



“Seldom Seen” Buckeye Butterfly
Photo taken in Peru, May 2024



Canada Geese family at the Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge, May 18, 2024

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“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

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Jubilant June!

A Message from your Publisher, Stephen Hassler, Peru, Nebraska

It's the season for small town festivals, from Nebraska City's "Arbor Day" to Brownville's "Old Time Autumn." **June 8th is Peru's "Old Man River Days."**

Feed the birds! TSC in Nebraska City is my source for black oil sunflower seed, and they make this publication available to their customers. Migrating songbirds and nesting locals require energy this time of year. And the price of 40# has come down!

Garden plants are sprouting all over. Snow shovel scraping has given way to lawn mower buzzing. So pour a second cup of coffee (or tea), at Brookshire Coffee in Peru, or Diana's Tea Shop in Papillion, and peruse "Your Country Neighbor" with its magazine articles and poetry, small town news and festivals, and regional photos of wildlife and landscapes.

Enjoy June. Don't forget Dad! Watch for butterflies!
Clip the **Valentino's coupon** on the back page and **carry it with you!**

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Thank You!

THANK YOU TRACTOR SUPPLY

Of Auburn

For the supplies donated to Peru's
Clean-up Day

Dorothy Rieke passed away on May 3, 2024

I am sad to have heard of the passing in May of Dorothy Rieke, a published, professional writer and long-time contributor to "Your Country Neighbor." We will all miss her articles, although her daughter has given me permission to continue to publish the articles that Dorothy rushed to me in order to be "through for this year." Coincidentally, the last submitted article is titled, "Secrets To Living." This month's article is on page 21. Rest in Peace, Dorothy, and 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

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

The Underground Railway Station

The Late Frieda Burston

We didn't know whether we would ever meet again, so we pretended that this last trip together would be just a fun trip. We would take our time, stop on the way for all the tourist attractions, buy cotton candy and balloons for Lulu, and take off our shoes to walk in the sand. Abe had been transferred to Photo Intelligence and was being sent to Japan. The Air Force needed engineers to read aerial photos, and find the safest routes for the US Army to enter the big cities of Japan. He had one more month of training left, in Salina, Kansas. Then parting. At Jacksonville, Florida we took off our shoes and walked on the beach. We ate hot dogs, we bought cotton candy, we drank sweet cold soda pop. We went to all the attractions, even the Psychic.

Now I was not one for seeking out Psychics. I had been a gypsy fortune teller for years at Halloween school carnivals, and I could tell a fortune with cards or hands or head bumps. I learned a "real genuine Gypsy fortune-telling" when I was still a little girl, and I thought that I was really psychic until I got to school and took advanced courses of Psychology— then I saw what a clever fake I had been, and how I had fooled myself along with everyone else.

See, my mother was born in Romania. Her father died and her mother remarried when she was five, and she was left with a young nanny while my grandmother and step-grandfather went to Paris for their honeymoon. The nanny was full of anxieties about boy friends, and was always running down to the gypsies to ask about them. Finally the nanny ran out of money.

The gypsies offered to teach her how to read the cards, so she could tell her own fortunes. All they asked in return were my mother's turquoise earrings. The nanny traded the earrings for the teaching, and conscientiously taught my mother — at 5 years old— how to see the future, in return for the donation. Mama believed in it absolutely, and taught it all to me. Well, well, now.

I made a local reputation for having a lot of fortunes come true, but I never felt quite comfortable about it. Got into Junior College in St. Joe, and discovered that one little thing that Mama had taught me, was the key to my success. I wasn't seeing into the future— I was seeing into the minds of my questioners.

Each card had several meanings. How did you know which meaning to choose? Easy— pick a card that had universal appeal, and look at the client's eyes. Mention all the things the card could mean. If the muscles around the eyes tensed up, or the eyes narrowed a little, you went down that path. Watch the eye muscles. That was the secret. The client's mind tells you what to say—

So when we came to the Psychic, I was ready to go sand walking, but Abe said no, we were on holiday, take this in too. And we went in. She was an ordinary looking lady with a nice smile, and she said immediately, "No, this isn't your last trip. Lots of others." Well, that wasn't so hard to figure— Abe was in uniform. We had a little girl, so presumably we had been together a while. Barring accidents, we'd have more trips, come peace time.

I tried not looking at her, looking at the Atlantic and smiling to keep my eye muscles relaxed. It didn't matter— she didn't look at me. She was talking above us. "I see you surrounded by mystery and music, mystery and music. How interesting!" she said. "You are going West." (Not so strange—where do you go if you don't go West from a beach in Florida?) "They want you in Kansas City, but you don't want to live in Kansas City. Whatever decision you make, it will be final, but it will be your decision. And I can't see more than that mystery and music surrounds you, but I don't know what and I don't know how. But I don't see danger, just mystery." I reminded myself to put that into my little speeches at carnivals; it sounded like a real good future. We thanked her, smiled at each other, and left. "Us, mystery?" said Abe. "The Air Force would never allow it— if there was any mystery in our future, someone would have checked it out already. I'd have been in jail." "Just part of the scenery," I told him. "Part of the tourist scene."

We went West. We arrived in Kansas City and the folks celebrated Lulu's second birthday. Then they told us of their plans for us, for after the war. We would settle in Kansas City and Abe would forget about engineering down in South Texas and join the family business with his brothers.

