



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)

March 10, 2006

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

President: Mike Briggs, (608) 835-0914 Consulting Minister: Rev. Jody Whelden, minister@uuprairie.org; (608) 231-9707 Editor: Dan Proud, prairieu@execpc.com; 661-0776

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, March 12

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
*10:00 a.m. "Spirituality and Health in Uganda,"
presented by Dr. Cindy Haq
10:00 a.m. OWL starts for K-2 and 3-5 classes
*11:45 a.m. Book Club eats and meets at Prairie

Tuesday, March 14

*7:00 p.m. "Natural Step" class begins
7:00 p.m. IHN Volunteer Training at Day Center

Wednesday, March 15

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Thursday, March 16

6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers potluck at Prairie

Sunday, March 19

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
*10:00 a.m. "Building Our Own Theology,"
presented by the Rev. Jody Whelden
*12:00 noon. Humanist Union potluck and meeting

Wednesday, March 22

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, March 26

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
*10:00 a.m. "Working in the Trenches," presented
by Rita Adair
*11:45 a.m. Annual Service Auction

Tuesday, March 28

5:00 a.m. Prairie volunteers serve breakfast at Men's
Drop-in Shelter, Grace Episcopal Church

2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood West,
Oaks Building, Second Floor Activity Room

Wednesday, March 29

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, April 2

*11:45 a.m. Book Club at Prairie

Friday-Sunday, April 21-23

*Central Midwest District Assembly 2006 at the
Madison Concourse Hotel

Sunday, April 23

*11:45 a.m. Annual Meeting at Prairie

Wednesday-Sunday, June 21-25

UUA General Assembly, St. Louis, Mo.

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: SUNDAY, MARCH 19

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, March 12

We know Prairie member Cindy Haq as a very gracious and caring woman who has often taken her skills as a doctor to needy people in third world countries. She has also served on United Nations advisory boards related to world health. Several times, upon her return, she has honored us with services that open a window to worlds very different from our own. During her presentation, "Spirituality and Health in Uganda", Cindy will reflect on her recent experiences in Uganda.

OUR SOCIETY

In a conversation some weeks ago, Cindy noted that although life as a doctor—and just as a person—in Uganda could be quite frustrating, she found that in some ways Ugandans, and she herself, lived a far more spiritually satisfying life than we do here in the United States. Often things don't work as expected there, or at least not how we Americans expect things to work. Yet, there are some surprising rewards that issue from this chronic situation. Besides telling us about her work in that landlocked country in central Africa between the Congo and Kenya, Cindy will share her insights about spirituality and health and her own attempts to retain the practices she found so helpful to her own life while she was there.

Cynthia Haq is a Professor of Family Medicine and Population Health Sciences, Chair of the International Health Advisory Committee, and Director of International Health for the UW Medical School. She has focused her career on improving primary health care, especially for medically underserved populations. She has trained village health workers in Uganda, established family medicine training in Pakistan, served as a consultant to the World Health Organization, and worked to improve medical education in the U.S., Afghanistan, Brazil, China and Iran.

To read more about Cindy and her work, go to <http://www.wisc.edu/> and do a search on her name. You'll get different references when you click the "UW" and the "People" buttons.

Sunday, March 19

The Rev. Jody Whelden presents "Building Our Own Theology." Unitarian Universalism gives each individual an opportunity to explore and develop an inspirational system which serves them. Have you looked at what you believe and experience as your spiritual path for a while? What are the components of an individual faith. Come and explore the possibilities for growing yourself wide and deep.

Sunday, March 26

We will observe UUA Justice Sunday with a presentation by Rita Adair entitled "Working in the Trenches." She will share voices of Allied Drive residents and speak about her experiences working in the neighborhood.

MARCH 12 BOOK CLUB

The March 5 meeting was rescheduled for **March 12** at 11:45. Bring food to share. We will discuss *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* by Kate Atkinson. For more information on this selection, see the last *Prairie Fire* newsletter.

