



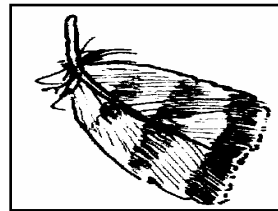
MINNESOTA PRAIRIE CHICKEN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 49 No. 4 Fall 2023



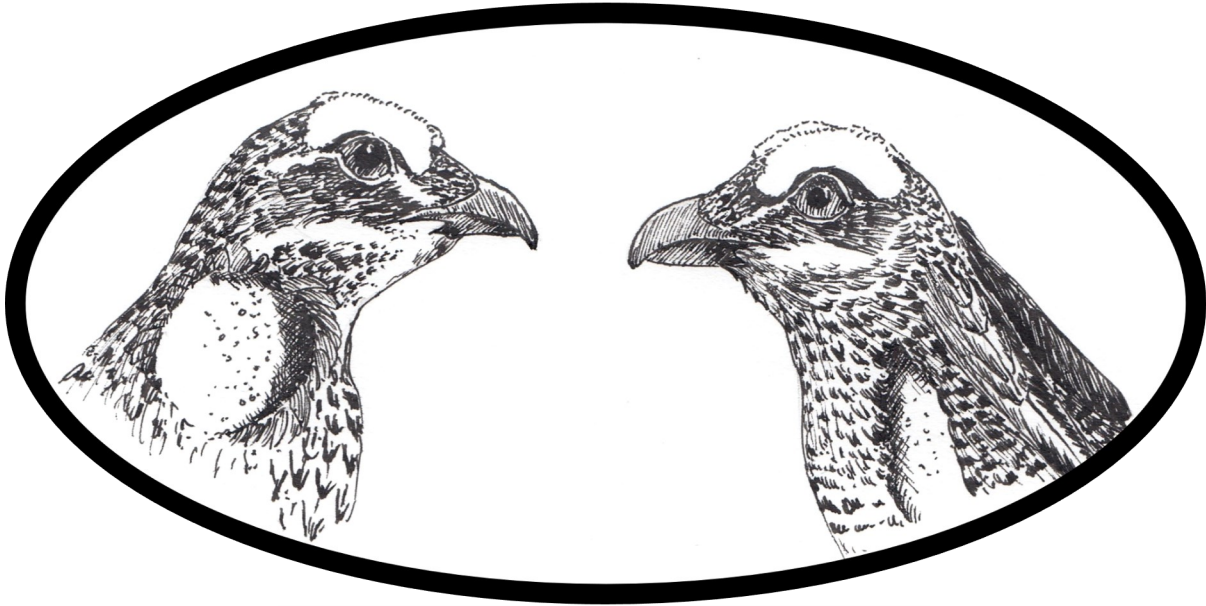
Attendees at the 50th Annual MPCS Meeting held this past April in Rothsay. Great people, great history and great conservation efforts!

Editor’s Note: Hello to all in the prairie and prairie chicken world. As usual, Fall activities left your Editor somewhat behind on Newsletter No. 4 of 2023. No worries ... onto our next grand adventure which will be a JOINT MEETING with the Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society on 20 April 2024 in Crookston! RHH



FEATHER FEATURES

- Joint Meeting with MSGS.....Pg 2
- Fur Trapping Era Linguistics Pg 3
- Call for Young Artists Pg 4
- Annual Scholarship Proclamation Pg 5
- The Adventures of Tympie Nuchus Pg 6
- The Schaumburg BOOMERS Pg 7
- Pieces of the Prairie Pg 8



Joint Gathering of MPCS and MSGS

Mark your calendars for 19 and 20 April 2024!. It will be a fine time when Minnesota's open-land grouse societies join wings in Crookston. The meeting will be held at the University of Minnesota-Crookston. A field trip to local prairies East of Crookston is being considered for Friday afternoon followed by an informal social Friday evening and the joint meeting to be held the following day. Currently, motels available in Crookston for overnights are the AmericInn, Cobblestone Hotel and Suites and Golf Terrace Motel. Motels in East Grand Forks and Grand Forks (North Dakota) are approximately 25-30 miles from the Crookston campus. As usual, an early morning field trip will be scheduled along with "time in the blind". We should have several blinds available for those wanting to view either Greater prairie chickens or Sharp-tails. If you have any fund-raising items to donate, they would be much appreciated. Look for more details in the next Newsletter (Winter Edition 2024). We look forward to seeing old and new friends!