"Well, the Psychic told us," I reminded Abe. And then we packed up the car again and went on West to Salina, Kansas.

There was, of course, no place to live. The motels were full, and people were sleeping in their cars because there was no place to rent. The new activity wasn't ready for us. Abe went to report, I took Lulu and went to a grocery store. We bought food, and I talked with the clerks awhile about where we had come from. Then I asked, "Does anybody know of a place we can rent for the summer?" Some of the customers laughed. But one of the men waiting on me said, "Maybe. You look like clean people. Your child is quiet. My cousin's gone for the summer, and didn't have time to find a good tenant. I got the key. Suppose you go look at the place with me."

Continued on page 4 >>>>>

<<<< Underground Railroad Station *Continued from page 3*

The “place” was in a big sprawly old house that had been divided into two apartments downstairs and two upstairs. He unlocked a lower one, and we went into what looked like an antique shop with a huge grand piano in a corner. I looked at it and said “WOW!” He smiled and said, “Yes, my cousin is a music professor at the college. It’s locked, so your little girl can’t bang on it.” “My little girl isn’t a banger,” I told him. “Open it and watch her.”

Lulu sat down and went daintily “plink, plink.” with a small finger. The store man took the piano-lock key off his key chain and held it out to me. Lulu finished plinking and closed the piano keys. The man took my check and left. Lulu and I went to meet Abe and bring him home with us.

Music surrounded us..... Now — was there a mystery here, too, as well as music?.

No mystery developed. Life in Salina was quiet except for the adjustments people were having to make about what Peace would mean for them. For us it meant only that Abe would take us back to the small town in South Texas where he had been working on the levees. We had decided that we weren’t townies, that we wanted our children to grow in a small place, as we had. The family in Kansas City assured us that the door was always open, and we parted still good friends. Life was uneventful.

Then one day, a week into the summer, I decided to rearrange the closet. The professor had left a lot of boxes of music papers, all arranged against the back wall of the closet. “Music surrounds you”— I smiled to remember the Psychic’s words. But it made hanging up our clothes a little awkward. I wondered why he hadn’t stacked all the boxes at the short end of the stairs, because it was a very long closet, the whole length of the big front room. I decided to do it, make notes, and put them back in their places before we left.

I moved the boxes. The back wall of the closet had apparently been part of the front room before the house was divided. It was wainscoted beautifully. The wood was soft looking and mellow. I ran my hands over it. And a part of the wall moved. I was looking into a small room under the stairs. With a flashlight I saw that there was a low, crudely made rope-sprung bed under the short part of the stairs, and a rough table and stool closer to the door. On the other side of the room, another door had been cut into the wall. No locks.

I wondered if the old lady who lived in the other downstairs apartment, knew that someone could come in from this side and murder her in her bed and then escape without a clue. Then it occurred to me that somebody could come in her front door, murder her, and then come over and murder us too— But no— hadn’t the Psychic said, “No danger, just mystery— ?”

I closed the door. I put the boxes right back along the wall as I had found them. Back at the store, I asked the store man, “Who built that house? When?” It was no surprise to hear him say, “My grandfather built that house before the Civil War. It was still a grand place when we were little, before the family grew old and spread out. My cousin split it into apartments.” I asked, “Was your grandfather an Abolitionist?” and he answered as I expected, “Oh yes, you could say he was the town leader in sneaking slaves out of Missouri and holding them until someone could sneak them into freedom in Iowa. Had quite a reputation for facing down slave-hunters. People thought maybe he had an Underground Railway Station, but nobody could prove anything, and he never said. They didn’t, you know, or some night someone would have burned them out. And as you see, the old house is still standing.” I thanked him, picked up my groceries, and left. We had found the mystery that surrounded us.

How the Psychic had sensed the wainscoted wall, I don’t know. How she had found the hideyhole but hadn’t recognized what it was, that was easy. The Civil War was long over, the coming end of World War II would have obliterated any trace of the Civil War —except in Missouri and its neighbors in Kansas. Someone in Florida would know the Civil War only from history books in grade school, and I didn’t remember any history books mentioning Salina. It just wasn’t that important, it was just one of the little towns in Kansas that took slavery seriously enough to do something about slaves.

But that adventure in Salina made me wonder if perhaps there was something more to telling fortunes than just watching the eye muscles tense.....

A note from your publisher; Who Was Frieda Burston?

Stephen Hassler, Peru

For those of you who have not been reading this publication for 15 or more years, Frieda Burston was a frequent writer introduced to me by my late friend, Joe Smith, of Johnson, Nebraska.

Frieda lived in Israel at the time. I don’t remember how Joe knew her, perhaps Marta does. As I recall, Frieda’s family lost their Kansas farm during the Great Depression, and moved to St. Joseph, Missouri, the location of her “depression years” stories. Years later, after WWII, Frieda and her husband moved to Israel. After her husband passed, Frieda moved from Israel to California to be near her daughter.

