



# Prairie Fire

**January 22, 2010**

## In this issue:

- Calendar
- Programs
- RE news
- Rev. Ralph's Ruminations
- Society News
- New Members
- UU community News

The full-featured **Prairie Fire** is published on the 22nd of every month. The **Prairie Fire Bulletin** is a calendar-only newsletter that is published on the 6th of every month. Both are published by Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org)

## Contact Us:

Minister  
Rev. Ralph Tyksinski  
[minister@uuprairie.org](mailto:minister@uuprairie.org)  
873-6041

Youth Coordinator  
Rebecca Malke-Eliganti  
[youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org](mailto:youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org)  
695-3435

Editor/Administrator  
Kate Liu  
[admin@uuprairie.org](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org)  
271-8218

President  
Rachel Long  
608-328-4899

## Calendar

### Sunday, January 24, 2010

8:45 am - Choir rehearsal.

10:00 am – service- "Rev. Dr. Mary J. Harrington: A Lifetime Isn't Long Enough," presented by Rachel Long.

11:45 am - Book Club meets to discuss The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and her niece Annie Barrows.

### Tuesday, January 26, 2010

2:00 pm - Prairie Elders meet. Topic is "Top Films."

Wednesday, January 27, 2010 - 7:00 pm - Housing and Property committee meets.

Thursday, January 28, 2010 - evening, time TBA, Adult Ed Committee meets.

### Saturday, January 30, 2010

8:00am - noon: UU Blood Drive at FUS.

8:30 am - Congregational Workshop on Ministerial Relations. Concludes at 12:30 with lunch.

### Sunday, January 31, 2010 - 8:45 am - Choir rehearsal.

10:00 am – service -"Terratheism: A New Way to View Science and Religion" - presented by Andrew Kerr.

11:15 am - Q&A session with Andrew Kerr.

Monday, February 1, 2010 - Prairie Fire Bulletin calendar items due.

### Wednesday, February 3, 2010

7:00 pm - Finance Committee meeting at the home of Barb Park, 5610 Hammersley.

### Saturday, February 6, 2010

9:00 am - Prairie WOW meets for breakfast potluck and conversation.

### Sunday, February 7, 2010 - 8:45 am - Choir rehearsal.

9:00 am - RE Committee meets.

10:00 am – service- "Science Education and the Scientific Public" - presented by Prof. John Hawks.

11:45 am - Humanist Union potluck, followed by a presentation by Prof. John Hawks.

### Wednesday, February 10, 2010

6:30 pm - Spanish Speaker's Potluck at the home of Dave and Marcia Johnson.

## Mark your calendars!

February 20-21 - RE's Wild Wintering; February 28 - Prairie Service Auction

## Upcoming Programs

**Sunday, January 24, 2010, 10:00 am:"Rev. Dr. Mary J. Harrington: A Lifetime Isn't Long Enough,"presented by Rachel Long**Rachel Long is presenting a 3-session lay ministry with sermons on DVD from some of the most interesting and inspiring ministers the UUA has to offer. These ministers all spoke at General Assembly 2009, and she appreciated them so much she just had to share them with you. In the first of this series, we will hear Dr. Mary J. Harrington, Reverend Emerita of the Winchester, MA, Unitarian Society, giving the sermon "A Lifetime Isn't Long Enough." Her experience of living with the disease ALS gives her a unique perspective on appreciating life's gifts.

**Sunday, January 31, 10:00am:"Terratheism: A New Way to View Science and Religion,"presented by Andrew Kerr**An exploration of terratheism, the belief that Earth's community of life has a lot to tell us about the nature of God, because Earth's living things struggle to achieve God's hopes as the means to succeed in the struggle for life. Our presenter, Andrew Kerr, is the Speaker with the Free Congregation of Sauk County. Andrew and his wife, Jennifer, operate Greenspirit Farm, near Dodgeville, a family run farm specializing in a wide variety of lovingly grown, organic vegetables and small fruits.

