



Bald Eagles, Snow Geese, Swans, are returning to the Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge
More Wildlife Photos Inside. This Photo Taken November 23, 2024.

PSC v Culver-Stockton College
Photos page 5

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



Prior to 2010, few Trumpeter Swans were seen annually at the Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge. Last December there were almost 3000! As of November 22, 2024, 144 were present.

CONTENTS

Your Window With a View of Rural America	
<i>December!</i>	2
Merri's Diary.....	3
PSC Basketball Photos.....	3&5
PSC Football Photos.....	6
Brownville Destinations.....	7
Peru City News	8-11&14
♥ Valentino's Coupon for up to Six!	12
John Chatelain's "I Can Do It".....	14
NCCF Winners.....	15
Arbor City News	15 - 19
Nebraska City's Morton-James Public Library.....	16
Nebraska City's Winterpaloosa.....	17
Bruce Madsen's "Stephany's Poem".....	18
Photos of Christmas at the Mansion.....	18
Devon's Poetry & Sketch.....	20
Dorothy's "A Christmas Robbery".....	21
A "Window" from the past.....	21
Sheila Tinkham's Poems.....	22
For Cat-Lovers Only.....	23

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

Auburn • Brownville • Cook • Falls City • Johnson • Julian • Nebraska City

Nemaha • Papillion • Peru • Rock Port • Syracuse • Tecumseh • Verdon

Your Country Neighbor

Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha

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This Month's Writers & Contributors

Devon Adams 20

John Chatelain “Peru City News” 14

Stephen Hassler 2, 21

Merri Johnson 3

DiAnna Loy “Peru City News” 8, 10

Bruce Madsen “Arbor City News” 18

Nebraska City's Morton-James Public Library 16

Marty Peregoy, “Peru City News” 9, 10, 11

Dorothy Rieke (Passed Away on May 3, 2024) 21

Sheila Tinkham 22

Thank You!

Divine December!

A Message from your Publisher

Stephen Hassler, Peru, Nebraska

December, “the most wonderful time of the year.” December is the month of Christmas; lights, decorations, giving, friendliness, family and worship. And no one is more aware of the “giving” part than children. Not only are they a major focus of gift-giving, but the culture of Santa Claus belongs to them. Children's expressions when opening gifts, or when seeing them under the tree on Christmas morning, are as pleasing to adults as decorations, lights, and store windows. These annual customs revive our memories of our own childhood's Christmases. And today's family experiences continue through the years, creating new memories that live on.

We can count on the revival of fond memories, but what might be new for you this year? Baby's first Christmas? Perhaps a new grandchild? A long delayed family dinner? A special gift? Whatever might make this month memorable for you, I hope it's a happy experience, and one that you can share. And whatever you do, have a Merry Christmas!

Now pour a second cup of coffee and peruse “Your Country Neighbor” with it's magazine articles and poetry, rural community news and festivals, and regional photos of wildlife, landscapes and college sports.

Clip the **Valentino's coupon** on page 12 and **carry it with you!**

Here is a quote from one of my newsletters.

“We may look different, we may have different beliefs, but we all have souls. There is no difference between a Muslim soul and a Christian soul. If we could see each other's souls, we would not be killing each other over different interpretations of God.”

Lorna Byrne

“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

Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

“Christmas is a-comin’ and the goose is getting fat!!” More likely a turkey or a pig to yield a ham these days, but the traditional lyric says “goose,” and since Christmas is all about tradition, “goose” it will remain.

From the birth of my eldest sister, my family had a tradition of gathering together at my parents’ house on Christmas Eve. As we married and the extended family grew, we continued to celebrate Christmas Eve together. Eventually, mom’s little house was too small and we moved the gathering site, but it was still in our home county in northwest Iowa. After my mom passed away in July 2023, we had one final extended family gathering in her honor last Christmas Eve. We had been holding on to that gathering for years, ostensibly for mom’s sake, but I, for one, looked forward to it above all else. But, the fact that several family members had to fly to get there and others had to make long car drives, and some had other gatherings to attend, it finally came time to move on.

So, this year, the members of our generation are each starting our own extended family traditions. My family will be gathering at our son’s home. He is a thoughtful son, and asked if we wanted them to come to our house, but we are happy to go there as long as we can drive! It’s only right that our two grandkids should be able to sleep in their own beds on Christmas Eve and race downstairs in their own house to see what’s in their stockings on Christmas morning for a few years before they are completely grown up.

But, without that big family gathering as the focus of our Christmas Eve, I thought I’d take a look online for some fun ideas that our little group of seven would enjoy, or that would at least be memorable. I often find that the least perfect events are the most memorable.

I came across the German-American Christmas Eve Cucumber tradition. My dad’s family and our daughter-in-law’s family are both German, so I say that makes it Kosher for us. My husband’s family is Swedish, but he has never mentioned any particular Swedish Christmas traditions. My online source says gingerbread houses are a must. And I am intrigued to learn that Swedes like chopped beet salad at Christmas. I may have to try that recipe sometime just for myself.

Diary, *Continued on page 4* >>>>>

PSC v Culver-Stockton College

Win 80 - 75 Nov 16, 2024



<<<<< Diary, *Continued from page 3*

But, back to the Christmas Eve Cucumber. You hide a pickle on the Christmas Tree and whoever finds it gets a reward of some sort, maybe the right to open the first gift, or to choose the next game, or a small prize (a jar of pickles, perhaps?) You can buy pickle ornaments, or just set out a Gherkin to dry for a couple weeks in advance so the scent doesn't give away its hiding spot too easily.