Frieda spent her last years in a condominium, on the edge of a greenbelt where she could see a deer now and then, and where she continued to write for “Your Country Neighbor” until her last days, without fear of rocket attacks. Frieda was a remarkable and unforgettable person. I wish I could read more of her stories of growing up in St. Joseph, Missouri. I’m still scrounging old papers for her past articles. When I find one, I will add it to these pages. **May 2024 Your Country Neighbor 4**



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www.brownville-ne.com

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10:00 AM Parade on Main Street between 6th street and Hwy 136
8:30 PM Fireworks Cruise on Spirit of Brownville (Boarding at 8)

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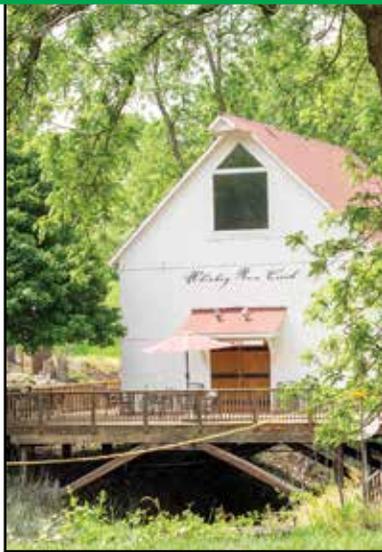
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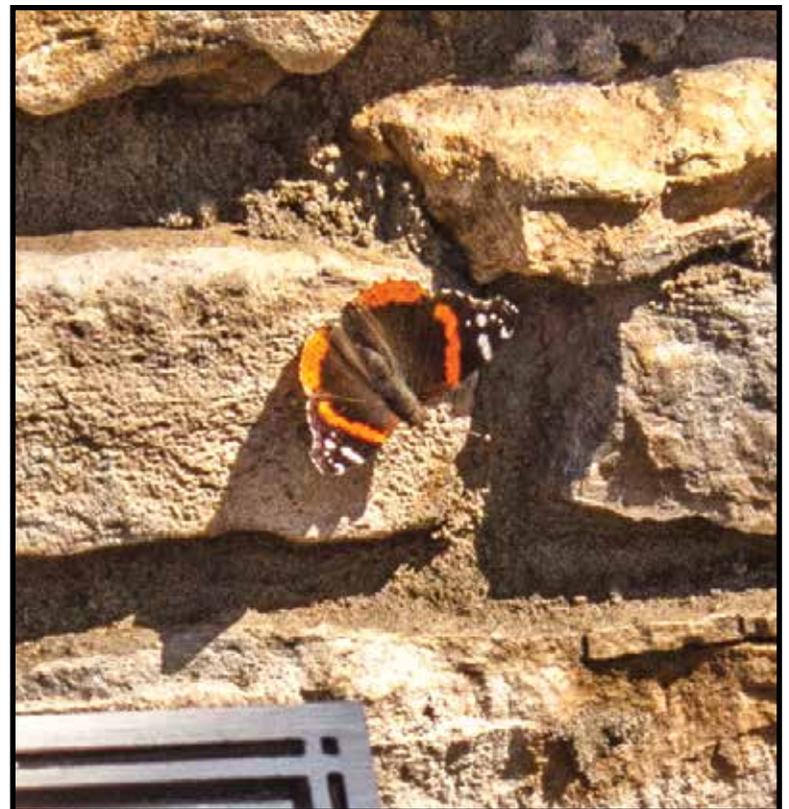
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The Schoolhouse Gallery in Brownville, Nebraska.

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Baltimore Oriole



House Finch (male & female)



Red-bellied Woodpecker

Winged Friends Offer Entertainment Opportunities

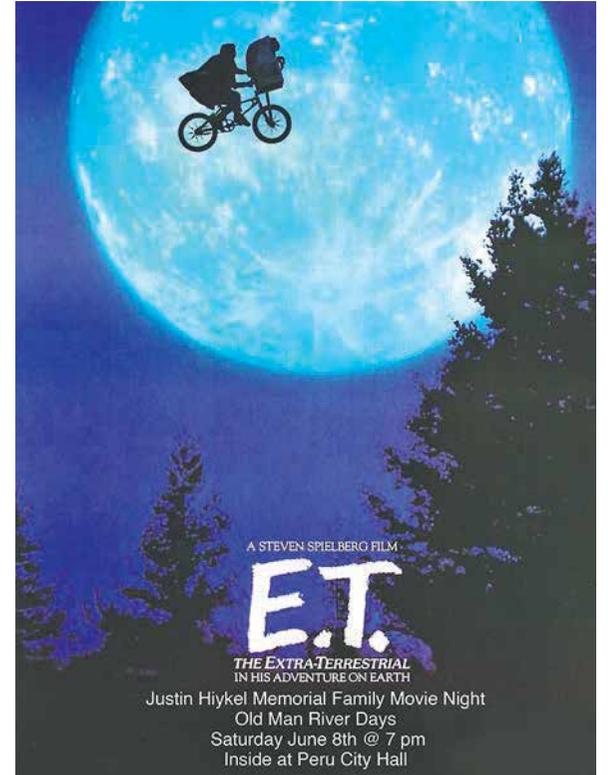
Marty Peregoy

If you're a bird lover, you're probably a lover of spring – especially spring in Peru. The city is positively brimming with bird varieties right now, and cool mornings are the prime time to sit outside and observe.

You can attract birds to your yard by offering a variety of foods, feeders, and native plants. Native plants are those that occur naturally in a specific region. Without them and the insects that evolved with them, the local birds of our region would not survive.

Shrubs, bushes and flowers native to our region, zone six, require less water and maintenance than plants of other zones. They also provide food and shelter for pollinators such as bees, butterflies, moths, and bats, so consider planting some if you own your own property.

