

# The Prairie Pulse

A newsletter brought to you by the Poplar Creek Prairie Stewards

Issue date: December 2025

## Upcoming Workdays

Sunday 12/28 PCP

Saturday, 1/3 PCP

Sunday, 1/11 SRG

Saturday, 1/17 SRG

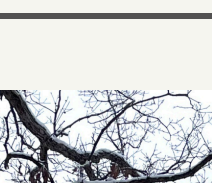
Sunday, 1/25 PCP

Saturday, 1/31 PCP

Sunday, 2/8 SRG

For more information: [PCPS website](#).

## TIS THE SEASON TO WISH FOR PEACE AND GOODWILL FROM AND TO ALL!



Poplar Creek (photo: A Brennan).

## Peace of Wild Things

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

By Wendell Berry

## 2025 PCPS HOLIDAY PARTY

Jenny Flexman's street was jammed with cars and her family room was jammed with people making merry at the Poplar Creek Prairie Stewards holiday party on December 6th. 40 attendees turned out, not counting several who stayed home at the last minute due to illness (we missed you!). All came to celebrate the season, and honor Rick McAndless, who retired as the Carl Hansen site steward for the second time, and whom we also recognized as being the lead founding member of PCPS. Fortunately, while stepping down from leadership, Rick will still be around for aid and advice.

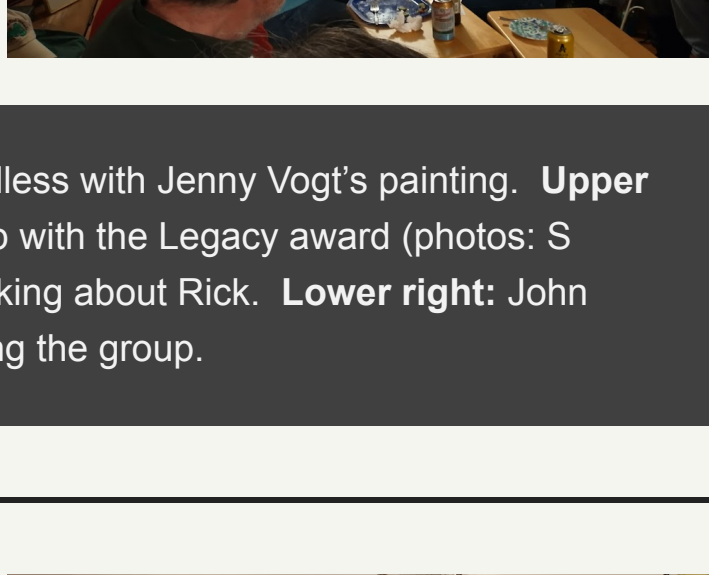
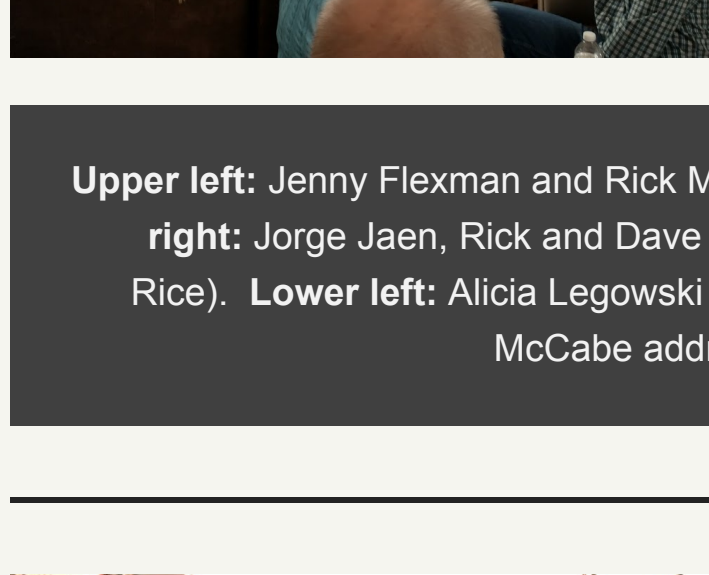
The evening started with drinks, hors d'oeuvres and chatting as folks arrived. What happened to that hot bean dip? It was gone in a flash. Main dishes were uncovered around 6pm. There was a lot of vegetarian and vegan fare, but that fried chicken vanished quickly. Fortunately some tasty chicken wings materialized on the table, just in time for those who were still craving some meat or missed Tom K's chicken. Unlike last year, we had a plethora of desserts which people continued to taste throughout the evening.

