



Prairie Fire

July 22, 2010

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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

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Calendar

Sunday, July 25, 2010

10:00 am- Annual joint service at Sauk City UU - "Exploring a UU Meaning for Faith, If Any?" No service at Prairie.

Monday, July 26, 2010

7:00 pm - Program Committee meeting.

Tuesday, July 27, 2010

2:00 pm - Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood. Topic is "Implications of the Texas Textbook Decisions."

Saturday, July 31, 2010

Summer Spree overnight event for middle and high school youth.

Sunday, August 1, 2010

10:00 am service - "Summer Reads," presented by Rose Smith.
11:45 am - Humanist Union potluck and photographic report on "The Amazing Meeting 8."

Sunday, August 8, 2010

10:00 am service - "Worth and Dignity of All People: UU's and Arizona Migrants"

Sunday, August 15, 2010

10:00 am service – Consulting minister candidate Rev. Jane Esbensen will present.
11:45 am – All-Society potluck lunch
12:30 pm – Parish meeting.
12:45 pm – Book Club meets to discuss 2 books about Postville, Iowa.

Monday, August 16, 2010

7:00 pm – Prairie Board meeting.

Sunday, August 22, 2010

10:00 am service - "Testing and Teacher Accountability," presented by Jim Carpenter.

Tuesday, August 24, 2010

7:00 pm – Program committee meets.

Sunday, August 29, 2010

10:00 am service - "In-Gathering and Water Ceremony" presented by Barbara Chatterton.

Looking Ahead:

Fri. 9/17 – Sun. 9/19: Prairie Fall Family Retreat at Pine Lake.
Fri. 9/24: 60th Anniversary Party for Rose and Galen Smith. Details to follow.

Upcoming Programs

Sunday, July 25, 2010, 10:00 am at Sauk City: "Exploring a UU Meaning for Faith, If Any?" Joint program with Sauk City UU, James Reeb UU, and First Unitarian.

We are once again invited to attend a joint service of all four area UU congregations to be held at Park Hall of the Sauk City UU congregation, to be followed by a picnic on their grounds. (Please bring a dish to pass and your own table service.) As UUs, we explore and question religious topics together, as a means to help each of us find our own answers, if any. Please note that there will be no service at Prairie that day. To get to Sauk City UU, take Highway 12 west. After crossing the bridge into Sauk City, turn right at the first light onto Water Street. Go three blocks and turn left onto Polk Street. Park Hall will be on your right at 307 Polk Street.

Prairie Web Sites:

Society Home Page
www.uuprairie.org

News Group
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_news/

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 or call 271-8218.

Sunday, August 1, 2010, 10:00am: "Summer Reads," presented by Rose Smith.

We Prairie people are readers. This is the time to share your recommendations of books you've read recently. If possible, please come to the service with the title, author, publisher, and publication year of the book you would like to share, as we will compile a list after the service. Please join us for this wonderful summer tradition led by retired librarian and avid reader, Rose Smith.

Sunday, August 8, 2010, 10:00 am – "Worth and dignity of all people: UU's and Arizona migrants

General Assembly, the biggest annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association, is scheduled to be in Phoenix, Arizona in 2012. The recent passage of a very controversial immigration bill in Arizona has created a debate over whether to go ahead with plans for this GA in Phoenix AZ, and if so how this GA would differ from a normal GA due to the immigration issue. We will hear what the UUA Board originally proposed, what was worked out in the mini-assembly sessions, the final proposal and the results of the voting. Members of the Tucson UU congregation's group No More Deaths may also be presenting.

Sunday, August 15, 2010, 10:00 am - Special presentation by Rev. Jane Esbensen, candidate for the consulting minister position at Prairie UU.

Religious Education News

While students are outside enjoying their second month of vacation I've been busy inside enjoying planning for the start of the RE year which will be August 29th. It's going to be another great year; I'm so excited! Calendars are done for Fall and Winter as well as plans for the Fall Frolic, field trips and several speakers. The RE brochure will be finished by the end of July and will be sent out along with the calendar to all students and their families.

Before the year begins we can still enjoy those lazy, hazy days of summer by weeding Prairie's butterfly garden, doing arts and crafts or just playing at the park. If you'd like to spend a Sunday morning with Prairie children you're in luck! We have two days open in August, the 15th and 22nd. Please sign your name on the sheet at the back of the meeting room or let me know on any Sunday.

Coming up is our annual Summer Spree event for middle and high school students. We'll be outside camping in the Prairie yard on Saturday, July 31st until the next morning. We'll be enjoying a campfire, roasting hot dogs and telling scary stories. I've invited the middle and high school students at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation so there will be a chance to make new friends. If you'd like to join us

please let me know. I'm in need of people for the evening and to stay the night.



