



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."

June 22, 2007



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

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Wednesday-Sunday, June 20-24

UUA General Assembly, Portland, Oregon

Saturday, June 23

Prairie fund-raising trip to Milwaukee

Sunday, June 24

*10:00 a.m. "Venezuela: Condoms and the Constitution" presented by Mary Somers

Tuesday, June 26

*2:00 Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood West

Wednesday, June 27

Note: The Midweek Meal @ Prairie is inactive during the summer. It will start up in September.

Sunday, July 1

*10:00 a.m. "The Immigration Problem: A Historical Perspective" presented by Sarah Lord

Monday, July 2

7:30 p.m. Membership and Hospitality Committee at Prairie

Friday-Sunday, July 6-8

*Summer Spree at Friendship Center Camp, Dodgeville

Sunday, July 8

*10:00 a.m. "U.S.A.—A Rogue State?" presented by Dr. Alfred McCoy

*11:30 a.m. Book Group brings our own books on contemporary political thought

Sunday, July 15

*10:00 a.m. "Bring Many Questions (About UUism)" presented by the Rev. Ralph Tyksinski

Monday, July 16

*6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers meet at the home of Amy Schulz

Thursday, July 19

7:00 p.m. Prairie Film Group meets at Prairie

Friday-Sunday, September 14-16

Prairie Retreat at Bethel Horizons

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

...Check out the UUSC HotWire for current goings on at the 2007 GA...

www.uusc.org/blog/hotwire.html

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, JULY 8

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, June 24

"Venezuela: Condoms and the Constitution" will be presented by Mary Somers. Prairie members Andy and Mary Somers went to see for themselves the situation in Venezuela. The tour by Global Exchange was sold as a celebration on International Women's Day and how women's rights are treated and implemented in Venezuela. They went with seven others, including two women from Nicaragua. Here's a taste of what Mary Somers will be telling us.

Women were managing cooperatives producing vegetables and fruits. They had received a small loan from Ban Mujer and paid it back in six months. The cooperative had nine women, but there are now only seven as two women had to drop out as their husbands did not want them to work outside the home. In another community shortly before the delegation arrived a woman was shot by her husband after being elected to the local community council.

Eighty-five per cent of the Venezuela people have been very poor and oppressed for centuries. The new government has brought health care, education and nutrition centers to poor neighborhoods. Food is 35 per cent lower at the barrio groceries. People of all ages are going to school. Free health care is available to everyone with the assistance of 20,000 Cuban health care workers including 12,000 physicians. Voting in elections is encouraged. Election day is on Sundays when few work and transportation is free.

The major problems will be getting improved water and sewer to the highly populated areas in the hills surrounding Caracas. These homes have few roads and crumbling soil. And the culture of male chauvinism, so prevalent in Catholic Latin America, stands in the way of social economic and political development. Venezuela may have the most progressive constitution in the world for women, but the men will not wear condoms.



Sunday, July 1

Immigration, particularly "illegal" immigration, is one of the most complex issues currently facing the United States and other affluent nations. As Unitarian Universalists, we have covenanted to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and justice, equity and compassion in human relations. What, then, should be our response to the current immigration debate?

Sarah Lord, a Prairie member and bilingual teacher in Madison, will present a program that places the current immigration debate in a historical context, exploring the evolution of the "problem" of illegal immigration during the past hundred years, largely as a result of immigration policies designed to guarantee that the United States would remain primarily a nation of European Christians.

Furthermore, we will look at the many ways in which the policies of the United States here and abroad have created conditions which have forced people to leave their countries of origin in order to survive. Given the problematic history of immigration policies in this country and the many ways in which our policies have led to the displacement of people from other parts of the world, we will consider what a just and humane immigration policy for the United States might look like.

Sunday, July 8

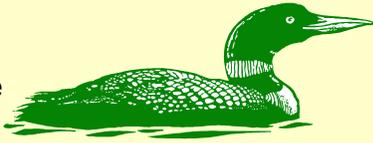
Dr. Alfred McCoy is a history professor at UW-Madison. His area of specialty is Asia South East. He has written several books on the politics of the drug trade and a history of the cold war. His most recent book is *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation from the Cold War to the War on Terror (American Empire Project)*. He will be speaking on "USA: A Moral Rogue State?"

