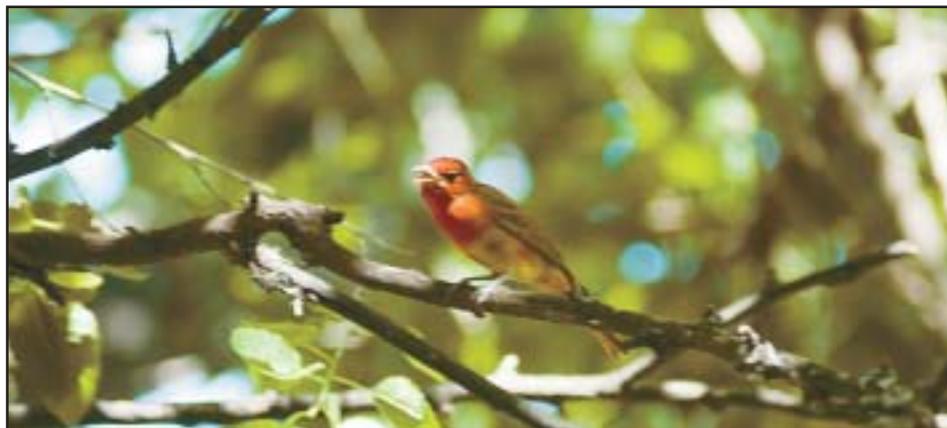


Your *Country* Neighbor

**June 2012
FREE!**



Unusual photos this month; rare bird in my yard, snapping turtle next door, fireworks, Golden Retriever with Australian Shepherd puppies.

Voices from the Valleys of the Nemaha

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

Writers this month

Devon Adams
Carol Carpenter
Mary Ann Holland
Merri Johnson
Vicki O'Neal
Shirley Neddenriep
Karen Ott
Josh Whisler
Marilyn Woerth

Thank You

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Your Country Neighbor

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Editor's note:

*Seven years of this publication
are online at:*

www.yourcountryneighbor.com

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COVER PHOTOS

Stephen Hassler

By now the early Spring of 2012 is almost history to residents of the four-corners area. And there have been many unusual observations, some of which I managed to photograph; a migrating song-bird I've never seen before, a snapping turtle that stopped traffic in front of my house before crawling through my neighbor's yard, fireworks at a Kansas barbecue, and a Golden Retriever with her puppies, photographed in the driveway of the neighbor of a Kansas friend. The sire of the puppies is an Australian Shepherd. If you like big, black, hairy dogs, let me know and I'll see if there are any unspoken for.

Wildlife Photo Show

Some of my best 'Country Neighbor' photos will be on display beginning mid June in the Lyceum Restaurant in Brownville, Nebraska. Featured items include photos of Bald Eagles, Snow Geese, Cardinals, barns, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebraska City's Arbor Lodge, some Brownville scenes, and an award winning photo taken of Sandhill Cranes near Kearney, Nebraska.

The Restaurant is open Wednesday through Sunday from 11:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Framed photographs are for sale of just for your viewing pleasure.

Where to Find Your Country Neighbor

Your Country Neighbor is hand-delivered to grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, restaurants, cafes, and businesses which advertise in this publication. *Your Country Neighbor* is hand-delivered to the following cities and villages in our "four corners" area. In **Kansas**; Hiawatha and Sabetha. In **Missouri**; Rock Port. In **Nebraska**; Auburn, Brownville, Cook, Falls City, Humboldt, Johnson, Nebraska City, Nemaha, Peru, Syracuse, and Tecumseh.

Past issues of *Your Country Neighbor* and more rural photos are on-line at:

www.yourcountryneighbor.com

Misleading Medicare Marketing—Don't Be Scammed

Mary Ann Holland, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educator

Most adults know how important it is to protect their personal identifying information, credit card or bank account numbers, from fraudsters whose goal it is to separate them from their money. Always use caution when giving out personal information in person, but be particularly wary of a phone call asking for your personal and bank account information. That is always a red flag.

