



PSC News Page 4.



The American White Pelican's migration arrives at the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge. More inside.

## Sweeten your Coffee Break with these Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha River.



American Bald Eagle, March 27, 2025  
Male returning to its nest where its mate is 'nesting'.  
Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge

## CONTENTS

### Your Window With a View of Small Town and Rural America

<i>April Awakens!</i> .....	2
Brownville.....	3
Merri's Johnson's Diary.....	3
PSC Home Baseball / Softball.....	4
<i>"Window From The Past"</i> .....	5
<b>Peru City News</b> .....	6 - 9
Kirsten Rescues Critters .....	6
<i>"James W. Crabtree"</i> by John Chatelain.....	7
<i>"Parli-Pro Part IV"</i> by Marty Peregoy.....	9
<b>Valentino's Coupon for up to Six!</b> .....	10
<b>Arbor City News</b> .....	12 - 17
Nebraska City's Morton-James Public Library.....	12
Bruce Madsen's <i>"4020"</i> .....	13
Nebraska City's <i>"Arbor Day"</i> .....	14,15
Robyn Williams' <i>"Under The Maple Tree"</i> .....	16
Empoderando a las Familias.....	18
Devon Adams' Poetry & Portraits.....	19

“Your Country Neighbor” is delivered to the following communities in Southeast Nebraska & NW Missouri.

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## *Your Country Neighbor*

*Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha*

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

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### **This Month's Writers & Contributors**

Devon Adams 19

John Chatelain 7

Stephen Hassler 2, 5

Merri Johnson 3

DiAnna Loy “Peru City News” 8

Bruce Madsen “Arbor City News” 13

Nebraska City's Morton-James Public Library 13

Marty Peregoy, “Peru City News” 6, 7, 9

Robyn Williams 16

Thank You!

*“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead  
where there is no path and leave a trail.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

*“People will forget what you said, people will forget  
what you did, but people will never forget how  
you made them feel.”*

Maya Angelou

*“Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very  
important that you do it because no one else will.”*

Ghandi

## Cover Photos

I'm pleased with the wildlife photos that I took for this issue. Swans, Snow Geese, and even Pelicans photographed well on warm, sunny days, of which there were few, but I was lucky to be there for the images on the cover as well as pages 11, 18, and 20. And my new camera helps.

I hope you enjoy my “gallery,” and be sure to check out next month's photos which I hope will include Egrets, Herons and perhaps a flock of Cormorants. And as always in nature, there is the possibility of seeing something new, different, or even rare. The marsh at the wildlife refuge is a favorite spot, but so is my back-yard bird feeder, and May is the best month for songbirds.

## April Awakens

April is here, and with it, the full embrace of Spring. The earth has softened, and vibrant colors are bursting forth. Trees are beginning to bud, and the sweet scent of blossoms fills the air. It's a time of renewal, where the landscape feels like it's taking its first deep breath after a long Winter's sleep.

April is also the month for getting outside and soaking up the longer days. With Spring rains painting the countryside in lush greens, it's the perfect time to get lost in a hike or explore the trails. There's something about the sound of rain on leaves and the sight of new life that feels like a celebration of all that's possible.

So, whether you're tending to your garden, planning a weekend getaway, or simply enjoying the beauty around you, step outside and let April surprise you with its many gifts. The world feels alive with possibility, and there's no better time to embrace it than now.

So pour a second cup of coffee or treat yourself to tea from Diana's Tea Shop in Papillion, Nebraska, and peruse “Your Country Neighbor” with it's magazine articles and poetry, small town news and festivals, and regional photos of wildlife, landscapes, and sports action. **Omaha area residents can find “Your Country Neighbor” at Bureikou Tea & More, formerly Diana's Tea Shop, in Papillion.** Their web address is; <https://www.bureikouteaandmore.com/dianas-tea>. If you go online to your-countryneighbor.com you can ‘click on it’ from page 2 of every issue..

I hope you will have a wonderful April and I ask you to clip the **Valentino's coupon** on page 10 and carry it with you, because a good meal is always in season!

Stephen



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## Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

Some time ago, I purchased a book entitled "The Fourth Quarter of Your Life," by Allen Hunt and Matthew Kelly. The authors purport to show you how to embrace what matters most in your life before it's too late. But to actually take the recommended, intentional measures to do so, the reader must first be compelled to face the reality that he or she is in the fourth quarter of life. None of this "70 is the new 50" malarkey will cut it. Based on average life expectancy, if you are 61 or older (what?! 61?), you are, in fact, in your fourth quarter. Most of us try to minimize the gravity of that fact with a joke, or an appeal to our superior genetics. A number of people do beat the odds. My own mother was independent into her early nineties, and lived to be 97, spending only her final six and a half months in a nursing home. So there.

One of my younger sisters recently turned 70. We celebrated her birthday by re-enacting a scene from her childhood and hanging a banner that read "70 is only 21 in Celsius." Talk about denying reality!! I don't even know if that is accurate in terms of temperature, but it is certainly delusional to believe that today's 70 year-olds are as fit as yesteryear's 21 year-olds. We may be healthier in some ways than our grandparents were at 70, but that is probably due mostly to advances in disease treatment and joint replacements. We really have not turned back time numerically. Of course, the childhood story is part of our family lore that also includes our mom, so I think we can be excused for resorting to sentiment to celebrate a birthday.

Perhaps we would have felt younger if we had all toasted my sister with margaritas while dancing atop the kitchen table to a Rolling Stones song. We would probably all still be recovering from various sprains and bruises (or worse) if we had attempted that. Instead, we sat securely around the kitchen table with glasses of wine, playing board games, and loving every minute of it.

Suffice it to say, I am in my Fourth Quarter. So, what to make of the book?

I have actually read only the first ten chapters, so today I opened the book randomly to Chapter 25:

Diary Continued on page 17 >>>>



## Peru State College Theatre Company Presents: The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical

Performance dates include April 10-13, 2025, at the Performing Arts Center.

The Peru State Theatre Company, in collaboration with the Music Department, proudly announces the return of musical theater to the Peru State College Performing Arts Center (PAC) with *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*. This thrilling production will run from April 10–13, 2025 and marks the college’s first musical in nearly a decade.

Adapted from Rick Riordan’s best-selling novel, *The Lightning Thief* follows the story of Percy Jackson, a teenager whose life is turned upside down when he discovers he’s the half-blood son of Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea. As Percy grapples with uncontrollable powers, an unwanted destiny, and relentless mythical monsters, he and his friends embark on an epic journey to retrieve Zeus’ stolen lightning bolt and prevent an all-out war among the gods. This rock-infused musical features a book by Joe Tracz and music and lyrics by Rob Rokicki, delivering an exciting and powerful experience for audiences of all ages.