Continuing my online search, I came across some really bizarre European traditions from centuries ago. We're not talking about the origin of the Christmas Tree or the coded meaning of the Twelve Days of Christmas song. We're talking far-out stuff here. Apparently, medieval people used to stage plays about Adam and Eve on Christmas Eve. That was mystifying until I read about other so-called Christmas traditions from that time period that were the medieval equivalent of contemporary "office" Christmas parties. So, I'm speculating that the Adam and Eve plays involved some pretty racy costuming and role playing. I think we will stick with charades based on Christmas carol titles.

A white elephant gift exchange is on tap. But I'm having trouble getting the grandkids to grasp the idea that giving away something you already have, but no longer want – and very likely receiving something you don't want – will be fun! I have assured them that the white elephant will not supplant the usual gifts we give them. I'm not sure they're convinced. My daughter is enthused and says she has the perfect thing already in mind. So, at least two of us will have fun.

A candle light church service will be the perfect ending to our evening. Whatever your perfect ending is, I hope you get it.

Pinpoint Communications Inc. Secures Second Round of NUSF 131 Reverse Auction Funds to Advance Rural Connectivity in Nebraska

Pinpoint Communications, Inc., a leading provider of fiber broadband and telecommunications services, is proud to announce its successful bids in the Second Round of NUSF 131 Reverse Auction Funds. This significant achievement marks the continued growth and Pinpoint's commitment to bridging the digital divide in rural Nebraska.

The Second Round of NUSF 131 Reverse Auction Funds will enable Pinpoint Communications, Inc. to expand its Fiber to the Home (FTTH) internet services to an additional 417 locations in rural Nebraska.

Pinpoint's will be offering speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps), to unserved and under served locations across Southeast, West Central and South Central Nebraska. With this funding, Pinpoint will enhance connectivity and empower residents with high-speed fiber internet access, unlocking opportunities for education, telemedicine, business growth and community development.

"We are thrilled with the results of the reverse auction the Nebraska Public Service Commission has implemented. Pinpoint has been active in seeking funding to deploy fiber to the home in rural areas for many years and this program is a continued example of how companies when given access to these funds can truly serve these rural Nebraskans," said Tom Shoemaker, President of Pinpoint Communications, Inc.

"This investment underscores our dedication to advancing rural connectivity and ensuring that all Nebraskans have access to reliable, high-speed internet services. With this support, we are poised to accelerate our efforts in narrowing the digital divide and fostering economic prosperity across the state."

Pinpoint Communications, Inc. has a long-standing commitment to serving rural communities, and the Second Round of NUSF 131 Reverse Auction Funds will further bolster its efforts. By deploying state-of-the-art fiber infrastructure, Pinpoint aims to provide residents and businesses in rural areas with access to fast, reliable, and affordable broadband services, thereby unlocking the full potential of digital technology.

The significance of this funding extends beyond technological advancement; it represents a tangible step toward creating more equitable opportunities for all Nebraskans. Pinpoint Communications, Inc. is dedicated to leveraging this support to drive positive change, empower communities, and foster inclusive growth across the state.

For more information about Pinpoint Communications, Inc., and its initiatives, please visit
www.pnpt.com

For specific locations check out
<https://broadbandmap.nebraska.gov>

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Win 83 - 75 Nov 16, 2024



Merry Christmas



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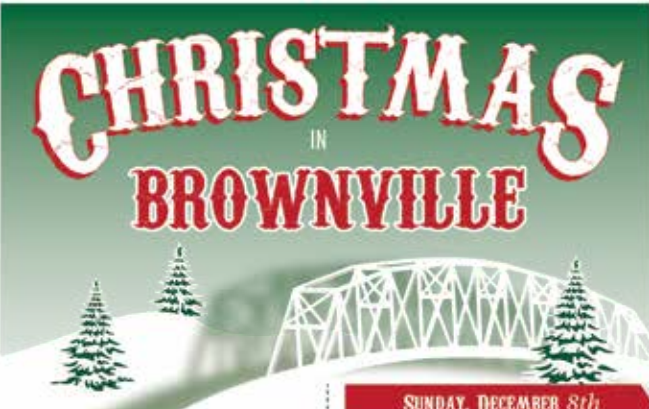


PSC v Culver-Stockton College
Win 52 - 21 Nov 2, 2024



Red-Tailed Hawk Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge, 11/22/2024.
Hawks are more “noticeable” now while hunting rodents along roads.

CHRISTMAS IN BROWNVILLE



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7th

Holiday Tour of Homes:
1 - 5pm. Tickets at Schoolhouse Art Gallery

Historical Society Annual Bake Sale:
Sage Museum 2 - 4pm

Come Visit Santa Claus - Brownville Village Theatre - Gifts for the kids - 3:30 - 4:30

Special Snow Flake Experience at Ice House Museum 4:30 - 5:30pm

Caroling and Tree Lighting with Refreshments: Rohman Garden 5:30 - 6pm.

- Sales & refreshments at Lone Tree Saloon
- Sale - warm beverage at Bird's Nest Trading Post
- 30% off at Whiskey Run Creek Winery & Distillery
- Stroll the lighted trail

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8th


Holiday Tour of Homes:
1 - 4pm. Tickets at Schoolhouse Art Gallery

Throughout the day:

- Sales & refreshments at Lone Tree Saloon
- Sale - warm beverage at Bird's Nest Trading Post
- Stroll the lighted trail

Bringing It Home!