Sunday, July 15

As UU's we are known for our questioning and inquiring minds. In this service I will be asking those who attend to write out a question before the service about our UU faith and I will try to give a response to your probings and curiosities! What I can't answer will be considered for future Program Committee offerings.

REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

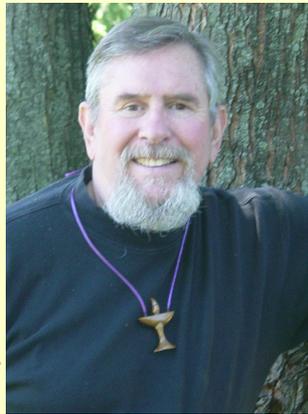
Mark your calendar for Sunday, August 5 at our Sunday service at Prairie UU Society Meeting House.



The Young Adult Steering Committee (YASC) from our Central Midwest District (CMwD) will be doing the service. The Central Midwest District Young Adult Network is a group of young adults ages 18-35 working to build community and to foster the growth of the Unitarian Universalist Young Adult movement in the Central Midwest District. It seeks to cultivate and integrate the presence and experience of young adults into UU congregations. It affirms and promotes the principles of Unitarian Universalism and works as an intentionally welcoming, anti-oppressive and growing community.

I have been informed by Kimberlee Tomczak, CMwD Youth & Young Adult Coordinator that the group that will be coming to Prairie on August 5, will consist of YASC Worship Team members: Tegan Jones, Chris Hagy, Meredith Schultz, Ian Danner-McPhadden, Danny Maitland, and Justine Urbikas.

If we are to engage and attract younger adult members of our wider community into our UU congregations then we must begin by listening to the thoughts, interests and ideas of individuals who speak for this vital segment of our population.



Our Unitarian Universalist history has many inspiring examples of how the leadership of youth and young adults have been and are contributing to make our congregations and our world better places.

It is a historical fact that our youth paved the way for the merger of the Unitarian and Universalist denominations. Nine years before the UUA was created, the Universalist Youth Fellowship and the American Unitarian Youth merged to form Liberal Religious Youth. A piece of trivia for you: the words to the popular hymn, We Would Be One, were written in 1953 to celebrate that merger.

Liberal Religious Youth is today Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, or YRUU. YRUU is an active part of our denomination, pushing us to live up to our highest ideals. Those of you who have attended General Assemblies have heard the passionate and eloquent voices of youth and young adults on issues of social justice and the direction of our Association.

Young adults consistently challenge us to deal with issues of oppression and social justice in our midst. As we all work for a better future, we need to be engaged on how oppression affects all of us.

Bring a friend, a relative, a neighbor, a younger adult, to this service on August 5, and I am convinced it will be challenging and exciting. The offering will be shared and the portion shared will be donated to the CMwD Young Adult Scholarship Fund. Hope to see you then

Glad to be journeying with you,

Ralph

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETING

Prairie Elders meet next on **Tuesday, June 26**, 2:00-3:50 p.m., Nakoma Room, Heritage Oaks Building, Oakwood Village West.

JUNE TOPIC: A book that inspired, motivated, influenced or otherwise had special meaning to you in your adult life.

We use a round-robin format for the topic and begin and end our gathering with casual conversation.

REFRESHMENTS: Please bring a small handful of snacks to pass, if convenient. Beverages are furnished. To reduce landfill trash, bring your own beverage cup if you can.

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 Doleta Chapru 238-4970.

BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS FOR THE SUMMER

All are welcome to the Book Club discussions listed below. We meet at Prairie after Sunday services, except in September. Participants bring food to share. The meeting usually begins 11:30-11:45 a.m. and continues until 1:00 or 1:30 p.m. For more information or to be put on the e-mail list, contact Mary Mullen, mmullen (at) chorus.net, 608-298-0843.

Sunday, July 8

Choose and read your own book on contemporary political thought. We'll each present and discuss the book we read. Group discussion will consist of comparing and contrasting what we read. If you are at sea for choosing a book, you might consider one of those listed here.