I want to thank everyone who signed up to be volunteers this summer with our youth. Having every Sunday filled with someone wanting to spend time with our young people tells them that they are loved by members of their community. This Prairie community has taken to heart the adage that it takes a village to raise a child, and I want you to know how much your efforts are appreciated by me, the children, and the parents.

As always, see you on Sunday.

Rebecca Malke
Director of Religious Education

Our Society

Contract Minister Recommendation and Parish Meeting

The ministerial search committee has proposed Rev. Jane Esbensen as our new contract minister and the Prairie Board has agreed to pass this recommendation to the congregation. On August 15th, Rev. Esbensen will present the program, which will be followed by a potluck and a parish meeting to vote on this recommendation.

Rev. Esbensen is in her second year as a half time consulting minister at Lake Country UU Church in Hartland, Wisconsin. She would take the position at Prairie as an additional half-time position.

Rev. Esbensen comes highly recommended on several fronts. She is viewed as an excellent speaker, both thoughtful and insightful. I think we will find her presenting ideas which challenge us. She will bring a humanist perspective but appreciates the need for spiritual reflection and ritual. She also loves “talk backs” after sermons, which fits our style well, and not all ministers are comfortable with this.

Rev. Esbensen is regarded as gifted in the area of pastoral care and tends to gravitate to that as a priority over other areas of ministry according to a number of references.

Rev. Esbensen is open to the idea of shared ministry and will do joint planning with our program committee, especially looking at overall themes and identifying any gaps in our programs. She has a definite interest in social justice and perhaps could help us strengthen our approach to these issues.

She is currently visiting in Sweden. When she returns, I plan to arrange several opportunities for her to meet with small groups prior to the August 15th service and parish meeting. This will include the Prairie Board, the staff, and the program committee. In addition, I will be arranging a time for folks who are not currently serving on the board or program committee to meet with her in an informal, small group setting. If you are particularly interested in this or if you have issues you would like to discuss with Rev. Esbensen, please contact me.

*Barbara Park, Prairie UU President
273-8775 or barpark (at) gmail.com*

WOW News

Prairie women have all been invited to Pat Watkins' porch for our August meeting on August 7th at 9 am. Please bring a dish to pass. Pat Watkins lives at 230 N Meadow Lane, right off of Regent, near Midvale.

In September we will meet at the Prairie Retreat, Saturday, September 18th, and the October meeting is October 2nd, back at Prairie, at 9 am.

Any questions or emails to add to the group call 276 8397 or email marysomers44@charter.net

Mary Somers, WOW coordinator

Prairie Book Club Update

The Prairie Book Club meets monthly, after the Sunday Service at Prairie, about 11:45 a.m..except for September when it meets at the Prairie Retreat at Pine Lake Camp (near Westfield, WI). Bring potluck food to share at the Sunday club meetings. This is an open book club. You may come whether or not you have read the book. For more information, contact Mary Mullen, 608.298.0843 or mmullen@chorus.net.

Sunday, July 18 - Roads to Quoz, An American Mosey by William Least Heat-Moon is about a series of short trips – total of 16,000 miles - rather than one long trip as Heat-Moon's other books were. In this book he covers the Ouachita River in AR and LA, the Florida Panhandle, portions of the Southwest, a swath from Missouri to Maine, portions of the Great Plains, and the East Coast. "Wherever he is, Heat-Moon's thought is often tethered to questions of sustainability and equitability...deep ecology." 608 pages. Feel free to select whatever trips appeal to you. Of the parts read by Mary Mullen, she especially suggests the chapters starting on pp. 15, 71 with 78, 86, 188 with 194, and particularly 306 with 317. Recommended by Al Nettleton.



Sunday, August 15 – Book club members can choose from 2 books on Postville, Iowa: Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America by Stephen G. Bloom or Postville U.S.A. by Mark A Grey, Michele Devlin, and Aaron Goldsmith. Both books concern the clash between the residents of a small, intensely Christian town and the group of Lubavitcher Jews who open a highly successful kosher slaughterhouse there. The book club will meet after the brief parish meeting.

Saturday, September 18 - Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa, by Peter Godwin, is a memoir of a man who grew up in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. His family was white, professional and middle class, but also liberal. As a result, he had black friends and learned the local language and got to know the bush. Yet he was caught up in the war for independence and required to serve in the Rhodesian armed forces. After the war he became a journalist, eventually fleeing the country when his investigative reporting led to threats to his safety. For reviews, see <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/philip-spires-reviews-mukiwa-by-peter-godwin.html> and <http://www.amazon.com/Mukiwa-White-Africa-Peter-Godwin/dp/product-description/0802141927> Published in 1996. 418 pages. Recommended by Rose Smith.

