

# Conservation Corner

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August 23, 2017

After last week's side trip to the Great American Eclipse, today we'll focus our sights closer to home and the upcoming Wiegert Prairie Fall Fest. We hope you'll join us this coming Sunday, August 27, as we celebrate *Preserving the Past*. Admission to the festival is free – donations are welcome. Wiegert Prairie Farmstead is located 4 miles southeast of Palmer at 27575 615<sup>th</sup> Street.

Gates open at 10:00 a.m. and close at 5:00 p.m. Join us for worship at 10:30 a.m. at the Pioneer Church as together we sing God's praises. The PAC FFA will be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Visit with your friends and neighbors while listening to old-time country and bluegrass music by Frank Tuma and enjoying kettle corn, frybread, root beer floats, homemade pie, and ice cream.

The farmhouse, barn, crib, hog house, school house, and church will be open throughout the day. On-going activities will include butter churning, organ music, tools, pets & farm animals, and old-fashioned games. Afternoon activities will include potato digging and mule-driven prairie rides. On-going displays will include early farm machinery, photos of past celebrations, and area Indian artifacts.

Special guest this year will be Iowa's Honey Queen, Carley Raye Vannoy, who will speak during the church service and also on the prairie rides. Be sure to stop by her display for more information on honeybees, beekeeping, and pollinators in general and a chance to observe honeybees, dip or pour a beeswax candle, and sample some honey treats. We hope you can join us in welcoming Carley to the farm!

Special building this year will be the recently renovated smokehouse. The 100+ year old building has received a new lease on life with a new foundation, new sill, new door, and new paint. While moving the smokehouse and readying the site, the guys found a couple old milk glass canning lids. And that got me to thinking about this year's theme – *Preserving the Past*.

To preserve is defined as:

1. Maintaining something in its original or existing state.
2. Retaining a condition or state of affairs.
3. Maintaining or keeping alive a memory or quality.

I think all three definitions apply to the Wiegert Prairie Farmstead. Come check out this year's Fall Fest and see if you agree.

Last week our son posted this photo of tracks in freshly poured concrete on their farm. Can you guess the intruder? Remember, Neil lives in southern Laos where they usually have too much rain, not drought, and they grow rice, not corn and soybeans. This critter is the nemesis of Lao rice growers as it digs holes in the levees which allows the paddies to drain. The critters may be fermented, fried, salted, ground into paste, or added to salads and soups. If you guessed a rice field crab, you are right. And while wildlife abounds at Wiegert's, at least we don't have crab tracks in the concrete. Hope to see you at the farm!