As usual Jenny developed a wonderful slide show that reviewed the year...so many people and so much accomplished. There was also a series of photos featuring Rick over time. Yes, Rick's beard and hair were quite red back in the day.

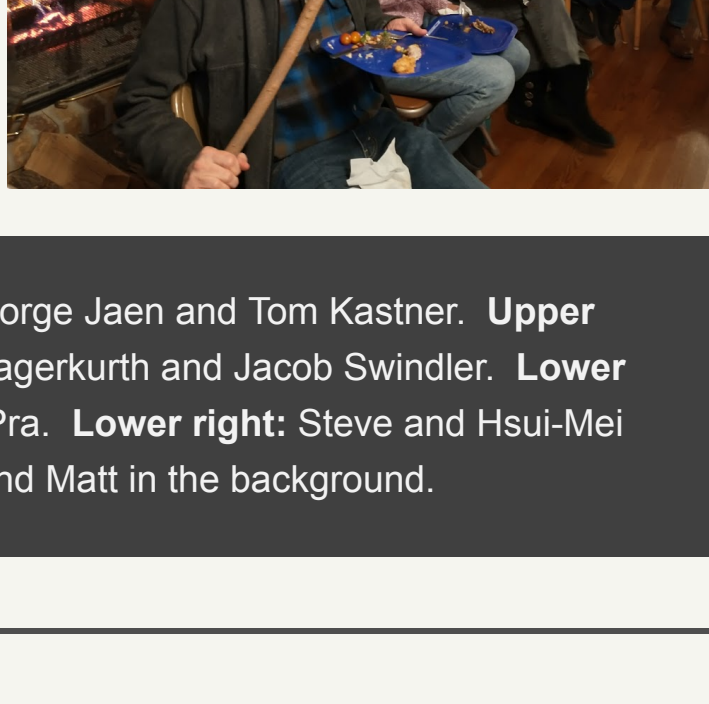
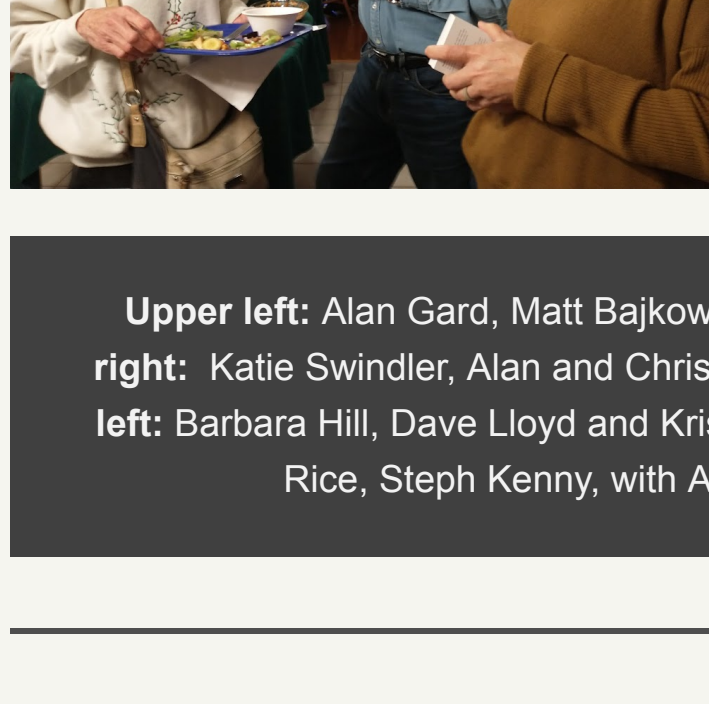
The evening's highlight was recognizing Rick for his many achievements. Alicia Legowski, the new Carl Hansen steward, focused on Rick's support as she steps up to the position. Jenny provided background and then, first presented Rick with a painting done by artist and former long-time Carl Hansen bird monitor Jenny Vogt, who now lives in Arizona. Jenny followed by presenting a plaque with volunteers' signatures. She stated, "Rick, through 36 years of hard work, leadership, and inspiring of others, has forged the Poplar Creek Prairie Stewards and the restoration of Carl Hansen Woods. The world is a better place because of him. He is truly deserving of the first ever PCPS Stewardship Legacy Award. What a Legacy!" The hand-carved wooden award was designed and created by Dave Webb, with Jorge Jaen painting the logo. We have such talented volunteers! John McCabe, FPCC Director Department of Resource Management, who attended the party with his wife Kris DaPra, FPCC Manager of Volunteer Resources, also provided appreciative words about Rick, and all PCPS.