Sadly, it is also necessary to protect yourself from healthcare fraud and abuse. Every day scam artists are busy accessing health benefits under someone else's name. Medicare and Medicaid lose billions of dollars each year due to errors, fraud and abuse. Errors in Medicare billing do occur, but when identified, they are usually correctable.

Here are tips to protect you from being victimized:

- Treat your Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security numbers like a credit card.
- Never give these numbers to a stranger.
- Know that Medicare will **never** call you or visit your home to sell you anything.
- Medicare insurance salespersons cannot solicit enrollees door-to-door, or tell you they are 'endorsed by Medicare,' calling 'on behalf of Medicare,' or that Medicare 'asked them to call or see you.'

Likewise, an agent or broker may:

- Call a Medicare beneficiary who has given permission to call; can initiate a phone call to confirm an appointment.
- Representatives from an insurance provider can call their own clients to discuss new plan options.
- Can conduct sales opportunities in common areas of healthcare settings, or educational events such as health fairs.

Medicare beneficiaries and their family members need to be cautious consumers when considering changing or purchasing different insurance plans. It is wise to gather information, but do take the time to research both the pros and cons of switching to a different insurance package. Don't allow someone to pressure you into making a hurried decision. Trust your instincts; if something doesn't seem quite right, there's a reason why. Decision-making related to complicated insurance coverage should be carefully considered.

Medicare beneficiaries should always examine their Explanation of Benefits statement, or Summary of Benefits Notice. If you believe Medicare has been charged for services you did not receive, or billed for items/supplies you do not need, contact the provider's office for an explanation. You are the eyes and ears at the grass roots level for detecting Medicare fraud and abuse. It could simply be a data entry error, or the item in question could be an example of intentional fraud. If the explanation of the billed item does not sound logical to you, don't hesitate to contact the Nebraska SHIIP [Senior Health Insurance Information Program] of the Department of Insurance at 1-800-234-7119, or the Nebraska Senior Medical Patrol (SMP) office at 1-800-942-7830.

Medicare information is complicated enough; don't let misleading marketing tactics become a barrier for accessing healthcare services you need.

This article was written by Mary Ann Holland, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educator and Trained SHIIP Professional. Resources used for this article include: *CMS Prohibited Agent/Broker Behavior—Appropriate Agent/Broker Behavior*, August 2011; and *Don't Be a Target of Healthcare Fraud*, brochure, Nebraska Senior Medicare Patrol. Questions can be directed to Mary Ann Holland at the Cass County Extension office at 402-267-2205, or by e-mail at: mholland1@unl.edu

Poetry by Devon Adams

MY FATHER'S DAYS

He looks at me from a faded photo,
his ruffled hair falling in his child's face.
He didn't know me then,
but I'm so glad we met.

YELLOW VOLCANO

Liquid sound erupts from the finch's tiny throat,
flowing through the trees like invisible lava,
leaving echoes of song.

FLASH IN THE PAN

In a flurry of feathers and bubbles and spray,
a cardinal fought the water in the birdbath
like he was in a war with himself.
He won, flying away in a wet, red flash.

THE BERRY TREE

Even in a dead wind, the
mulberry tree is moving.
Waxy leaves shimmer as
feathered bodies hop through
the branches, seizing succulent
purple fruit, dribbling slushy syrup
from their stained sharp beaks.

THUNDER TRAIN

Under the covers of sleep,
the dreamer heard the rumble
and turned it into an image of a
night train chugging through the dark.
Then lightning exploded and
thunder wrecked the train.

GRANDPA'S SUMMER

An acre square, it was so big
that he never finished weeding.
He wore a long sleeve shirt
buttoned at the wrists and neck,
and the sweat wet cloth would
weigh him down, soaking through
his suspenders, spreading to the
waistband of his sun-bleached pants.
He never took off his felt hat that
was stiff with salt and grime.
He was tall and I was short, as I
followed his shadow along the path
to the melon patch, which was set
beside the rows of rhubarb with their
umbrella leaves and long pink stems.
With his thumb, he thumped a golden
orb and the hollow drum of sound
told him it was ripe. Puffing through
his shaggy, tobacco stained mustache,
he opened his old Jim Dandy knife,
cut into the juicy, fragrant flavor core,
and handed me a slice of cantaloupe.
His faded blue eyes sparkled, as juice
dripped off our chins, and bees buzzed
close with jealous appetites.