**Sunday, February 7, 2010, 10:00 am "Scientific Education and the Scientific Public," presented by Prof. John Hawks**Complex scientific issues are increasingly part of public policy debates and individual futures. Climate change, alternative fuels, genetic modification, routine mammograms, genomic testing -- each is a topic driven by scientific inquiry, presenting opportunities for technological solutions but demanding public awareness. How can we cultivate a culture of aware citizens, informed consumers, and entrepreneurs ready to invest or work in scientific fields? Can education policy advance these goals? Professor John Hawks has been an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the UW-Madison since 2002. He teaches a range of courses from the introductory to the graduate level. In his research, he investigates human evolution in its morphological and genetic aspects. For more detailed information, check out his page with the University at [http://www.anthropology.wisc.edu/people\\_hawks.php](http://www.anthropology.wisc.edu/people_hawks.php).

**Sunday, February 14, 2010, 10:00 am "Re-imagining Valentine's Day: Standing on the Side of Love ," presented by Rev. Ralph Tyksinski**This Sunday we observe a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression. It is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association <<http://www.uua.org/>> and all are welcomed to join. Why? We explore at this period in American society as a time of great hope and possibility, yet our communities are threatened by the increased prevalence of acts motivated by fear and hate. No one should be dehumanized through acts of exclusion, oppression, or violence because of their identities. In public debates over immigration, LGBT rights, and more, religious people stand on the side of love and call for respect, inclusion, and compassion.

## Religious Education News

I can't believe it's 2010. The days are supposed to be getting longer but they feel like they're getting shorter and shorter. In April I will be celebrating my 4th year as the YREC at Prairie, and my, have the faces of our young people changed.

### Prairie Web Sites:

Society Home Page  
[www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org)

News Group  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie\\_news/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_news/)

Views  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie\\_views/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_views/)

Social Action  
<http://socialaction.madisonwi.us>

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

### Input Deadlines:

Calendar items and program descriptions are due on the 1st and 15th of each month. Feature articles for the full *Prairie Fire* are due on the 15th of each month. Please send to Kate Liu at [admin@uuprairie.org](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org) or call 271-8218.



I always wonder at the start of the year what great things the new year will bring. I also have that negative side that can't help but ask what disasters will this year bring? The poor people of Haiti have been hit hard and through our continued studies of our seven principles our young people are learning that by exercising our sixth principle, "We believe in working for a peaceful, fair and free world", they too can make a difference.

As always there's a lot going on in RE. This Sunday students will continue working on the butterfly garden with indoor projects setup by Karen Deaton and the Green Sanctuary Committee.

Next month will be Wild Wintering, our overnight event. If the weather is nice and snowy we will go sledding, otherwise we will stay warm by bowling with family and friends. February also kicks off our month-long Mystery Friends event with a potluck celebration in March. Also, on March 7th each class will give a presentation upstairs on a famous Unitarian Universalist.

As always if you would like to get involved please let me or RE Chair, Robin Proud, know. RE Committee meetings are every other Sunday at 9 am, childcare provided. For more information on the events I mentioned or other RE news please visit our web site at: [www.uuprairie.org/re](http://www.uuprairie.org/re)

*Rebecca Malke*  
*Youth Religious Education Coordinator*  
[youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org](mailto:youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org)

## Our Society

### January 17th Program Notes

Chris Tackett, founder of Friends of the Deaf, an organization to support the Deaf in Guatemala, visited Prairie on January 17th and gave a wonderful presentation. If you missed the program and would like to hear it, or any other program you may have missed, you can check out the audiotape of the service - these tapes are located in the left hand drawer in the foyer. *[Note: due to technical difficulties, there is no recording of the Jan. 17 program.]* In addition, if you would like more information about the Friends of the Deaf organization, please visit <http://www.friendsofthedeaf.org/>.



Also at this service, Prairie took a special collection to support the joint Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund organized by the UUA and the UUSC. We raised over \$1000 for this effort! If you would like to contribute to this fund, there is still time - you can bring a check (made out to Prairie with "Haiti" in the memo line) or cash to Prairie and our administrator will add in your donation. If you have made a contribution to other Haiti relief efforts and are willing to do so, please inform our president, Rachel Long, as the UUA is interested in tracking the total amount of donations from members of our denomination. (For example, tracking the data after hurricane Katrina revealed that Unitarian Universalists have collectively contributed \$3.7 million to the ongoing efforts of relief in the gulf coast area. )

*Kate Liu*  
*Prairie Administrator*

## Special Collection Procedures

Those of you who attended the January 17th service where we took a collection for Haiti may have noticed that we took the collection in a different way. We are trying something new for special collections like this one for Haiti or collecting money to pay for breakfast when we serve at the Men's Homeless Shelter at Grace Episcopal Church. Instead of passing the basket for Prairie donations and then a separate can or basket for the charity, we will have an envelope in the collection basket so people can put in cash or checks for the special collection. The envelope will be clearly marked.