A Glorious musical celebration of the Christmas Season created and staged by Alex Rybeck for Brownville. Brownville Concert Hall
December 13th & 14th: 7:30pm
December 15th: 2pm



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Nativities from Around the World

DiAnna Loy

From Peru to Kazakhstan, the Philippines to Bali, and Viet Nam to France a wide variety of countries grace the display of Nativities in the Loy/Nevitt home. It all started when DiAnna moved to Peru in 2000 and purchased a clay Nativity from the used bookstore in downtown Peru. They range in size from one to five inches. Some were purchased and many have been gifts from special friends. However they came to be a part of the collection, they are all special and unique. St. Francis of Assisi is often credited with creating the first Nativity scene.



The set that started it all; from Peru, South America.



A selection of sets representing one made in the Philippines and one in Mexico as well as one painted by a friend, among other smaller sets.



Made in the image of the Shipibo people living at the head waters of the Amazon River. The wise people bring treasures from the rain forest.



Hand carved from olive wood in the Holy Land.
The grain in the wood is spectacular.



Created through the years because a two year old insisted the animals needed to see Baby Jesus, too.

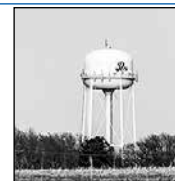
PERU CITY NEWS

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supported by the Peru Community.

Thank you to everyone who participates!



Confessions of a Wayward Mom

Marty Peregoy

In sixth grade, my son Ethan went with the Teen-Life group on a field trip to Worlds of Fun. While there he played the crane game. You know the one; several cheap things are encased in glass, with a tin crane hovering over them. For a quarter, maybe 50 cents with inflation, a player can activate the crane, hover over his gift of choice, grasp the object, maneuver the crane to the drop box, and drop the item into it, all within the time span of a minute or less. Those who are blessed with the ability to operate a hand crank, and there aren't many, are the proud owners of new junk.

It was in one such burst of pride that Ethan got his first non-disposable lighter. When he showed it to me upon his return, I tried not to be appalled. It had a decorative little bunny in a bow tie on the front, but despite the innocuous decoration, it was still a lighter.

"Can we get some lighter fluid for it?" he asked me, spaniel eyes pleading?
"Ummm...that's a big no," I thought. But did I say it? Of course not. He was full of pride. How could I shoot him down?

"What would you use it for? You don't smoke," I said with a good deal of confidence. He was only in sixth grade. I had conveniently forgotten that I'd tried my first cigarette in 8th grade when my best friend and I were trespassing in her brother's bedroom to listen to the Beatles sing, "Let It Be." That experience will always be associated with the painful realization that not only does blowing smoke out your nose NOT look elegant, it hurts like hell.

"I wouldn't use it without you knowing it. I promise," he said earnestly.

I caved, but not without reservations. I kept putting off the trip to the store, hoping that he would forget. He did not. Around his fiftieth reminder, we happened to be passing a tobacco shop near the intersection of 27th and Randolph Street in Lincoln. Some of you may be familiar with its colorful appearance. It's in a rather dilapidated building near the pawn shop on the corner, and its windows are filled with reflective foil and neon advertisements.

"O.K.," I said. "Today's the day," I added as I signaled my turn and pulled around back to the parking lot. Rather than walk around to the front, I waved the boys (the fourth grader was riding shotgun that day) through the back door. The first thing the boys noticed was the collec-

Wayward *Continued on page 10 >>>>>*

A little silliness doesn't hurt

Marety Peregoy

The other day I was having my first cup of coffee and staring out the kitchen window. It must have been around 7:00 a.m., because it was daylight. Staring back at me from within three feet of the chicken/duck houses was a fully-grown coyote.

I immediately went to grab my phone, thinking I needed a photo of this oddity, but by the time I found it, the coyote was gone. I went outside, phone in hand, just in case. There was no sign of him, and evidently he had been in stealth mode, because neither the chickens nor the ducks had a clue that they had been considered for breakfast.

When it happened again the next day, I was concerned. I yelled, "You get outa my yard!" (as we old folks do) at the offender, but I was thinking he probably was too hungry to listen. It was time for a trip to the upstairs closet, where the pellet gun is kept.

While I was climbing the stairs, the guilt started getting to me. It's not that I was going to kill the coyote. First of all, I can't hit the broad side of a barn, and second, I'd never intentionally kill something unless it was actively harming my animals. I just wanted to scare it off with a big bang. I worried that maybe it was just a mama coyote trying to feed hungry little coyotes.

For a brief moment, I thought of the pulled pork in my freezer and what a good meal it would make for a hungry 4-legged family. And then I thought of that family coming back to my house for regular meals day after day and what a pain that would be. And truth be told, I could imagine the comments I'd get. They'd be very similar to the ones I made when my 92-year-old friend was feeding three generations of raccoons leftovers on his porch in Lincoln every night. They were quite fond of Valentino's spaghetti.

So, after clearing the cobwebs off the Daisy air rifle, I hunted through my jewelry box for the little can of pellets and took them both downstairs.

That's when I realized that the only thing I remembered about loading the air rifle loaned to me by my brother for just such an occasion was that it was stronger than I was. It required tipping it upside down with the barrel on the rug and using my foot for the necessary leverage to break it open in the middle. That's probably why he didn't seem reluctant to give it a new home.

Once it was open, I couldn't remember where the pellets went. I called my friend Kelly, whose husband used to hunt, and asked if I could bring a gun over to get some advice. I could. I went outside to dry fire it after shaking it to see whether or not it rattled – safety first – and then I put it in the front seat where it was visible, and I put the little can of pellets in the back seat.