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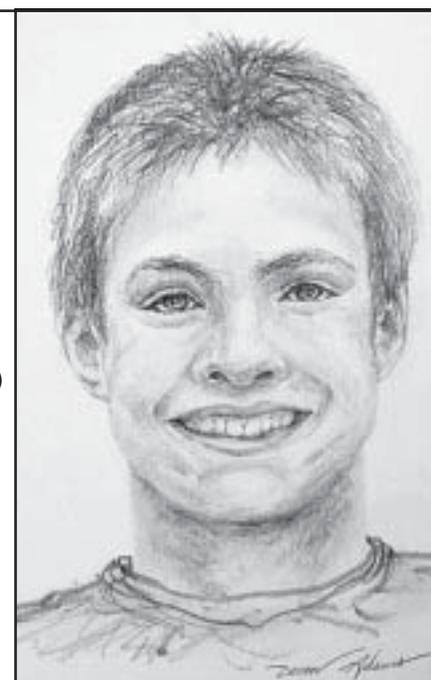
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SUMMER STORM

Shirley Neddenriep

Back in the 1980s the Farmer here rented farmland several miles south of where I live in Southeast Nebraska. We had installed a hy-range IV radio for communication with KBI 1481 as its base name. The radio, mike, and cables are still here taking up shelf space, and the radio's tall tower stands in its original location near the garage, unused.

For several years, however, the radio was used frequently as speedy, pre-cell phone communication between the base and the various receivers installed in each truck or tractor. At times I fixed dinner for whatever crew operated the machinery and equipment far away. This saved planting hours and avoided a time-consuming round trip for the men. I remember fixing Beef Stroganoff in a deep iron skillet with a lid. There was a big pot of mashed potatoes jerry-rigged to keep it hot; bread, I suppose and a fruit pie. I especially remember the Beef Stroganoff, a complicated and special dish.

I got it all together and grabbed the mike. "The meal is on wheels!" I announced. When I'd driven all those miles the Farmer and sons were gathered under a shade tree for their hot dinner. It was a fun time. Then I gathered all the pots and dishes and loaded them for the trip home. The guys asked if I could also take a four-year old grandson who had somehow wormed his way into the farming operation and gotten to be excess baggage for the crew.

I was happy to bring him home with me. Along the way I noted a cloud bank in the northwest, looming larger along the horizon as we drove. The two of us arrived home and unloaded the car. Grandson busied himself by building a tunnel with the 'Bag of Blocks' left from his dad's era. I cleaned the kitchen and put utensils away. I also watched the weather.

The cloud bank hovered above us. In a little while thunder roared and rolled; lightning flashed to light the room. I took grandson to a center hall to wait. He brought some of his blocks. Then the rains came, heavy and with a driving force. Rain swished, driven by terrific straight winds, thunder boomed and shook the house. I thought of going to the cellar, but it is dark and damp and I could hear water gushing somewhere. Investigating, I saw that the force of the storm had shifted the down spout off the eaves trough allowing tons of water into the yard next to the foundation. From there water found its way to the cellar. Then hail fell.

I found no alternative but to wait until the storm passed. Grandson remained calm and unafraid. We learned later that the work crew had crowded into a pickup and started for home, but had been forced to seek shelter in Hick Nolte's barn. With no Emergency Weather Alert Radio to warn us, we all lived on in blissful ignorance of the storm's time of arrival or degree of threat. We'd survived one more sudden summer storm back in those days when weather still gave a great show here in the Midwest.

Fourth of July Freedom Celebration - Brownville, Nebraska

Marilyn Woerth

Beckoning back to the days of an old time Fourth of July celebration, when families enjoyed a parade, listened to enthusiastic speeches, and participated in numerous outdoor events, isn't just a memory here in Brownville. For the past nine years, the citizens of Brownville have strived to make their small town celebration stand out from the crowd, and boy have they succeeded. This year marks the tenth year of a full, family oriented, old-time patriotic Fourth of July event.