The production is directed by Laura Gold, Associate Professor of Theatre, who is eager to showcase the immense talents of Peru State students. Gold is joined by Dr. Tanner Harrod, Assistant Professor of Music, as music director, and Dr. Rachel Green, Adjunct Voice Instructor, who will assist with teaching and coaching the cast’s vocals. The music will be brought to life by a five-piece professional band from the Omaha metropolitan area, including returning staff accompanist Liz Stinman on keyboard.

This production is especially significant as it marks the first musical at Peru State College since the 2015 performance of *The Rocky Horror Show*. Audiences can expect a dynamic blend of humor, heart, and high-energy rock music in a story that captures the spirit of Riordan’s beloved novel.

Make plans to join us at the PAC this spring for *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*. Don’t miss this exciting opportunity to witness the talents of our incredible actors, musicians, and creative team.

We look forward to welcoming you to a spectacular evening of music, adventure, and heroism!

***Your Country Neighbor***  
**Your “2-cups-of-coffee” companion**  
**including local photos and articles**  
**with the flavor of rural America.**

PSC Baseball lost both games Friday, March 21st.  
PSC v Bellevue University; 1-6 and 0-12



Below, PSC v Culver-Stockton College  
PSC won both games of Sunday’s March 23rd double-header;  
4-3 and 3-1





## Window From The Past

Stephen Hassler, Peru

Through my window on Fifth Street I watch many good people pass by. When I meet someone, I try to give them the benefit of any doubt. I often give my trust before it is earned. This somewhat naive approach has benefits and drawbacks. It accelerates acquiring friends, but it invites betrayal.

I don't like the word "hate." I dislike some people, but I don't hate anyone. If I really dislike someone or their wrongful action, I put them on "my list." Once back-stabbed, I don't bother trying to get even, I just put the person on my list. It's healthier than "getting my Irish up."

I heard recently that the opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. "Indifferent" is a good word to describe how I feel about the entries on my list. I don't like to think that I have enemies, but regardless, there's no benefit for anyone being on my list. If someone is on my list, it might be because they put me on their list first. I usually give everyone a lot of slack, so if they put me on their list, it might have been due to me calling them out for doing something wrong, or trying to do something wrong, to someone or to some group. So if that's the case, keep me on that list. I want to stay there. But possibly they were manipulated by lying gossip from someone they trusted as a friend. So who might one say is responsible?

Anyone who makes my list is helpless to get off it. They just took things too far. However, I might drop an entry from my list. I did that recently. The person didn't die, they didn't apologize or make amends, I just don't think about them anymore. They are not wanted nor needed in my world, and so I don't need them on my list. They might be worthwhile for something or to someone, but not to me.

This has just been a kind of self-thought exercise. People who might be on my list are not the type who read this paper. So if you are reading this, it's unlikely that you are on anyone's list. Good for you, and Happy Spring!

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## Reeves Provides Valuable Service

Marty Peregoy

Peru's Kirsten Reeves loves animals. All kinds - even the ones that most people would rather observe from a distance or not at all, like snakes and opossums. For the past twenty years, she has been removing them from places they don't belong to give them a second chance at life in an environment where they can thrive. Her Facebook page has numerous photos of her and her "clients" on the way to their new homes.

I called Reeves a couple of years ago when my sump pump in the basement started making a horrid noise. When I went down to investigate, I saw a small, black snake head and flickering tongue rising from the water.

I had a brief moment of panic before realizing that I had seen lots of Facebook photos of Reeves handling snakes. I immediately called her, and she was on her way. When she arrived, she tucked her flannel shirt around her hand, reached into the hole, and by the time she was done, there was five feet of live, black, rat snake hanging from her hand. Reeves was smiling.

Reeves began helping snakes at age 15. She said she's from an animal-loving family, so her parents weren't against her removing ten snakes from a property in 2005 - they just warned her to be careful. She has been bitten by non-venomous snakes once or twice: "It feels like sandpaper with little needles," she said. But most of the time they are calm and just happy to be in a better place.

Most people reading this article are thinking, "I would NEVER do that." I asked Reeves if there are any animals that she would never handle. She said she draws the line at raccoons, not because she's afraid of them - she thinks they're pretty - but because they take a lot of handling, and she doesn't have the experience. She also admitted to disliking "naked" spiders, although the fuzzy ones are o.k. She'll remove those if you ask her to.

She considers herself a rescuer, not an exterminator, so whatever she helps with goes to an appropriate environment. Recently she removed an opossum from Athena and Shawn Sherman's yard. Their dogs had been harassing it. Reeves was careful to find it a new home away from any horses, as they can pass a fatal disease to horses through droppings in water tanks.

Just last week she posted a picture of the Blue Racer snake she removed from Miranda Decker's basement. She has also helped relocate a Bull snake for Tiffany Harms, two snakes for Julie Cotton, and a snake in the fire barn. She tries to find them a place with good food, water and shelter, and often heads for the river or Peru bottoms area.

Reeves considers critter rescue one of her callings and hopes people will reach out through Facebook if they need her help. "Snakes and opossums are beneficial," she says. "Snakes control the mouse/rat population, and opossums eat lots of ticks. They deserve a second chance."

Photos by Kirsten Reeves



This opossum was responsibly relocated away from horses.



This Blue Racer is on its way to a new home by the river.



# PERU CITY NEWS

*Communication • Information • Pride In Community*

A volunteer project

supported by the Peru Community.

Thank you to everyone who participates!



## Peru Plant Exchange

Marty Peregoy

The semi-annual Peru plant exchange will occur once again the weekend after Mother's Day and Peru State College graduation from 9:00-11:00 a.m. May 17th. It will be held on the sidewalk between Plum Crazy Lady and Peru City Hall on 5th Street in downtown Peru. Trade your extra perennials, seedlings, house plants, seed packets, plant slips, pots and gardening tools for what you want or need during the first hour and a half. The last half hour you're welcome to help clean up left-overs by taking anything without exchanging.

This year we're hoping to get some new exchanges, as we've had a healthy supply of Aloe Vera, Wandering Dude, Mother of Thousands, and Airplane or Spider Plants for several years. You can still exchange those, as there are still some folks in Peru that don't own one. Plants somewhat newer to the exchange are Begonias, Arrowhead plants, Snake plants, and African Violets. If you happen to have a leggy Boston, English or Swedish Ivy, consider taking cuttings now so that we can get a few more of these into the homes of Peru. Offer to trim the plants of friends if they have something different than what you have. Plants needn't be in fancy pots. Yogurt cups, jars of water and disposable planters are all popular choices. And if you have something plant-related that you're no longer using, chances are someone in town would be happy to have it.