Continued on page 9 >>>>>



Old Man River Days
June 8th and 9th



5th Street, Downtown Peru, Nebraska

April 29, 2024

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<<<< Winged Friends *Continued from page 8*

Popular trees on the Zone 6 list include Black Walnut, Burr Oak, and Black Willow, as well as fruiting trees. Those that maintain fruit for long periods of time, such as crabapples, are especially good, and miniature varieties are available for smaller yards. Chokecherries and Elderberries are prolific in Peru and the surrounding countryside.

Popular native perennial plants include Black-Eyed Susans, Butterfly Milkweed, Goldenrod, Sunflowers, Yarrow and Jack-in-the-Pulpit. And there are many, many non-native perennials that attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds and grow just fine in Peru with a little care.

While birdseed provides for the basic needs of your backyard birds, you might consider adding fruit to encourage visitation by songbirds. Black Oil Sunflower seeds attract the widest variety of birds, although they can be pricey. (*Publisher's note; Black Oil Sunflower seeds were \$19.99 at TSC in Neb. City.*) Suet is also a good choice in spring, and making your own can be very economical.

The internet abounds with suet recipes. No-melt varieties that you can customize for the specific birds you'd like to see are especially popular. Bulk Ingredients can be found at any big box grocery store and include lard, peanut butter, oatmeal, cornmeal, dried fruit and nutmeats.

If you save containers from purchased suet cakes, you can use them as molds for homemade suet cakes. Other flexible storage containers that fit in suet cages and are freezer safe work just fine. Homemade suet cakes cost 75% less than purchased ones.

Bird feeders with baffles that prevent squirrels from stealing the bird food, bird houses, and providing fresh, clean water via a bird bath, also make your yard attractive to birds. You can attract hummingbirds by making your own sugar water – don't add food coloring. One part sugar to four parts water is the standard recipe. Don't boil it, just use warm water and stir until it is dissolved. Cool and pour into a clean feeder. Mold can damage the hummingbird's ability to swallow. Never substitute honey.

Orioles are big fans of oranges and grape jelly. You can have a completely oriole-free yard one day, and within three days of putting out fruit and jelly, they'll be clustered around the feeder.

No Melt Suet Block

- 1 cup lard – 4-pound containers are available for about \$8 in big box grocery stores
- 1 cup peanut butter, smooth or crunchy
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 2 cups oatmeal, old-fashioned or quick cooking
- 1 cup assorted dried fruits, nuts, seeds such as raisins, dried cranberries, sunflower kernels.

Melt the peanut butter and lard in a small pan. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients. Spoon into containers and place in the freezer to harden. Unmold directly into the wire suet feeders while frozen. This recipe makes approximately four 5x5 blocks. Birds usually go through them within a day or two.

It's Rhubarb Season

Marty Peregoy

When it comes to rhubarb, you either like it, hate it or don't know you like it. If you are unsure where you stand on the issue, now is the time to find out. In most Peru gardens, rhubarb is ready to be picked.

Rhubarb, also known as Pie Plant, is considered by many to be a fruit, although it is classified as a vegetable. It is a perennial that grows easily in full sunlight and well-drained soil from rhizomes and reappears in gardens and on happy family's tables each spring.

While some people object to the tart taste, that can be remedied with sufficient sugar or a great recipe. If your complaint is texture, however, the only remedy for stringiness/woodiness is to pick the stalks at the right time. With proper care, plants can live for over ten years. That's a lot of crisps, jams, crumbles, pies and cakes.

Rhubarb can be planted any time that it is dormant in spring or fall, but should not be harvested the first year, and should be harvested sparingly the second year. Only the stalks are edible, as the leaves are toxic.

Almanac.com suggests the following tips: "Harvest stalks when they are 12 to 18 inches long and at least 3/4-inch in diameter. If the stalks become thin, stop harvesting; the plant's food reserves are low.

Grab the base of the stalk and pull it away from the plant with a gentle twist. If this doesn't work, you can cut the stalk at the base with a sharp knife. To prevent the spread of disease, be sure to sanitize the knife before cutting. Discard the leaves.

Always leave at least two stalks per plant to ensure continued production. You may have a bountiful harvest for well over ten years without replacing your rhubarb plants."

Peruvian Julia Perry says her extended family is a big fan of rhubarb and has been collecting recipes for several years. Her recipes for rhubarb cookies and rhubarb dessert are included.

I have been serving rhubarb and surprising rhubarb haters with the delicious taste of straw-

Continued on page 11 >>>>>

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Tuesday Literary Club Reads

DiAnna Loy, Tuesday Literary Club

Keeping with our theme of foreign settings/authors, Nancy Wheeler chose the book Moriarty by Anthony Horowitz for her book review this month. Horowitz is a bestselling author and writes in the style of the Sherlock Holmes books for this book; for this reason, I had a little bit of a tough time getting into the flow of the book when I started reading but was soon in the thick of the plot and reading became easier.

Moriarty begins at the struggle of Detective Sherlock Holmes and Professor James Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland. Both men struggle and fall over the edge of the falls and are presumed dead. Days after the incident, Pinkerton Senior Investigator Frederick Chase, and Scotland Yard Inspector Athelney Jones arrive at the scene of the incident. Chase delivers news of possible American evil doers wanting to take over Moriarty's place in London's criminal underworld. Jones has been a follower of Sherlock Holmes for years and considers himself an expert in his problem-solving techniques. They agree to band together to capture the new criminal element plaguing London. At each step along the way, Jones stops to explain how he figured out the next clue; always using the same methods of deduction that he believes Sherlock Holmes would have used. Chase is even allowed to sit in on one meetings at Scotland Yard after Jones vouches for him.

