



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)

May 20, 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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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, May 22

*10:00 a.m. "Tsunami Relief in Thailand," presented by Larry Nahlik

Tuesday, May 24

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

Wednesday, May 25

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, May 29

*11:00 a.m. Memorial Day Weekend Picnic at the Briggses'

Wednesday, June 1

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie
*7:00 p.m. Membership Committee meets at Prairie

Sunday, June 5

10:00 a.m. Program to be announced
*11:30 a.m. Special parish business meeting

Wednesday, June 8

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, June 12

10:00 a.m. Ideas for summer reading, led by Galen and Rose Smith
*11:45 a.m. Book Club discussion and potluck

Wednesday, June 8

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie
7:30 p.m. Prairie Board Meeting

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: JUNE 5

Thursday, June 9

*6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers at the home of Prudence Barber

Friday, June 17

*5:30 p.m. Playreaders Annual Fish Dinner, starting at Quivey's Grove (the Stone House) and ending at the home of Pat Watkins.

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, May 22

In April, Larry Nahlik spent several weeks in Thailand helping with tsunami relief. He will present a report, with visuals, on his experience.

Sunday, May 29

The annual Memorial Day weekend picnic at the home of Mike and Norma Briggs starts at 11:00. This is a family event, with potluck picnic, games, music, and plenty of talk. You may bring beverages if you prefer, and grills will be available. Lunch will start about noon.

Directions: Take Hwy. M west from Fish Hatchery Road or east from PB to Brazill Road. Go south until the road ends at Purcell. Turn left and follow the road around a big bend, where it becomes Storytown Road. The turnoff lane leading to the house is less than half a mile south of the bend, on the right side of the road.

For more information, give Mike or Norma a call at 835-0914.

OUR SOCIETY

NO BOOK CLUB MEETING IN MAY

The Prairie Book Club has decided not to meet in May. We will meet next on Sunday, June 12, to discuss two books: Louise Erdrich's *The Master Butcher's Singing Club*, and Tenaya Darlington's *Maybe Baby*. The July 17 selection is *Red-Gold* by Allen Furst.

We meet on Sundays after the Prairie service. Bring food to share. Even if you haven't read the entire book, you are welcome to come for the discussion.

Mary Mullen

LOST AND FOUND: COME AND GET IT

Quite a few pieces of clothing made their home around the coat rack at Prairie over the winter. Families are urged to look over the hats, scarves, gloves, and other apparel in the next couple of weeks. Thanks!

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETING MAY 28

Prairie Elders meets Tuesday, May 28 at 2:00 p.m. in the second floor activity room of the Oaks Building at Oakwood Village West.

Discussion Topic: Attitudes toward aging in various cultures. All participants are invited to briefly share knowledge of another culture's expectations and treatment of older adults. We will discuss how such cultures differ from our own.

In keeping with Prairie Elders' goal of "good times and mutual support" we will also take time for personal sharing, casual conversation and, of course, snacks. If convenient, please bring a few cookies, crackers, fruit, cheese, etc. (Leftover Oreos always welcome.) Beverages will be furnished.

Parking near the Oaks Building is limited. For additional parking, follow the entry road to the top of the hill and turn right. Ask a receptionist in one of the buildings for the best way to walk back. People unable to walk that distance should be dropped off at the Oaks.

Contacts: Donna Murdoch 260-8551, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382, Doleta Chapru 238-4970

MAKING HISTORY: PRAIRIE VOTES IN JODY

May 15 was a great day in Prairie's history. At the service, Jody Whelden gave an inspiring presentation, followed by discussion. (Jody, of course, was our candidate for the position of quarter-time temporary consulting minister.)

Then, after the service, there was a well-attended parish meeting. After lively discussion, the parish voted to hire Jody (47 in favor, 1 against, 1 abstaining). The ministerial search committee will now work out the details of a one-year contract with Jody.

I'm really pleased that we have Jody help us work through the issues of congregational growth and change. I am very hopeful that with her professional leadership she will help us grow together (and not just in numbers).

And, btw, I for one am going to call her our "minister." Calling her our "quarter-time temporary consulting minister" is too much of a mouthful for me. And when she speaks out to the larger community on social justice issues, as I hope she will, I don't want for her to have to burden and confuse her audience with the technical details of her appointment. She will be working with us as our minister, and I'll be happy if that's how she identifies herself while she's with us. Let me know how you feel.

Mike Briggs, President

NOTICE OF PARISH MEETING JUNE 5

On June 5, a short parish business meeting will follow the Sunday service. Nominations will be accepted and a vote will be taken to select a chairperson for the Ministerial Relations Committee. The vote taken at the last business meeting must be redone because of lack of notice beforehand.

SPANISH SPEAKERS MEET JUNE 9

The Prairie Spanish Speakers will meet at the home of Prudence Barber, 1050 Jenifer Street, at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 9. This is a potluck followed by conversation. For information, call Prudence at 281-0852 or Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

ANNUAL FISH DINNER AND PLAYREADERS ON JUNE 17

The Playreaders' Annual Fish Dinner is open to anyone who would like to join us at Quivey's Grove (the Stone House), 6261 Nesbitt Road, on Friday, June 17 at 5:30 p.m. The only requirement is that you phone Pat at 233-5795 before Monday, June 13 to place your names on the reservation list. At the end of each church year, the playreaders have this special night.