The exchange, which is in its 7th year, began as a beautification effort for the

## James W. Crabtree

John C. Chatelain, Omaha

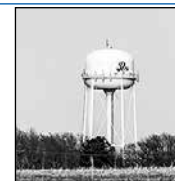
George L. Farnham, head of Peru State Normal School from 1883 to 1893, was particularly vexed by Crabtree, reported to be "clever in enlisting 'stooges' from among the newer boys' to carry out his pranks." On Halloween night, 1886, the young man established an alibi at the home of a highly respected local family, the Gilmores. They were from Cass County, living temporarily in Peru, while their sons and daughters were obtaining their education. The evening was spent playing simple games and talking about folks back home. As J. W. departed he remarked, "It is near midnight, and I must go." Hills of Peru, Nebraska Lore pp. 12-13 While he was at the Gilmore home, the "stooges" were creating their mischief, loudly calling out Crabtree's name, even though he was not present. A college teacher heard his name and accused him the next day. Crabtree's alibi was corroborated by the Gilmores. The teacher was then compelled by Farnham to apologize to the young rascal. First College: Shaping the Future Since 1867, p. 25

Louise W. Mears further reported the young man was as adroit in romance as he was in school diplomacy, outwitting "all rivals in securing for himself a bride of rare talent and family background, Miss Donna Wilson, of Nebraska City." Hills of Peru, Nebraska Lore pp. 11-14

James was born April 18, 1864 in Crabtree, Scioto County, Ohio, moving with his family to Cass County, Nebraska in the 1870s. After graduating from Peru in 1887, he began his career teaching a rural Cass County school, before making rapid strides in the educational world. He was the first alumnus to become president of Peru College (1904-10). During his administration the degree of Bachelor of Education was first awarded. "Prof. Crabtree will be remembered in Peru's history as the man who made Peru popular and a power of influence throughout Nebraska. . . . This resulted in remarkable growth of the institution, as shown by the enrollment, which for the regular year of 1909, reached the grand total of 1,453, . . . More room was necessary to accommodate the students. A new library was erected and the old library building was remodeled and equipped for a Science Hall. A new heating plant was provided, and an appropriation was secured for the new administration building." Peruvian (1917).

After leaving Peru, Crabtree served briefly as president of the Nebraska State Teachers Association before assuming the presidency of River Falls State Normal School of Wisconsin in 1911. From 1917 on, his life was spent in Washington, D. C., as Executive Secretary of the National Education Association, becoming Secretary Emeritus in 1935. Id. 14-15 Crabtree also served on President Hoover's advisory commission on education (1931-32). He authored "Roll of Honor Word Book" (1899) and "The Crabtree Speller" (1908). The Peru alum was highly regarded for keeping the National Education Association together during a period of conflict between teachers and administrators. Upon his death, the editor of the National Education Association Journal called him "a great leader, a combination of Horace Mann and Abraham Lincoln." First College: Shaping the Future Since 1867, p. 46

James W. Crabtree died June 9, 1945 at age 81 and is buried in Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D. C.



## Tuesday Literary Club Reads

DiAnna Loy, Tuesday Literary Club

Staying with our theme of senior authors, Cecilia Marnell presented *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabel Allende. Allende was born in Peru, South America, but currently lives in California and originally wrote this book in Spanish and it was subsequently translated into English. This added an extra bit of interest when reading. The story begins three weeks after New Year's Day in 2016 during a raging blizzard in Brooklyn.

We meet our first characters Lucia Maraz, from Chile, who lives in a cold basement apartment. Upstairs lives her landlord and employer, Richard Bowmaster, who is Chairman of the Dept. of Latin American Studies at New York University. Lucia is a visiting professor in Richard's department at the university. Lucia is attracted to Richard but he has shown nothing to let her know he might return her feelings. Lucia has a small sickly dog as her only companion. Richard has four cats and has chosen to venture out into the storm to take one of the cats, who has become sick, to the vet. On the way home, Richard has an anxiety attack and drops his glasses on the floor of the car. When he reaches down to get them, he runs in to the back of a white Lexus. A tiny young woman gets out. The trunk has popped open and will not stay shut; the woman is very upset. Richard tries to tell her his insurance will pay for the damages but she just gets in the car to drive away. As she shuts the door, Richard throws his business card on to her lap. We have the total cast of characters for the book!

At 9:30 that night the girl, Evelyn Ortega, turns up at Richard's door. He invites her in but she can mostly communicate in Spanish. Richard phones Lucia and asks her to come upstairs to talk to Evelyn in Spanish. Lucia comes bringing her dog. Evelyn is attracted to the dog immediately, he makes her feel safe. Evelyn confides that she is from Guatemala. She is afraid to go back to where she lives and works because she has taken the Lexus without permission. Frank Leroy, her employer, is a vicious man. She is a nanny to his handicapped son.

The three spend the night in Richard's house laying in front of the fireplace staying warm and share small bits about their backgrounds. The next morning Evelyn shares that there is a dead body in the back of the trunk of the Lexus. Richard wants to call the police but Lucia stops him. She is afraid Evelyn is undocumented and will be in big trouble. None of them will be able to explain the dead body and they all will be in big trouble. Lucia wants to get rid of the Lexus and the body. After going to look at the body, Evelyn recognizes it as Kathryn Brown, the physical therapist for the little boy. After much plotting they decide to take the Lexus and body to the Catskills Mountains. A set of complicated plans are developed.

The three set off and have many misadventures along the way. Plans are changed and changed again. The longer they are together the more they find out about each other and how they managed to leave their home countries and be living in Brooklyn. All three have heart wrenching stories. The reasons for leaving their home countries seem completely valid. The women left their home countries under threats of violence. They stay together until the end of the saga; helping each other until all three are safe.

The ending comes together nicely and it is appropriate when the author uses a quote from philosopher, Albert Camus...

"In the midst of winter, I finally found there was within me an invincible summer."

``Happy reading!''

<<<< *Plants Continued from page 7*

yards of Peru. Along with their perennials, people brought along a few extra house plants that first year, and the beautification has spread to the inside of Peru homes as well.

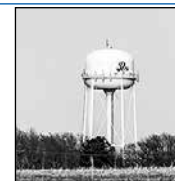
Avid city gardeners are often outside those first few warm days of spring dividing Hostas, strawberries, Irises, Black-Eyed Susans and Bee Balm, all of which can easily be transplanted. Someone said that you can toss an Iris on a bank and it will grow.