Sponsors sought to help with meeting costs that will help both societies provide more funds for open-land grouse conservation!

Old French Technolets* and the Prairie Chicken

By Jim Uhrinak

History-of-the-prairie enthusiasts can now enjoy French notes on northern-plains wildlife, geography, and the early fur trade in a thorough translation of, and commentary on, *The Journal and Description of Jean-Baptiste Truteau, 1794-1796* in *A Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri* from the University of Nebraska Press, (Truteau 2017).

Many researchers contributed to the production of this volume over a compilation period of more than 50 years. Most surprising to me were the challenges in translation faced by linguists. As the Editorial-Methods section explains, “French words designating species found in the Old World were applied differently in North America, but Mississippi Valley French, like American Indian languages” often used pairs of terms to name animals. Hence, Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society members might appreciate that Truteau “is among the first to give a glimpse of the remarkable productivity of the word *prairie* as a determinative in the language of French speakers of the West (especially the Metis) over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.” “Among these numerous composites are *bois de prairie* (Buffalo chips), *pomme de prairie* and *navet de prairie* (Breadroot or Prairie turnip), *boeuf* and *cache de prairie* (Buffalo), *lievre de prairie* (White-tailed jack rabbit, *Lepus townsendii*), *poule de prairie* (prairie chicken, *Tympanuchus cupido*), *loup de prairie* (Coyote), *renard de prairie* (probably Swift fox), and *cheval de prairie* (wild horse)” (Truteau 2017:461).

The linguists’ identification of *poule de prairie* as the Greater prairie chicken may simply indicate that the linguists didn’t know the Sharp-tailed grouse. This quote is not enough to satisfy Dr. John Toepfer’s question of how Native peoples distinguished prairie chickens from sharp-tails by name. What Truteau shows us is that early fur traders were talking with tribal peoples about such things during the past three centuries. History-of-the-prairie buffs will not be disappointed with the analysis of Truteau’s account documenting aspects of the French on the northern plains, reaching back a generation before Lewis and Clark.

*Technolet is a real word from the technolet of linguistics.

Calling All Kids!

The Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society is once again sponsoring a youth art contest. Any visual or written art form is welcome. Get those creative juices flowing and share your prairie-inspired art!

Prizes will be awarded to a winning entry in each of three age categories: 6 and under, 7-12, and 13-18. Entries must be received by March 31, 2024. Submit your masterpiece to Sara Vacek (saravacek5@gmail.com or 57368 490th St, Appleton, MN 56208).

Please complete and include the form below with your art submission. Please do not put the artist's name on the front of the artwork.



*2023 winning entry in the 13-18 category
Audra Reiffenberger, Sauk Centre, age 16*



The Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society is a non-profit wildlife conservation organization devoted to promoting and supporting through public education the preservation, management, and restoration of native prairie and open landscape habitats that are key to the survival of this endemic North American prairie grouse

Artist Name _____

Artist Age _____ Artist Grade _____

Artist School _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Do you want the original artwork returned? Yes No



