

# Conservation Corner

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August 15, 2018

*Anybody can love the mountain, but it takes a soul to love the prairie."*

I agree with Willa Cather. Mountains are wonderful places to spend a vacation, but for daily life give this soul the prairie. I love the open skies, vivid sunsets, the ever-changing colors of the seasons. Most of all, I love the songs of the prairie. The call of the meadowlark, the rustle of big bluestem, the hum of the bumblebee or rasp of the cicada all unite in a concert not to be missed.

Pocahontas County Conservation and Historical Society invites everyone to join us on Sunday, August 26, at the Wiegert Prairie Farmstead. Our theme this year is *Songs on the Prairie*, and that got me to thinking. What childhood sounds of the prairie and farmstead still echo in your memory?

My husband and I came up with our favorites. On the farmstead: cows munching their way across the pasture, baby pigs suckling on mama sows, ear corn sliding into the drags, logs zinging through the tractor saw, the pulsating rhythm of bucket milking machines in the stanchions. In the farmhouse: coffee percolating in the morning, the satisfying pop of sealing canning jars, the clean swish of the knife cutting sweet corn, lying in bed listening to a welcomed rain gently falling on the flat porch roof outside my bedroom.

If it's been a while since you've heard the sounds of yesterday's farmstead and prairie, come to this year's 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Fest get-together. Gates open at 10:00 a.m. and close at 5:00 p.m. Meet at the Pioneer Church at 10:30 a.m. to listen to God's praises. Stay for grilled hamburgers and hotdogs served by the PAC FFA from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Spend the afternoon catching up with friends and neighbors while listening to western music and enjoying kettle corn, frybread, root beer floats, and homemade pie and ice cream.

Listen for the sounds of yesterday as you tour the farmhouse, barn, newly painted crib, hog house, school house, and church. Listen as you help churn butter or press cider and enjoy organ music, tools, pets & farm animals, and old-fashioned games. Listen to the bang of the loom shuttle or blackpowder musket, the ring of the blacksmith's hammer, the jangle of the mules' harness on the prairie and in the potato patch. Listen to neighbors sharing memories at displays of early farm machinery, past celebrations photos, and area Indian artifacts.

This year's special guest will be Carol Markstrom, who will be sharing her award-winning western music throughout the day. We're looking forward to hearing and enjoying her special blend of folk and western-themed music. I think Carol's melodies and vocals will harmonize well with the lonesome ballad of Harry's windmill.

Thanks in advance to all the neighbors and friends who pitch in each year to bring the many sights and sounds of the Wiegert Farmstead to life. What melody or harmony does your soul love to sing on the prairie?

