings in our lives. The travel topic grew out of an impromptu discussion held as some of us huddled in another building during a surprise fire drill which ended our formal meeting. Prairie Elders is never dull.

For further details, call Doleta Chapru, 238-4970; Donna Murdoch, 260-8551; or Rosemary Dorney, 238-4382.

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Saturday, February 26, is the beginning of  
Ayyam-i-Ha in the Baha'i faith.  
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PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Prairie UU Society:

prairie.madison.uua.org

Prairie News Group:

groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Prairie Views Group:

groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action:

socialaction.homestead.htm

Humanist Discussion Group:

<http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

Long Range Planning Committee:

www.execpc.com/~prairieu/planning (no space)

(For this last address, type it directly into your browser. Omit the space before "planning".)

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR

Saturdays 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933

PRAIRIE NEEDS YOU!

The Spring Parish Meeting is coming soon, Sunday, April 10, and with it comes opportunities to bring your ideas and energy to keep Prairie vital and to expand our horizons.

The Prairie Board has the following positions open:

- **Social Action Co-Chair**

Keeps Prairie members aware of social action activities, both UU and in the larger human community. Sarah Lord will be one co-chair and Bob Park will continue to keep the Web page bulletin current.

- **Housing and Property**

Do you notice things that need doing to keep Prairie's home functioning smoothly and want to facilitate that process? Are you handy around your own house? If so, please consider chairing the H&P committee. Note: this committee has the largest line item in the budget!

- **Finance**

Prairie runs on money. The yearly pledge drive and auction are this committee's primary activities, to provide sufficient funds to pay for salaries, upkeep, and mortgage—essential to carry out Prairie's mission.

- **Denominational Affairs**

Meet and connect with other UUs in the Central Midwest District and continental UUA.

Lay ministries are needed to provide a 4- to 6-week series during the 2005-2006 program year. The Program Committee then schedules these presentations in coordination with other single Sunday service programs and monthly presentations that we are anticipating will be provided by a part-time minister. Do you have an idea for a series to inspire the congregation to thought and action?

Act Fast!! Offer Good for a Limited Time Only!!

- March 20 is the deadline for Board openings
- April 6 is the deadline for Lay Ministry proposals

Please contact one of the following members of the Committee on Committees to offer your talent:

Mary Mullen

KK Anderson

Rick Ruecking

Norma Briggs

Susan Hagstrom

KK Anderson

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

VALENTINE INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE WAS WELL ATTENDED

On Sunday, February 20, we had our second Service Sunday of the year in R.E. This time we decided to stay at Prairie, and we were glad we did after all the snow we got!

The high school and middle school groups paired up with younger kids to make some donation bags for Briarpatch. One set of bags contained basic hygiene products, while another set contained dozens and dozens of cookies they baked with the help of Paula Pachciarz. Robin Carre assisted with writing letters and drawing pictures to put in the bags to let the kids at Briarpatch know we were thinking about them. Briarpatch will use the donated supplies for children and teens who need emergency placement in foster care and to be distributed to homeless teens by their Street Outreach Team.

Thanks also to Rachel Long for donating hygiene items and Carl Wacker for taking pictures!

I recently attended a Train the Trainer event held by the National Coalition Building Institute in Geneva, Illinois. I am excited to share what I learned about creative diversity training and conflict resolution with the congregation and especially the youth in R.E. Because of the conference, I was gone for the Valentine's Day Intergenerational Service. Thanks to Robin Carre, Rachel Long, Susan Herr-Hoyman, Warren Hagstrom and Doleta Chapru, Orange Schroeder, and all else who helped make it happen!

I also wanted to say thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers that helped make Wild Wintering so successful this year:

- Erin Bosch: games and strobe light dance
- Patty Stockdale: dinner prep and cookie baking
- Robin Carre: giant inflatable bouncy thing
- Anne Urbanski, Savannah Jahrling, Rick Ruecking, KK Anderson, and Jolien Connor: staying overnight
- Barb Park: breakfast and strobe light supplying
- Dean Schroeder and Phoenix Wardell: breakfast and clean-up
- Paula Pachciarz: preschool patrol and "lovely assistant" for games
- Holly Driscoll: dinner prep
- Carl Wacker: picture-taking

- Aileen Nettleton: dinner prep and general supervision
- Andy Swartz, Corrine and Ron Hornbeck, Jan Gjestvang-Lucky and Kate Liu: general supervision
- Kim Truog: for working the door

Everyone who volunteered did a lot more than I mentioned, so thank you to all!

