

Prairie Fire

May 2015

Pub. Date: 04/27/2015



Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

Fri	May 1	Prairie Retreat Weekend —May 1-3 at Bethel Horizons, Dodgeville, WI
Fri	May 1	8:00 pm at retreat— Humanist Union to discuss Daniel Dennett TED talk
Sat	May 2	5:00 pm at Prairie— AFIK Men's Group
Sun	May 3	9:15— Key Log Ceremony —at Bethel Horizons
Sun	May 3	10:00 am service— Ted Talk —at Prairie
Sun	May 10	10:00 am service— Mothers and Daughters —A panel of Prairie Members will explore the complex and diverse relationships between mothers and daughters
Sun	May 17	10:00 am service— Americans with Disabilities Act After 25 Years —by Larry Bond
Sun	May 17	11:45 am— Soup Sunday and Parish Meeting
Sun	May 24	10:00 service— Ethics at the End of Life —by Matt Tedesco
Mon	May 25	Evening— Spanish Speakers Potluck —at Prairie (call Rosemary for a ride 608-238-4382)
Tues	May 26	1:30-3:30 pm— Prairie Elders—Prohibitive Drug Costs --at Prairie
Sun	May 31	10:00 am service— Does Anybody Know What Time it is? —By Rev. Sandy

May 1--The Humanist Union's monthly meeting for May will be a departure from our usual meeting on the first Sunday of the month at the Meeting House. Instead we will meet on the evening of Friday, May 1, at Bethel Horizons as part of Prairie's annual family retreat there. From 8 to 9 pm we will view and discuss a TED talk video by Daniel Dennett titled *Let's teach religion — all religion — in schools* (24:45 min. long). All are welcome to join us.

May 3—If you can't make it to the retreat there will be "Bagels, Smear and TED at Prairie. In Rajasthan, India, an extraordinary school teaches rural women and men--many of them illiterate—to become solar engineers, artisans, dentists and doctors in their own villages. It's called the Barefoot College, and its founder, Bunker Roy, explains how it works.

May 10—We don't all have daughters, but we do all have mothers. This morning four of Prairie's mother and daughter duos (Karen Deaton and Jessie Garst, Kate and Katherine Liu, Heidi and Rachel Hughes and Kathy and Mei Lien Converse) have been invited to reflect upon such questions as: disciplining children in public; what qualities are most important in a mother; is it harder to be a kid now than in past generations; what is the best memory you have of your mother. The congregation will also be asked to consider these questions. Happy Mother's Day!

May 17—After 25 years of experience with ADA what it has meant for the disabled, the improvements, the unintended consequences and what further improvements are needed.

May 17--The Spring Parish Meeting will be held on May 17, after the service and Soup Sunday. Agenda items include electing Board members and some other Prairie business.

May 24—Prairie's resident philosophy professor will address hard questions About treating every person with dignity at the end of life—assisted suicide, palliative (terminal) sedation, passive euthanasia. In different states and in different countries, these practices vary in their legal status. Matt will lay out those differences, and make some arguments for what their legal status ought to be.

May 26--Please plan to join us for the next Prairie Elders meeting on May 26, from 1:30pm to 3:30pm, at Prairie's meeting house.

TOPIC: Prohibitive drug costs: Suppose you have an unusual form of a potentially terminal illness and your insurance company won't cover what you need. Suppose:

- Your insurance just won't cover it at all,
- Your insurance won't cover the particular drug you need,
- Your insurance will run out.

CONTACTS: Rosemary Dorney (238-4382) or Donna Murdoch (238-3802). Call for directions, parking, or a ride.

WHAT TO BRING: If convenient, bring your own beverage cup and a few snacks. If not convenient, don't worry about it, just come.

ABOUT US: Prairie Elders aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65. Newcomers are welcome.

Topics alternate between general issues and personal interests. Our "round robin" format makes it easier to hear and gives all of us the option of speaking. Sharing is optional. People are welcome just to come and listen.

May 30—The Membership Committee will offer ***Intro to Prairie*** (formerly known as ***New UU Orientation***) on Saturday, May 30, from nine until noon. If you are new to Unitarian Universalism and/or to the Prairie Community, you are invited to attend. These introductory sessions are also open to anyone within the Prairie family who wishes to join us, regardless of how long you have

been associated with Prairie. NOTE: We are happy to provide child care, but we NEED TO KNOW IN ADVANCE whether or not you need child care so that we can plan accordingly. Please let Erin Bosch, co-chair of the Membership Committee, or Rev. Sandy know if you are planning to attend. (or call the Prairie Office, 271-8218, to say that you will be there.)