Many Peru yards have Surprise Lilies, also known as Naked Ladies, growing. You never know where they're going to pop up next year. With their long skinny bodies and frilly pink floral heads, they're a great addition to sunny banks.

The conversations at the exchange are often as popular as the opportunity to clean-out and get new plants, so if you want some advice, bring a lawn chair. If you're wondering what to do with an unhealthy plant or where to plant the newly acquired plants, the long-time gardeners of Peru can help you with that.

If you're wanting a plant and don't see it at the exchange, oftentimes there are plants available for the digging; you just have to put the word out. It's okay to bring signs listing what you're looking for with your contact information.





## You, Too, Can Become a Parli-Pro – Part IV

Marty Peregoy

This is the penultimate installment of a five-part series on the basics of parliamentary procedure. The first three articles focused on main motions, subsidiary motions and incidental motions. This article will focus on a few remaining incidental motions and general consent. There are two remaining incidental motions for us to discuss - Parliamentary Law Question/Parliamentary Inquiry and Request for/Point of Information, and both take precedence over all other business and can interrupt the proceedings, as often proceeding with the meeting is dependent upon the answer. Neither needs a second, and they are neither debatable nor amendable.

- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Suppose you are in a meeting where one important member of the group is absent. You have questions about how to proceed, such as, “Do we have a quorum?” or “Does an absent member’s vote count as a no?” That is when you state, “I have a parliamentary inquiry.” The Chair will respond with, “State your inquiry,” and you then ask your question. In large groups or conventions where a parliamentarian is present, he or she would answer your question. In smaller groups, it is hoped that the question could be correctly answered by the group’s attorney, if present; by the group chair; or by some quick on-line research.
- **Request for Information:** Formerly called “Point of Information,” the request for Information is basically a question to which the asker needs an answer before proceeding. Suppose that your group must decide whether or not to spend \$1000 on refrigerator repairs for the office refrigerator. Before deciding, you might wonder the age of the refrigerator, the price of a replacement as opposed to repair, or whether or not the budget contains sufficient funds. You may interrupt proceedings by stating either, “Point of Information” or “Request for Information.” The chair should respond with, “What is your question?” And here is the important part – you **MUST** respond with a question. This is not an opportunity to provide information **TO** the chair, but to solicit information **FROM** the chair. Anything not in the form of a question is out of order.

**General Consent:** also known as Unanimous Consent, is a situation in which no member objects (or is expected to object) to a proposal, and its use is in the hands of the chair, not the members of the governing body. The chair uses it when he or she expects all members of the group to respond favorably to an issue - most often for adjournment of the meeting. The chair might say, “Without objection, the meeting is adjourned.” If someone objects, then the chair would entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting, followed by a second and a vote. But when were you at a meeting that you did **NOT** want to end? Another use of general consent might be, “Without objection, we will move the treasurer’s report to later in the meeting when the treasurer arrives.”

The final installment of the Parli-Pro articles will concern amending motions. If you want additional information, there are numerous videos, blogs, and cheat sheets online that you can view, download and print by searching Parliamentary Procedure.



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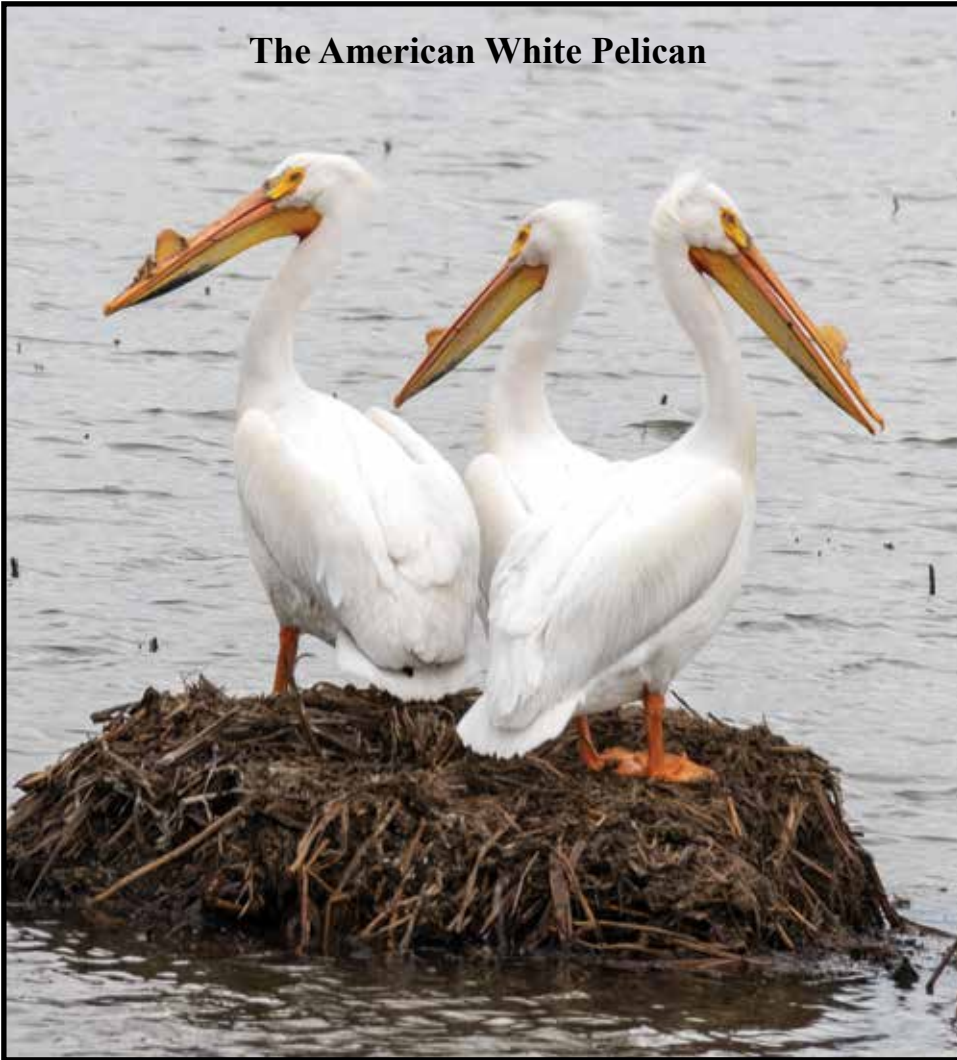
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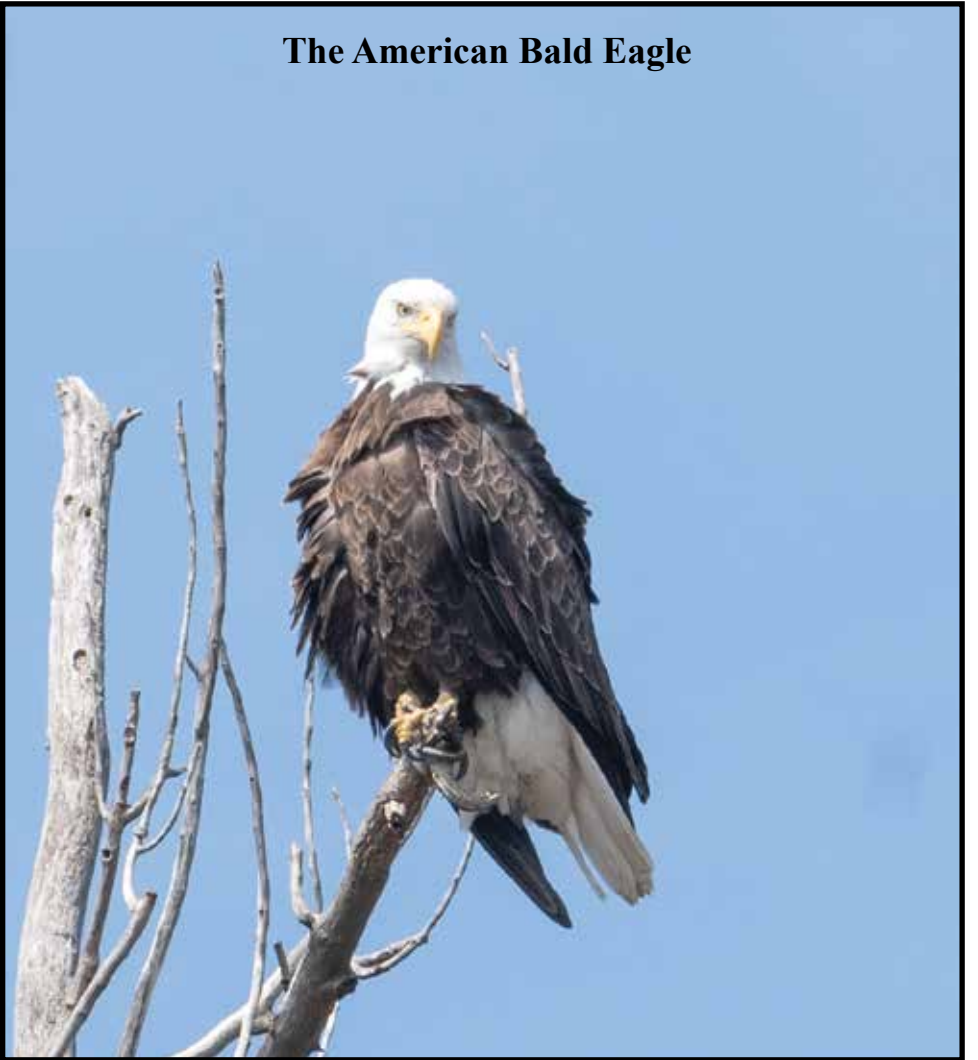
[countryneighbor@windstream.net](mailto:countryneighbor@windstream.net)



