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(608) 271-8218 admin@uuprairie.com
Located off the south frontage road (West Beltline Hwy Rd.) near the Seminole Hwy exit.



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."

February 23, 2007



Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at www.uuprairie.org.

President: Mike Briggs, (608) 835-0914

Editor: Dan Proud, admin@uuprairie.org; 661-0776

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Saturday, February 24

Trip to the Art Institute, Chicago, to see "Cezanne to Picasso."

Sunday, February 25

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Human Rights in Occupied Tibet" led by Students for a Free Tibet

11:30 a.m. Bylaw amendment discussion

7:00 p.m. "Articulating Your UU Faith" Adult R.E.

Monday, February 26

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

*6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers potluck at the home of Dave and Marcia Johnson

Wednesday, February 28

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

7:30 p.m. Left Hand of God Covenant Group

Saturday, March 3

*12:00 p.m. Memorial Service for Pat Cautley at First Unitarian Society

Sunday, March 4

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "History, Culture and War Propaganda," presented by Brian Standing

7:00 p.m. "Articulating Your UU Faith" Adult R.E.

Wednesday, March 7

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, March 11-14

IHN Volunteer Week for Prairie

Sunday, March 11

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Universalism 101" presented by Rev. Ralph Tyksinski

*11:30 a.m. Book Club lunch and discussion of *Until I Find You* by John Irving

7:00 p.m. "Articulating Your UU Faith" Adult R.E.

Wednesday, March 14

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Saturday, March 17

*7:30 p.m. Playreaders meet at Nettleton's

Sunday, March 18

*10:00 a.m. "The History of Evolution Theory" presented by Kathy Converse

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, MARCH 4

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, February 25

Students for a Free Tibet is an international organization that recognizes the legal and historical status of Tibet as an independent country and supports the right of the Tibetan people to determine their own future. The mission of their organization is to educate people about the situation in occupied Tibet and work towards human rights through non-violent political, economic, and social campaigns.

Tom Boman, Hilary Edwards, Annie King, Abi Scott, and Asius Vangio, from the University of Wisconsin, Madison chapter, will speak about the current state of Tibet within China, focusing on the Beijing 2008 Olympics and the recent massacre at Nangpa-la Pass, where Tibetans were shot down by the Chinese Armed Police while traveling to Nepal to escape persecution.

The service will also include Tibetan music and religious readings as well as a Tibetan story for all ages. Jampa Khedup-la, a professor at the university and former monk, will lead Prairie in musical meditation.

Sunday, March 4

Brian Standing founded Prolefeed Studios in 1997 to provide an independent forum for alternative news coverage, artistic expression and subversive political satire. His credits include the award-winning feature "War is Sell," the widely-seen documentary short, "Pedalphiles," about a renegade gang of bicycling anarchists, and the ongoing documentary series "Scoop Perlman's Guide to Art."

After bouncing around from his hometown in Albany, N.Y., to Minneapolis, Boston, outback Australia, Austin, Tex., and Tomahawk, Wis., Brian has finally settled down in Madison, where he enjoys making Godzilla movies with his son, Shea and his wife, Lisa. Madison radio listeners know him for his work at WORT 89.9 FM, including "In our Backyard," the "Eight O'Clock Buzz" and local election coverage.

Brian will be showing clips from his film "War is Sell" and talking about the history, culture and techniques of war propaganda.

Sunday, March 11

In "Universalism 101," Rev. Ralph will explore the ways we can adopt and accept our identity as Universalists with historical background and contemporary descriptions. Hopefully, it will be of use to you if you are asked "What does the second U mean?" after you say I'm a UU.

Sunday, March 18

"The History of Evolution Theory" will provide a quick tour of the development of evolution theory from the 1700's discovery of how the human body works to the 1900's genetics and DNA sequencing. This is the first of three programs in Kathy Converse's lay ministry.

OUR SOCIETY

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER AVAILABLE

Electronic Funds Transfer is here! No more searching for a pen during the offertory or trying to remember when you paid your pledge and how much.

