



# MINNESOTA PRAIRIE CHICKEN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 51 No. 2/3 Summer-Fall 2025



**Editor's Note:**  
"Greetings" to the MPCS Flock! Hope everyone has enjoyed a fine Summer and the very extended run of Fall weather. RHH



## FEATHER FEATURES

Barb Lydell Receives MPCS Award.....	Pg 2
Ode To The Big Prairie Chicken .....	Pg 3
53rd Annual Meeting Announcement/Kiosk .....	Pg 4
The Adventures of Tympie Nuchus/Dokken Retirement .....	Pgs 5-7
Pieces of the Prairie .....	Pg 8

## President Brian Winter presents Barb Lydell with the “Friend of the Prairie Chicken Award”

By Ross H. Hier



MPCS President Brian Winter presenting Barb Lydell with the “Friend of the Prairie Chicken Award”. Barb was unable to attend our Annual Meeting in April so Brian personally delivered the award to Barb this early Fall. Barb is the widow of long-time Board member Terry Lydell who passed away in 2024. She has been instrumental in keeping the support and momentum going for Terry’s “MPCS Scholarship”. So much so, that the scholarship is now named “The Barb and Terry Lydell Scholarship” through MPCS. MPCS greatly appreciates Barb’s tremendous support!

## Tracks from the Past

\*Editor's Note: In going through archival material of Roberta Ouse's, I found the following gem. I do not know who penned it.



### **"Ode To The Big Prairie Chicken"**

**On top of old Rothsay, All covered with feathers  
We watched over our town in all kind of weathers.**

**We greet all the big trucks that enter that way,  
And then I just watch them, as they drive away.**

**We smile at the tourist, And then we say cheese.  
And then we keep smiling as they crawl on my knees.**

**They take their little fingers, And poke at my eyes.  
I wish they would leave them and say their goodbyes.**

**Now please understand us, We don't mean to bother.  
We just came to tell you, we are as good as the Otter.**

## Announcing MPCCS's Annual Meeting



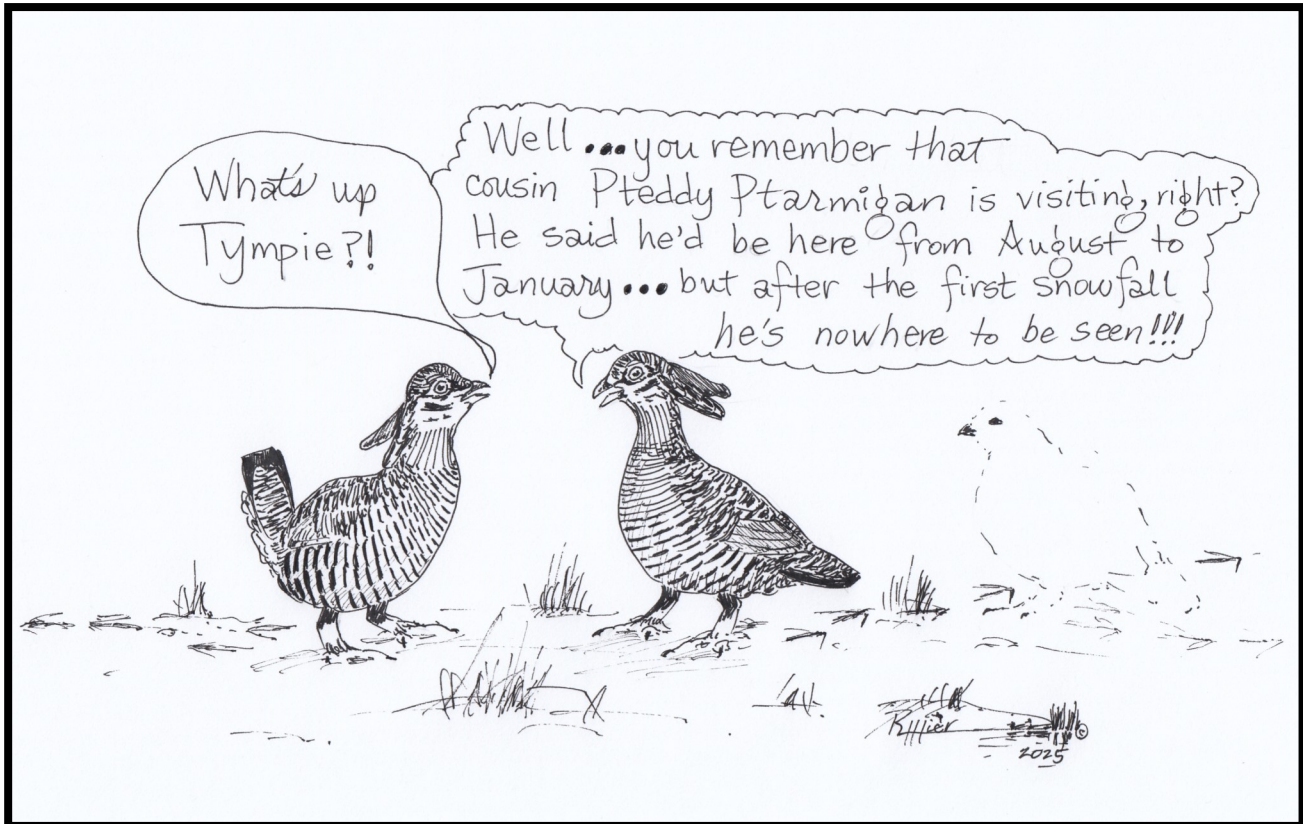
### New Kiosk at Big Boomer's "Booming Ground" in Rothsay

The new kiosk (multiple panels) explaining excellent Greater prairie chicken biology and habitat needs near Big Boomer has been installed. It is very nicely done and will provide much information for and interaction with visitors to the site. A grand "thank you" to all those involved in getting this project completed. Please make a point of stopping-by to see it when traveling on I-94.