The American White Pelican



The American Bald Eagle



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# ARBOR CITY NEWS

## *Morton-James Public Library Calendar of Events April 2025*

All activities held at Morton-James Public Library (unless otherwise noted) 923 1st Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410

For questions call 402-873-5609 or visit [morton-jamespubliclibrary.com](http://morton-jamespubliclibrary.com)

### Story Time - Ages 2-6

Families Welcome! No registration.

Wednesday, April 2

10:00 AM

### Yarn Crafters Club

Join us to work on your crocheting or knitting skills and projects. Club is for all levels of crafters. Bring your own hooks, yarn, needles, whatever you need to make your yarn craft. Club members will be here to help those beginning. Free to attend.

Everyone welcome 15 and older!

Wednesday, April 2

1:30-3:00 PM

### Chess Club Every Thursday

4:00-6:00 PM

### Humanities Nebraska - Andean Folk Music and Cultures of South America

presented by Oscar Rios Pohirieth

Thursday April 3

7:00 pm

**Paint Together** – Join us to paint a rabbit on a canvas (all materials provided). Free to everyone 8+ years old. **Must have a partner to paint with for class.** Refreshments provided. **Limited spots. Must register.**

Call 402-873-5609 or email [CFoust@MJPL.ORG](mailto:CFoust@MJPL.ORG)

Saturday, April 5

10:00AM - 12:00PM

### Lego Club

Must be 8 years and older to join.

Monday, April 7

3:30-5:00PM

### Mocktails and Trivia

Sign up in Teams of 2. Adults ages 19+

Fruity Mocktails and snacks provided.

Call, email or visit the Library to register.

Friday, April 11

5:00-7:00PM

### Puzzle Tournament

Sunday, April 13

Registration required. Call 402-873-5609 for details. Check in 12:30PM

Competition 1:00-4:00PM

Day Book Club - Demon Copperhead

by Barbara Kingsolver

Tuesday, April 15

2:00 pm

### Story Time - Ages 2-6

Families Welcome! No registration.

Wednesday, April 16

10:00 AM

### Evening Book Club

Mad Honey by Jodi Picoult

Wednesday, April 16

5:30 PM

**Writer's Workshop** - Join us to **get feedback** on your own writing and to learn more about the craft of writing.

Saturday, April 19

10:00 AM

### Lego Club

Must be 8 years and older to join.

Monday, April 21

3:30-5:00PM

### Arbor Day

Friday, April 25

Library CLOSED

### Craft & Color for Arbor Day

Saturday, April 26

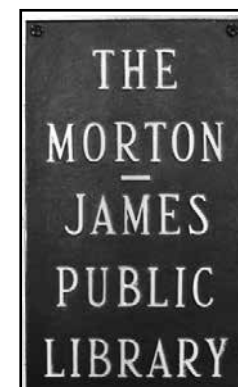
10:00 AM-11:00AM

### Used Book Event

Free will donations accepted.