Your pledge will be automatically paid from your checking or savings account. It takes 1-2 weeks to get this set up. Forms will be available in the lobby or can be sent to you. Please return them to Robin Proud (661-0776), and see Robin with any questions.

SPANISH SPEAKERS

Spanish Speakers will meet for potluck and conversation on **Monday, February 26**, at 6:30 p.m. at the current home of Dave and Marcia Johnson, 7855 E. Oakbridge Way, #2A. For directions or information, call the Johnsons at 829-0270 or Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEET FEBRUARY 27

Tuesday, February 27, 2:00-3:50 p.m. Nakoma Room, Heritage Oaks Building, Oakwood Village West. This is a room change.

The Nakoma Room will be open at 1:30 p.m. for those who wish to come early for casual conversation. After 2:00 we introduce newcomers

and share personal information. The topic portion of our meeting lasts from around 2:20 to 3:40.

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

TOPIC: Stories about our parents or others of their generation. Photos or memorabilia welcome. For the benefit of participants with hearing loss, we use a round-robin format.

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

DIRECTIONS: Oakwood Village West is in the 6100 block of Mineral Point Road several blocks west of Whitney Way. Follow the main entrance road veering left and up the hill. Heritage Oaks is the new building on the right. Its visitor parking entrance is directly across from Oakwood's small one-story Resale Shop. The parking lot's automatic door is directly behind a large white painted arrow on the driveway. Drive in and find a spot near the clearly marked elevator shaft. Directions to the Nakoma Room are in the elevator.

There are also a few handicapped stalls farther up the hill in front of Heritage Oak's main entrance. The Nakoma Room is on the main floor just past the receptionist's desk on the right.

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 contact Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR PAT CAUTLEY

A memorial service for Pat Cautley will be held at 12:00 noon on **Saturday, March 3** at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, Madison. Pat Cautley, 93, passed away Friday, January 19, at Oakwood Village.

Notes to the family can be sent to: Eleanor Cautley, 114 W. Lakeside St., Madison, WI, 53715.

UPCOMING BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

The Prairie Book Club meets monthly after the Sunday service at Prairie. Bring food to share. Anyone who has read the book or simply wants to listen to the discussion is welcome to attend.

Remember that there's a link to the poster of our book club selections on Prairie's Web site. See <http://uuprairie.org/NovDecBooks.htm> or find the page through the Prairie calendar entries for book club meeting. Prices are those current at <http://amazon.com> as of November 18, 2006.

Sunday, March 11. *Until I Find You: A Novel* by John Irving. Fiction, "the story of the actor Jack Burns—his life, loves, celebrity and astonishing search for the truth about his parents." 848 pages, \$1.00 & up.

Sunday, April 8. *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* by John Perkins. Non-fiction, "a former respected member of the international banking community describes how as a highly paid professional, he helped the U.S. cheat poor countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars by lending them more money than they could possibly repay and then take over their economies." (Democracy Now) 320 pages, \$6.44 & up. See http://www.amazon.com/Confessions-Economic-Hit-John-Perkins/dp/0452287081/sr=1-1/qid=1163862031/ref=pd_bbs_1/103-2391547-8734245?ie=UTF8∓s=books

WELCOME TO PLAYREADING

All are invited to join us in reading a play together at 7:30 p.m., **Saturday, March 17**, at the Nettleton's home, 645 Sheldon St. Each person is given a character part and we read the play "cold," but with enthusiasm. Treats will be provided by the hosts. Join us for good home-made, late-winter drama. For details about the play to be read or directions, please call 238-6053.

SERVICE AUCTION PLANNED FOR MARCH 18

Sunday, March 18 is the date of this year's Prairie Service Auction. Orange Schroeder will again serve as our auctioneer, and there will undoubtedly be bargains galore.