Chase and Jones play major roles in the entire book as well as Johnathan Pilgrim who we believe was a Pinkerton agent sent over at an earlier date to spy on Clarence Devereux. Devereux is a secondary player in the book. He is an American criminal who has traveled to London to become the criminal overlord, taking over Moriarty's minions. Devereux is joined in his endeavors by Edgar and Leland Mortlake, two other American criminals; Scotchy Lavelle, a small-time criminal who is easily intimidated; and Perry, a thoroughly warped individual barely older than a boy. One of the things that causes problems for the detectives is that neither Professor Moriarty nor Clarence Devereux have ever been seen outside of their inner circle making it hard for anyone to identify them.

Moriarty is full of action every step of the way. There are numerous clues and closes calls that Chase and Jones experience. There is a letter that must be decoded. There are gruesome murders and more clues, an explosion at Scotland Yard, and a wild fight against Edgar Mortlake. They discover where Clarence Devereux is hiding but cannot arrest him. Jones' daughter is kidnapped and rescued but in the process Chase and Jones's are taken prisoner...more fighting. The descriptions are very detailed, and you want to keep reading so you don't miss anything. It's almost like you're watching a movie and don't want a commercial to interrupt.

Just when you think everything is under control, it suddenly isn't. I had to stop and reread several paragraphs. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. What a twist! And then everything that had happened was explained all over again from a different perspective. Wow! To tell you anything else would take a SPOILER ALERT!

Overall it's a great read and I encourage anyone who likes a good mystery to try it.

Happy reading!

Recently, I was asked, "What has happened to our Peru?"

Stephen Hassler

When I first moved to Peru in 1996, I marveled that I could fill my tires with air for free! And the bank would count my change for me and not require me to fill those little paper cylinders with my coins. And picking up my mail at the post office often involved conversations with new friends.

Today I discovered that I have to pay to put air in my tires. I don't have any right to object to this. Casey's provides many services necessary to make the lives of Peru residents easier. What would we do without Casey's? But I am disappointed.

But there's more. I was asked why residents who want to meet to organize funding for an event or holiday have to first spend "funds" to rent City Hall for a meeting? And why are zoning changes being made only after building permits are issued? I myself, asked, "What happened to the missing zoning maps?" Never mind that last question, rather, how can we replace the missing color-coded zoning maps?

I was asked, why are the Trailhead rest rooms locked? If there are sensitive contract negotiations going on that must be kept from the public, then at least allow a few residents to be observers rather than offering conflicting explanations from the Council. And at least speak with one voice.

It was mentioned that we are running at a deficit. Is that why volunteers have to come up with a fee to rent City Hall for their fund-raising and event planning? Is that why City Hall doesn't want to "open the books" to inquiring individuals? Failure is forgivable, secrecy is not.

My belief is that there is reason for concern, but not alarm, not yet. But I understand the objections. And I'm aware that sometimes city staff and Council Members feel harassed by "walk-ins" complaining about street conditions, lawn heights, more street conditions, flooding issues, and if anyone is unhappy with their life, they will always complain about street conditions.

Peru, love it or leave it? In a Democracy we have a third option; change it. That is what elections are for, so we don't have to leave, and we don't have to put up with what is wrong.

Peru has an election beyond the Summer experience of fireworks and parades, hotdogs and beer, vacations and back-to-school. Peru needs candidates for Mayor and Council. And Peru needs to vote!

We've witnessed the power of the Peru vote before; Esther Divney lost by 8 votes, Phil Allgood won by a two-to-one margin, and Jay Moran won by just one vote. Will voters determine our next Council? Will the non voters? Or could it be you?

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<<<< Rhubarb *Continued from page 9*

berry rhubarb Jell-O jam for years. It's easy to make, and recipes that include delicious additions such as canned pineapple or blueberry pie filling abound online. Whether you use it as jam, ice-cream topping or currency (yes, I've traded it), it's worth trying, and the recipe is included.

Rhubarb Cookies:

2 cups uncooked rolled oats
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon ground ginger
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup salted butter, softened
1 ¼ cups white sugar
2 large eggs
1 ½ cups chopped fresh rhubarb
½ cup minced crystallized ginger

Add oats to a large bowl along with flour, baking soda, ginger, and nutmeg. Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer on medium-high speed until fluffy, about 3 minutes. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until incorporated. Add the oat mixture to the butter mixture, beating until combined. Stir in rhubarb and crystallized ginger. Cover and transfer bowl to a refrigerator to chill for at least 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Scoop dough (about 1 ½ tablespoons per cookie) onto prepared baking sheets, leaving about 2 inches in between each cookie.