The morning program starts bright and early at 7:00 A.M. with the annual Freedom Run, featuring a half marathon, 10K and 5K races. In recent years, well over 200 contestants have participated. Following the race at 9:00 is the annual favorite with the kids, the dog show, followed by the flag waving, candy throwing, high-stepping, parade at 10:00. Immediately after the parade, a rousing Patriotic Program will feature historic speeches by Bill Hayes, along with some spirited patriotic music.

The afternoon program starts at noon with Meyer's Children's Tractor Pull. Southeast Community Band Concert is at 2:00 followed by Tall Tales of Southeast Nebraska, with Jim Ferricks in the town hall at 3:00. 4:00 features Darrel Draper portraying the life of Teddy Roosevelt, his life after his term as the Rough Rider President, this program is sponsored by the Nebraska Humanities Council. At 4:30 the kids are in for a treat with some old fashioned Fourth of July games, like the good ole sack race.

Trolley rides, horse and buggy rides and meandering down the Missouri on a riverboat are also included in the afternoon schedule. A Freedom Day breakfast and lunch will be available for those who have worked up a good old fashioned appetite. The Lyceum will extend hours and be open for dinner and ice cream is always available at the Ice Cream Shoppe. The Whiskey Run Creek Winery doors will be open for the more mature thirst.

Throughout the day a Scavenger Hunt will be conducted with the local businesses. Participants will receive a list of clues that will lead them into a business; there they will receive a letter that forms a word. Participants must be present to win and prizes will be awarded during the Enigma concert.

The ultimate acoustic experience, Egnima will be performing on the River Inn at 7:00PM. Then the magic begins, at 9:00 with a fabulous fireworks display down by the river. Ahh, Brownville the place where life is good, especially on the Fourth of July.

Please go to www.brownville-ne.com for a full schedule and to register for the Freedom Run. See you all on the 4th of July.

Historic Brownville Days are June 9, 10, 2012 in Brownville, Nebraska. The weekend activities feature Western Re-enactors each day on Brownville's main street. The Historical Society will have their museums, Carson House, Bailey Museum, Railroad History Center, Dr. Spurgin's Dental Office and Wheel Museum open for public viewing.

It is a family weekend with Trolley rides, Moon Walk for kids, Village Theater production on June 9 at 7:30 PM. Call (402-825-4121) for reservations. The Spirit of Brownville boat sightseeing cruises each day at 3:00 PM. Call (402-825-6441) for reservations.

Enjoy Brownville by participating in the Arboretum Garden Walk at 11:00 am on June 9. Walk or bike the trails, visit the quaint shops, Whiskey Run Creek Winery, eat at the Lyceum. If you need housing visit the website: [www/Brownville-ne.com](http://www.Brownville-ne.com). for B&B information.

The 1854 Didier Log Cabin will feature a program and Grand Opening at 11:00 AM on June 9 in Boettner Park at 2nd and Main Streets. Several of the Didier family will be present, along with friends and supporters of B.H.S. and the Cabin.

John Didier erected their home in 1854 10½ miles south of Brownville. John married Mary Peneaux Beauvais Red Nose Didier in Brownville by Judge Whitney. John died in 1918 and is buried near Barada. Mary died in 1901 and is buried at St. Francis, South Dakota.

A portion of the 1854 Cabin was used in the reconstruction process. The building, porch and loft are the same size as the original house.

After the 2011 flood, the Brownville community is anxious to have you visit and join them in this early summer Historic Brownville Days.

