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 1921 HARLAN STREET - FALLS CITY, NE



Neighborhood Closet's new location,
911 Central Avenue in Auburn.

Neighborhood Closet

by Sandra Streit

Neighborhood Closet would like to thank the community for their donations that help families in crisis.

The store's history started out as a dream. A single parent raised her son for twelve years. They had some good times and bad times. It would have been easier, if a store like the Neighborhood Closet had existed.

In February of 2000 was the grand opening of the Neighborhood Closet. The store is like a Salvation Army Store or a Goodwill store. The Neighborhood Closet is small part of Project Response. Project Response is a nonprofit organization that helps victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and families in crisis.

The Neighborhood Closet is open to the public. Families in crisis and clients of Project Response get a voucher to go through the store free.

Today, the store has a problem. Expenses are more than income. There are no grants to help out with this problem. Sales and cash donations are the only income. Last year, the Neighborhood closet was in the red for (\$6800). The year before it was in the red for (\$4500). The Project Response board has given the store a challenge to turn the loss to a gain or the store will close.

No one wants to see the store close. Many families have been served at the Neighborhood Closet. In the month of August 2005, the store served \$965 worth of vouchers (FREE) and over \$200 of gift certificates (FREE) for hurricane victims from New Orleans. The store is here to serve.

Neighborhood Closet has moved to 911 Central Avenue on Highway 136. This is a new start to help many families. Community, we need your help! Continue to bring donations of clothes and shoes to the back door of the Neighborhood Closet. The donated items that are not used in the store will be given to the Red Cross.

Thank you, *Your Country Neighbor* for the advertisements in your newspaper and for many customers from Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and the local area. Sandy Streit, Manager. 402-274-5202

**ATTENTION:
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(ONE DAY COUPON) Tuesday thru Friday
Open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Expires December 30, 2005 Saturday
10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Neighborhood Closet has moved to:
911 Central Ave. Auburn, Nebraska



The Gift of Giving

by Stephen Hassler

Growing up in a low income family, a percentage of our Christmas gifts were 'recycled' from the previous year. I gift-wrapped my old toys that were no longer very special to me, and helped make Christmas a little better for my brother and sister. I have forgotten the receiving, but I remember how my Christmases were better for the giving.

Can you pause in your busy holiday season to sort through the clothes in your closets for those items you don't wear very often or not at all? With very little effort you might help a child feel warmer this season, assist an unemployed single parent make a good impression in a job interview, and add some warmth to your own holiday experience.

In Auburn, remember the *Neighborhood Closet* for clothing, and *St. Francis Gift & Thrift* for household items.

In Nebraska City, the *Salvation Army Store*.

In Seneca, *The Right Stuff*.

It's enough that most people experience hard times at least once in their lives. But everyone should experience the gift of giving as often as possible.

Your Country Neighbor is grateful to have had a small part in such an important service for Southeast Nebraska. And if this publication has done anything to help bring peace to a child or family, your publisher humbly requests that we all try to do more. Thank you, and Merry Christmas to everyone.



TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM

SATURDAY
10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

CLOSED SUNDAY & MONDAY

Whisler's Hunting & Fishing Report

by Josh Whisler
Photos Provided by Author



Fishing:

The Missouri River has been lowered for the winter months. And fishing season on the river is obviously over for this year. The rock structures used to channel the river and the clear water flowing, are still worth a look. Soon enough the ice will be flowing and the ducks and eagles will be common sights near the river's edge.

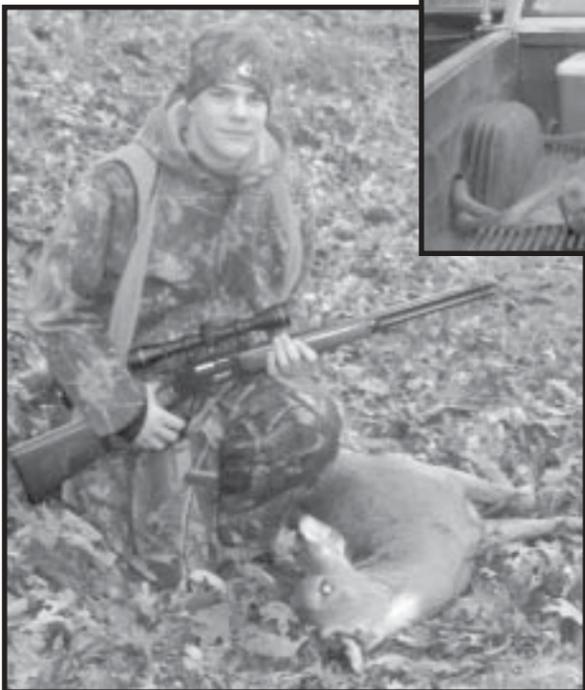
Hunting:

Turkey and Deer Seasons are in full swing. Fall Turkey opened October 15th and is closed for the 10 days of the rifle deer season and reopens to the end of November. There are plenty of birds and deer around. This part of the state offers a bonus deer tag with a special permit called "Seasons Choice". The Season Choice allows the hunter to bag two antlerless deer in an effort to control the growing deer population. The bucks are the least of our worries in this area. The cover is good – the food sources are good too. That makes for a growing herd that the locals have to deal with on a daily basis. Dodging darting deer on the local road ways with your vehicle, whether it be highways or byways, is a big problem.

This month's hunting pictures are a couple lucky ducks that bagged their regular rifle season deer. The first is Jeff Dewitt from Omaha with his first buck (Jeff attends Peru State College). Next is Reese Whisler shown with a big doe bagged on a Season Choice Tag.

Upcoming Hunting Seasons:

Cock Pheasant	Oct. 29 - Jan. 31
Quail	Oct. 29 - Jan. 31
Grouse - East Zone	Sept. 17 - Dec. 31
Grouse - West Zone	Sept. 17 - Dec. 31
Partridge	Oct. 29 - Jan. 31
Snipe	Sept. 1 - Dec. 16
Squirrel	Aug. 1 - Jan. 31
Cottontail	Sept. 1 - Feb. 28
Jackrabbit	Sept. 1 - Feb. 28
Archery Deer (Statewide)	Sept. 15 – Nov. 11 & Nov. 21 – Dec. 31
Duck (Low Plains Late)	Oct. 22 – Jan. 1
Dark Goose (East Unit)	Oct 22 – Jan. 22
White Front Goose (Statewide)	Oct. 1 – Dec. 11
Light Goose (Statewide)	Oct. 1 – Jan. 13



Hunting is good now with some real nice weather. It's been nice all fall to get out and hunt when you don't have to wear a lot of clothes. The cold is yet to come and sometimes that's makes hunting a little hard but more challenging. You really need to get out and try some of the fine hunting Nebraska has to offer. Give it a try. You won't be sorry. Remember I'm not an expert but I have my share of luck. I wonder if the experts are having any luck today? So until next time "Happy Hunting & Fishing."

Diary of an Unemployed Housewife

By Merri Johnson, Auburn, NE

Soup supper season is in full swing again. My church is always one of the first in town to hold its annual fall social hall event. Or, in our case, "fellowship" hall event. We Missouri Synod Lutherans are keenly aware of the nuances of language. The term "social," when used in the context of a church-sponsored event, is a tad too secular. "Socializing" might evolve into card-playing or square-dancing. Whereas "fellowship" connotes a more sedate and circumspect pastime, i.e., innocuous conversation about the weather and such, while seated on unpadded folding chairs, crammed in so tightly you couldn't do anything but talk even if you dared.

But I digress. I was talking about soup suppers. Truly, I don't believe it's the soup, or the conversation, that draws people to these humble gatherings. It's the homemade pies.

We fed a record number of guests this year, and we didn't run out of soup or crackers or cakes. But we ran out of pies with an hour remaining and no way of knowing how many more people to expect!

Trust me, the disappointment on the faces of the latecomers when they discover the homemade pie is gone is not pretty. Of course we had made a run to the neighborhood grocery for bakery pies. Unfortunately, or maybe not, they were pretty much sold out of pies, too, which makes me wonder if a few members fudged on the "homemade" criteria for supplying pies for the supper. Hmmm.

Anyway, the ladies attempted to arrange the remaining homemade desserts and bakery cookies in an appealing fashion, hoping the visual array would avert notice that there was no pie. This failed, of course. Pie connoisseurs cannot be deceived by such trickery.

I myself am a pie lover and baker. Fruit pies are my favorite, if, and this is a big IF, the crust is up to my standards. When dining out, I make a point of locating the pie case to perform a visual inspection. The crust must be flaky and nicely browned. Once, in a restaurant where the pies were not displayed, I asked the waitress to bring a slice so that I might see it before ordering. You'd have thought I had asked her how much she weighed. It was apparent no one had made such an audacious request before. She brought the pie, but the crust was doughy and I declined to order it. She really wasn't happy with me.

Many women lament that they can't make good pie crust. It's really not that difficult. Perhaps the most important element in the technique is loving pie yourself. My dad loved pies and my mom baked a lot of them for his field lunches, coffee breaks, Sunday dinners, you name it. I called my mom the other day to ask if she remembered specifically teaching me how to make pie crust. Neither one of us could recall a formal lesson, so I must have learned it by observation. Thanks, mom. Here's to your one-handed rolling pin: may you wield it for many more years.