May 31—Rev. Sandy will continue the discussion she began in mid-April about Gaia and impending environmental disaster. All is not gloom and doom, though, because there is a lot of little-known, grassroots activity occurring in this country and elsewhere that does not get publicized. Many people throughout the world are beginning to talk about changing the narrative of the human story in order to change the future that predicts a doomsday scenario to a serving life future scenario. Join me this Sunday to find out more about these amazing people and about what we can do right here in our Prairie community to better serve life and steer humanity away from the market and money ethos.

From Ruth Calden—Historical Tidbit

Prairie Society started in 1967 as an offshoot of the First Unitarian Society. Because of overcrowding in their Sunday School, First Society planned, financed and provided the leadership for a new group called “The Branch.” The numbers tell the story. There were 78 children! and 30 adults who met at the Holy Name Catholic Seminary on the far west side at that first service on September 17, 1967. The Seminary Band welcomed the new group sharing their facilities by playing “When Those Saints Come Marching In.” Bruce Bashore of FUS, the first presider entitled his talk “A Chance to Grow.”

Yea! Prairie Society will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2017!

From your Prairie History Committee:

Mary Mullen, Chair, Barbara Park, Rosemary Dorney and Ruth Calden

Message from the President—Gary Gates

April 22, 2012 was a key date in my life. Just three years ago I attended my first Sunday service at Prairie!

Actually I could say April 21 was a key date also since it was the first day I knew Prairie existed.

My life was changing and I wanted to find a congregation that would help me live by the principles I believed in. I knew about First Unitarian but it was just too big to suit me. I had read someplace that there was some other UU church in Madison so I went to the phone book to find out where and was surprised to find not one but two alternatives. I went to Prairie the next day and immediately knew I'd found my home.

I felt an immediate and sincere welcome and threw myself into helping with whatever needed to be done. I might have chickened out if I had known that two years later you would elect me as your President. I've never regretted joining Prairie and only occasionally regretted becoming President!

This month at our Parish meeting we will be selecting more people to carry on the traditions of Prairie. After we have done so I encourage you to seek out and thank not only the new recruits but all the people who keep Prairie a loving and caring community with their service on our committees and in our offices.

I especially want to thank our long serving Finance Chair and Treasurer, Kathy Converse and Al Nettleton, who have chosen to take a well-earned "retirement" after many years of service in very challenging and demanding positions. I know they aren't really retiring but just seeking new ways in which they can serve Prairie.

Thanks to everyone who has been serving to keep Prairie working and to those people willing to step up and continue our traditions of respect for our world and the people in it.

Circle of Friends—Holly Tellander, Dir. of Religious Education

Prairie RE April Happenings

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Mark your calendars for SUNDAY, MAY 17TH 11:30 - 1:30 p.m. for RE's 1st PAD (Principal Action Day)!

The first PAD activity will be Blankets for Critters. Check out <http://blanketsforcritters.com/>. At our first PAD we will be working on our 7th principle – RESPECT FOR THE INTERDEPENDENT WEB OF WHICH WE ARE ALL A PART. We will create crocheted, knitted and fleece-tied blankets to donate. Finger knitting lessons will be given! Anyone one who loves RE and would like to participate is welcome! RE welcomes donations of partial/full skeins of machine washable yarn AND fleece scraps. Keep an eye out for our June, July & August PADs as well!

RESCHEDULED!! PLEASE READ - 2016 RE Planning Summit – Due to a scheduling conflict **this event has been rescheduled!**

A post on Prairie News contains a survey regarding what date/time of day works best for you. Please, if possible, vote on your preferred day/time slot. A final decision will be made and posted ASAP. Then PLEASE CLEAR YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS EVENT. A new year brings opportunities for **big changes**, and **this is your chance to weigh in on what works and what doesn't in regards to RE.** Pastries and coffee will be provided, with childcare provided, if necessary. Some new ideas will be presented and we will hold a

round table discussion about the direction of RE in the years to come. This event is for parents, those interested in teaching (we will have less time-consuming options available next year!), students who have something to say and ANYONE ELSE who likes RE or just likes to create new things ☺. Please RVSP to holly@tellander.net.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM! WHAT?