MPCS Scholarship For 2024

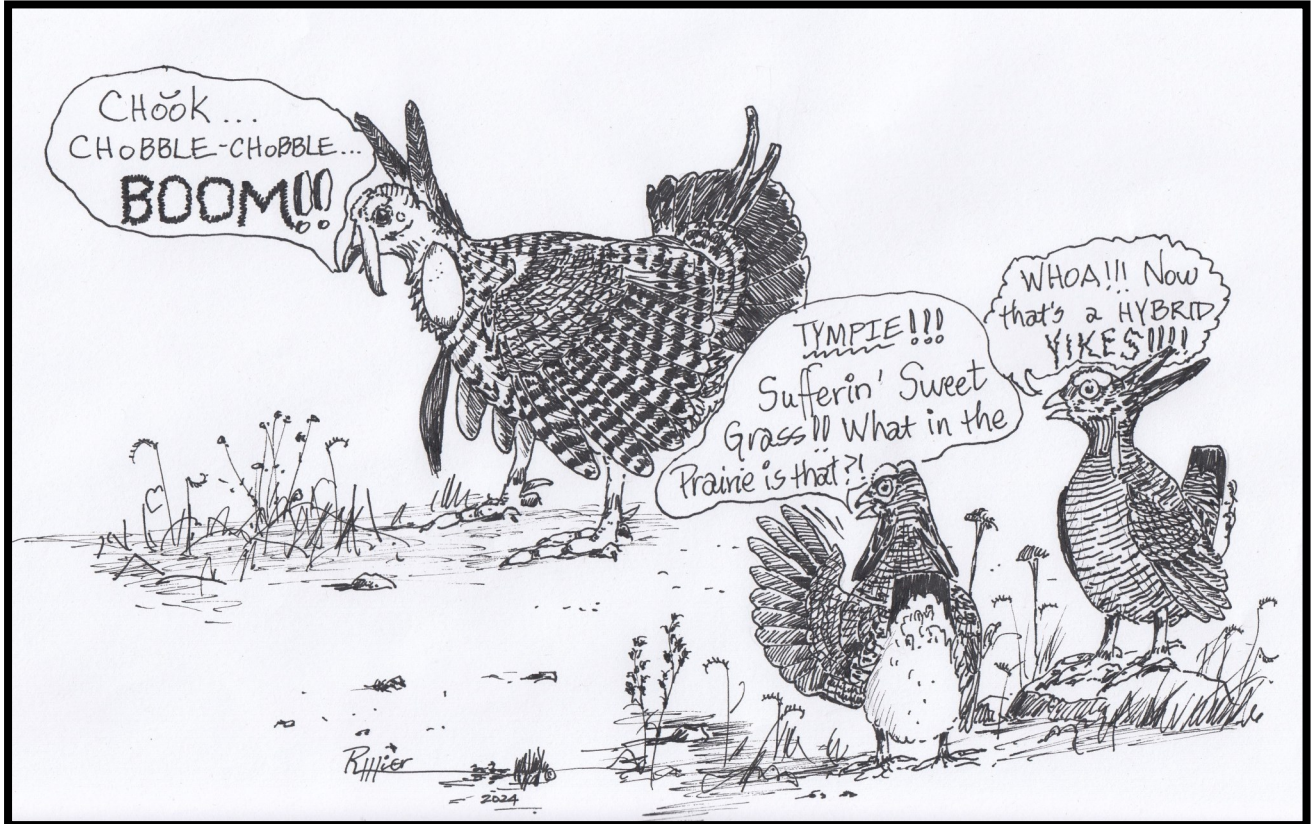
By Sara Vacek

The Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society (MPCS) is pleased to announce that we will once again award one scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00 to an undergraduate college student who has completed at least three semesters (or equivalent) in wildlife sciences, natural resources management or closely related field. For complete scholarship guidelines and application materials, please visit the MPCS Website:

<https://www.prairiechickens.org/mpcs-scholarship-application>

The Adventures of Tympie Nuchus

By Ross H. Hier



The “Winter” of 2023-24

By Ross H. Hier

Just for our records, it needs to be noted that the northern plains are having one of the mildest winters on record. There has been snow cover in many parts of the prairie region but as I write this article, snow is rapidly disappearing in my backyard as the temperature on 31 January 2024 is currently at 45 F in early afternoon. It is likely this will be the warmest winter (or at least some of the individual months of winter) on record. After last winter’s deep and long-lasting snow cover, this winter has been a great reprieve for our regional wildlife.