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Poetry, etc.

SO THEY ARE CLOSING THE STORE

by Shirley Neddenriep

Earl May, that giant, that pioneer of garden plants and supplies, is losing. Another empty building. Another need to go somewhere else for supplies.

Each Spring people scurry around buying plants, seeds, seed potatoes, trees, shrubs, from the variety store, from the grocery store, from, well, the gas station.

All spring and summer plant sales from other stores siphoned off sales from the traditional supplier, Earl May. Sales is the bottom line. If sales dip too low, the business fails.

Now consumers will be faced with a lack of service that had traditionally been provided by the Earl May store. There, a gardener could refer to huge volumes of information. Gardener's questions about tripe, yellow leaves, dying pines, could be answered by turning the pages of those volumes.

Earl May helpers would come, well-informed about each situation, to problem solve. They could go directly to the shelf to find the correct controlling chemical or fertilizer for any ailment. Or offer management plans. They offered landscaping services and gift certificates. Gift certificates from Earl May were special, I could go and pick what I really liked, something within my capabilities, something tough that would live in the rugged, dry, windy, arid, exposed place we call a garden.

A few years ago the encroachment of farm implements, farm trucks, farm pickups got to be threatening to our peace and tranquility. Their drivers were beginning a pattern of parking closer and closer to our house. You could read the odometer of a pickup from the living room.

To keep our home from looking like a machinery station parking lot, we bought and planted a row of four Gold-tipped prostrate junipers to separate living space from farm space.

I selected the little shrubs myself from the catalog at Earl May's store. Each species, pictured in full living color in the store catalogs, included growth patterns, where to plant, how to maintain and possible disease or insect enemies of the plant.

The store only had two of the variety I chose, but the staff ordered two more for us. Next Spring at planting time I picked them up and we completed the row, watered in the container plants and mulched them with wood chips.

They are looking good and so far have performed as a living fence between the house and the driveway. Orchids! to Earl May for providing advice, plants, fertilizer, mulch and hints for treating the new green growth.

The County Extension Office could provide some help with plants, but you have to go there, or call, different than one-on-one contact found at the Earl May store. One could buy a pet fish or a parakeet from Earl May, and advice about how to handle a well one or a sick one. Of course, a sick parakeet is a dead one, like a duck. And where could a person be entertained by a large Macaw that sat his perch in the Earl May store without having to travel to Argentina?

You know by now that I will miss the garden supply center of our county seat. Next: the jewelry store. What's to become of us?



Downtown Shenandoah in Autumn.
I will include this colorful scene at
www.yourcountryneighbor.com

CHRISTMAS IN OTHER PLACES

by Lila Meyerkorth

When my sister and I were in Hawaii one November, we had the opportunity to enjoy some of their Christmas traditions. We walked about a half mile to the Liberty House, all the while fascinated with the many large poinsettia's growing along the way. They were many times larger than any we had ever seen. By the time we got there our clothes were damp and our hairdo ruined, as it rained lightly all the way. But we actually enjoyed it and were amazed we hardly felt damp at all. It was a wonderful trip, but we were glad we were going to be back in Nebraska at Christmas time.

The one time I was South for Christmas, made it hardly seem like Christmas at all. Disney World was great entertainment. Its 43 square miles of theme parks and resorts, and undeveloped green space were very attractive. The Fountain and Chocolate Shop was a must for my sweet tooth, and the musical groups playing Christmas carols were a delight. But I got really homesick when I saw the Candy House, wishing my grandchildren were with me. The huge Christmas tree handsomely decorated on Main Street USA helped to give me the Christmas spirit. And there are many other attractions, but it just wasn't quite Christmas without the cold and snow in Nebraska!

THANK YOU

At the end of the year is a good time to say
This will be my last for a while.
Other ideals are pulling on me
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Thank you, YOUR COUNTRY NEIGHBOR
And all you supporters too.
We'll explore new territory, new experiences
To that adventurous nature be true.

ADIEU!

LOVE WAS EASY

by devon Adams

She was very young and thought

that love was easy.

He told her everything

that she wanted him to say.

He seemed to be the best

for her of any that she'd known.

She saw only what she wanted

him to be and never thought

that things could change.

She planned their future

until he left her with his lies.

The man she'd loved did not exist.

She found instead a hollow man

who led her to the truth.

Poetry, etc.

Apple Cider

by Kay Marks

"Cider," he said, "Isn't that just apple juice?"

