

❖ PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK ❖



Winter scenes at the Sioux County Ranch in December, 2008.



Randy Ruppert

The Winter Bird Hike at Bader Park brought the 2008 season of park tours to a close. Over a dozen of us enjoyed the beautiful morning of birdwatching, followed by lunch in the Bader House. Our bird list included cedar waxwings, Canada geese, a bald eagle, cardinal, hairy woodpecker, robins, bluejays, crows, tree sparrows, and a loggerhead shrike.



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF



December, 2008

The final days of 2008 included a quick preserve checkup trip to the Pearl Harbor Survivors Prairie in Buffalo County and the Guadalcanal

Memorial Prairie Ranch in Sioux County. Director Bill Whitney and new member Randy Ruppert enjoyed the landscapes of the sandhills and panhandle along the way to the beautiful high plains destination. Sights on the ranch tour included a golden eagle, herds of white-tail and mule deer and of course the rugged, wintery terrain.

Resident rancher Scott Schaefer has been busy making improvements to structures, including replacing the windows of the ranch house - a priority where winters are long and harsh. Warm hospitality prevailed, however, for Bill and Randy at Meredith Bixler's Harrison House Hotel and at the Schaefer home.

December 2: PPRI Office Manager (and then some) Amy Snyder Jones en route with Restoration Director Mike Bullerman to the final prairie restoration planting of the year - Decatur Bend in Burt County, northeastern Nebraska along the Missouri River - bringing the 2008 total to 594 acres in eight counties.



Suggested New Year's Resolutions for Members:

- Attend Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday, Jan. 17 in Aurora (see details below);
- Take full advantage of other PPRI offerings - Prairie Festival (May 22); Sioux County Ranch Weekend (June 12-14), and Bader Park and Griffith Prairie hikes and other events throughout the year;
- Volunteer! Cedar Attack is Saturday, Feb. 14; other volunteer opportunities will be announced throughout the year for taking out fencing, mowing and other maintenance tasks at Griffith Prairie & Farm, various Center-building tasks and for planting and harvesting;
- Renew your membership at the most generous level you can afford, and keep in mind PPRI's extra funding needs - SOAR and the Education Center;
- Invite others to join! Refer them to our website, and check it often yourself.

...and for Non-members:

-Become a member - then make the resolutions suggested above!

December Thank-yous:

- to Mert Griffith and Jim Senn for repairing the heater on the livestock waterer at Griffith Farm;
 - to Randy Ruppert for transportation services for the Sioux County trip, and to Scott Schaefer and Caitlin Muldoon for their hospitality;
- AND
- one more big THANK YOU to everyone who renewed their membership, volunteered their time & labor, supported SOAR and the Education Center, and made extra year-end contributions.

ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS: Saturday, 1/17/09, Bremer Community Center - 16th (Hwy 14) & L St. in Aurora; 8:30 a.m. coffee/social; 9:00 a.m. meeting. Keynote: Dr. Kelly Kindscher, University of Kansas/Kansas Biological Survey - "A New Vision for Restoration: Developing a Culture of Harvest and Use of the Planted Wild." Noon lunch catered by Fayne Petersen, \$12 - RSVP to amyppri@hamilton.net by Jan. 14.

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*Happy
New
Year!*

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