Who Let the Dogs In? Incredible Political Animals I Have Known by Molly Ivins, from \$0.32
<http://www.amazon.com/Dogs-Incredible-Political-Animals-Known/dp/1400062853> 384 pages (essays)

The Genius of Impeachment – The Founders' Cure for Royalism by John Nichols, from \$7.47
<http://www.amazon.com/Genius-Impeachment-Founders-Cure-Royalism/dp/1595581405> 256 pages

Dick: the Man Who Is President by John Nichols, from \$2.84 <http://www.amazon.com/Dick-Man-Who-President-Cheney/dp/1565848403>. 224 pages

Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America by Barbara Ehrenreich, from \$1.55
<http://www.amazon.com/Nickel-Dimed-Not-Getting-America/dp/0805063897>. 240 pages

Sunday, August 12

The Dead, a novella by James Joyce. Available for free as a 26-page e-text (printable version) at <http://www.enotes.com/dead/>. This story presents the thoughts and actions of Gabriel Conroy on the night he and his wife attend a party given by his two aunts. His wife reveals a relationship she had when she was a young girl with a young man who loved her passionately. The story has many characters and a number of references to the dead, and many characters are based on Joyce's friends and family members. (Suggested by Nancy Garst)

Saturday, September 15

(at Prairie's annual Bethel Horizons' retreat; exact time to be announced later. Contact Aileen Nettleton, 238-6053, or watch for the Bethel Horizon's schedule a week or two before the weekend retreat.)

Midnight at the Dragon Cafe by Judy Fong Bates, from \$2.19.
<http://www.amazon.com/o/ASIN/1582431892/105-3315333-7491661?SubscriptionId=09GE3K6JDGSKCKXK EJG2>. This is a Chinese immigrant story set in Canada where 6-year-old Su-Jen Chou meets her father for the first time when she and her mother come to join him where he runs a restaurant. It's a first novel by the author. Booklist says, "The haunting characters in that lonely greasy spoon evoke a tradition stretching back to Carson McCullers." 317 pages (Suggested by Al Nettleton, from an Oregon "everybody reads" program)

Note: In each case, the Amazon URL give access to used books at reasonable prices and includes brief reviews of the books. Prices are those current at <http://amazon.com> as of June 10, 2007. The Web sites have brief reviews as well as links to buying the books.

SPANISH SPEAKERS MEET JULY 16

Spanish Speakers will meet for potluck and conversation on **Monday, July 16**, at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Amy Schulz, 2304 South Syene Rd. Come early to enjoy the hot tub! For directions, call Amy at 273-2639. For rides or other questions, call Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

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>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Well, it's good-bye RE school year, hello summer! We officially ended the 2006-07 year with our transition service. It was a lovely service that involved the talent of our youth.



Gavin McFarlane, who is transitioning to high school, displayed his artwork and showed us an exciting video of his longboarding talent. According to Wikipedia.org, longboarding is "a skateboard with a longer and sometimes wider shape. Longboards are most commonly used for downhill racing, slalom, or transportation. The longboard shape provides added stability, safety, and comfort."

We also had a chance to learn more about Gavin, like his love for lutefisk, by completing a quiz his parents, Yvonne Hiebert and Doug McFarlane, designed.

Our second transitioning student was Seth Gutknecht. Teachers and students from the middle school and high school Humanism class listed "10 Good Things About Seth". We learned that Seth is not only intelligent but very funny and clever. He loves music and computers and can really hold his caffeine!

Finally, Mei-Lien was recognized as our third transitioning student. Mei-Lien will be graduating and attending college at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. She is definitely a proud UU. She is always cheerful and welcoming of new students to the RE program. She was always the first to ask about overnight events, upcoming CONS and ways to meet other area UU's.

Mei-Lien will be missed by everyone at Prairie, especially me.

All students were presented with gifts and Mei-Lien gave some very helpful advice to Gavin and Seth.