NATURAL STEP CLASS BEGINS MARCH 14

Judy Skog is leading a 9-week adult RE class for Sustain Dane in the Natural Step at Prairie starting on **March 14**. The Natural Step was used by eco-municipalities in Sweden to achieve amazing results in only 5-10 years toward reducing their CO2 emissions, becoming more energy efficient, reducing their solid waste, and improving their air and water quality.

The class will think about what we can do in our new church or a remodeled one (in the case of First) as we learn about the Swedish accomplishments.

The class will cost \$30 (\$25 covers the cost of the book). See Judy Skog (273-4813) if you are interested in the class.

SPANISH SPEAKERS TO TRY AGAIN

The Spanish Speakers potluck is **Thursday, March 16**, at Prairie, starting at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome and we are hoping it won't be snowed out as the February one was.

HUMANIST UNION TO DISCUSS "DARKER" TWAIN

On **Sunday, March 19**, Marcia Johnson and Al Nettleton will lead the Humanist Union in discussing some of the controversial "darker" writing of Mark Twain. As usual we will share a light potluck lunch at noon, with the presentation starting about 12:20 p.m. and the discussion winding up about 1:30 p.m. The Humanist Union meets once a month at Prairie.

MARCH 26 ANNUAL SERVICE AUCTION AND POTLUCK

The Annual Service Auction will be held on March 26 following the Sunday service with Orange Schroeder serving as our auctioneer. Please

consider the talents and skills you have to offer that others may appreciate. Past services have included home baked items, dinners, artwork, music lessons, poetry, Bed and Breakfast weekends, childcare, financial Services, photography, computer services, help with household chores, and many other diverse contributions. Please contact Steve Vorass at svorass@sbcglobal.net or 216-0608 or KK Anderson at AndersonKK@yahoo.com with your contribution to this year's service auction. Please include a minimum suggested bid, and if you are offering an event, please choose a date.

This is a fun opportunity to discover (and benefit from) the hidden talents of your fellow Prairie members and friends. There will be a potluck meal, so please bring a food item. Child care will be provided.

Steve Vorass

ATTENTION, ARTISTS! RAINBOWS NEEDED!

The Communications Committee requests graphic images that indicate we are a welcoming congregation. The graphic selected by the committee will appear on our new Prairie UU Web site. Submissions may be electronic files or images on paper that can be scanned into a digital file.

We need a short, wide image, about 5 times as wide as it is tall. The image will be rather small on the home page of the Web site (about 120 pixels wide by 30 pixels tall, or about 1.25" by 0.25"), so it must be very simple and bold to show up well.

Submissions may be given to Karen Deaton by hand, by mail (22 Starr Ct, Madison, 53711), or by email (karendeaton@tds.net).

Deadline is Sunday, April 23.

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.madisonwi.us

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

Long Range Planning: www.execpc.com/~prairie/

THE VIEW FROM MY BRANCH



The month of March is an in between month for Wisconsinites. It is still winter. Also, it is the beginning of Spring. We are touched by warm breezes and frigid cold temperatures within days of each other. The thought of growing plants is juxtaposed with shoveling the fresh fallen snow. The need to replace a lost pair of winter gloves may happen the same week we pack a spring wardrobe for a weekend in Chicago.

Also, this year it is a time of transition at Prairie. There are a lot of decisions about 1) What do you want for your future? and 2) How do you want to get there? There are many elements going into this transition. One of those is the Task Force on Right Relations. The Task Force's job is to write a draft document on being in right relations with each other and others. Some of the areas we are working on include Welcoming and Hospitality, Living Out Diversity, Listening and Speaking, Conflict Work, Forgiveness & Reconciliation, and Service to Each Other.

The Task Force on Right Relations hopes to share a draft document with the congregation before the end of the year. It will take another year to get it finalized. This is because each committee and each member of the congregation will be asked for feedback. We want ideas and thoughts from everyone. Sometime this Spring we will have congregational meetings. Patty Stockdale, Mary Somers, Nancy Schraufnagel and Larry Nahlik have been meeting every other week since November to do this work for Prairie. Feel free to talk with them, or give them your thanks for their work. Come by Prairie on every other Thursday evenings at 6:00 if you would like to see what we are doing. The next meeting is March 23.