"Oh, no," I say, "Cider is wild turkeys brazenly crossing the road on the way to Percival, Iowa.

It is white sheets hanging on the line, wild plums, and falling leaves at Waubonsie Park.

Cider is old barns and old men who still wear bib overalls and talk about shucking corn and threshing crews. It is a team of horses named Babe and Whiskey pulling memories behind a plow.

Cider is cousin to pickles steeping in crocks, fresh-squeezed lemonade, peach jam and potatoes stowed in the same fruit cellar you hid in when the tornado took your farm.

Drinking cider is a ritual where you contemplate the meaning of gravity, the purpose of sweat bees, and the scariness of reflections that peer back from the depths of cisterns and wells.

It is murkiness and clarity as one.

It is yearning and reward."

I give him a drink from a chipped jelly glass and wait for his response.

"Now," he says, "I understand."

"Apple juice," I say, "however, is just apple juice."



Just South of Hiawatha;
I'll bet these Canada Geese stay for the Winter.
Here's another possibility for my web site.

A Country Confection

by Jan Chism Wright, © 12/17/99

Powdered sugar sifts slowly down
round rows of caramel corn stubble.
Cardinals burn like mini red hots
in branches of black licorice trees.

Gingerbread farm houses nestle
mid pine breaks of creme de menthe
as cotton candy curls from chimneys
rising over roofs rimmed in popsicles.

Hot chocolate rocky roads ribbon
past festive candy cane mailboxes
while rivers of molasses flow below
bridges iced with sugar frosting.

Tootsie roll and tinsel fences hold
herds of white and dark Hershey cows
and giant marshmallow hay bales.
Nebraska must be Christmas country.

LIKE DIAMONDS SINGING

by Devon Adams

He came on the early morning train
and got off at the station
when the sky turned pale.
Things looked familiar.
Trees were as tall as ever
and barns and houses stood
in their well-worn places.
Voices from cows and horses called
their owners for their breakfast meal
but grew silent as they heard
the new arrival sing a prayer
of thanksgiving to the wind.
This mockingbird had copied
songs from other birds
but made them all his own.
He flew into the trees and hung
his notes on all the branches.
They sparkled there
like diamonds singing.



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The Face of Drought

by Karen Ott

A Nebraska Farm Report from the Western Plains

Morrill marks midday with a blast of a noon whistle. In truth it's not really a whistle, it's a siren mounted on a tall pole behind the fire hall, but it's always been called a whistle and so far no one has come up with a good reason to call it anything else.

During the summer, when I'm working in the garden, I'm able hear both Morrill and Lyman's noon whistle. Oddly enough they sound a couple of minutes apart, as if the few miles between the small towns translates into an equivalent time difference. If I'm exceptionally busy I'll work straight through Morrill's whistle, but when I hear Lyman's I know it's time to go indoors and get dinner on the table.

The whistle does more than tell time. On occasion it yells 'fire', or warns of approaching tornadoes, or proclaims accident or illness. This week Tuesday it blasted Morrill and adjacent countryside with a frantic distress call.

It had started out an ordinary day. Customers came and went at the tire shop and the 'across the street' café, the one with the farm-scene mural painted on its east wall, served the usual patrons: the early morning breakfast lovers, the midmorning coffee gossips, the noontime hamburger and fries crowd.

School was still in session, the long holiday weekend wouldn't start until Wednesday afternoon, and the sound of childish laughter drifted down Center Avenue like it does every day during recesses which run off energy and make memories.

The village electrical crew was out in the late November sunshine hanging the town's Christmas decorations. Bound and determined to finish the job they had started a few days earlier they moved the bucket truck from one light pole to another, stringing greenery, hanging banners, dressing the streets in holiday finery.

A few homeowners, inspired by the city crew, were out doing their own decorating. Stapling white icicle lights to their eaves, and wrapping strings of colored ones around shrubs and trees, their homes would sport a rather eclectic mix of decorations for a few days...at least until they removed the weather beaten Halloween and Thanksgiving do-dads hanging from doors and windows.

I was at home when it happened. I had left the tire shop around twelve thirty with two tired and cranky grandsons, and had just put them down, along with blankets and teddies, for an afternoon of snoozing when the phone rang.

"Mom", our son Matthew said, "I think Kelley Bean just blew up." I heard the screaming siren in the background, the concern in his voice, and felt fear for the people who had been working in the mill just a block and a half from the tire shop.

A few minutes later he called again. The siren was still shrieking, but this time the sound was overlaid by the shrill blasts of ambulance sirens. My heart sank.