Prairie Chickens are Still a Powerful Image Even in Areas Where They Have Been Extirpated for Decades

By Ross H. Hier

This past Spring, my wife and I were awaiting a flight in Chicago's O'Hare Airport when a couple sat down near us. Conversations ensued on where we were headed and their planned travel. When I mentioned we had flown out of Fargo the eyes of the wife of this couple lit-up. She noted they had just been to Fargo a couple weeks earlier (they were from Chicago). That piqued my curiosity and I asked what they did while in Fargo. She smiled and told us they attended a baseball game and timidly noted that they were owners of a baseball team that plays in the Frontier Baseball League. Goodness! I asked what the team's moniker was and she said, "The Boomers!". I instantly replied, "As in booming prairie chickens?!". "YES!" To add to this crazy conversation, I happened to be holding and reading Steven T. Oney's novel, *Stalking Chickens: A Parker Robinson Mystery*. I pointed to the cover of the book which has the head image of a Greater prairie chicken on it. We all broke-out laughing in this very serendipitous moment. They wondered how I would know so much about prairie chickens and I gave them a bit of my personal history. The Schaumburg Boomers of Schaumburg, Illinois proudly display prairie chickens in images and words on their uniforms and other team memorabilia. They asked for our address and said they would send us some "Boomer Gear". In exchange for a T-shirt and a baseball cap, I sent them some hand-picked Minnesota Wild rice when we returned home. I received the better part of that deal! See below!



Pieces of the Prairie



Wild or American Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*): This mid- to late Summer perennial is another native prairie member of the Legume (pea) Family. It is a fairly robust plant of 18 –36 plus inches in height. On our prairies, it is generally found in low swales and along intermittent flowages. Its white to yellowish-white flowers appear on spike-like racemes; the flowers give way to very distinctive seed pods which are about one-half inches in length. They tend to remain on the plant well into the winter months. Most upland bird hunters who hunt over English setters or other “softer coated” gun dog breeds are all too familiar with this plant as they may often spend much time post-hunting helping their pooch get these “little native velcro-like” seed pods out the dog’s coat. Note in the close-up above the remaining strands of hair from our Brussels Griffon’s coat after an hours walk on a local prairie! Native peoples used this plant as a tea for numerous short-term maladies such as stomach upset, fever and a sore mouth or toothache. As the roots contain much sugar, they were also consumed raw in the early season of plant growth.



MPCS Board Members

(Updated 10 September 2023)

Officers:

Board Members:

Terms Expiring in 2024 Terms Expiring in 2025 Terms Expiring in 2026

President:	Jerry Forgit	Rob Baden	William E. “Bill” Faber
Brian M. Winter Mpcs.web@gmail.com			

V-P/Secr/ Archivist/Editor:	Terry Lydell	John Voz	Matt Mecklenburg
Ross H. Hier			

Treasurer:	Phil Doll	Doug Wells	Sara Vacek
Travis Issendorf Mpcs.web@gmail.com			
	Stacy Salvevold	Earl N. Johnson	Doug Hedtke

Director-At-Large: Terry Wolfe and Dan Svedarsky

Newsletter Editor: Ross H. Hier

Website Coordinator: Sonia Winter; Mpcs.web@gmail.com

Twitter Coordinator: Phil Doll; @M_P_C_S

Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society Membership

Your gift membership will help! Any tax deductible contribution or donation will bring you the MPCS Newsletter and supports the Society's efforts to save Minnesota's prairie chickens and their habitats. Renew your membership today!

The Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society is a non-profit wildlife conservation organization exempt from Federal Income tax as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions made to the Society are deductible by donors as provided in Section 170 of the Code. The Society's Federal Identification number is #41-1327954.

- I would like to make a membership contribution.
 I would like to contribute to Prairie Chicken Habitat Improvement.
 I would like to renew my membership.

Or RENEW ONLINE with PayPal at: <https://www.prairiechickens.org/donate>

Name:

Address/City/State/Zip:

Email:

MPCS Newsletters Now Electronic

After a slow transition period from direct mailing to electronic newsletters, the board has decided to post all newsletters on the newly updated website. Newsletters will now be posted as a .pdf file and be in full color. We recognize that some members may still want to receive direct mailings so please contact Travis for direct mailing. The newsletters posted on the website will allow members to read past newsletters and share them with family, colleagues, educational institutions, or other conservation partners.

Take a look.

www.prairiechickens.org