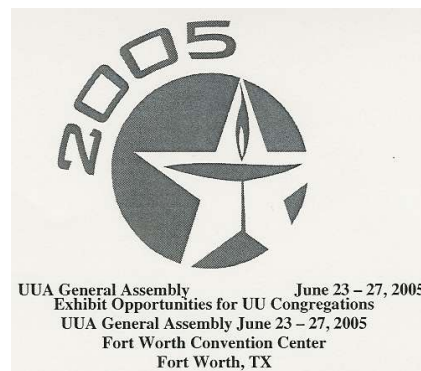
In Peace,
Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky

PROGRAM

Ideas for programs on topics of spirituality are sought by the Program Committee. Contact Warren Hagstrom or Doleta Chapru.

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY EXHIBIT INFO

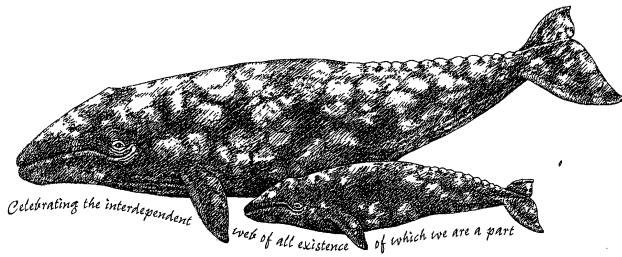


This year the General Assembly will be held in Fort Worth, Texas, the city "Where the West Begins."

Approximately 60,000 square feet will be available for GA exhibitors.

Congregations can reserve space singly or cooperatively, and are encouraged to "incorporate the talents of congregation members into their exhibit space." Members can also sell items through UNI-UNIQUES on a consignment basis (for more information on UNI-UNIQUES, contact Nancy Warren-Oliver at (585) 248-5688, email nancy@uniuniques.com, or visit www.uniuniques.com. Requests forms for exhibitor space or ad space in the GA program must be delivered to the GA office by February 2, 2005. Call (617) 948-4209 or gaoffice@uua.org for details.

INVITATION TO ALASKA UU PROGRAM



Five Alaska UU fellowships invite other UUs from “outside” for our UU eco-spiritual/intercultural programs in July 2005. Participants stay in UU homes in Anchorage, Seward, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Sitka and enjoy discussions and dinners with Alaska UUs.

See whales, sea otters, sea lions, seals, bears, moose, caribou, wolves, Dall sheep, puffins, eagles, and other birds in the wild from the Arctic Ocean to the Inside Passage in the south. Visit Denali’s Mt. McKinley and Kenai’s fjords and glaciers. See totem poles, native arts, dancing, story-telling. The Rev. Dick and Mary Weston-Jones are the leaders.

Visit the Web site, www.wuurld.org, e-mail dick@wuurld.org, or phone toll-free 1-888-998-8753 for a brochure.

Reservations are due April 1.

MEMBERSHIP

Please welcome our new members!

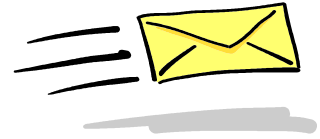
Pam and Steve Vorass
(and sons Dylan and Daren)
6011 Sylvan Lane, Monona, WI 53716
216-0608
[pvorass \(at\) merr.com](mailto:pvorass@att.merr.com)

Directory change:
Kim Truog: 835-6397

(We protect our e-mail addresses. Substitute @ for (at) and type addresses without spaces.—Ed.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear friend,



We are thrilled to invite you to participate in the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Holiday Card Design Contest 2005. Visit www.uusc.org/holidaycards to learn more.

Each year, Unitarian Universalists nationwide purchase UUSC holiday cards, sharing warm wishes with their loved ones and helping our vital human rights work worldwide. This year, one of these cards could be designed by you!

We urge creative UUs of all ages to submit a card design for the 2005 holiday season. Text suggestions are also welcome.

The winning card designers' names and congregations will be printed on their cards, which will be purchased and shared by UUs nationwide during the 2005 holiday season.

Before submitting your design, please review the submission guidelines at www.uusc.org/holidaycards.

Submissions must be received by UUSC on or before May 6, 2005. Mail submissions to:

UUSC Holiday Card Contest
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139-1845

E-mail submissions to: volunteerservices@uusc.org

Thank you for your participation in this program, and good luck!

Sincerely,

Rachel M. Binderman
Associate for Member Development
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

OTHER NEWS

APRIL BUS TOUR OF CIVIL RIGHTS SITES
Have you ever wanted to see some of the sites of the civil rights movement: the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma; 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham; Money, Mississippi, where Emmett Till was lynched? These and many more are included in a

tour being offered this spring by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart, Indiana.