Initially disorder and confusion reigned. Some thought one of the mile-long coal trains, which speed through town once every few minutes, had derailed and smashed into a railside building, others believed the lumber yard had collapsed. But when the smoke cleared it was discovered that the top of a tall feed-mill elevator had blown off like a champagne cork.

The culprit was bean dust. For a few days prior to the explosion employees had been transferring some 'hot'...not stolen, just poor quality...beans from the elevator to waiting trucks, and the movement had somehow triggered the dust detonation. The fiery blast not only blew the top from one of the three giant silver and blue elevators which stand track-side, but also destroyed the maze of catwalks and elevator augers which connect them.

Eventually the sirens fell silent, the dirt and dust and smoke cleared...and Morrill held its breath; waiting, hoping, praying.

Then a miracle happened.

There were no twisted and crumpled bodes beneath the wreckage; no broken bones, no internal injuries, no deep lacerations. There would be no empty chairs at evening supper tables, no desperate calls to distant family, no wails of grief or holiday funerals with silent, ashen faced Thanksgiving widows holding the hands of confused, fatherless children.

There were no injuries at all.

As the horror of what could have been dissolved into the relief of what was, we could only wonder at our luck and marvel at our good fortune.

Christmas is still a few weeks away but our small community has already received a gift beyond measure...the gift of life.

It's the best gift of all.

Karen

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by Joe Smith

I have a better name for those systems but I won't put it down here. By the time you go through all those numbers you forgot why you called. They are very maddening to say the least. They are supposed to save time? That is something like the computer was supposed to save paper. Now there is another joke too. I think some people (like me) just get mad and hang up. I tried to order some ink for my printer on the net. I spent an hour and never did get it ordered. There was a time when you could call up and order what you wanted by actually talking to a live person. There are some companies that still do that. That is where I do my business if I can. I guess if everybody felt like I do about that system they would have to junk it, that would be a blessing. I can stand 3-4 choices but to do it over and over? Once you get past the first hurdle then they stick in another one, try to jump that one and then there is still another, by that time you punched the wrong one somewhere and it left you just holding the phone waiting for some soul to answer. After about a minute of waiting they press a busy signal. Boy I can see why they are busy. They are trying to think up more ways to make it hard for you to talk to a live air breathing person. Most don't speak the same English as I do. So I hang up and say to H— with it. I'll do something else. Who ever thought of this idea was a moron. Think of the people that are put out of work by this gadget. Think of the business they lose when people get mad and hang up. And the recording that says "Your call is valuable to us, please wait for the next available person." Then they come on and tell you, you could get the same information by just going to their website. Heck if you had wanted the website you would have gone there in the first place. Besides that, every website you want on, wants your life history and a password you forgot. "Man! Which password did I use here? No that wasn't it. I'll just have to send them an email and have them send it to me, again". You have no idea how many websites require a password. This is on top of going through 30 minutes of the auto system. You need a pocket notebook to write all the different passwords. It is a good life if you don't weaken, I keep telling myself.

I keep reminding myself how much fun it is to use one of these computers. What really gets me though is to watch some people just walk right through all this stuff with apparently great ease. Somebody can show me how to do this one step, but by the time I need it again I have already forgotten how to do it. I guess I've been conked on the head once to often. Maybe if I had started earlier in life it might have helped. The kids now-a-days are brought up with all of this and take it in stride, like second nature. Really, a computer is a fine tool if it works. Same with anything I guess.
Joe



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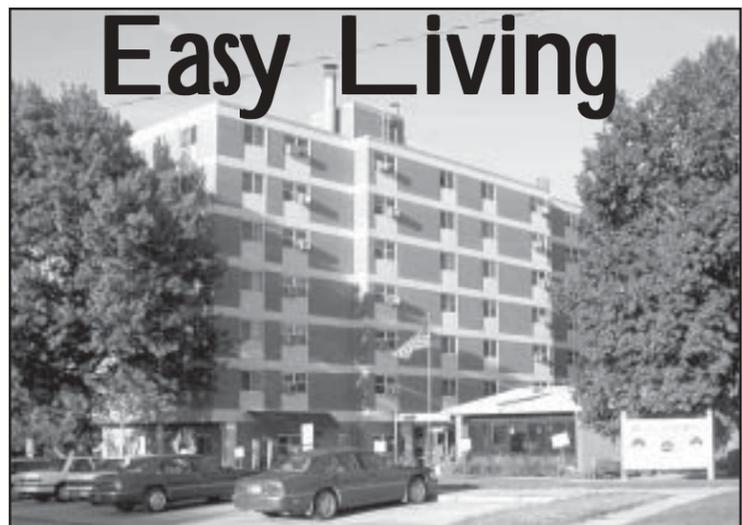
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