Anyone in Prairie is invited and welcome to attend the fish dinner. Fried Cod=\$ 9.95; Baked Cod=\$10.95. Then, at 7:30, those who wish to do so will adjourn to the home of Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane, to read a one-act play and have dessert. You may attend the entire evening's events, the dinner only, or the playreading only.

HUMANISTS DISCUSS SKEPTICISM

The May 8 meeting of the Humanist Union was devoted to a discussion of skepticism led by Susan Hagstrom. She subscribes to two magazines, [Skeptic](#), published on the west coast and [Skeptical Inquirer](#), published on the east coast. Susan provided general information on skepticism from the point of view of the West Coast skeptic methods, reviewed the 5 points of good skepticism listed by Robert Todd Carroll, author of the Skeptic's dictionary, handed out a list of her favorite fallacies in argumentative styles, and talked a bit about the 6 or 7 national skeptics conventions she has attended. The meeting was attended by 19 people, including 3 associated with the Free Congregation of Sauk County.

The group also voted to make the Humanist Union an officially affiliated chapter of the American Humanist Association.

To be added to the humanist mailing list, or to propose future discussion topics for the group, contact Bob Park at (608) 273-8775 or by email at [rwpark \(at\) loonfoot.com](mailto:rwpark@loonfoot.com).

Bob Park

ARCHIVIST NEEDED

Prairie is currently without an archivist, and records keep propagating! If you are interested in collecting and organizing artifacts that will make up the history of our Society, please contact Mike Briggs (835-0914) or K.K. Anderson (255-3596).

ROOMMATE NEEDED

Have apartment, need a roommate. Any age, gender, or ethnic or religious background is acceptable. Please call Phoenix at 271-8365.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Hello, Everyone!

Does anyone have copies of the *In Our Hands* Social Justice curricula for any of the grades? We are missing a lot of copies and the RE Committee thought that past teachers may still have their copies. Please let me know if you find one!

Are you interested in creative conflict resolution? How about giving kids and teens positive and accurate messages about sexuality? We are still looking for teachers for next year's RE program! The curricula next year will focus on Social Justice and we will also be using the OWL sexuality curricula for some classes.

All of the UU curricula give easy-to-follow lesson plans and instructions for teachers, and there is definitely room for creativity if you are so inclined. If you like kids and/or teens and are able to commit to being at Prairie for some Sundays, please consider teaching RE! This is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our youth and give them some positive tools to create social change.

The number of Sundays that you teach is flexible and could be two a month for part or all of the year, or a block of consecutive Sundays sometime during the year. Please contact me if you are interested at 236-0196 or at [m_a_gl \(at\) att.net](mailto:m_a_gl@att.net)!

In Peace,

Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky

MEMBERSHIP

Please welcome the following new members to the Prairie fellowship:

Jori Conca

6409 Hammersley Rd., Madison 53711

Kristin Long and Andy Swartz

(and children Caleb and Emma)
702 Dunning St., Madison 53704

Directory change:

KK Anderson

andersonkk (at) yahoo.com

The Membership Committee will meet at Prairie on Wednesday, June 1, at 7:00 p.m. Our business will be to begin work on a new directory, establish a schedule for orientation activities, and develop an agenda for the coming year.

Rick Ruecking

OTHER NEWS

UUSC GUEST AT YOUR TABLE RESULTS

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee has notified us with thanks for our congregation's support of UUSC work with gifts of \$318.45. The Service Committee is dedicated to protecting and advancing human rights by eradicating economic injustice, defending civil liberties, and promoting environmental justice.

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

Did you know that there are now 10 families living in Second Chance Apartments? IHN and the YWCA make this transitional housing opportunity available through sponsorship by local congregations and organizations.

Families from IHN and YWCA shelters who cannot qualify for other housing are selected for the program, provided that they are willing and able to work with intensive case management and mentoring services.

Two families with young mothers will graduate from the Second Chance Apartment Project in the next few months. Both families have reached many goals. Both moms have increased their education and job skills, and they've both gotten drivers' licenses. The children have experienced two years of stable housing and schooling. Both of these families now have improved credit and housing references and are able to qualify for other affordable housing. Soon they'll be making it on their own.

The Second Chance Apartment Project must expand to 14 apartments by the end of the year to continue our eligibility for Federal funds. Do you know a congregation, organization or business that might want to sponsor a family on their way to permanent housing? Do you know a landlord who might want to donate an apartment?

SUMMER WOMANSPRIT RETREAT

The Central Midwest District (CMWD) Women and Religion Committee is pleased to announce the 12th annual summer retreat at Camp Ronora in southwest Michigan, August 5-7, 2005.

Summer WomanSpirit at Camp Ronora provides a time and a place to connect with the elements of land, sky, fire, and water, as well as with each other, and with our inner selves. As we play and dance under the sun, moon and stars, we synchronize with the Dance of the Universe. We acknowledge our power and worth, and the power and worth of all. We find and become the joy of creation.

Registration and brochures are available online at www.womenandreligion.org. We offer a special maiden program for girls 7-16 and childcare for younger children.

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: prairie.madison.uua.org

News Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Views Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action: socialaction.homestead.com

Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

Long Range Planning Committee:

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