Sunday, October 17 – Now and at the Hour, a novel by our own former Prairie member Marty Drapkin, is the story of three isolated people in Ward B: a young aide, a 12-year-old boy with a brain injury suffered in a football game, and a 54-year-old man with cerebral palsy. The three “struggle to connect with others and to find some meaning, and maybe even salvation, in their lives.” One reviewer remarks that “the novel is more than just a memorable character study of compromised individuals; it deals with such difficult issues as the nature of identity, the responsibility of state and society, the existence of God, and, above all, the Jobean question of why the good person suffers in what appears to be an untenably indifferent or incomprehensibly hostile world.” 224 pages.

Recommended by Erin Bosch. Contact her to get a \$6 copy from the author: 238-6285 or hillfarms2002@yahoo.com We hope Marty will be able to attend our discussion!

Mary Mullen
Book Club Coordinator

Menu for the Future Follow Up

On July 11, 2010 10 Prairie members and friends, who were participants in a Northwest Earth Institute course Menu for the Future, gave a presentation to summarize what they had learned. This course and presentation were completed as one of the required Green Sanctuary projects. During the presentation, a list of things you can do as an individual to support a healthy food system were mentioned and a promise made to provide them to all. They are as follows:

THIRTEEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM by Lena Rotenberg

Discussion course on Menu for the Future, Northwest Earth Institute, page 92

- 1 - Eat foods grown and processed locally. Consider growing, processing, and preserving some foods yourself.
- 2 - Give preference to foods that were grown organically.
- 3 - Become part of your foodshed's community. Buy food through farmers' markets, food co-ops or community supported agriculture programs (CSAs).
- 4 - When you buy from chain supermarkets, ask where the vegetables, meats and fish came from. Encourage the store managers to carry local, organic, sustainably harvested and fairly traded products.
- 5 - If eating commercial foods, eat foods that have been processed as little as possible (they are likely to be fresher, more local to you, and healthier for you).
- 6 - Buy food in bulk, or with the least packaging. Bring your own reusable or recyclable packaging to the store.
- 7 - Compost food scraps and waste. Reuse or recycle whatever packaging you can (Be creative!).
- 8 - Eat lower on the food chain.
- 9 - If you're buying imports, give preference to products that are fairly traded to guarantee farmers and food industry workers a living wage.
- 10 - Cook at home as much as possible. When you eat out, try to patronize restaurants that follow the directives above.
- 11 - Understand that by paying a little bit more for sustainable foods you're supporting practices that reduce negative environmental and social impacts.
- 12 - Teach your family, friends, and community about how their food choices impact the environment, their health, and society. Contact governmental officials to encourage their support of a sustainable food system.
- 13 - Most importantly, give yourself credit for trying to do your best. Take pride in the fact that you're making every decision count, as best you can.

For more information, please contact Kathy Converse, chair of the Green Committee.

Kathy Converse, conversekrtn (at) msn.com

Prairie Elders meetings

Prairie Elders is a group of over-65 Prairie members who meet once a month (generally on the 4th Tuesday) at Oakwood, in the Nakoma room, for conversation and mutual support. New members are always welcome. Topics alternate between general interest and more personal items. For July 27th the topic is "Implications of the Texas Social Studies Curriculum ." The Texas School Board's removal of Martin Luther King's quote "Injustice anywhere is a threat to injustice everywhere" typifies the

Board's revisions. For complete texts, still awaiting technical editing, go here:
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3643>

All meetings begin with informal conversation at 1:30 pm, followed by discussion beginning at 2:00 pm. If possible, please bring some snacks to share and your own beverage cup. For more information about the group or to arrange a ride, please call one of the following: Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Gordon Cunningham 230-3367, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363.

Prairie Fall Family Retreat!

Our annual fall family retreat will be held at Pine Lake Camp in Westfield, Wisconsin, on the weekend of September 17-19, 2010. The next Prairie Fire Newsletter will contain full program descriptions and a registration form, but here are some "teasers" to get you thinking!

We have the program just about finished and it contains some of the favorite elements we do every year as well as some new things. There will be folk dancing and Bollywood dancing, a talent show, recorder and Spanish lessons, yoga, crafts (paper bags and seeds,) a presentation of the Ware lecture from GA, nature walks and story time, a workshop on coping with stress, and more. The women's group and the book club will also have their regular monthly meetings at the retreat. We will be cooking spaghetti dinner together on Saturday night and having our traditional Key Log ceremony on Sunday morning.



Lodging options have expanded from last year. In addition to the cabins, camping, and hotel-like accommodations, there will also be a "bunkhouse" style option. You can look at all the lodging options online at
<http://www.pinelakecamp.org/lodging.html>

If you have any questions about the retreat, please contact one of us, and we hope to see you there!