Please start thinking about what you would like to contribute. Past contributions have included food,

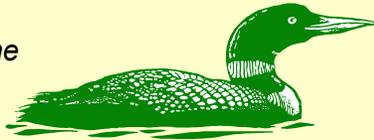
entertainment, household services, professional services, artwork, weekend getaways, and more.

Contact Robin Proud with the following info:

- item name
- description
- preferred date (for an event)
- number of people who can purchase
- value
- minimum bid (if applicable)

REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

*Once to every soul
and nation comes the
moment to decide,
In the strife of truth*



*with falsehood, for the good or evil side.
Then to stand with truth is noble, when we share
its wretched crust,
Ere that cause bring fame and profit, and tis
prosperous to be just.*

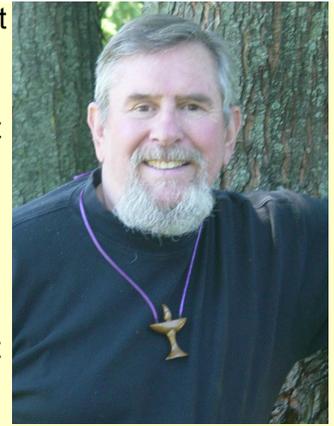
These are the words by James Russell Lowell, from our Hymn #119, *Once to Every Soul and Nation*.

At our February 18 Sunday Service, in my talk on Charles Darwin, I read the list of pall bearers that carried his body to the grave site in Westminster Abbey. I mentioned that one was James Russell Lowell, then U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain, and an ardent Unitarian. Soon members of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society will be asked to vote on a major issue regarding the future of Prairie. Is this the kind of decision that one could ask:

“So what’s it going to be in this momentous choice that we are invited to make? Good or evil? Truth or falsehood? Are we going to be brave or are we going to be cowards?”

The words of the hymn are taken from a poem written by Lowell, a journalist and diplomat, written to protest the United States’ war with Mexico in the mid-nineteenth century. This is the war which Henry David Thoreau protested by refusing to pay his poll tax, which earned him a night in the Concord jail. When his friend Emerson came by and asked, “Why Henry, what are you doing in there?” Thoreau is said to have replied, “Waldo, what are *you* doing out there?”

Back then, it seemed that these difficult moral decisions came about once in a generation. But things have speeded up now, and we are faced with frequent opportunities to make difficult choices about whether or not to support the actions of our government as it moves on the world stage. or choices closer to home.



Would that it were as easy as Lowell’s words imply. If we actually knew that on one side of a decision stood truth and goodness, and on the other side stood evil and falsehood, we wouldn’t have much trouble making a decision, would we?

But it’s rare to be offered a choice that is so clearcut. In our personal lives and in our public/political lives, the choices are much more ambiguous and seldom simple. And as far as Prairie’s upcoming congregational choice is concerned, persuasive arguments can be made for either side. Learn from and listen to those whose opinions have the highest regard for what is at stake for you and your congregation. May we find it in our own hearts to live according to our highest truths and our deepest understandings.

Blessed Be,

Rev. Ralph

CALL FOR DELEGATES

You can represent Prairie UU Society and join the larger UU community at the District and National Assemblies. Delegates will vote at business meetings, as well as attend educational sessions and network with other UU’s. The Central Midwest Assembly, with the theme “Congregations Alive!” will be April 13-15 in Oak Brook, Illinois.

General Assembly will take place June 20-24 in Portland, Oregon. If you are interested in attending either of these events, please contact Nancy Schraufnagel, Denominational Affairs Committee, at 273-3195 or schraufnancy (at) hotmail.com by **March 18**.

Delegates must be appointed by the Board, but any UU is welcome to attend these conferences.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

R.E. NEWS

Winter has a tendency to slow things down. We're cold and locked up indoors and we're not as active as we like. Here at Prairie we're moving along as usual; busy with classroom and out-of-classroom activities.