Kelly and Dave were sitting together on a bench in her front yard, and she quickly gave up her seat to me. Dave and I started a thorough examination of the air rifle as the main street traffic continued to drive past, and that's when I realized how we must look.

I swear to you, it was at that point that I started thinking with a down-South accent. I was "sit-ting in the yard with m'side arm" and I was only seconds away from saying, "Lookee here at this here hole in the barrel." All of a sudden, I was reliving that familiar scene from Hee-Haw, where they're gathered "all spraddle-legged in rockin' chairs, totin' guns 'n pitchforks."

"So," I said to Dave, as Kelly was looking for a Daisy air rifle owner's manual on her phone, "Whut do ya 'spose them folks goin' past is a thinkin' when they see us sittin' out here with this here gun? It kinda reminds ye of Hee-Haw, don't it?" And I began to sing.

"Well, where...are you tonight? Why did you leave...me here all alone?" At that point, I realized Dave had joined me in song. We made it through the entire verse, including the blowing of the raspberry in, "She met another and *blurp* she was gone."

The three of us burst into laughter, and Kelly asked us what we'd been drinking. We hadn't. That's when I realized that a little silliness now and then is a good thing. I had gone over there after a day of mild stress with the coyote and gun problems and all, and now I was grinning ear to ear and reliving my teenage years in the 1970's. We could all do with a little more silliness in our lives.

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Tuesday Literary Club Reads

DiAnna Loy, Tuesday Literary Club

With November we begin our new theme of Senior Authors. The book chosen to start our new year was *Broken and Chained: My First Thirty Days in the Hell Called Detox* by Lori Gottula. We were honored to have Ms. Gottula join us at the Auburn Memorial Library to talk about her book. Lori is a native of southeastern Nebraska, currently living in rural Steinauer. She is a longtime freelance writer. Fear initially kept her from publishing this book; she and her husband were widely involved in their community; well known and respected. This book would lay her bare; open her life to the world for everyone's scrutiny.

In 2012 Lori was a successful business owner, writer, volunteer, wife, mom, grandma, lost Christian, and addict. "Behind closed doors, I was taking medication that stole my soul so gradually that I had no idea anything was even happening to me," Lori said. Lori had injured her back and was taking only her prescribed medication and never more than the prescribed amount. Lori was also using alcohol daily. She was also addicted to people-pleasing, food, and codependent relationships. A counselor had told her that she needed to change her life soon and drastically or she would not be around much longer. Lori took him seriously and sought out a treatment center to begin her journey back to a clean and sober life.

Lori checked herself in at the treatment center she had chosen but knew from the way she was treated and the way the other clients in her room were treated the first night that she would not be able to stay at that facility. As soon as possible the next morning she called her husband to come get her. She still wanted to continue her journey back to sobriety, but she knew this was not the place for her to be successful. A hospital rehabilitation center in Lincoln was suggested to them but she was not accepted as she did not meet their criteria for a weekend admission. They did offer some valuable advice and the name of a doctor who might help. Ultimately, Lori ended up at home going through all the stages of detox on her own. As she was telling her story, I found myself wondering how much time had passed; it seemed like she had gone through so much. Soon Lori would mention the period of time that had passed, and I found myself amazed that she was able to endure all the things that had transpired; it just seemed like too much for the human body to handle. Lori found a counselor that she trusted and that was straight with her about what she could expect and what she needed to do to be successful.

In this book, Lori only covers the first 30 days of her treatment process. She is frank and holds nothing back; the reading is brutal at times. She began taking notes that eventually became this book that first night at the treatment center. She told me that even if she hadn't, each and every detail of those 30 days was crystal clear in her mind; that she would never forget even a minute of it.

Lori's presentation of the book was thorough and thought provoking; it prompted a lively discussion. The book itself was well written and engaging. Several members expressed that they were glad she had joined us and shared her book with us. The time reading this book and meeting with Lori was well spent and I look forward to reading her next book, *Breaking the Chains*. I thank Lori for opening her heart and her life to public inspection that someone else might benefit from her experiences.

Happy reading!

tion of tall, blown glass vases on a metal shelf to the right.

"How pretty!" I agreed, as they pointed them out.

Within seconds, a sales person was at our side. "Wow!" I thought. "Tobacco shops have great service!"

"Um, Ma'am? You can't bring kids in here. It's not appropriate."

Geeze! Did she think I was going to buy them cigarettes? It was at that moment that I realized the vases we'd just admired were NOT what I thought they were.

"We're just here for lighter fluid. Do you have that?" I wasn't turning around and walking out without my butane. It had taken fifty reminders to get me there, and I wasn't looking forward to an additional 50 before I found another dealer.

Within seconds, the can of lighter fluid was in my hand. The price tag said two dollars.

"Tax?" I questioned, concerned because I had very little cash and might have to use my debit card.

"No, no tax. Just give me \$2 and go," she said, practically dragging me by the arm that was digging in my purse for spare change. I poured it into her cupped hand and she didn't even count it before pulling the door closed behind us. "No 'Thanks, come again!'" I muttered under my breath as I herded the kids to the vehicle.

"That was weird," Ethan said, as we climbed into the car.

"Very," I said, as I stuck the can of butane into the cup holder of the Honda and started the engine.

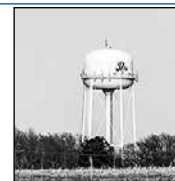
When we got home, I filled the lighter, let him make fire four or five times and then tucked it away on a high shelf in the cupboard after he'd left the room. It came in handy when lighting birthday candles or the odd stick of incense now and then, but eventually it was thrown away during a kitchen cleaning frenzy, and it wasn't missed.