Rhubarb Dessert

4 C diced rhubarb
1 C sugar
3 oz cherry gelatin
1 box white cake mix
1 C water
⅓ C Butter (melted)

Layer in above order in a 9 x 13 pan and bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

Strawberry Rhubarb Jell-O Jam

6 cups finely-chopped, fresh rhubarb
3 ½ cups white sugar
¼ cup water
1 (3 ounce) package strawberry flavored Jell-O

In a large saucepan or stockpot, stir together the rhubarb, sugar and water. Cook on high, stirring constantly until sugar is dissolved. Reduce to medium heat, cover and cook until rhubarb is tender, stirring occasionally. Uncover and cook until mixture is slightly thickened, approximately 12-15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, skim foam, and stir in dry gelatin mix. Transfer to sterile containers while hot and refrigerate or to sterile jars and waterbath for ten minutes. This is one canning recipe that you can double or triple without impairing its ability to set up. Makes approximately 4 pints.

Peru City News

is a volunteer project promoting

Communication, Information, and Pride in the Peru Community.

Peru City News is supported by the Peru Community.

Thank you to everyone who participates!

Share this publication with friends.

It's online at;

<http://www.yourcountryneighbor.com>



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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Red-winged Blackbird at the Wildlife Refuge, but can be seen along H-136 East of the Missouri River Bridge at Brownville.



Dove nesting in my sister's hanging fern, May 21, 2024.
Photo by Judy Hassler using 'selfie' stick.

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Peru's 5th City-Wide Semi-Annual Plant Exchange

It was May 11th. Did you miss it? Next opportunity will be Fall 2024.



There were truck-loads and buckets-full.



There were benches-full and bystanders

ARBOR CITY NEWS

Morton-James Public Library Calendar of Events June 2024

Morton-James Public Library 923 1st Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410

For questions call 402-873-5609 or visit morton-jamespubliclibrary.com

Scrapbook Club

Bring your own project to work on. We provide paper/stickers/tape/markers and scissors.

All ages 15 and older welcome

New members will receive a scrapbook to fill! Bring your own pictures!

Saturday, June 1 9:00 AM-Noon

“Bring Your Own Book” Club

Join us for a silent reading book club. Bring your own e-reader, book, or grab a title from our shelves and enjoy an hour of quiet reading time. Read what you want, no discussion required. Optional social time at end. Free and open to the public all ages 15+. You are welcome to bring your own non-alcoholic beverage.

Sunday, June 2 2:00-3:30 PM

Mr. Oakley’s Summer Reading

Kickoff Party

Family fun for all ages!

Free to attend & no registration.

Monday, June 3 10:00 AM

Lego Club

Must be 8 years and older to join.

Monday, June 3 3:30-5:00 PM

Talewise (Science + Storytelling)

Family fun for all ages!

Free to attend & no registration.

Thursday, June 4 10:00 AM

Story Time Guest Reader:

Lifetime Vision

Story Times are geared for ages 6 and under.

No registration. Families welcome!

Wednesday, June 5 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, June 5 1:30-3:00 PM

Chess Club

All ages welcome!

Every Thursday 4:30-6:00 PM

Farmers Market Storytime

Take & Make Craft Kit

Corner of 8th & 1st Corso

Thursday, June 6 4:30 PM

Humanities Nebraska-Chris Sayre

Musical Journey Across America: Songs That Helped Shape a Nation

Thursday, June 6 7:00 PM

Adam White Magic

Family fun for all ages!

Free to attend & no registration.

Monday, June 10 10:00 AM

Story Time Guest Reader:

Keep Nebraska City Beautiful

Story Times are geared for ages 6 and under. No registration. Families welcome!

Wednesday, June 12 10:00 AM

Card Club

Come to meet new people and to play any card game you’d like...ages 19 +

Thursday, June 13 1:00-3:00 PM

Lego Club

Must be 8 years and older to join.

Monday, June 17 3:30-5:00 PM

Book Club

The Other Einstein by Marie Benedict

Tuesday, June 18 2:00 PM

Story Time StoryWalk® at Steinhart Park

Story Times are geared for ages 6 and under. No registration. Families welcome!

Wednesday, June 19 10:00 AM

Evening Book Club

Beautiful Ruins by Jess Walters

Wednesday, June 19 5:30 PM

Farmers Market Storytime

Take & Make Craft Kit

Corner of 8th & 1st Corso

Thursday, June 20 4:30 PM

Princess Party w/ Fairytale Omaha

Family fun for all ages!

Free to attend & no registration.

Friday, June 21 10:00 AM

Super Hero Party w/Fairytale Omaha

Family fun for all ages!

Free to attend & no registration.

Friday, June 21 2:00 PM

Adult Literary Trivia

Must be 19 or older to compete.

Call to register your team of 2.

Sunday, June 23 2:00 PM

Story Time Guest Reader:

Grimm’s Gardens

Story Times are geared for ages 6 and under. No registration. Families welcome!

Wednesday, June 26 10:00 AM

Wildlife Encounters

Family fun for all ages!

Free to attend & no registration.

Thursday, June 27 10:00 AM

ARBOR CITY NEWS

Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce



Left: The Talbott Brothers headlined the live music portion of Treestock last year after a rain delay. The duo and their band will be back this year!

Above: The Wellness Center-sponsored Color Dash is popular with kids.

NEBRASKA CITY'S TREESTOCK FESTIVAL PLANNED FOR LAST WEEKEND IN JUNE

Nebraska City's annual Independence Day Celebration, nicknamed "Treestock", is returning in 2024 after rain caused cancellations and postponements in 2023. The dates this summer are June 29-30.

"We had to cancel a couple of our live music acts and had to postpone the fireworks last year," recalled Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce executive director Amy Allgood. "It was pretty disappointing so we're hoping things go extra smoothly this year."