Last week our RE students participated in the Valentine's Day intergenerational service. Reuben Arnold started off the service with a funny Valentine poem and Madeline performed a scene from Romeo and Juliet. As always, the Arnold children used their talents to entertain Prairie members and friends, many thanks to you both.

During the Valentine-making portion of the service we made valentines for all the former RE students who are now away in college. We miss them and hope the cards brightened their day.

High school youth are getting ready for the annual Spring CON in Kirkwood, Missouri on March 2-4. CON is a general assembly for youth ages 14-20 with post-high school youth encouraged to transition to young adult CON's for people 18-35. One of our K-2 teachers, Carl Wacker, will be taking Reuben, Madeline, Mei-Lien Converse and Toby Wacker to the event. The weekend will be full of fun and educational workshops for students to attend. If you see Carl around on Sunday, make sure to thank him for taking valuable time and energy to educate our youth and have them attend these conferences.

The K-2 class have learned about the environment and students in the 3-5 class have learned about famous UU's like Clara Barton.

Next month high school and middle school youth will start a new section of Humanism entitled "Humanism, Politics and Economics", led by Prairie member Doleta Chapru. So far this year our RE students have been able to engage in a number of presentations given by Prairie members. Thank you to everyone who has helped out; we appreciate your hard work and commitment to our program.

Rebecca Malke (YREC)
youthcoordinator (at) uuprairie.org or 695-3435

2007 UUSC HOLIDAY CARD CONTEST

Creative UUs of all ages are invited to submit original designs for 2007 UUSC holiday cards. Create an original design that reflects the joy of the holidays, and justice, equity, and compassion. Please visit www.uusc.org/ia/holiday_cards/2006/contest2007.html for submission guidelines and to the 2006 award-winning card. Submissions must be received by April 27, 2007. Mail submissions to UUSC Holiday Card Contest, 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 or use E-mail: volunteerservices@uusc.org

LETTERS

A LETTER OF THANKS

Our family was so buoyed up by the outpouring of concern and support from scores of Prairie folk during George's final illness, death and aftermath. Your cards, calls, visits and offerings of food were so appreciated. I hope to eventually thank each one of you but I would like to mention names of people who gave tirelessly of their time and talents and to whom I am especially grateful.

Aileen Nettleton, my "guardian angel" at Prairie, lined up respite people to sit with George during his illness and hospitalization so I could get away. Doleta Chapru spent countless hours helping me plan George's service and then organized Prairie musicians to play during the reception. Warren Hagstrom masterminded our family's post-visitation night dinner. Al Nettleton designed and printed the the service bulletin. Erin Bosch took charge of assigning and serving food at the reception. Bob Park, our communication's person, instigated reminiscences of George by Prairie folks and made them and George's obituary accessible by e-mail and the Web.

Special dinners were brought in by Cindy Haq, Barbara Chatterton and Warren Hagstrom. Rose and Galen Smith, whose home and dinners were a respite for me, also took in Dave Zakem when I had a houseful of guests. And I was so comforted by the visits and planning sessions with Max Gaebler and Ralph Tyksinski. Thank you one and all. I am so grateful to be part of this blessed community.

Ruth Calden and Family

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: <http://uuprairie.org/>
News Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>
Views: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>
Social Action: <http://socialaction.madisonwi.us>
Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST NEWS

BERNSTEIN PEACE CONCERT BENEFIT

Leonard Bernstein said, "This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before." In keeping with Bernstein's stand for peace, the Friends of the Peace Council are sponsoring an all-Bernstein "Concert for Peace" on **Friday, February 23**, 7:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Meeting House, 900 University Bay Dr., Madison.

The program, with pianists Martha Fisher and Bill Lutes, cellist Parry Karp, and vocalists Paul and Cheryl Rowe, will feature songs by Bernstein from the musicals *West Side Story*, *Candide*, *On the Town* and *Peter Pan*, plus selections from "*Arias and Barcarolles*," one of Bernstein's last works.

