



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)

June 23 , 2006

Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. The two most recent issues may be seen at www.uuprairie.org.

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Wednesday–Sunday, June 21–25

*UUA General Assembly, St. Louis, Mo.

Sunday, June 25

*10:00 a.m. "Bringing the World Home" presented by Karen Gross

*5:00 p.m. Prairie potluck with Midge Miller and members of the Madison Ethical Discussion Group

*5:30 p.m. Report and discussion on Spiritual Activism Conference, led by Midge Miller

Wednesday, June 28

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, July 2

*10:00 a.m. "Oscar Howe, Artist of the Sioux and the Painting of the Truth," presented by Rosemarie Lester

Wednesday, July 5

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, July 9

*10:00 a.m. "How We Heal, How We Are Healed," presented by Rev. Matt Cockrum, UU Minister

11:30 a.m. Farewell reception for Rev. Jody Whelden

*11:45 a.m. Book Club potluck and discussion

Tuesday, July 11

6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers' Potluck at home of Amy Schulz

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: SUNDAY, JULY 16

Wednesday, July 12

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Saturday - Sunday, July 15-16

Summer Spree for Prairie youth at the Ruecking farm

Sunday, July 16

*10:00 a.m. "The Circle within the Circle: On the Path of Humano-Paganism," a musical program presented by Susan Urban and Phil Cooper.

Sunday, July 23

10:00 a.m. Joint Service of area UU congregations to be held at Prairie

*12:00 noon. Humanist Union potluck lunch followed by "A Humanist's View of Kevin Phillips' American Theocracy," presented by Doleta Chapru

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, June 25

Peace Corps Year 2006 marks the 45th anniversary of an organization that has placed almost 200,000 volunteers who have served in 138 countries overseas. Karen Gross (Dominican Republic 2000-2002) will share her experiences using pictures, art, music, story, and literature.

Karen Gross was an active member of Prairie for a number of years. Before she left for her Peace Corps training, she presented a service on her hopes for her Peace Corps experience. She also served one summer as the director of Camp Unistar, the UU family camp on Star Island in Cass Lake, MN, near Bemidji.

Karen will be arriving June 15 and house-sitting for Mary Mullen and Patty Stockdale until they return at the end of June, so there should be plenty of opportunities to catch up with her.

Sunday, July 2

Oscar Howe, who is considered to be one of the fathers of modern American Indian art, overcame the stark deprivations of a childhood on a South Dakota reservation to become a highly regarded professor of art and an internationally renowned artist. His work represents the best of ancient Native American tradition and imagery, infused by elements of twentieth-century modern art movements. Yet Howe always remained deeply centered in the religious rituals of his culture; among them "the painting of the truth." This slide lecture should be considered a kind of addendum to our recent series on religions of the world.

Rosemarie Lester, a Prairie member since 1969 and a retired professor of German, became personally interested in the late Oscar Howe when she met his German sister-in-law in South Dakota!

Sunday, July 9

Religious communities can be bodies of reconciliation and healing for the many broken places in ourselves and our world. How can that healing happen? Join us on Sunday, July 9, when Rev. Matthew Cockrum will lead us in a service and discussion, "How We Heal, How We Are Healed."

The Rev. Matthew Cockrum is currently serving as a chaplain at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, Ill. He also served the Unitarian Universalist Church of Ogden, Ut., where he met Yvonne and Doug Hiebert and their boys, who now attend Prairie. Prior to entering seminary, Matt studied human development and worked as a child protection worker and case manager. He lives with his partner Chad in Chicago, where he is an endorsed community minister of Second Unitarian Church.

Sunday, July 16

Is it possible to be *both* a humanist and a pagan?

On July 16, we welcome Susan Urban back to Prairie for at least the fourth time. She and fellow musician Phil Cooper will explore the not-always-obvious ways that two seemingly very different belief systems, humanism and paganism, can be reconciled. Whether or not you have thought about

the intersection of these two systems, you are sure to come away both informed and entertained by the service "The Circle within the Circle—On the Path of Humano-Paganism."

Susan Urban is a songwriter and singer with a definite Unitarian-Universalist viewpoint. In 1987, she began creating services for her then home congregation, Second Unitarian Church of Chicago. In 1997, she began to present services for other UU congregations regularly.

Although the subject matter of her programs is wide-ranging, all her programs use music combined with the spoken word to create services that provide a satisfying spiritual experience.

Susan Urban's influences are the old traditional ballads such as "Tam Lin" and the Child Ballads, and such 20th-century story song masters as Stan Rogers, Harry Chapin, and Steve Goodman. Sometimes humorous, sometimes heart-wrenching, sometimes inspiring, Susan's performances weave a tapestry of humor, passion, and reflection as rich and varied as life itself. She sings in a powerful alto voice, and plays guitar (in varied tunings), 6-string banjo, Native American and African drum and (on one song) kazoo.

OUR SOCIETY

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETING JUNE 27

Meeting Place: Oakwood Village West, Oaks Building, Second Floor Exercise Room

Discussion Topic: Crystallizing moments in our lives: an "aha moment!" What caused it? How did we change significantly from that time? Rosemary Dorney, facilitator. All are welcome to share their brief tales. General discussion afterward as time permits.

Time: 2:00 to 3:50 p.m. Note the change in the ending time. The Exercise Room will open at 1:30 for those who wish to come early for casual conversation. We must vacate it no later than 4:00.

Participants are welcome to come and go as necessary for appointments, rides, chair attendants, etc.