# The Adventures of Tympie Nuchus

By Ross H. Hier



## Grand Forks Herald's Outdoor Editor Brad Dokken Retires After 40 Years of Journalism

By Ross H. Hier

Long-time Outdoors Editor for the Grand Forks Herald, Brad Dokken, retired in early December from an adventurous career covering fishing, hunting and various natural resource issues in North Dakota and West-Northwest Minnesota. Brad was born in Roseau and grew-up in the small border community of Pinecreek near the Roseau River Wildlife Management Area where his father was employed. Outdoors was simply a way of life for the Dokken family; fishing, hunting, camping, “snowcatting” and playing hockey on the outdoor Ross Rink in little Ross, Minnesota just down the road on State Highway 89. After graduating from Roseau High School in 1979, he continued his

Education at Bemidji State University earning a Bachelor's degree in Mass Communications with a Journalism emphasis along with a minor in vocal music. Although he didn't pursue his love of music as a career, it opened many doors to new places and cultures as he toured in Europe with the Bemidji State Choir.

He never really planned to have a career in "the newspaper world". Via a class on Newspaper Reporting, he wrote a story for the campus newspaper, the Northern Student. He loved the "buzz and energy" of being a part of that publication. In his junior year, he became the paper's Feature's Editor and he moved-up to Managing Editor during his senior year. He has many fond memories of the many "all-nighters" the paper's team pulled-off getting the next edition "to bed" as they watched the sun rise over Lake Bemidji through the office window at Deputy Hall.

He went on to work for the Wadena Pioneer Journal; performing all the jobs needed to cover a weekly newspaper. He then moved to Grand Forks in 1985 and became the Copy Editor/Page Designer for the Herald's Agweek Magazine. Around 1989, he moved onto the Herald newsroom where he worked various jobs before becoming the Outdoors Editor in early 1998. He felt he ended-up there by "being in the right place at the right time".

Prior to that, he was on the Herald team that was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for their coverage of the brutal flooding in the Spring of 1997. He calls it his proudest moment as the staff somehow made their way to the Twin Cities (the Herald's building not only flooded that tragic week but also started on fire) to use facilities and the Herald *never* missed a day of publication. To this day, he still doesn't know how they managed that. Now, he plans to enjoy the moments where a "deadline" doesn't loom over him and spend more time enjoying his beloved outdoors. He does prefer fishing over hunting but a walk in the Fall woods for Ruffed grouse near his deer/get-away camp on the border next to Roseau River Wildlife Management Area always brings a smile to him. In recent years he's been hunting deer a little more using a crossbow. He loves listening to Rock and Roll and some classical music. He rides his e-bike and when conditions allow, still enjoys his "snowcatting". Reading is always on the agenda too.

Some freelance writing will likely occur as time moves forward along with various volunteer work ... perhaps with our society.

I need to give this humble man much praise. He covered many stories on Greater prairie chickens and Sharp-tailed grouse along with their habitats and needs. He literally was “just a phone call away” and always went to bat for our area natural resources; he will be missed in the world of newspaper journalism in our part of the world. He is pleased that the Herald will be filling his editorship; something many newspapers are not doing as the generation of outdoor editors retire from their jobs of many decades after building vast numbers faithful followers of their stories.



Brad Dokken receiving the “Friend of the Prairie Chicken Award” from your Editor at the 2021 annual MPCs meeting.



## Pieces of the Prairie:



*Solidago nemoralis* (Gray goldenrod) is a more delicate goldenrod blooming in late summer. Its grayish leaves and distinctive “nodding wand” flower cluster can easily be identified from a distance. It is mainly found on dry prairies such as ancient beach ridges. Typically 1-2+ feet tall. Indigenous peoples used tea from the leaves for colds and sore throats. Roots and whole plants were used for “washes” to help skin ailments along with jaundice, kidney issues and general gastric issues.



## MPCS Board Members

(Updated 7 April 2025)

**Officers:**

**Board Members:**

Terms Expiring in 2025      Terms Expiring in 2026      Terms Expiring in 2027

**President:**

Brian M. Winter Mpcs.web@gmail.com	Rob Baden John Voz	William E. "Bill" Faber Matt Mecklenburg	Jerry Forgit Phil Doll
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**V-P/Secr/  
Archivist:**

Ross H. Hier	Doug Wells Brian Winter	Sara Vacek Doug Hedtke	Stacy Salvevold Nicholas Snavelly
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**Treasurer:**

Phil Doll Mpcs.web@gmail.com	Travis Issendorf	Ross H. Hier	Neal Feeken
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**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](http://www.prairiechickens.org)