The benefits of an outdoor classroom are numerous, but specifically for Prairie's RE – an outdoor classroom reinforces our principles and our sources in a way that is truly dynamic and unique. Yes, the outdoor classroom will be available YEAR ROUND. Yes, it will supplement our learning and our experience of the world in which we live. Yes, it will serve as a community outreach/education center for the neighborhood of which we are a part. Does this sound interesting? A committee is now forming to take charge of this amazing new opportunity.

According to the following website:

<http://classroominnature.weebly.com/why-consider-outdoor-classrooms.html>, today's society has become so separated from nature that we actually fail to realize our basic dependence on experiencing nature as a tool for individual growth and development (Winters et al., 2010, p. 248G). To help increase awareness of this dependence to the mainstream public, the idea of an outdoor classroom was created. An outdoor classroom is an extraordinary resource. "It can be a learning center, a project-based station, and an area for reflection and observation" (Winters et al., 2010, p. 248G). It includes both natural materials like dirt, trees, and stones, along with man-made materials like bird houses and tables. An outdoor classroom provides for a student to learn in a way not possible in a traditional indoor classroom.

If you are on Pinterest, feel free to check out the Prairie Outdoor Space board I've created! <https://www.pinterest.com/hTel22/prairie-outdoor-space/>.

What's Up Downstairs?

Like always lots of learning and exploration going on downstairs! We have a new bulletin board contest that has just launched. If your student hasn't heard of it yet – they soon will! It promises to be lots of fun! All I can say is – keep your eyes and ears open...you could get caught on 'camera'!

We had a lovely visit on Easter from Rain & Brenda – two Wiccan priestesses who shared with us spring equinox traditions, both current and historic, from all around the world. It was informative, entertaining and sweet! They brought chocolate eggs and bunnies to share!

Our first Craft & Chat was a great success. Keep an eye out for RE's new Busy Bags display – Coming Soon!

Though there aren't many classes left, we'd love to see you downstairs. Come on down and check out our interactive bulletin boards and make a contribution.

And we can always use donations of pre-packaged string cheese, single serve applesauce containers & saltine crackers (COSTCO, ANYONE?).

⊕ As always, thanks for your support! ⊕

From Karen Deaton

Introducing the Landscape Planning Committee

Spring is here (despite snow and hard frost this week). The remodel of the house next door is nearly complete. The soil in the front yard of the new house will soon be graded. I'm sure many of you are ready to bring your iris divisions and extra clumps of dogwood and tuck them into empty spots in the unfinished front yard or our spacious double-lot backyard. *Please wait just a little longer.*

If we jump ahead to planting before we have an overall plan, we might end up with lawn areas that are awkward to mow, or one group planting a perennial bed just where another group planned to put a sandbox, or plants that can survive a drought next to plants that need regular water, or who knows what other horticulturally distressing situations. With a solid plan in place, and with help from all of you who can dig, plant, water, or weed, I am confident that in a few years, we'll have a landscape that is not only attractive, but efficient to maintain, and useful for many of the activities of our little society.

The Housing & Property committee has recruited an ad hoc committee to plan our landscaping efforts. The committee is made up of these enthusiastic individuals:

Martin Arnold (avid gardener)

Kathy Converse (accomplished gardener and naturalist)

Karen Deaton (committee chair, native plant enthusiast and former master gardener)

Jim Lyne (hardworking co-chair of Housing and Property)

Barb Park (master gardener with broad-ranging knowledge and experience)

Holly Tellander (Director of Religious Education and font of ideas for enriching our young people's experience of the natural world)

There are steps we need to take immediately to control erosion and weeds in bare soil, to fill holes and remove debris for safety, etc. We have begun working on these tasks and we will ask for help with them at the next Prairie Work Day on May 9. The committee will announce additional work days (sometimes on short notice). Watch Prairie News and Prairie Fire as well as weekly announcements.

We are currently gathering input from several committees and groups about what they would like to do with Prairie's outdoor space: Religious Education, Hospitality, Music, Program, and Green Sanctuary. If you have an idea for our landscaping, don't just mention it and hope we remember--let one of us know in writing or via email by May 3. My email address is: wisconsinkaren@gmail.com.