Refreshments: Please bring a handful of snacks to pass, if convenient. Beverages are furnished.

About us: Prairie Elders aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU members and friends over 65. We also welcome other UUs who live in the facility where we meet. For directions, rides, parking and further information please call Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382, or Doleta Chapru 238-4970.

HUMANIST UNION PLANS 2 MEETINGS

June 25

Following the all-Prairie 5:00 p.m. potluck on Sunday, June 25, there will be a 5:30 p.m. public meeting, cosponsored by the Humanist Union, the Prairie Program Committee and the Madison Ethical Discussion Group, to hear Midge Miller and Beth Wortzel report on the May 17-20 Spiritual Activism Conference held at All Souls Church, Unitarian, in Washington, D.C. This conference, organized by Rabbi Michael Lerner and others with the Network of Spiritual Progressives, was attended by over 1200 participants from 34 states.

According to Rabbi Lerner, "Attendees came because they are sick and tired of having the Religious Right use religion or God language to justify militarism and war, cuts in spending for the poor while cutting taxes on the rich, assaults on basic civil liberties and human rights, assaults on homosexuals, and massive governmental corruption."

Information about the Madison Local Chapter of the Network of Spiritual Progressives may be found at <http://nsp.madisonwi.us/>.

July 23

Following the potluck picnic lunch at noon on July 23, Doleta Chapru will present "A Humanist's View of Kevin Phillips' 'American Theocracy'". The book's subtitle is "The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century". Are unchecked biblical end-time expectations, oil hegemony and national debt a toxic mix that could bring the U.S. to its knees? Phillips' strong warnings suggest courses of action for ethical humanists who value an informed electorate and fact-based governmental decision-making.

SUSAN URBAN CONCERT AT BORDERS EAST JULY 15

Looking for a good way to relax on Saturday night, July 15? Our mid-July presenter, Susan Urban, will be sharing a show with Phil Cooper on Saturday, July 15 at 8:00 p.m. at the East Madison Borders Store at 2173 Zeier Road. Susan describes Phil as one of the finest guitarists in the world who sings an interesting variety of traditional and contemporary songs.

CHICAGO TRIP SEPTEMBER 30—SAVE THIS DATE

Saturday, September 30: Save this date for Prairie's fundraising trip to Chicago's Field Museum for the exhibit "Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs." There will be more information in later editions of the newsletter, or contact Pat Watkins.

BOOK CLUB MEETS ON JULY 9

The Egyptian Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz, was first published in Arabic in 1983. The short novel, *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, described variously as a parable, fable, or morality play, is about the search for a humane religion that lives up to its ideals for all classes of people who belong to it. The narrator, Ibn Fattouma, travels to several countries representing different real countries, societies, and religions. As you read, try to identify the places Mahfouz might have had in mind. (148 pages)

Recommended by Mary Mullen, this book was one assigned and discussed in the UW class she took last semester called "Religion in Critical Perspective." Learn about the author at the first URL and look at some discussion questions at the second: http://nexttext.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=books.resource&target=worldlit&file=worldlit_ism_05.cfm&type=student

<http://www.randomhouse.com/anchor/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780385423342&view=rg>

MISSING SONGBOOKS!

Members are encouraged to check at home for *Rise Up Singing* books borrowed from the meeting room and upstairs office Sunday, May 14. All are needed

for congregational singing. You can purchase copies at local book stores.

Also, individual copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* hymn book and the new songbook supplement are available through the UUA Bookstore at uaa.org or by calling 1-800-215-9076.

PRAIRIE FIRE SCHEDULE

Because of the upcoming holiday, the *Prairie Fire* will not be published the first week of July. The next deadline will be Sunday, July 16, for the issue dated July 21.

LETTERS

FAREWELL, JODY

After lo! these many years, Prairie had a minister—even if only temporarily, even if only quarter-time, even if only on a consulting basis.

Many of us were comforted. (Some, perhaps, a little discomfited.) But, Jody, you were good for us. With you, we worked on a number of things that can only help us grow: defining roles in our religious education program, bringing more structure to Sunday mornings, drafting a long-range plan, caring for and nurturing each other, moving toward a promise of right relations in our community.

As we continue on our path toward growth, we will remember your vital role in guiding our steps along that path. We hope that we were good for you, and that your memories of us will be as fond as ours will be of you. Jody, farewell, thank you for all of your hard work and cheerfulness, and good luck with your new venture.

Mike Brigg, President

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: www.uuprairie.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/~prairieu/

OTHER NEWS

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

Did you know that Summer is the hardest season for homeless families? While the rest of us are enjoying picnics, pools and vacations, homeless families face dramatically longer waiting lists in shelters and a greater chance of being stranded with no place at all to go. Summertime presents problems for families in shelters as well, because children lose the stability and care offered by the public schools during the rest of the year.

“Sanya”, age 10, hugged each of her teachers in turn as she said a tearful goodbye on the last day of school and got on the IHN van. She will not see her teachers or her friends—some of her most important relationships—for the next three months.

Fortunately, Sanya is signed up for daytime programs at Neighborhood House, where she may make some new friends and find the daytime stability

she is missing. But unlike most other children, as long as she is in shelter, she will not be out playing with neighborhood friends into the twilight hours. We hope to help Sanya’s family find a home this summer.

Meanwhile, We are very grateful to volunteers and organizations that offer activities and field trips for our kids during the summer—would you like to take some IHN kids out to play?

Rachel Krinsky, MSW, IHN Executive Director