The bottom line: If you have a check or cash you want to go to Prairie, just put it in the basket. If you want the cash or check to go to the Homeless Shelter breakfast or other charity, put it in the envelope. As an added measure, if you write a check, use the memo line to indicate where you want the money to go.

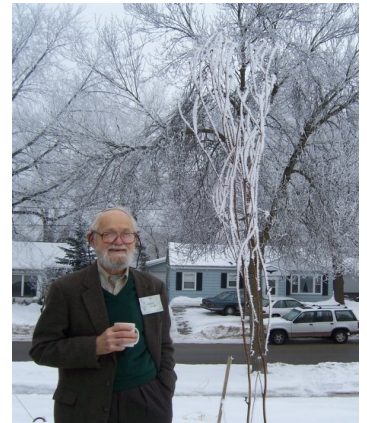
We will be trying this method on the third Sunday of each month for the next 3 months and then evaluate it to see if it is going smoothly or needs revision. Your feedback is welcome.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support of both the Homeless Shelter breakfast and of Prairie.

*Barbara Park  
Finance Chair*

## Winter Scenes

Galen stands beside a beautifully frosted prairie dock plant on a recent foggy Sunday morning.



## WOW to Meet February 6th

Prairie's Women's group, also known as WOW, meets monthly for breakfast potluck and conversation and an occasional project. In December we assembled gift baskets, and earlier in 2009 we painted watercolors. We will meet next on Saturday, February 6th, at 9:00 am. Please join us for great food and conversation.

## Prairie Book Club Selections

For February, the Prairie Book Club is reading Cutting For Stone by Abraham Verghese, a story involving a complex Indian family, takes place in Ethiopia and America. The author is a renowned physician, and a number of the characters are physicians. The book will be discussed over potluck lunch on February 21st after the service at Prairie. Looking ahead, the book club is reading Remarkable Creatures: Epic Adventures in the Search for the Origins of Species by Sean Carroll for March 21st.

## Prairie Elders

The Prairie Elders group aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65. Current participants range from age 65 to 90-something. We meet once a month, typically on the fourth Tuesday, beginning at 1:30 pm for informal conversation and a more structured discussion beginning at 2pm. We meet in the Nakoma room in the Heritage Oaks building, Oakwood Village West. (You can park in front or underneath the building.) Our January meeting will be on the 26<sup>th</sup>, discussing Top Films. Bring a prioritized list of a few favorites. After we have discussed one film each, we'll do another round as time permits. Not into films? Join us anyway and share your thoughts



on the film industry or just have some snacks and listen.

Topics alternate between general issues and personal interests, and our "round robin" format gives all an opportunity to speak and to hear. If you are interested and would like more information about the group, or would like to arrange a ride, please contact one of the following: Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Gordon Cunningham 230-3367, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363.

*Doleta Chapru  
Prairie Elders*

### **PRAIRIE'S ANNUAL SERVICE AUCTION COMING SOON!**

Prairie's annual Service Auction is scheduled for February 28th with Orange Schroeder again acting as our auctioneer. We will be offering a simple lunch of soup, bread and cookies.

The auction is only successful if you get into the spirit of it and offer a service for others to bid on. Items in the past have included everything from fresh baked bread to child care to special dinners, gardening to yoga lessons to computer lessons. The more variety, the more likely it is that someone is going to find something that will meet their needs.

After you have decided what you want to offer, send an e-mail to me, Barb Park, at [barpark@gmail.com](mailto:barpark@gmail.com) or talk to me on Sunday morning. I will need to know what the service is that is being offered and how many people can participate. For example, if you would like to host a special dinner, how many people can you accommodate? on what date will the event be held? The end of February will come faster than we think, so get your items in soon! In addition, if there is a service item you would love to bid on, please suggest it to me and I will try to find someone willing to provide it.