Saturday, April 26

9 AM -12:30 PM





# ARBOR CITY NEWS

## News from Nebraska City

4020

Bruce Madsen

The first recollection of my existence, is being delivered  
To the dealer and put on the showroom  
I was big, I was pretty, had an attitude, was shiny green  
And full of power

I just sat there watching people walk in and out of the door  
Older ones would stop, look at me, shake their heads and say,  
“What is farming coming to? You don’t need something that big”  
Younger ones would look at me wantonly and say  
“Wow, maybe someday, I’ll be able to get one”

And there I sat, waiting, wondering who would be the lucky soul,  
That one individual, that would end up with me  
I was ready to go, ready to work, ready to make my mark  
All I needed was a place to start  
My mind set was immortal, my steel muscles were aching  
And I knew my pistons were my guarantee  
That I would be everything that I could be

Well, one day I got my wish. A young buck with blonde hair  
Walked in and looked me over  
He sat in my seat, kicked my tires, stood back and admired me from a  
Distance, nodded approval  
It was then I realized that my destiny was found  
I felt like my future was solid, I felt like my future was sound

To the dealer he talked in serious negotiation,  
Hands gestured and waved in the air  
Heads nodded yes then no, then yes again.  
Then the deal was struck, hands shook, and there was no more despair  
The blonde guy stuck his hand in his pocket, pulled out a wad of money  
And took me home, a brand new John Deere 4020

That was the beginning, and it was years ago  
Since then we have plowed and planted and worked with the sun  
Sometimes tasks were not easy, sometimes not fun  
But working together, we got the job done  
We developed a bond of appreciation and respect  
So whenever we worked, we were one

And when I got tired or feeling a little sluggish from hours of toil  
I’d get driven to the shop to get a wash and a fresh change of oil  
It would perk me up and make my day. I’d be at my max  
The only way I could ever feel any better, is if he took the time  
To shine me up, giving me a coat of wax

Yes..... I used to be the main dog, but those days are gone  
My younger relations are all bigger and better, more tastefully done  
They're all full of toggles and buttons and electronic gadgetry  
They don’t know what a crooked row looks like  
Due to their computer screen imagery  
The first time something goes wrong and they have to shut down  
Whether it's something electronic, iconic, or a faulty computer cord  
They sit there helpless and cry, and whine for a new motherboard

In our day we did it on our own, my boss had the brains and I had the brawn  
Not all the frills did we have to ease our way  
And it probably wasn’t perfect like it might be today  
But we got it done, though some days were long  
We did it, year after year, right or wrong.

Now I’m in the shed, looking out the big door  
Still here, but don’t do much anymore  
I can see what goes on but can’t do much about it. So, I just watch  
I can see the blonde guy walk across the farmyard,  
Now with grey under his hat  
He moves a little slower, leans a little, and his walk is slightly bent  
But you know, I can relate, my paint is kind of faded,  
I have a couple dents, and my left rear tire is flat.

We both know where we are going to end up. It’s inevitable  
Our strengths and powers have diminished and the  
Attitude we once had is no more  
For me, I’m just going to ease out quietly when I get to  
That big scrap pile in the sky  
And about my time here on earth, I’d never complain,  
I loved to be outside, but I was always put in the shed when it rained

Yes, It’s been a long time since I was new.  
That showroom floor is now just a vague memory  
But I don’t think I could have had it better or have expected more  
So, with the time I have left, I’m just going to sit here in this shed  
And reminisce about the past, ‘cause the memories  
I have I’m sure are enough to last.

# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*



## ARBOR DAY PLANS UNDERWAY IN NEBRASKA CITY

Nebraska City's annual Arbor Day Celebration for 2025 is scheduled for April 25-27, with the actual holiday of Arbor Day falling on Friday, April 25. Event organizers have already put plans in motion for the weekend.

Friday, April 25, includes special programs for the school children of Nebraska City, held, weather permitting, on the lawn in front of the Arbor Lodge mansion. Students in Kindergarten through 5th grade will learn a brief history of Arbor Day, the dos and don'ts of tree planting, and will be entertained by the Lincoln band The String Beans. Friday afternoon, a Commemorative Tree Planting will be held for the 2025 Arbor Day Honorees and Tree Planter of the Year.

The next morning, on Saturday, April 26, festivities begin early with a 5K/10K Fun Run on the Arbor Day Farm Conservation Trail. At 11 a.m., the Kregel Windmill Factory Museum will host an official unveiling of their National Historic Landmark plaque, followed at 1 p.m. with the Arbor Day Parade on Central Avenue. Throughout the day will be the Home, Craft, & Garden Fair at the Eagles Club.

The main event on Sunday, April 27, is the Best of the Midwest Bloody Mary Championship at the Eagles Club. Prize money is given to the Best Bar, Best Independent, Best Overall, and People's Choice.

Other events throughout the weekend include tours of the Lilac Trail at Arbor Lodge State Historical Park and a "Ride Back in Time" Car Show at Kimmel Orchard. Many local retailers will have special Arbor Day sales and all Nebraska City museums will be open for the season beginning that weekend.

For details about how to participate in events like the Fun Run, Home, Craft, & Garden Fair, or the Best of the Midwest Bloody Mary Championship - or if you'd just like general information on Arbor Day 2025 - visit [NebraskaCity.com/festival/arbor-day](http://NebraskaCity.com/festival/arbor-day). Schedule of Events booklets with details on the entire weekend will be available throughout town beginning April 22.



*Top Left:* The Arbor Lodge mansion.

*Bottom Left:* Grade school children compete in an annual poster contest; the 2024 winners are congratulated by Arbor Day Farm's Carly the Cardinal.





# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*

*Nebraska City...*

## THE HOME OF **ARBOR DAY**

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Shopping | Food Trucks | Craft Fair  
Best of Midwest Bloody Mary Championship

Learn more at  
[NebraskaCity.com/festivals](https://NebraskaCity.com/festivals)  
or just scan this QR code!



### **Blue Star Mothers Hosting Quilts of Valor Awards on May 24, 2025**

Mary Holland, Nebraska City

Blue Star Mothers, Chapter #1, in Nebraska City, will be hosting Quilt of Valor awards on Saturday, May 24, 2025 in Nebraska City at the Veterans' Memorial Building, 810 1st Corso. The event is open to the public; the ceremony will be held at 10:00 a.m.

Veterans who reside in southeast Nebraska, and have not yet been honored with a Quilt of Valor are encouraged to contact Blue Star Mothers at 402-297-3536, or P.O. Box 333, Nebraska City, NE, 68410, to request a Veteran Information Form. There is an updated waiting list for veterans to be awarded quilts.

In addition to the Memorial Day Saturday event, additional award ceremonies have been scheduled for July 4th in Brownville, August 3, in Syracuse, and November 8 in Nebraska City. Private or family-only award ceremonies can be requested.

Any service member or living veteran who served in one of the following branches: Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard are eligible. Members of the activated National Guard or active duty-special work (ADSW) reservists are included. Veterans may have served during declared war, conflicts, police actions, peacekeeping missions, and counter terrorism operations and/or times of peace. Receiving a Quilt of Valor is a once-in-a-lifetime honor.