We hope you will come to Sunday meetings to share your ideas and hear what we have been doing. We will hold these after services on Sundays. Look for announcements of the meeting dates! Eventually, we hope to have a document we can all be proud of and willing to work to live up to.

The Rev. Jody Whelden

Consulting Minister

Office: 608-271-8218

Home Office: 608-231-9707

BOOK CLUB TO MEET APRIL 2

The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse by Louise Erdrich will be discussed at the **April 2** meeting of the Prairie Book Club. (Remember that Daylight Savings Time begins. Set your clock ahead 1 hour.)

“The latest in Louise Erdrich's chronicles of the Chippewa (Ojibwe) and Michif people of central North Dakota, *The Last Report...* is a beautiful, brilliant book ... Focusing on religion and how it touches the lives of the town of Little No Horse, Erdrich weaves new patterns into the fabric of her wonderfully imagined, magic tapestry. ...the novel holds up as a bold and thoughtful study of sexuality.”

Here's a clue: the priest who is thought to be a man is a woman! If you have lots of time on your hands you might want to read some other of Erdrich's books that involve the same characters, but this isn't necessary, as the book stands on its own. (355 pages) Read more about the novel at the first URL and see discussion questions at the second.

<http://www.dancingbadger.com/nohorse.html>
http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides/last_report_on_the_miracles_at_little_no_horse.asp

HOUSEMATE NEEDED

Fully furnished (right down to the linens!) 1-2 rooms available to rent in a member's home near Prairie. Includes many amenities... all utilities, cable TV and Internet in room, semi-private bath, kitchen privileges, and more. One room for \$500/month or 2 for \$800. Will also consider 2 people for a total of \$1000/month. Share with one adult and 2 cats. Photo and more info at <http://dorothyk.net/> or call Dorothy at 271-7532.

MEMBERSHIP

A BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

James and Kim Truog are the proud parents of Samantha Annette Truog. Samantha was born Friday, November 4, 2005 at Meriter hospital at 9:30 p.m. She weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. And was 19 ½” long. James and Kim plan on raising Samantha as an independent thinker, who will, in her own time, chose a religion that is right for her. James and Kim are very joyful to be graced with Samantha's presence in their life. Parents and baby are doing great. Congratulations, James and Kim!

[Ed. Note: *Prairie Fire* wishes to retract the announcement found in the last issue with apologies for its omissions and misleading statements.]

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

HELLO TO THE OPEN ROAD

After six months of being the Director of Religious Education for Prairie, I am leaving the position. I have liked working with you-- you have done good to me, I would do the same to you. I believe I have done a good job and I have learned a lot. I wish the best to you all, especially the kids.

It was great to have such a nice Sunday School, service and party on March 5. Thank you to everyone who made a note or said goodbye. Thank you to the RE Committee for the beautiful candelabra. We sure had good food and fun at the Mystery Friends luncheon, including being and guessing human machines. My bearly friend Nobis is sad and a little mad that he still doesn't work there--we want to keep in touch.

In our hymnal, poem #645 by Walt Whitman is a humanist way for me to think about this. He says "Walking light-hearted, I take to the open road, healthy and free, with the world before me. From now on, I don't ask for good fortune--I myself am good-fortune, strong and content. Onward--to that which has no end as it has no beginning, to experience much, to see nothing anywhere but that which we may reach. We know the wide universe as a road--for our traveling souls."

Three of the RE classes are now in Our Whole Lives courses, which is a cool way to think about relationships, bodies and sexuality--good luck! Remember that as spring arrives, so do Earth Day, Easter and the Pagan Planting moons. In April, the RE kids will do Spring Fling and another Service Sunday.

The RE Committee will need some special help for the next weeks as they do the spring classes and plan for the summer and fall session--yes, already! Can you be a teacher next year? Or cook at the Summer Spree?

Thank you. See you on the road.

Bob Radford, Director of Religious Education