We are going to try something new this year. In addition to the live auction, we will also have a small silent auction. If you have any items you would like to include, let me know and bring them on the 28th. Some items already donated to the silent auction include a hand-made walnut bowl and a hand painted tray from Costa Rica.

This is Prairie's big fund raiser of the year, but it needs your participation to be a success. Join in the fun by donating a service, then come for lunch and bid!

This is also a good time to review what you bought or promised last year so you can get those things done before the auction rolls around again. There is a spreadsheet hanging on the bulletin board across from the greeting table at Prairie; or you can contact Kate Liu, Prairie's administrator, at [admin@uuprairie.org](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org).

*Barbara Park  
Finance Committee Chair*

### **Humanist Union to Hear About Human Ancestor "Ardi"**

The Humanist Union is very pleased to have UW Prof. John Hawks as our speaker on Feb. 7th. He has been collecting photos for some time related to *Ardipithecus ramidus* ("Ardi") which he plans to share with us in his illustrated presentation on *Ardipithecus and human origins*. You will find a good introduction to this 4.4 million year old human ancestor in the National Geographic News article at <http://tinyurl.com/yd7w8t6> . Prof. Hawks' talk will be our annual Darwin Day program marking the Feb. 12th birthday of Charles Darwin.

John Hawks is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. He was trained as a paleoanthropologist, studying human evolution from an integrative perspective. His research focuses on the processes affecting human genetic evolution across the last 6 million years.

*Bob Park  
Humanist Union*

### **Spanish Speaker's Potluck**

The next Spanish Speaker's potluck will be Wednesday, February 10th at 6:30 pm at the home of Dave and Marcia Johnson, 305 S. Segoe Rd. Please call Dave and Marcia at 441-0271 for directions, or Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382 for more information about the group.

### **Green Committee News**

Your Green Sanctuary Committee will be inaugurating a 6 week course on "Menus for the Future." This is one of a series of courses offered by the Northwest Earth Institute. The courses are directed and led by the participants and consist of readings from a course book with the meetings consisting of discussions of the questions listed in the readings. There is no "leader". Participants take turns chairing the meetings. Each participant, or couple if you wish, needs to buy a course book. The cost is about \$20.00. Groups usually consist of 8 to 10 people. The groups decide when, where, and how often they will meet and how long the meetings will last. The final meeting is a feast, either a potluck or restaurant meal.



Marcia and I will be facilitating the course (or courses, if there are enough people interested.) We would like to begin soon, so please contact Marcia or me or any member of the Green Sanctuary Committee. Our e-mail is pinefarm(at)uniontel.net .

*Dave Johnson, Green Committee member*

### **Long Range Planning News**

#### Congregational Workshop on Ministerial Relationships

What is the difference between settled ministry, contract ministry, and lay ministry? How might each type of ministry facilitate our strategic goals as a congregation? What spectrum of experiences exist within UU ministry? Continuing a year-long discussion of ministry and ministerial relationships, Prairie UU Society members are **\*\*highly encouraged\*\*** to participate in this workshop to discuss these matters and more. Join us for a dynamic morning of small- and large-group discussion, appreciative inquiry techniques, scenario-building, and panel discussion on Saturday, January 30, beginning at 8:30 am with bagels, coffee, and conversation; workshop begins at 9:00 am. Workshop concludes at 12:30 pm, with lunch and informal discussion to follow. Childcare is available.

#### Q & A with Speaker Andrew Kerr of Sauk City UU

In connection with Prairie's year-long exploration of ministry/ministerial relationships, the Long-Range Planning Committee invites you to a brief Q&A session with Andrew Kerr of the Free Congregation of Sauk County directly after his service presentation on Sunday, January 31. To meet the ministry and logistical needs of the congregation, the Free Congregation of Sauk County engages a Speaker (Mr. Kerr), who is responsible for two services per month, and an Administrator. Mr. Kerr will remark on the roles of Speaker and Administrator, and how the congregation arrived at this arrangement.