I hadn't discussed the drug-related aspects of our adventure with the kids at the time, but some years later, when they were old enough to drive and quote anti-drug messages from TV, the older one said, "Hey, Mom. Do you remember when you took us to that head shop?" Boy, do conversations die down quickly at a family reunion!

PERU CITY NEWS

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Peru Community Christmas Plans

Marty Peregoy

By now, you've probably noticed that the long-awaited Rob Walker Memorial Christmas Tree has been planted in between the gazebo and pergola just south of the Western National Bank. Proceeds from raffle ticket sales of the queen-sized quilt were used to purchase a 5.5' Blue Spruce that was planted by several community members in early October.

Kelly Adams and I are excited to decorate the tree after Thanksgiving, and the gazebo as well, so that they may be used December 8th for Santa's visit and the official tree-lighting and caroling. We hope to bring the Christmas spirit to life throughout that little area.

Starting Thanksgiving weekend, we hope that the nine old light poles in the downtown area will be available for seasonal decorating by creative community members. The city has contracted with a company to remove them, since Mary successfully applied for a grant to replace them, but we are hoping they will still be around through the first week in January.

If you'd like to reserve a pole and enter the decorating contest, contact Cate Wyckoff at 928-451-4556 or wyckoffcate@gmail.com for guidelines. The fee for entering the contest is \$5.00. The winner will receive two thirds of the fee pot, while the runner up will receive the remaining third. Judging by a panel of mystery judges will take place December 7th. Should the poles be slated for removal before the contest is completed, entry fees will be returned, and entrants will have a chance to remove their decorations.

The timeline and location for activities on December 8th are as follows:

11:00-3:00 p.m. – Breakfast Buffet with holiday beverages will be available at KJ Whitehorse, 605 5th Street.

3:15 p.m. – Santa arrives. Children may visit with him in the gazebo just south of Western National Bank at 622 5th Street and collect a bag of fruit and candy, courtesy of the Peru Volunteer Fire Department. A photographer will be available to take pictures of kids with Santa and their family. The photos will be made available on-line for free download. As each child's visit with Santa concludes, the child and an adult should make their way to NorthRidge Church at 808 5th Street.

4:15-5:15 p.m. – NorthRidge Church, 808 5th Street, activities include drinking hot cocoa, eating cookies, making Christmas ornaments, listening to a Christmas story, and receiving a warm scarf (47 available). Cocoa and cookies are courtesy of Western National Bank.

5:15- 5:45 p.m. – Gather around the Rob Walker Memorial Christmas Tree south of Western National Bank for the lighting of the tree, the singing of a few carols, the drawing for the winner of the queen-sized quilt, and announcement of the winner and runner-up of the pole-decorating contest. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. We want this to be the kick-off for our Community Christmas Spirit this year and for many years to come.



St. Clara's Catholic Church
604 6th Street

Pastor Fr. Timothy Danek
Mass - Sunday 8:30 am

Confessions - Sunday 8:00-8:20 am



Northridge Church
808 5th Street

Pastor Daniel Hutchison
Services - Sunday 10:00 am



Peru Community Church
520 Nebraska Street

Pastors Raymond & Rebecca Girard
Services - Sunday 10:45 am

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JOHN DEERE



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

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Nemaha • Papillion • Peru • Rock Port • Syracuse • Tecumseh • Verdon**

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PERU CITY NEWS

Communication • Information • Pride In Community

A volunteer project
supported by the Peru Community.
Thank you to everyone who participates!



I Can Do It! John C. Chatelain, Omaha

The old timers who built the farms and businesses of early Peru did not allow obstacles to stop them. The earliest ones waited eagerly for riverboats to arrive with loads of merchandise.

There were no federal agricultural agencies, SBA loans or grant programs to rely on. The rugged souls rolled up their sleeves, opened retail stores and repair shops, planted fruit trees and vineyards, raised gardens, chickens, livestock and multitudes of children. A few of them had the temerity to start a college, before the State of Nebraska even existed.

The pioneers demonstrated that success is a state of mind. Henry Ford confidently proclaimed, “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t – you’re right.”

A number of folks in Peru have the “I can do it,” mentality. At the risk of leaving someone out, “Your Country Neighbor” and the Allgood’s “KJ Whitehorse” come to mind, along with Preston and Sylvie’s “Bookshire” and the Wemhoff’s, “Plum Crazy Lady.”

These businesses are wonderful, but there is a dire need for more and the possibilities are endless. How about a yard clean-up business? It would be much in demand and the barrier to entry is low. With a pick-up truck, chainsaw, clippers, shovel, rake, reasonable rates and a little word-of-mouth advertising you could be in business. A gutter cleaning business requires extreme caution, but very little capital. A wood working shop, a home bakery or a taco truck could make a great side hustle.

The “I can do it” spirit could also apply to volunteer city beautification projects. Why wait on someone else to do it? Identify the activity, get a few friends together and enjoy the satisfaction afterward.

If you have an idea for a business or civic project, declare it. Put detail into the vision. Believe unwaveringly in the reality of your dream and feel the way you would if you were already enjoying success. Repeat to yourself, “I can do it, I can ..., I can ...”, every day for at least 30 days. Something good is certain to happen.

Finally, remember a sense of gratitude is essential to success and happiness.

John & Jean Chatelain’s current project on 5th Street, Peru, Nebraska.