Proceeds will benefit the work of the International Committee for the Peace Council, a Madison-based organization committed to finding practical ways to promote peace and to relieve suffering through effective inter-religious collaboration. Tickets are \$25, available at Spruce Tree Music, A Room of One's Own, Orange Tree Imports and online at www.peacecouncil.org.

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General Assembly will take place June 20-24 in Portland, Oregon. If you are interested in attending either of these events, please contact Nancy Schraufnagle, Denominational Affairs Committee, at 273-3195 or [schraufnancy \(at\) hotmail.com](mailto:schraufnancy@hotmail.com) by **March 18**. Delegates must be appointed by the Board, but any UU is welcome to attend these conferences.

UU CHURCHES HOST VACATION TRIPS

April 13–15 D.C. Annual Cherry Blossom Festival: www.cedarlane.org/cbfestival.pdf.

June 24–July 3 Northcentral Alaska: www.wuurld.org

July 3–12 Southeast Alaska: www.wuurld.org

July 15–17 Niagara Falls: <http://www.uunex.net/> or (716) 791-4453

July 16–30 Alaska: www.wuurld.org

UU B&B DIRECTORY UPDATE

For a copy of the 2007 directory, send a check for \$20 (or \$25 and your e-mail address for a year's access to the Web site as well) to UU're Home, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806.

JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS NEWS

Truth and Reconciliation: In observance of Black History Month, this is the second article in a month-long series examining Unitarian Universalist racial justice work.

Dismantling Racism in the Heartland: The Work and Witness of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana
Overcoming the legacy of centuries of racism is never an easy feat, but it can be particularly challenging in less diverse communities in the rural Midwest.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington (Indiana) congregation member Guy Loftman says, "We have nearly four hundred members, two services on Sunday mornings, and a growing congregation with two ministers. We are predominantly European American, and largely oriented toward Indiana University faculty and students. Minority population in Monroe County is

three percent African American, three percent Asian American and three percent Hispanic, and the remainder is European American. Minority participation in our congregation is disproportionately small for our community. This has been an ongoing concern and frustration."

Each year, the congregation's choir joins the choir of one of its neighbors, the Indiana University African-American Choir Ensemble, and visits the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility, a maximum-security prison an hour west of Bloomington. The prison rents a 55-passenger bus for the two choirs to visit. The choirs sing together, travel together, and have lunch together at the prison. The Bloomington Martin Luther King Commission provides hundreds of dollars each year for the sound amplification equipment used for the event.

Over the years, members of the choirs have shared their concerns about the disproportionate rate of incarceration of men of color and the institutional racism inherent in the criminal justice system. Members of the UU Church of Bloomington took the issue to the board of the local NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) branch, with whom they had pre-existing relationships. The congregation has a very friendly relationship with the predominantly African American Second Baptist Church and the choir is invited to sing annually at their Gospel Extravaganza. Members of the two churches make up about eighty percent of the NAACP chapter's board.

The NAACP chapter led a study of race and criminal justice in Monroe County that was published in 2000 showing numerous racial disparities between African Americans and whites in the Monroe County criminal justice system. The report was highly controversial and led to the formation of the Monroe County Racial Justice Task Force, which conducted and issued its own study, [Race and Criminal Justice in Monroe County](#), published in 2003. The UU church's "What Color is Community?" Racial Justice Task was expressly identified in that report.

"We are deeply involved at this time in the challenging but exciting efforts to see more of our recommendations implemented," Guy Loftman said. "We have already achieved official documentation of racial information in all court

records. Now we are working on getting funding to install video cameras in police cars to document all stops and arrests."

The congregation has also examined the issue of reparations. "Repairing the Breach: The Monroe County Race and Justice Project" is a task force formed by interested community members. Their work includes producing a documentary film, "Living with Jim Crow in Monroe County," which gained wide viewership in the community through the Monroe County Historical Society, the local community access TV station, schools, and churches.