For more information, contact

Mary Ann Holland, member of Blue Star Mothers, at 402-297-3536.



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# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*

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## Under the Maple Tree

Robyn Williams, Nebraska City

Washington is a beautiful place to be.  
It's a site to see.  
Mountainous and full of life with swaying evergreen trees,  
How wouldn't it be?  
From Vancouver to Seattle, that's where I became your bride to be.

Then, we sold our things and bought an RV.  
On our wedding day, it was so heavenly.  
We traveled for our honeymoon, oh, what a treat.  
From the east coast to the Columbia Basin, you have my heart's key.

And for our third wedding anniversary, Ephrata is where we would meet.  
Catered to with our favorite dessert, gluten free shortcake with strawberries.  
Enjoying one another, we fed each other, it was celebratory,  
All while laughing and singing under the glorious shade of the maple tree.

## NEBRASKA CITY'S FARMERS MARKET LOOKING FOR VENDORS

**The 2025 Nebraska City Farmers Market is open to new vendors, specifically those selling produce.**

"We are very interested in getting more gardeners involved," said Amy Allgood, one of the market organizers. "We advertise that the market features fresh produce, baked goods, and handmade items, but we are saturated with those last two and don't have enough of the first one."

The 2025 Farmers Market will begin for the summer season on Thursday, May 22, and runs through Thursday, August 28. The Market is open from 3:45 until 6 p.m. and encompasses the Memorial Building parking lot at the corner of 8th Street and 1st Corso and 8th Street itself from 1st Corso half a block north to the alley. Each week there is a Kids Korner with a special craft, story time, or educational activity offered free to children whose parents are visiting the market. The Kids Korner is from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Any gardeners with produce to sell who has an interest in reserving a booth at the Farmers Market this summer should contact Allgood at [amya@nebraskacity.com](mailto:amya@nebraskacity.com)

Booth space can be rented weekly or for the entire season at a discount.



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*



## **Empoderando a las Familias: El Plan de Seguridad y Acción Familiar de HWC Llega a Más de 1,150 Hogares**

**Omaha, NE (10 de marzo de 2025)** – Heartland Workers Center (HWC) continúa fortaleciendo su compromiso con las comunidades inmigrantes y subrepresentadas en Nebraska a través de sus presentaciones sobre **Plan de Seguridad y Acción Familiar**. Desde el inicio de estas presentaciones hace casi dos meses, hemos logrado involucrar a **1,150 familias**, proporcionándoles herramientas prácticas, recursos legales y estrategias de apoyo emocional para enfrentar la incertidumbre.

Estas presentaciones ofrecen orientación esencial para:

- **Personas indocumentadas** – Prepararse para una posible detención y proteger sus derechos legales.
- **Familias de estatus mixto** – Comprender sus derechos y opciones cuando un ser querido es detenido.
- **Hijos de personas detenidas** – Asignar tutela y prevenir la separación familiar.
- **Sustentadores del hogar y trabajadores esenciales** – Asegurar la estabilidad financiera y laboral.

HWC incorpora estrategias de **aprendizaje socioemocional (SEL)** en sus sesiones para ayudar a las personas a manejar el estrés, regular sus emociones y tomar decisiones informadas, incluso en momentos de crisis. Técnicas como la respiración controlada, ejercicios de conexión táctil y prácticas de atención plena han demostrado ser particularmente efectivas para ayudar a los participantes a mantener la calma durante encuentros con agentes de la ley.

### **Empoderamiento a través de la educación**

Nuestro programa se enfoca en ayudar a las familias y personas a **comprender y hacer valer sus derechos civiles**. Los participantes aprenden a expresar estos derechos en inglés y practican respuestas efectivas ante diferentes interacciones con la policía, incluyendo encuentros al conducir, en espacios públicos, en el hogar y en el trabajo. Si bien los escenarios presentados pueden ser desafiantes, nuestro enfoque interactivo fomenta un ambiente de aprendizaje positivo. Al transformar situaciones potencialmente intimidantes en experiencias de aprendizaje manejables, los participantes adoptan con facilidad estrategias de respuesta efectiva.

Estas presentaciones han sido **bien recibidas en organizaciones religiosas, socios comunitarios y a través de reuniones en hogares**, aprovechando relaciones de confianza dentro de la comunidad. HWC sigue comprometido con la difusión de información vital y el fortalecimiento del sentido de pertenencia y conciencia. Ya sea trabajando con familias individuales o congregaciones más grandes, nuestros esfuerzos contribuyen a construir comunidades más resilientes.

<<<< *Diary Continued from page 3*

The Energy Factor. The authors assert that in 2021, on average, Americans spent three hours a day watching television, and then ask the reader, “Is that what they want to be doing more than anything else in the world?” On winter days, after 6:30 p.m., Hubby and I say “yes!” Watching TV shows that give us pleasure or broaden our understanding of the world is how we want to spend our evenings. When the weather is nice, we might take a walk, or read, listen to music, etc., inside our screened porch. And we don’t feel guilty about it!


The authors conclude Chapter 25 by encouraging the reader to “start paying major attention to the people, places, things, and activities that energize you, and those that drain your energy.” I think that has more to do with how you feel mentally about what you are doing than how physically active you are. I certainly advocate for being physically active, but I’m not sure that my Fourth Quarter will be more satisfying to me, or more beneficial for anyone I interact with, if I take up running.

That being said, the book is an easy read, and a good reminder for people to assess their lives, quit procrastinating, and try to be better. But, you don’t have to wait until you’re 61 to do that. And, if you’re still above ground, it’s really never too late to start.

Happy Easter and Happy Self-Improvement, Everyone!



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Canada Geese



# P o e t r y

by *Devon Adams, Nebraska City*

## FIND THE TREASURE

Now is the time to walk in the wilds of the bottom timberlands along the Mighty Missouri river. Go slowly and stop often to spot the elusive morels who are hiding from your hungry eyes. They seem to pop up when your back is turned. Some years mix moisture and sun and heat in just the right recipe, so that you may come upon a patch of mushrooms so large that your bags will be filled and you can brag and share. Good luck!

## FOOLS AND PLANS

April is true to her Truth, which is that you shouldn't be certain that your plan will happen, until it actually happens. You can write the lists, pack the bags, fill the tank, wash the car and go to bed early, in spite of the weather forecast. You are certain the morning will be fine. Because this is YOUR PLAN. Even when you head out of the driveway that is half-full of snow, you are determined to keep going. And that works for you, until you do a 180 onto the highway and narrowly miss being crushed by a semi. Confidence doesn't trump common sense. And I'm talking about a blizzard in April!