Phyllis Long, Retreat Program Coordinator [plong373 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:plong373@gmail.com)

Kate Liu, Prairie Administrator [admin \(at\) uuprairie.org](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org)

Supporting Our Young Families

As you know if you have been coming to Prairie in the last year or so, we have a lot of infants and young children who've been coming on Sunday mornings. It's terrific to see these fresh faces, and we want our young families to be able to take advantage of everything Prairie has to offer, including our annual retreat. If we are successful in drawing some of these families to the retreat at Pine Lake this year, we will need LOTS of help with infant care and with activities for preschoolers and young elementary school-age children. That is why we need YOU. Our regular childcare provider Xena Anderson has agreed to help us on Saturday from 9 to 4. In addition, we are asking every adult who is able to volunteer at least an hour to care for and play with our young children. If we all pitch in, we can assure our young families that they and their kids will have a great time, and the children will get attention they need and deserve, so the parents can be free to get to know the rest of us and enjoy all the activities.

There will be a place on your retreat registration form to indicate how many hours you can devote to infant care or activities with young children, whether you have an age preference, and times you will

be available. Thanks so much for your help in welcoming and supporting the youngest folks in our society and their parents!

Phyllis Long, Retreat Coordinator

Humanist Union to hear and see report from TAM 8

The Humanist Union will meet on August 1 to see a slide show and hear a presentation on *Documenting The Amazing Meeting 2010: A photographic report* by Ingrid Laas. She took photos at "The Amazing Meeting 8", held in Las Vegas July 8-11, 2010, with James Randi, Richard Dawkins, Paul Kurtz, Michael Shermer, D.J. Grothe, Sean Faircloth, and many others. These meetings are "a celebration of critical thinking and skepticism" sponsored by the James Randi Educational Foundation for thinking people who gather annually "to share learning, laughs and life with fellow skeptics and distinguished guest speakers."

We will start as usual with a potluck lunch at 11:45 am, with the photographic report and discussion from 12:30 to 1:30 pm. All who are interested in critical thinking and skepticism are encouraged to attend.

Bob Park

Wedding Announcement

Kathy and Randy Converse announce the marriage of Tara Converse and Chris Rollins on June 5, 2010, at the Allen Centennial Gardens on the UW Campus here in Madison. Tara and Chris met in 2004 while students at Knox College in Galesburg, IL. Following graduation, Tara spent a year teaching English at a high school in Aizuwakamatsu, Japan, where Chris learned why she loves Japan so much. Following Japan, they moved to Philadelphia while Tara completed a Masters degree at Drexel University in Dance Movement Therapy. Tara and Chris currently live in Bloomington, IL. Chris is a jazz musician and works for US Cellular. Tara is a dance movement therapist for children with mental health needs that are in professional foster care at *The Baby Fold*.



Social Action Notes

Death and Human Rights Violations at the Arizona-Mexico Border Presentation

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom presents Death and Human Rights Violations at the Arizona-Mexico Border by Leila Pine and Craig McComb. Leila Pine is a member of First Society and has spoken at Prairie on this issue. The speakers will discuss their work with the No More Deaths humanitarian organization, and cover updates to Arizona's SB1070 / racial profiling, the Arizona boycott, and Arizona Freedom Summer. The presentation will be held Tuesday, August 17th at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 605 Spruce St. There is no admission fee, but the organizers ask that you bring an item for the St. Luke's food pantry.

Mary Somers
Social Action

Interfaith Hospitality Network Week is August 1 to August 7

Please consider helping homeless families. You can call Erin Bosch for more information about IHN (238-6285)... or... you can go to this website for an explanation of the volunteer jobs:

<http://midvalelutheran.org/ihnjobs.htm>... and you can sign up online at this address:
<http://nordengs.com/ihn/group.asp?eg=15&u=true>. Because of construction at Midvale Lutheran Church, we have not had a week of volunteering to do in awhile. But now the church is finished, so the families will again be housed at Midvale Lutheran and our help is needed there.

Erin Bosch
IHN Coordinator

UU & Wider Community News

Ethical Eating study group at FUS

The 2008-2012 Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) for the UUA is Ethical Eating. First Society invites you to join members of their Environmental Action Committee and others at First Unitarian Society this fall to delve into Ethical Eating as it relates to the environment. Kicking things off, at our August 5 meeting, we will discuss the book The Way We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter by Peter Singer and Jim Mason. This book is available through the Madison Public Library system in print, audio, and electronic versions or can be purchased from your favorite bookseller. Future meetings will be devoted to specific aspects of the topic such as: soil fertility, water and air quality, energy use, technology/GMO issues, and effects on other species. Meetings of the Environmental Action Committee are the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. starting Thursday August 5th. Join us for one or all of the discussions! Look at the First Unitarian Society Calendar and newsletter for notices of meetings (<http://www.fusmadison.org/calendar/calendar.shtml>). Meeting rooms are posted on the door of the First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive. For more information - Liz Wessel, 238-9934.



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