ARBOR CITY NEWS

News from Nebraska City

NCCFF Announces the Fall Winners of Dixon Scholarships

Nancy Feeney NCCFF Communications Director

It is with sadness that the Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund announces the recent passing of the generous donor who anonymously established the Dixon Scholarship earlier this year. Ervin 'Brub' Earl Dixon, 82, of Nebraska City wanted to create a scholarship to put technical training within the reach of more people in his community for decades to come.

Following Mr. Dixon's specific wishes, this scholarship is designed for Nebraska City students and/or workers of any age who are pursuing or wish to pursue careers in technical fields such as agriculture, skilled trades and technical sciences, health care, manufacturing and transportation.

These \$1,000 Dixon Scholarships will be offered every six months to residents of Nebraska City or graduates of any high school located in Nebraska City. On the day of Mr. Dixon's death, the NCCFF Scholarship Committee was in the process of approving the second group of annual recipients of the Dixon Scholarships. These recipients are Cael Kreifel, Alexandra Southard and Nathaniel John Stukenholtz.

Cael Kreifel said, "I think the Dixon Scholarship provides a confidence boost for any applicant that receives it. It lets you know someone is believing in you enough to give you the money to help you achieve."

Alexandra Southard said, "I've developed a strong interest in landscape design and environmental conservation." Alexandra hopes to work in landscape design and management where she can contribute to creating greener spaces and promoting sustainable practices.

Nathaniel John Stukenholtz said, "Having this scholarship has helped relieve some of my stress for paying my bills and fees for school and allows me to focus more on my education." Nathaniel encourages other students to apply for the Dixon Scholarship. "I say give it a chance, because if you don't try, you won't succeed. It's good to know that there are people out there willing to help you when you need it."

Any Nebraska City resident pursuing a certificate, diploma or associate degree program at any publicly accredited Nebraska community college or technical school is eligible to apply for this new scholarship. If no candidates residing in Nebraska City apply, then the scholarship may be awarded to residents of Otoe County. Applicants must intend to live and work within the state of Nebraska. Scholarships may be renewed upon re-application and satisfactory academic progress, with preference given to renewing students over new applicants.

The next application deadline is March 1, 2025. Applications can be downloaded at nebraskacitycommunityfoundation.org. To request an application by email, contact:

nccommunityfoundationfund@gmail.org

The Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund is a local, non-profit organization focused on investing in the people of Nebraska City and inspiring a culture of giving by developing knowledge, skills, leadership and the commitment necessary for community engagement. Since its founding in 2000, NCCFF has invested over \$6.2 million in the people of Nebraska City. The Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation. Learn more at;

www.NebraskaCityCommunityFoundation.org or
www.facebook.com/NCCFF.

NCCFF Announces 2024 Non-Traditional Scholarship Winners

Nancy Feeney NCCFF Communications Director

This fall, Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund (NCCFF) is pleased to present four more Non-Traditional Scholarships to adult students in the Nebraska City community who are seeking to improve their skills in current jobs or help them secure jobs in a different field.

These \$2,000 scholarships are open to individuals who have not been on a continuous course of study since high school graduation and who now wish to pursue more education. Since this scholarship was begun in 2001, NCCFF has given over \$130,000 to 89 Nebraska City non-traditional students, helping them to reach their career goals.

Winning NCCFF Non-Traditional Scholarships this year are Tanya Lee, Sierran Nutter, Natalie Turner and Emily Wiebeck.

Tanya Lee, a Nebraska City resident for 21 years, is a speech-language pathologist at NCECBVI (Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired). In the summer, she works in nearby skilled care facilities where she provides speech therapy to the elderly.

Sierran Nutter thinks the Non-Traditional Scholarship is a great opportunity to improve your education on anything you want. "I truly appreciate this opportunity to gain knowledge on being an administrator by receiving this scholarship!"

Natalie Turner said, "If you are thinking of applying for this scholarship, 'Just Do It'!! There is nothing wrong with putting yourself out there and asking your community for help."

Emily Wiebeck is thankful to have received this scholarship. "It helps lighten the financial burden of paying to further my education," she said. "I am excited to use the opportunity to pay it forward in my teaching and coaching throughout the wider community."

This scholarship is a prime example of NCCFF's mission of "investing in people" and improving the lives of people in this community. To download a scholarship application, go to: www.nebraskacitycommunityfoundation.org and click on: Scholarship Application.

ARBOR CITY NEWS

Morton-James Public Library Calendar of Events November 2024

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



Lego Club

Must be 8 years and older to join. No registration.

Monday, December 2 3:30-5:00 PM

Story Time

Ages 2-6. Families Welcome! No registration.

Wednesday, December 4 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, and MJPL will have some patterns available. Free to attend. Everyone welcome 15 and older!

Wednesday, December 4 1:30-3:00 PM

Chess Club

Every Thursday 4:00-6:00 PM

Humanities Nebraska-

Terry Lane presenting "Meet Buffalo Bill"

Thursday, December 5 7:00 PM

Paint Together- Limited Seating

Must Register 8 years and up.

Must have a partner to paint with for class.

Call 402-873-5609

Saturday, December 7 10:00 AM- Noon

Library Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 11 4:00 PM

Lego Club

Must be 8 years and older to join. No registration.

Monday, December 16 3:30-5:00 PM

Story Time

Ages 2-6. Families Welcome! No registration.

Wednesday, December 18 10:00 AM

Winterpalooza (new location)

at the Nebraska City Veterans Memorial Building

810 1st Corso

Saturday, December 21 featuring:

9a-11a Limestone Coffee Co. (outside)

9a-12p NCTC Winter Market and Craft Fair

**10a-noon Free photos with Santa, Crafts and Cookies
courtesy of Morton-James Public Library**

2p-4p Christmas Bingo

7p-9p The Flyovers in Concert -Ticketed event

Brought to you by the Nebraska City Creative District

6p Cocktail Hour cash bar

\$25 per ticket or \$35 for ticket and dessert

Scan to purchase tickets.