Soon it was time for our volunteers and party guests to head home to the many different places where they live, after a pleasant time of food and fellowship. Throughout Rick's leadership with PCPS he has continually emphasized the importance of "breaking bread together" from workday break times, to post-workday lunches to special events. By coming together on December 6 we all honored Rick and a philosophy that has informed PCPS from the beginning to present.

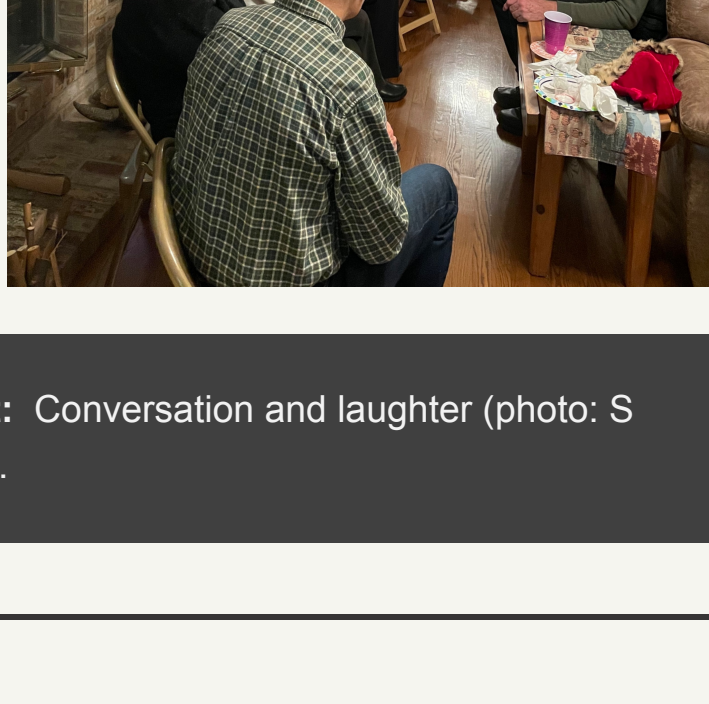
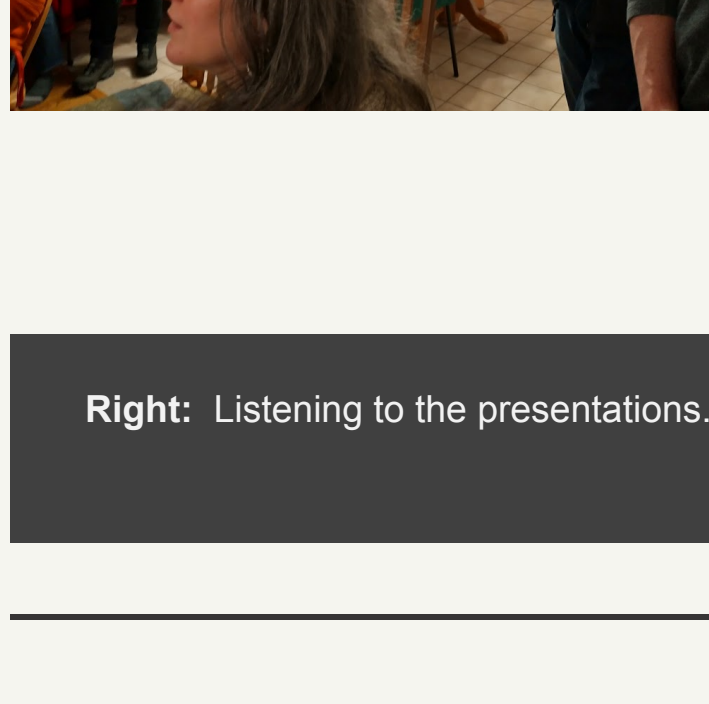
Much thanks to all those who helped with party set-up and clean-up. And a big thanks to Jenny for annually putting up with our "invasion."



**Upper left:** Jenny Flexman and Rick McAndless with Jenny Vogt's painting. **Upper right:** Jorge Jaen, Rick and Dave Webb with the Legacy award (photos: S Rice). **Lower left:** Alicia Legowski speaking about Rick. **Lower right:** John McCabe addressing the group.



**Upper left:** Alan Gard, Matt Bajkowski, Jorge Jaen and Tom Kastner. **Upper right:** Katie Swindler, Alan and Christie Magerkurth and Jacob Swindler. **Lower left:** Barbara Hill, Dave Lloyd and Kris DaPra. **Lower right:** Steve and Hsui-Mei Rice, Steph Kenny, with Alan and Matt in the background.



**Right:** Listening to the presentations. **Left:** Conversation and laughter (photo: S Rice).

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