Teachers were also recognized at the service. I want to thank again all the teachers for giving their valuable time and energy to RE. You made RE possible and successful this year. Thank you: Yvonne Hiebert, Kim Truog, Aileen Nettleton,

Robin Proud, Rachel Long, Carl Wacker, Randy Converse, Jori Conca, Karen Deaton, Anne Urbanski, Erin Bosch and Rick Reucking. And thank you to the RE Committee: Yvonne Hiebert, Rachel Long, Susan Herr-Hoyman, Kurt Gutknecht and Anne Lundin.

Day care will be provided this summer. Middle and high school students will have the opportunity to watch and discuss various movies while preschool-5th grade will have activities planned each Sunday.

It's been a wonderful year and I look forward to RE 2007-08!

Next month will be our annual Summer Spree. Middle school and high school students will spend the weekend at the Friendship Center Camp in Dodgeville. The event will be from **Friday, July 6 to Sunday July 8.**

Friends are welcome to attend!

Rebecca Malke (YREC)
youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWS

FOLLOW GA 2007 ONLINE WITH UUSC

UUSC has a full schedule of special events and workshops at General Assembly 2007 which opened Wednesday, June 20, in Portland, Oregon and you won't miss a beat by reading the regular updates from our staff on the scene. Several of these events are focusing on the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan and how Unitarian Universalists can help end the genocide.

If you are not in Portland, you can keep abreast with human rights issues that are important to you by checking the reports our staff is filing through our blog, UUSC Hotwire, at <http://www.uusc.org/blog/hotwire.html>. Also, the Unitarian Universalist Association is providing live coverage at <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2007/27648.shtml> of GA plenary sessions and other major events.

Visit our Web sites through Sunday, June 24!

OTHER NEWS

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK BULLETIN

Sometimes, the welcome from IHN's volunteers makes ALL the difference. The guests don't always thank you, and they aren't always happy, but they often tell us how much it means to them that people care and take the time to help them.

Recently, a new family came to IHN after a terrible day. The mom was sick, the dad had worked late and been outside in the heat, and then they were confused by the directions to the day center. When they finally got here, they had to turn right around and follow even more confusing directions to the congregation. Even though they had been living in their car, staying at IHN was starting to seem like a real hassle! But, having finally arrived, they decided to at least stay for dinner.

As soon as they walked in, the volunteers greeted them, showed them their room, and had dinner ready for them. After dinner, they decided to stay. They couldn't get over the fact that that dinner was made for them and they didn't even have to do the dishes!

Rachel Krinsky, MSW, IHN Executive Director

BARN DANCE AT PRAIRIE, HYMN SING AT UNITY CHAPEL

I have been exploring part of my ethnic heritage, and am bringing an annual weeklong Welsh course to Madison **July 22-29**. Anyone can register for the course, and the public is invited to selected evening events. Two events may interest you:

7:00 p.m. **Friday, July 27**—Barn dance at Prairie with a live band and caller from Wales. Great fun!

10:30 a.m. **Sunday, July 29**—Gymanfa ganu (Welsh hymn sing) at Unity Chapel, Spring Green, led by Gareth Hughes Jones from North Wales. Wondrous singing in an historic UU country chapel.

The hymn sing for the Welsh course, for which the Welsh students practiced all week long under the tutelage of Mr. Jones, is being held at the family chapel of Frank Lloyd Wright, Unity Chapel.

This Unitarian chapel was built at the direction of the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones in 1886. It is set in the beautiful Wyoming Valley, in what was once called "The Valley of the God-Almighty Joneses", now on the grounds of Taliesin outside of Spring Green.

The area was settled by the Lloyd-Jones families from Wales. The famous architect's mother was Hannah (Anna) Lloyd Jones, who was born in Wales, and her family in turn was raised in the Wyoming Valley. Frank Lloyd Wright grew up there and returned years later to build Taliesin. His father, incidentally, also was one of the charter members of First Unitarian Society in Madison.

People can register for parts of Welsh Heritage Week, including daily sessions folk dancing or rehearsing in the band for the dance, or singing sessions in which we carefully go over the words and music for each hymn for the hymn sing on Sunday. For more information, contact Dan Proud at 661-0776 or prouds (at) tds.net or see www.welshheritageweek.org.

Dan Proud