The **April 9-17** tour has been planned and will be led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, minister of the Elkhart Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, who was involved in the early stages of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and was the Unitarian Universalist minister in Mississippi, 1969-1984. The Rev. Ed Harris, a native of Birmingham, will also be on the tour as a resource.

The tour, by luxury motor coach, will include all admission charges, overnight accommodations, and most meals. Videos on the bus and visits with 1960s activists will supplement the site visits. The tour will begin and end in Birmingham, Alabama.

For full details on cost and schedule, you can go to the Elkhart Fellowship's Web site at www.uufe.org. You can also request a printed version by writing UUFE, P.O. Box 584, Elkhart, IN 46515, or by e-mailing judygibson@juno.com. Registration is on a first-come basis with only 30 seats available.

A participant in the 2004 Tour said, "the stories from the folks who were 'in the trenches' make the Movement come alive." Another participant described it as "seeing the Movement through the real experiences of real people."

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE (UUSC) BULLETIN

The Oil-for-Food Program: Response to the Volker Report

On February 3, the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Program released its interim report. The Oil-for-Food scandal has opened the door for critics of the UN to defame the organization and even call for the resignation of Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Unitarian Universalist UN Office urges recognition that the IIC report, while uncovering unlawful behavior by several administrators, does not warrant indiscriminate criticism of the United Nations.

The Oil-for-Food Program (OFFP) was established in 1996 to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Iraq who were unintentional victims of international sanctions imposed on the country following the first Gulf War.

The evidence certainly reveals probable corruption

on the part of several UN staff members. Most notably, it is alleged that Benon Sevan, Executive Director of the Oil-for-Food Program, acquired \$160,000 in kickbacks and allowed Saddam Hussein to illegally profit from oil sales. Joseph J. Stephanides, who supervised the selection of contractors, is also under investigation.

Nonetheless, the IIC's findings do not point to an extensive problem of corruption within the UN system itself. As Mr. Volker recently wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*, overall management of the Program appeared to be "free of systematic and widespread abuse."

It must be made clear that the Oil-for-Food Program was successful in achieving its two primary aims. First, Iraq's 27 million people significantly benefited from food aid, increased access to clean water, electricity, and medical supplies. Specifically, polio was eradicated throughout the country, chronic malnutrition of children under 5 dropped 56 percent, and primary school attendance rose by one third.

Second, the implementation of the Program maintained global support for the sanctions that prevented Saddam Hussein from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

More significant than the problems relating to the OFFP, Hussein collected millions of dollars by illegally smuggling oil to Jordan, Syria and Turkey. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations were made aware of this, yet chose not to respond. These illegal oil sales began years before the Oil-for-Food Program was implemented, and were ultimately outside the purview of the Program. By comparison, Hussein profited by roughly \$1.7 billion through the OFFP, while he gained an estimated \$19.4 billion from oil smuggling.

Not Kofi Annan, but rather, the UN Security Council had direct oversight of the Oil-for-Food Program. Its special OFFP Committee, on which each Security Council member sat (including the US and the UK), was notified of 70 cases of potential contract abuse, and chose not to intervene.

The Oil-for-Food Program was unique and contained inherent flaws from the very beginning. In order to convince Saddam Hussein to agree to the terms of the Program, the Security Council gave Hussein the right to choose all contracts and

negotiate the terms. Naturally, this allowed for extensive manipulation.

Regarding improper acts on the part of UN officials, Kofi Annan has responded to the scandal swiftly and thoroughly. He has pledged to lift immunity of any UN staff member criminally charged, and he has already begun implementing reforms to improve the UN system.

We accept the UN as a human institution whose staff has human strengths and weaknesses. Our UU commitment to the organization leads us not to idealize the UN, but to encourage thorough examination of mismanagement and to work with it to rectify the problems. The strength and effectiveness of the United Nations depends on the massive restructuring and revitalization process that the UN is currently undergoing. We give these efforts our full support.

To read the Independent Inquiry Committee's report, go to http://www.oilforfoodfacts.org/Multimedia/IIC_Interim_Report.pdf. For more information about the Oil for Food Programme, go to <http://www.oilforfoodfacts.org/> (a Web site sponsored by the UN Foundation).

This message is from the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office. The UU-UN Office is an Associate Member Organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association and is supported by direct contributions from Unitarian Universalist men and women, congregations and youth, women's and men's groups. If you would like to make a donation, or join as a member, please visit our website at www.uu-uno.org. All contributions are tax deductible.