The Monroe County Racial Justice Task Force also gained recognition of the original segregated 'Colored School' with the placement of a state historic marker last February at the site. The congregation and the Bloomington Black Business Association organized a multiracial community-wide celebration, which attracted hundreds of people. It is one of the few historical markers in the state that deals with African American history, and only the second historical marker on any topic in Monroe County. Since then, other community organizations have begun planning other ways of recognizing African American history in the county.

The congregation's *What Color Is Community? Racial Justice Task Force*, established six years ago, sponsors an annual "Journey Toward Wholeness Sunday" event, holds anti-racism trainings and workshops, and organizes a regular movie and book discussion series on racial justice. Other anti-racist partnerships include outreach to local Muslims since the September 11, 2001 attacks, and an annual Ramadan fast-breaking in the church.

"What we have learned," Loftman said, "is that partnerships with groups outside the church are absolutely essential if there is to be a community impact. You must join with the people you want to 'help' on their turf and their terms."

For further information:

- The Monroe County Racial Justice Task Force was [recognized by the American Bar Association](#) as a national model for communities across the nation.

- [The Sentencing Project](#) (TSP) is a national leader in the development of alternative sentencing programs and the reform of criminal justice policy. The Bloomington Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) sought TSP's expertise in identifying strategies and best practices for preventing/reducing racial disparities or the perception of racial disparities in the Monroe County justice system. The RJTF is conducting a second study to examine in greater depth the causes and implications of arrest and sentencing disparities, and to develop recommendations to remedy actual or perceived causes of racial disparity.

Smithfield Worker Justice Fund

On Wednesday, January 24, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arrested 21 Smithfield company workers from the Tar Heel, North Carolina plant pork processing plant. Despite tremendous odds, these workers have been courageously struggling for justice in their workplace for over a decade.

The arrests came on the heels of the company's announcement that it will fire up to 600 people in the coming weeks, primarily those who walked out in protest last November over the firings of fellow employees for alleged problems with social security mismatches. On a regular basis, workers are fired after being injured and in January were threatened with possible termination for demanding the right to observe the MLK holiday.

Smithfield workers need our support. The arrests and threatened firings have created a climate of fear throughout the workforce, as well as the entire Tar Heel community. IWJ is creating a "Smithfield Worker Justice Fund" to provide financial support to the workers who lose their jobs or face deportation as a result of the actions.

You can donate to the Fund at <http://www.iwj.org/dev/smithfield-fund.html>.

In faith,

*Susan Leslie, Director
Congressional Advocacy & Witness, UUA*

FROM EMPIRE TO EARTH COMMUNITY: NAVIGATING THE GREAT TURNING

A Leadership Gathering sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community and People Centered Development Forum, featuring David Korten and David Cobb, will take place **March 30, 31 & April 1, 2007** at Columbus State Community College in Columbus, Ohio.

Using the framework presented in David Korten's book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, we will work together to advance our understanding of The Great Turning, strengthen our individual works, foster critical connections and further create Earth Community. To register go to <http://www.greatturninggathering.org/> or call 503-665-3957.

OTHER NEWS

VARIETY PROGRAM AT PRAIRIE ON FEBRUARY 24

A year ago I organized a special weekend of Welsh activities, the Wild Welsh Winter Weekend, at Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center. People had so much fun, we are doing it again.

I would like to invite Prairie members and friends to a noson lawen, or merry evening, on **Saturday, February 24**, 7:30 to 10:00 p.m. at Prairie. This is a program of do-it-yourself entertainment, with poetry, music, songs, stories, and humor. If you have questions, call 661-0776 or see www.wildwelshweekend.com.

Dan Proud

MADISON HARP ORCHESTRA MARCH 15

The Madison Harp Orchestra will perform its second annual benefit concert on **Thursday, March 15** at Monona Terrace at 7:30. Tickets are \$25, with proceeds going to the Access Community Health Center. Over 30 harp players, including Prairie's own Orange Schroeder, will perform, in addition to Irish dancers and the Celtic band Stone Ring. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at www.harpsinger.com.