Mr. Kerr has served as part-time Speaker since May, 2008; prior to this, he completed 8 years of doctoral studies in Religion and Philosophy at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. More information on his background is available at <http://www.freecongregation.org/about-us/staff/andrew->

[kerr/](http://www.freecongregation.org/about-us/staff/michael-whaley/). Information about the Free Congregation's current Administrator, Michael Whaley, is available at <http://www.freecongregation.org/about-us/staff/michael-whaley/>.

The Q&A session will occur immediately after the service and conclude at 11:45 am.

*Robyn Perrin*  
*Long Range Planning Chair*

## Social Action Notes

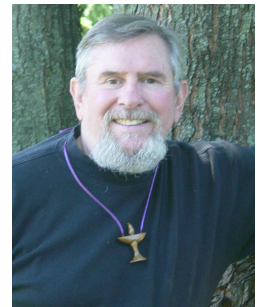
Prairie serves breakfast at the Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Madison once per month, working jointly with James Reeb UU Congregation. The next date for serving breakfast is Saturday, February 6th - if you are interested in helping, please contact Dave Johnson.

After two successful performances in the Madison area, Prairie member Nancy Graham is bringing the play Seven Jewish Children to Tucson, Arizona. Nancy is producing the play, with Andy Somers directing.

*Mary Somers*  
*Social Action Chair*

## Rev. Ralph's Ruminations

This January, 2010's arrival, brings along with it not only a new year but also a new decade, with all the challenges that come to us as living, caring and concerned human beings. Many of us are amazed and in shock at the horrendous conditions in Haiti in the aftermath of the 7.0 earthquake that is bringing such devastation and destruction to millions.



In 1989 I was employed by FEMA( Federal Emergency Management Agency). During that year was I on the staff of the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, MD, where I learned about the many deadly effects that earthquakes bring to people and communities. I have spent hours listening to the stories of professional rescue workers who had first hand experience with search and rescue operations at earthquakes in Mexico, Guatemala, and Fullerton, CA. Words are inadequate to describe the traumatizing that this kind of natural disaster brings to not only the victims of the tragedy but also those who serve as members of the rescue and recovery efforts.

I hope that as a Prairie member, you will find the most enduring and compassionate way to respond to the relief efforts needed by the people of Haiti.

As Prairie moves forward in the new year let us also continue to focus on our vision and reach toward our goals for the future. Shared ministry requires your feedback and continued monitoring. Voice your concerns to me, to your board members, to your staff, to each other. Pitch in. Be generous with your time and talent and treasure. You are your future.

Glad to be journeying with you,  
*Rev. Ralph*



# UU Community News

## UU're Home

Do you dream of inexpensive vacation travel to interesting destinations where you can stay in the homes of friendly people who share your ideals and are happy to provide directions and advice for their area? The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) can fulfill your dream. For 31 years, we've provided a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and who are happy to open their home to like-minded people. You can also become a host and be listed in the directory: see [www.UUreHome.com](http://www.UUreHome.com) for an application. If you have questions, contact us at [info@uurehome.com](mailto:info@uurehome.com) or call 828-281-3253.

*Paula Robbins, for UU're Home*

## Bayside Unitarian Universalist Family Camp

Mark your calendars now for Bayside UU Family Camp, July 11-17, 2010, at Wesley Woods Conference Center, Williams Bay, Wisconsin. See the camp website at [www.yahoodrummers.com/bayside/](http://www.yahoodrummers.com/bayside/) or talk to Jill Delisle at 238-5536 for more information.

## LGBT Welcoming Committee at FUS to sponsor Happy Dance!

First Unitarian Society in Madison is celebrating their welcoming congregation status with a dance on Friday, February 5th from 7 to 9pm. This family friendly event will feature the dance band "Ladies Must Swing" and snacks. All are welcome.

# Input Deadlines

## Deadlines for Prairie Fire Bulletin and Prairie Fire - note change for February!

For the month of February, the deadline for calendar and program items for the short Bulletin will be Monday, February 1st, and the Bulletin will be published on the 6th. For the full featured Prairie Fire, the deadline will be extended to Thursday, February 18th, and the issue will be published on the 23rd. Regular deadlines will return for the month of March (and beyond): 1st of the month for calendar items and 15th of the month for articles.



**Prairie UU Society**  
**2010 Whenona Dr.**  
**Madison, WI 53711**  
**608-271-8218**