December 25-26

Library Closed for Christmas Holiday

MJPL's Kimmel Gallery December Exhibit
"The Nebraska City News-Press:
Past, Present and Future"
December 4-28, 2024

ARBOR CITY NEWS

News from Nebraska City



JOIN US FOR NEBRASKA CITY'S WINTERPALOOZA!

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 21

VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING
(810 1ST CORSO)
NEBRASKA CITY

9-11a LIMESTONE COFFEE CO.

9a-12p MORTON JAMES PUBLIC LIBRARY WINTERPALOOZA EVENTS - FREE!

Picture with Santa/Giveaways/Craft Kits/Toy Drawings

9a-12p WINTER MARKET & CRAFT FAIR

2-4p CHRISTMAS BINGO

7-9p THE FLYOVERS

With 6p Cocktail Hour \$25 per ticket/\$35 for ticket+dessert

Scan the QR code for tickets!



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The Snow Geese will increase their presence at the Refuge until the marsh freezes over. Then they will move South. Largest presence will probably be February, right before they head back North.

December 2024

Your Country Neighbor

17

ARBOR CITY NEWS

News from Nebraska City

Stephany's Poem

Bruce Madsen

I remember the day well, there was bright sunshine
When we brought our daughter home for the very first time
She was tiny and sweet, so little to hold
A precious gift, like purest gold.

Her skin was so fair and her eyes so blue
To me she had wings and a halo too.
I was just as proud as I could be,
She was Daddy's little girl, and we named her Stephany

She grew older with time like little girls do
Ponytails, braids and lip-gloss too
Little girl feelings and little girl cares
She was a pretty little thing with long blonde hair

Next in her life her school years came
From grade school to college, she worked hard to gain
The educations she needed to stand on her own
And faith and the wisdom to go it alone.

And those years too have come and gone
Time keeps marching on and on
I am no longer the man in her life
Daddy's little girl is now another man's wife

They share a love that's deep and true
They're happy together, that makes me happy too.
Together they'll deal with the powers that be
And face life head on, inseparably.

Now it's April of two thousand two
A cycle of life is beginning anew
A sweet little child was born into life
Just like one was for me and my wife.

This brand-new child has a wonderful start
A Mom and a Dad full of love in their hearts
May this young little life so fragile and new,
Be blessed with God's blessing its whole life through.

Christmas Decor in the Morton Mansion



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- Bridges
- Tooth Extractions
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Arbor City News

is a monthly news section in
Your Country Neighbor
 A Southeast Nebraska
 Regional Magazine (w/News)

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This pair appears to be occupying this nest in the Refuge. Watch for nesting in early Spring and chicks in May, leaving the nest in June.

Auburn 1901 N Street 402.274.2444
 Humboldt 713 4th Street 402.862.2321
 Nebraska City 620 Central Avenue 402.873.3715

P o e t r y

O e t r y

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by Devon Adams, Peru

BE STILL

When noise becomes fear,
close your mind against
panic and be still.
Listen for the fall of a leaf
that is impossible to hear
unless you imagine it.
Breathe so slowly that you
can feel your heart expand.
Gaze through the intricate
branches of a tree and find
the sky spots that are puzzle
pieces made of air.
Hang your jumbled thoughts
on a star and leave them
hanging there.
Peace is a place not far away.

STAR POWER

Tonight is clear
and cold and
some of the stars
from the Milky Way
have fallen into the
cedar grove that
stands on top of
the hill, or so it seems.
If you stand at an
angle, you can line
them up with the
tops of the trees,
making magic
decorations for
Christmas Eve!

SNOWLIGHT

Blue bright
in the sky on the
day after the way
the snow blew
away all the dreams
of summer days,
and now it's tomorrow.
Stare into the glare
and go snow blind
until some gray clouds
come to stay.
Facets on flakes throw
diamonds in the air
that are fakes.
But beauty is richer
than money!

FIRST LIGHT

Out of the black
comes a gray
that starts to glow
and grow until
it becomes
DAWN, painted
over the stars in
bright streaks of
fire and light.
Night is gone like
the figment of
a dream on the
edge of waking.

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with the flavor of rural America.

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11x14 mat: \$35
16x20 mat: \$55

Send to:

Devon Adams
P.O. Box 192 Peru, NE 68421
Phone: 402-209-9377
adamsdevon07@gmail.com

SOLSTICE

Revolutions come around
and turn around, in the way
of the world, and cycles
circle into years.
And years come and go,
as we come and stay awhile,
before time takes us away
to another level.
But the energy of life goes
on into tomorrow and
after that.

STAY

It's okay to
stay
awhile today.
Feel the sun
warm
your chilly
bones,
and let your
mind
off it's
short leash.

A Christmas Robbery

Dorothy Rieke

Years ago, trips to Omaha were quite special. During those days with the car we owned and a distance of over fifty miles, our family seldom traveled that far from home.

At that time, Dad owned a Massey Harris tractor that sometimes needed repairs. Just north of the Union Pacific Train Station was a parts store with a clerk who always knew exactly what part was needed to correct tractor problems. I recall one trip, especially. It was time to shop for Christmas presents. We always thought that we could locate nicer gifts for a cheaper price in Omaha, so we were delighted when Dad told us he was going to Omaha during the last week in November.