Part of the plans for 2024 include recreating the entertainment line-up on Saturday, June 29, to mimic the rained out line-up from 2023. Musical guests will

include The Hangin' Cowboys, Mike Semrad & The Riverhawks, and the Talbott Brothers, who were able to play acoustically last year after the stage was dried.

Other Treestock activities include a Color Dash, food trucks, a pickleball tournament, performances by Nowhere BMX, and family-friendly events at Bethel Church. The Jaycees Fireworks Show is scheduled for Saturday night at dusk. Sunday events include a Community Worship service, the Waffleman,

a show & shine car show, and a golf scramble. The Steinhart Aquatic Center will be open throughout the entire weekend.

"We hope families will make plans to come to Treestock this year and take advantage of all the fun events we have planned," Allgood said. "We want Treestock to be a place for our locals and visitors to make memories and create traditions."

TREESTOCK INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

When: Saturday & Sunday, June 29-30
Where: Steinhart Park, Nebraska City

For complete details, visit
www.NebraskaCity.com



Nowhere BMX performed at Treestock 2023. They are returning for Treestock 2024.

ARBOR CITY NEWS

Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce

SPEND A WEEKEND IN
NEBRASKA CITY!

TREESTOCK

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

JUNE 29 & 30
2024



LIVE MUSIC
COLOR DASH
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ARBOR CITY NEWS

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Arbor City News

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



My favorite time at the Mansion is when the peonies are in bloom, May 22, 2024.

ARBOR CITY NEWS

News from Nebraska City

AGE

Bruce Madsen

OK, So tell me, What am I supposed to do?

I feel my life is knocking on September
And sometimes its hard for me to remember
The years back when I was young and tender
And was eager to learn all that the world would render

Its not that I feel as though my purpose is through
But some days its very hard to find something to do
There should be something that would bring to light
Whatever I achieved or at least, what I've done right

So I piddle with this and I piddle with that
Trying to look busy and committed to task
To look in my eyes you'd think I was all concentration
But look closer and you'll see my frustration

I can remember way back in my prime
When I was in a hurry all the time
From one job to another, on a dead run
The day was never long enough to get it all done

Now, the years went by and it seems I got old fast
And one day I realized my prime wasn't going to last
I had to slow down, I just wasn't the same
My body was telling me that I should refrain

From the work I was doing to make my living
And find an easy chair and enjoy the comfort it would be giving
A hard change, it's true
But it's something most of us have to go through

We don't really regret the transition
We just have to buckle up and accept the situation
I do feel my reason for being here is not yet through
And I'm thankful that over the years I've developed a hobby or two

But my current plan now is to keep looking busy
Keep myself sane and not go crazy
To be a credit to the world and to be productive
Not to get sedentary and be self destructive

To this end I will accept my fate
And be thankful I lived long enough to appreciate
Although being old is not my ideal
My age made me realize how thankful I feel

The life I led and the work I've done
Hopefully it made this world a better one
So no, you don't have to tell me what to do
I'll figure it out as I go through

The rest of my life and whatever time I have due
The example I set will be honest and true
I'll do the best I can without dismay
And pray its good enough when comes my final day

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Window From The Past (2002)

Stephen Hassler, Peru

I am willing to confess that I can't blame our young people for feeling limited living in rural America. After all, that big, wide, wonderful world is "out there" somewhere. Tall buildings, bright lights, action! Or it may be those exciting, high paying jobs. With a little luck, a college degree, or a knack for sales, one's income could easily afford an apartment, a car manufactured within the last ten years, and a cup of coffee at Starbucks. How can you keep 'em down on the farm?

Perhaps it should be a law that a young person must kill a lion before he or she may go out into the world. But we would have to import lions and they would kill cows and create an environmental disaster. However, I know there are bobcats around here. I don't mean college students, but real bobcats! But what if the kids just want to get away from mom and dad? In that case there could be dead bobcats lying around everywhere! So on second thought maybe we shouldn't add more rules.

So what's the solution? I don't know. I think a person just has to know what they want. I had to get away to the big city to learn that. Fortunately for me, I didn't get caught in the rat race. Through my window on Fifth Street there are no bright lights no offices on the ninth floor, no lunches with coworkers at a sunny sidewalk café, no cocktails at happy hour, no happy hour. And since I moved here, I've never seen a rat around, racing or otherwise.

So until we become a resort area, I'll just take life a day at a time. My coffee is sometimes as good as Starbucks, my neighborhood is so quiet that shoveling the driveway produces echoes, and I can just smile at the blizzards from the warm side of my window on Fifth Street.

Life is good. Just live it.

Your Country Neighbor
Your "2-cups-of-coffee" companion
including Nebraska photos & articles
with the flavor of rural America.

Clarence And The Cup Handle

Dorothy Rieke

One hot summer day, I attended a wedding with my aunt and her family. Years ago, especially in rural areas, weddings were popular because they not only presented the entertainment of seeing a couple married but also involved eating a large meal.

Aunt Aggie, holding her special chocolate cake in a cake container, was determined to deliver her cake in good condition. Uncle Bob sat straight driving their 1935 black-painted Plymouth along the country roads. Ten-year-old Clarence wiggled about on the back seat occasionally reaching into his pocket. I wondered what he was up to now?