From Rachel Long

Furnishing the House

As you know, our remodeling project on the house next door is nearing completion. Now comes the next phase—furnishing! The house remodeling committee (Tom Robinson, Al Nettleton, Barb Park, Jim Lyne, Martin Arnold, Rachel Long, and formerly Dirk and Susan Herr-Hoyman) has been working with our minister, staff, and the hospitality and membership committee to generate a list of furniture and other items (see below) that we would like in order to outfit our new house. To keep our cost and fundraising to a minimum, we are asking YOU for help. We are soliciting offers from you of any items on this list that you might be able to spare. We just know your homes are full of lovely pieces that you might not need, and would love to see in our new house. We are looking for items in very good condition, and items that match others being offered and that fill our space well. The easiest way for us to evaluate your offers would be for you to take a picture of the item you would like to offer, and send it by mail with a brief description (for example, the dimensions of a piece of furniture). Our committee will review all of the offers to find the best combination of furniture to meet our needs. I agreed to serve as the point person for this endeavor, so please send photos and descriptions to me, Rachel Long, raarlong@gmail.com. If you would like to contribute financially, we would welcome contributions to cover the cost of matching folding tables and stacking chairs on the list. Thanks!

Shelving

Shelving for administrator closet
Book case or wall mounted shelving for minister's office
Bookshelf for fellowship space
3 feet of shelving for downstairs large room

Tables&desks

Work table for administrator's office
End table OR nesting tables for fellowship space
coffee table for fellowship space

Seating

One large upholstered bench OR sofa OR 2 small upholstered benches
4 smallish upholstered chairs for fellowship space
2 couches for upstairs large room

Lighting

3 floor lamps for downstairs large room

Piano light

Desk lamp for administrator

Table lamp for fellowship space

Kitchen items

Microwave

Crockpot

Hot water warmer

Dishcloths, Sponges

Table clothes (for rectangle tables for 6-8)

Dish soap, Dishwasher soap

Knives (paring, cleaver, serrated)

Large skillet, Small skillet

Serving spoons

Ladels

Sugar bowl, Cream pitcher

Drinking glasses

Pitchers

Serving plates/platters

16 large plates, small plates, bowls

Other

Printer for minister

small ottoman

Area rug for fellowship space

2 wall-mounted whiteboards for upstairs large room

Set of wall coat hooks

3 Rubbermaid snow catchers

Financial contributions

6 long folding tables, \$95 each, office depot

<http://www.officedepot.com/a/products/774511/Realspace-Folding-Table-Molded-Plastic-Top/>

20 stacking chairs, \$53 each, office depot

<http://www.officedepot.com/a/products/543537/Realspace-Sled-Base-Stacking-Chair-ChromeGalaxy/#>

Musings from the Minister—Sandra Ingham

Sitting in a coffee shop in Las Vegas yesterday, I heard one of my favorite songs from many years ago, done by the group "Chicago": "Does anybody know what time it is?", they sang, "Does anybody really care?" At that exact moment, I was reading an article in the local paper -- "Lake Mead water level on verge of record low". The average yearly rainfall in Nevada is nine inches! And yet, almost two million people live in the Las Vegas Valley.

Humans are harming Planet Earth. We are the only beings on earth that make decisions -- consciously and unconsciously -- that can harm the environment upon which we depend for life. To say that we humans are not being good keepers of our precious space is a profound understatement. To say, as ardent environmentalists do (and I count myself as one of them) that the earth would be better off without us and that the rest of creation would not notice our absence is not being anti-human. To say these things is simply stating the facts.

Many factors have played a part in getting us into this mess, including, but not limited to: our addiction to automobiles; less and less interaction with nature and the outdoors; the demise of neighborhood stores and the subsequent rise of malls and mega-stores; incredibly effective marketing, convincing too many people that a price, a monetary amount, can be put on anything and, ultimately, on everything.

How do we change the direction in which we are going? How do we change the human story so that we change the future?

Here are three ideas. (1) Pay attention. Be aware of what we have done and are doing to Gaia, our Mother Earth. (2) Allow ourselves time to grieve and mourn for what we have done and are doing to the earth. (3) Make wiser decisions -- personally and communally -- always keeping in mind how those decisions will affect humanity seven generations into the future.

We can change our direction. First we have to wake up. Then we have to organize and put our collective energy into the task.

I will be in the Southwest, trying not to use too much water, until May 19. Except for the first six days of May, I can be reached, as always, by phone or email. See you in May! Sandy

Please consider volunteering for and participating in one or more of Prairie's committees or groups—A full list is located on Prairie's website: <http://uuprairie.org/aboutus/>. Or call Patty Stockdale for contact information: (608)293-0843. Visit Prairie's website: <http://uuprairie.org> for further information.