Wearing our “go to town clothes,” we left the farm experiencing great anticipation for the day. All day, Mother and I shopped. Late in the afternoon, we entered Kilpatrick’s Department Store. Seeing some pretty pillowcases that would be nice gifts, I set the two filled shopping bags on the floor on each side of me. Mother and I looked at the pillowcases and then decided to move on. It was then that I realized that one of my shopping bags was gone.

We excitedly told the clerk who seemed unaffected with the theft. Maybe it happened daily. I do not know. We were heartsick. Money was scarce at that time. However, Mother decided that she must return to Woolworths and again buy seven boxes of chocolate cherries and seven children’s books. These were Christmas gifts for her rural school students.

Fortunately, the thief took the wrong bag. The other bag contained an expensive pair of shoes and a blouse adding up to more money than the candy and books. Totally disgusted, I hoped that the thief got violently ill eating all those chocolates and bored with reading children’s books!

Dorothy was a teacher before she was a professional writer, and her readers, as well as her students, will find echoes of the past that will resonate in their hearts.

Dorothy was deceased in May 2024. She always worked ahead and provided “Your Country Neighbor” with articles for all of 2024. This Christmas article is the last I have from her to print, but there are monthly articles by Dorothy that date back several years which can be accessed online at;

<http://www.yourcountryneighbor.com>

A “Window” From The Past

Stephen Hassler, Peru

Memories, Milestones, and A Mother’s Smile

I expect all of us who have lived through “interesting times” have special memories that will never leave us. On my list is the assassination of President John Kennedy, the Challenger disaster, seeing Darla for the first time, and seeing her for the last time.

My grandfather wrote in his diary about spotting the first Robin of the year, a welcome signal for him that warmer weather was coming and the bitter cold nights working in the Omaha stockyards would soon give way to Springtime temperatures. No doubt his memory of the first Robin helped him keep faith on those cold Winter nights herding hogs through the maze of pens and alleys that were the Omaha Stockyards.

There was an episode of Downton Abbey in which ‘his lordship’ announced to his family and staff that the war (World War I) was over. It reminded me of my mother relating her memory of the news that World War II had ended. She was a housewife on a farm in Iowa and rushed out of the house and into the field to tell my father, “The war is over!”

I wonder what other moments were important memories to my parents. One died too young and the other didn’t talk much about the past. What were their lives like as newlyweds? What happy times or sad times did they reflect back on? Which events were random and which were results of personal life decisions? I wish I could understand better what their lives were like; the lives I didn’t know. I suspect they were hard, and perhaps at times, unfortunate.

Imagine if parents kept a diary or a journal chronicling their daily lives, or at least the milestones on their journey through life. Later, their children could reconnect, and recall those experiences in their minds, and reflect in their adult years what they let pass by earlier in life.

Photo albums help with this, but if a person wrote down their thoughts and feelings describing those birthdays, holidays, and vacations, what a treasured companion to the photo album!

My sister remembers our mother’s favorite Christmas ornament; a vintage angel with sparkling wings and a gown of many strands of pink thread. She remembers that our mother would smile admiringly at it hanging on the tree. I don’t remember the ornament but the memory of that angel is a go-between connecting my sister to our mother’s smile. That particular connection to a moment in her childhood no longer exists; the angel’s threaded gown unraveled long ago. Nor is its image in any photos with the family Christmas tree. But my sister has the memory of that smile, and the image of the angel that creates a present-day connection to a special time.

Some memories are just milestones, signposts, but others are more intimate. Sometimes we reach back in time to connect with a smile, a kiss, or a feeling. By grasping at the threads of long-ago memories, we can sew a fabric of love, connection, and deeper understandings of those from whom we came, as well as of ourselves.

Suggestion; begin a journal by listing three things each day, for which you are grateful.

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Christmas

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

Christmas... does it mean Christ's mass
Because that is how the Christian world celebrated
But to me Christmas means the joy of Innocence
Before war and sin and chaos descends
There is a space for peace and hope and possibility
Because a new babe new life means new possibilities and this
Christmas between opening gifts and quaffing egg nog, think
of that 14 year old
Mary who said yes to life
And so transformed the world
By her one act of faith
And maybe we can worship and say yes
To God, to nature, to faith
Say yes to all that baby Jesus represents
And so start afresh... 2025!

December

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

Why was December chosen for Christmas?
In the west more exact the Roman empire
December was the month of Saturnalia celebrating Saturn,
God of agriculture and for more than a week, you got drunk
and ate loads of food, gave gifts and gambled
And enjoyed yourselves the Roman way...
Well when Pope I and all the powers that be were casting
around for a good date for Christmas
using a date around the time of Saturnalia seemed like a good
way to usurp some of the old Roman holiday's appeal
Voila! Dec 25 is Christmas.

Yule

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

There were pagans in the North
Who worshiped the Norse gods
The idea of Yule
Was the celebration of the winter solstice with
feasting and drinking
Many cattle were slaughtered because of lack of feed
This pagan festival merged with Christmas,
So the feast between seasons commenced
The yule log was lit Christmas Eve
And kept burning the 12 days of Christmas until Epiphany or
little Christmas when the 3 wise men arrived and gave gifts to
Baby Jesus
The fire represented light and warmth and to the Celts a plea to
the sun to return to full radiance...
Today the French and many others cook a Buche du Noel or
yule log to celebrate Christmas.
Raise your glass of egg nog and toast to
A good Yule or Christmas!

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

Share this publication with friends.
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This Page For Cat Lovers Only



My Kittens



Hide
&
Seek

Smoky Sleeps...



...like This





Martin Jewelry

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