Summer weddings usually meant brides dressed in white satin gowns with sweetheart necklines, puffed sleeves, and long full skirts. Even though, brides may have felt summer heat in those gowns, it was nothing compared to grooms often dressed in their best wool suits.

The after-wedding dinners were often the reason for high attendance at these events. Aunt Aggie, along with other ladies, brought her own meal specialties. Aggie's was her rich flavorful chocolate cake with fridge frosting.

After delivering the cake to the church basement, Uncle Clarence, Aunt, and I found seats to watch the ceremony.

After the ceremony, invited guests made their way to the church basement for a feast. In those days, a large amount of food was unusual as economic conditions meant saving money on food by using what was in the garden or in the cellar.

Clarence was spooning homemade ice cream into his mouth. The cake came next. He bit off a large piece of cake, chewed on it, and swallowed. Then, he removed something from his mouth. He yelled out, "Ma, look what I found! Your missing cup handle was in my cake!" Clarence believed that he was doing his mother a great favor. Instead, his mother's face turned beet red showing embarrassment.

Uncle Bob angrily said, "Eat your lunch, boy." Of course, the crowd heard Clarence and drew their own conclusions.

Aunt, in her haste, while preparing the cake, noticed that the measuring cup handle was missing. She looked all over for it, but did not locate it.

Clarence found the handle and thought he would receive praise. However, he changed his mind as he saw the adults' reaction to his loud exclamation.

Needless to say, Clarence was smart enough to realize he should have kept quiet. How many times do we speak out without thinking? This is a common enough trait. Poor Clarence probably took a trip to the woodshed never understanding adults.

Note, This was a true story; names, however, were changed.

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Flag Day June 14th:

Sheila Tinkham

Raise the United States flag
13 stripes for the original 13 colonies
50 stars representing the 50 states
Betsy Ross sewed the first flag
“O say can you see”
The Star Spangled Banner
Francis Scott Keyes wrote during battle of 1812
Fort McHenry
Bomb after Bomb
Hit the flag
Bring the United States down
Flag “gallantly streaming”
Why won’t the flag come down? It is still flying.
Roared the British commander
Francis learned man after man had volunteered to keep the flag
aloft,
Each sacrificing his life for the cause
And that was why the flag was tilted sideways...
Tears fill my eyes
Thank God for the flag
And all she represents
And God bless America.

A note from your publisher;

I recently re-connected with a writer who used to submit poetry to this publication, but took a break for some family time. For those of you who might miss Janet Sobczyk’s poetry, you will enjoy her website at;

<https://momsmusingsblog.blogspot.com/search?q=ycn>



Father's Day

Sheila Tinkham

I want to thank all the fathers out there
No matter how hard the work, physically or mentally
Blue collar or white
Your work matters
What you do for yourself and your families matter
The example you give to your children
About the value of hard work and honesty
Being a man is tough
You can be drafted
You do all the tough, dirty, physically demanding jobs
Most of us would prefer not to do
But I want to say Thank you
Thank you for all the little things you do from opening doors
To playing baseball
To writing sweet notes
Father's matter.
Men matter.
And I thank God every day I had such a wonderful father.
So give him a call, a hug, an I love you....
Life is short.
Happy Father's Day!

P o e t r y

O e t r y

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by Devon Adams, Peru

FATHERS' DAYS

All the little minutes
add to the sum of days
of love and devotion
for the children of
your heart.
Each fragment of time
is a step into tomorrow
and away from yesterday.
But when they've grown
tall and aren't small any
more, your memory holds
precious snapshots of
scenes that define your
connections to them.
They are forever young,
protected by your love.

THE EDGE OF NIGHT

It isn't sharp, like the
edge at a corner of a
building, with dark on
one side and sunlight
on the other. It is a soft
change from colors to
to grays that play with
your eyes so that shapes
seem to change minute
by minute. Dusk paints
with a subtle brush as
sunlight walks away from
the day and into evening.
Is it like this when we go
from this side of life to
the other side? Do we
know how to see where
we are, or is it a journey
of revelation to finding
peace in our hearts
forever?

FIRE SPIRIT

He is a fire in the light
of the setting sun as
he stands on the hill
with sun rays striking
his flowing mane and
tail. King of his own
band of horses running
wild and free out in the
vast space of the West,
he screams a challenge
into the wind to defy
his right to be there.
Other beings want to
end their existence
and destroy their legacy.
Pray for him to win his
battle against forces he
can't control. He is the
spirit of all that is magic
and perfect about horses.

WHO ARE YOU?

Is the person in the
mirror looking back
at you who you think
you are, or are you
fooling yourself?
Are you what you
think, or what you do?
Do other people see
someone you might
not recognize because
they see only your
actions? Do you have
a good reason that
justifies what you did,
or is it simply a bad
excuse for causing grief
for someone else
because of your anger
or your hurt?
Courage and honesty
are forged together
in the same furnace.

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REAL LIFE

The PLAN. That is the thing
to have, we are told. If you
write it down and follow it
step by step, you will get
what you want.
But no one registers for the
class titled "HOLY CRAP"
101, where you learn how
to adjust to random chance
and sudden setbacks that
totally screw up your PLAN.
When you come out at
the end of a crisis, you
may realize that it was
good for you, or maybe it
made everything worse.
Either way you will write
a new plan, with some blank
spaces to fill in with "options
and back up plans."
Good luck with that!



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