## THE WATCHERS

Suddenly, they are here again, spiraling over the hills, watching all that is below. Vanishing without a trace, in Autumn, then coming back into Spring, this phantom horde is looking for the dead. Vultures are experts at removing remains of the formerly living creatures who are waiting for them.

## By Artist, Devon Adams PENCIL AND WATERCOLOR PORTRAITS OF

## PEOPLE, ANIMALS, & BUILDINGS

*Drawn from your photographs.*



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Devon Adams

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adamsdevon07@gmail.com 402-209-9377

## SUNDAY SUNRISE

Dawn cracks the sky with a lightning bolt that blows out the pretty purple and pink streaks painted by the rising sun. Gray fades all the colors, as a chilly rain falls on the group who has come to the top of the hill to pray and say thanks for all good things. But a storm can't dim the spirit that helps all hearts to find peace.

## SWEET SYMPHONY

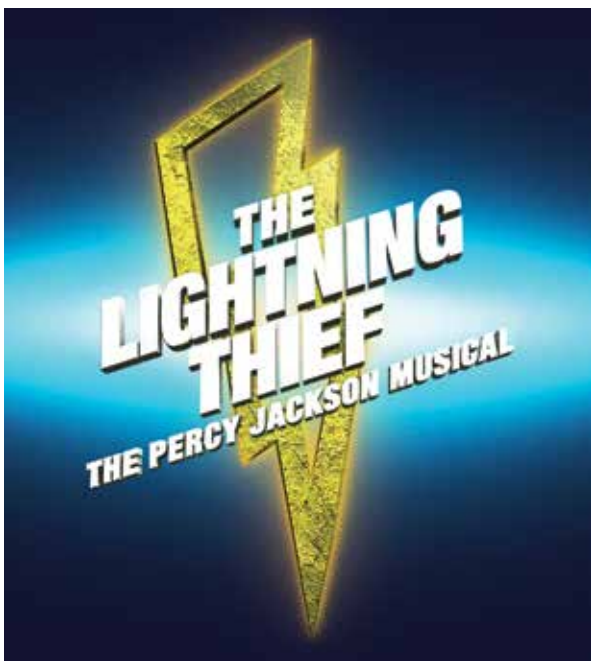
In the still of dawn, when the sky is waking to the sound of voices falling into the air from tiny throats trilling melodies written on their memories, the birds are waiting for light. They will work hard all day, building nests and raising babies and never once think about not doing it. It is what they are. And our lives are blessed to listen to the sounds of Grace.



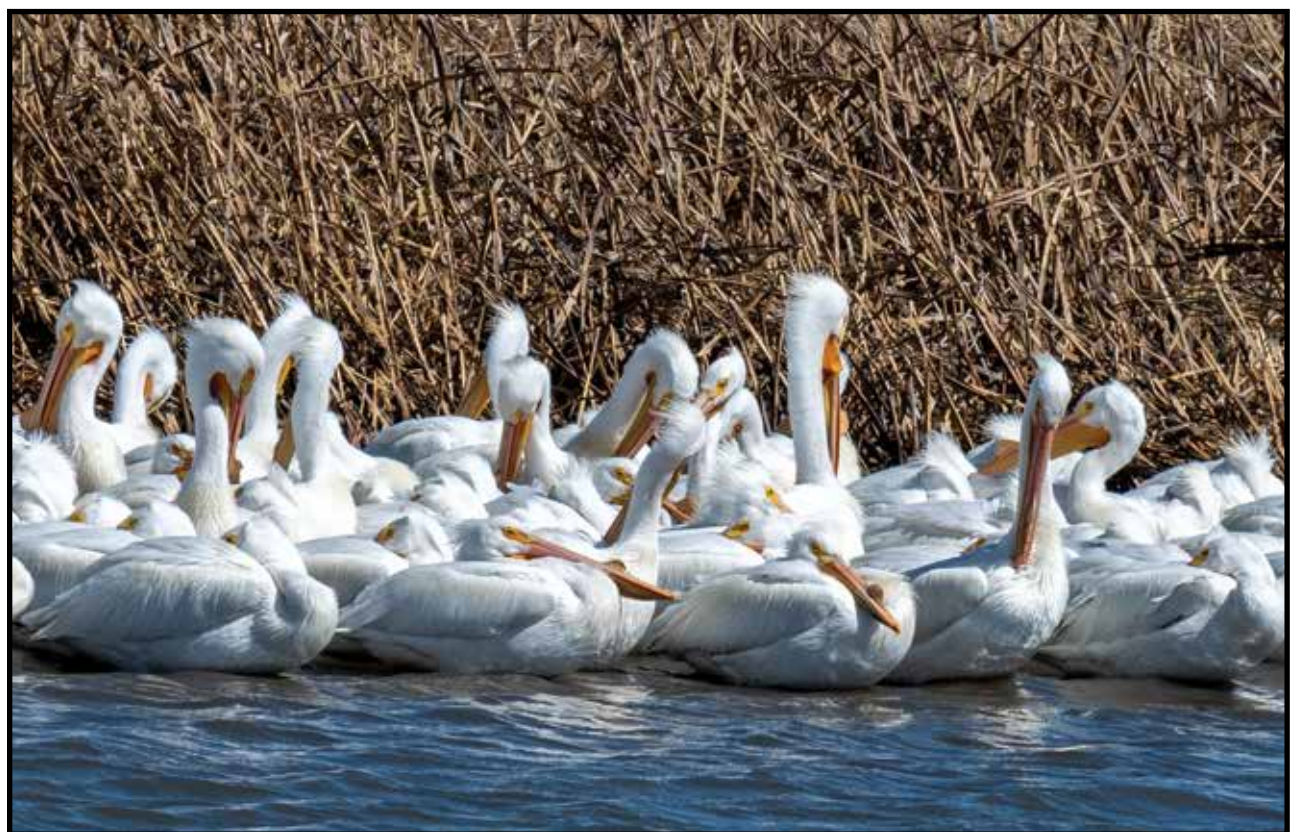
**Swans lifting off from the marsh at Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge**



Most snow geese have left the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge. Shown are Trumpeter Swans which have been present most days since late Fall. See inside for more photos of migrating Geese, Pelicans, and Swans.



**Peru Theatre Company Presents:**  
**The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical**  
See Page 3



The American White Pelican is one of only two pelicans in North America.  
The Brown Pelican stays close to the Gulf, Pacific, and Mid Atlantic coasts.