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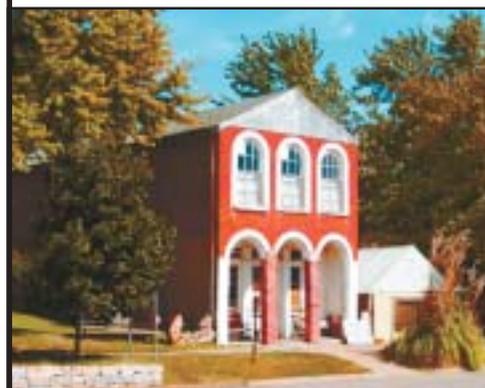
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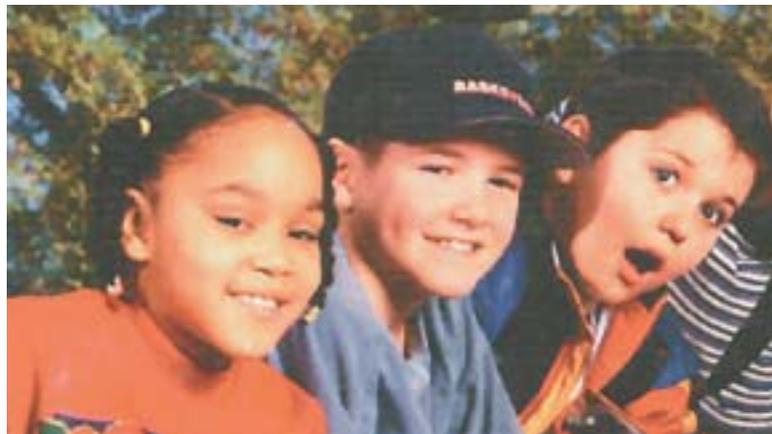
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Indigo Bunting, submitted by Marilyn Woerth



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The Face of Drought

by Karen Ott

I'm familiar with house dust, field dust, and road dust, but I'd never heard of fugitive dust until the term appeared on the front page of our local newspaper. (quote) "Excessive dust from the city's landfill prompted the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to issue a notice of violation to the City of Gering. Officials had been notified of the "fugitive Dust" violation in January....."

As a farmwife and rural resident I was intrigued by the notion of dust on the lam, and imagined big-bellied sheriffs named Bubba nailing up wanted posters, and three or four baying bloodhounds hot on the trail of juvenile-delinquent dust bunnies or dust rags gone bad.

But no...the real definition was something more incredible.

Our EPA, in a spectacular show of regulatory overreach, has declared natural occurring dust illegal.

"Title 129, Chapter 32, Section 001 requires sources to handle, transport, and store material in such a way to prevent particu-

Continued on page 11 >>>>

<<<< *Continued from page 10*

late matter (commonly referred to as dust) from visibly crossing property boundaries. Section 002 of Chapter 32 applies to construction, **use**, repair and demolition **of buildings roads, driveways or other open areas**; Section 003 of Chapter 32 provides limited exemption to this regulation for normal farming practices.....as long as reasonable and practical measures to limit the dust are utilized.”

In simpler terms: If your car raises dust on a gravel road you have violated the fugitive dust regulation....and if the wind blows 50 mph you could face enforcement action if your neighbor complains to the right people.

Already burdened by a staggering national debt Americans are being robbed by the whims and fancies of outlaw agencies who govern by excessive regulation...whose employees sign into law rules that have never been thoroughly vetted.

How could we have allowed this to happen?

Keep your dust close...you never know who's watching.

As Always, Karen

'Diary' continued, from page 6

All in all, we were probably more at risk of injury from power boats than alligators. You can't actually see a boat coming over the clumps of tall marsh grass; you just have to listen and keep to the right. One particular boat, occupied by three young boys, managed to cross our path three times. My son-in-law was sure they were intentionally staying near us to ogle the younger, tank-top clad female kayakers. Boys will be boys.

By the time the tour ended, I was getting pretty good at backing up out of patches of marsh grass I had plowed into in my clumsy attempts to navigate turns. Still, I had thought my rowing technique wasn't too amateurish, until we all eventually got out of our kayaks. Why was I the only one who had apparently splashed enough water into my kayak to soak my shorts?

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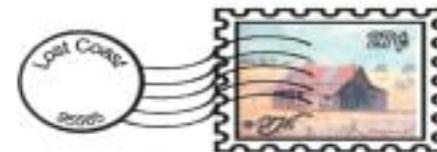
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I still see the Flicker now and then when it sneaks over to get a few sunflower seeds.

Country Mama Makeover Part II

By Vicki O'Neal



My daughters don't like my old-fashioned beauty treatments. When I scrub my skin with baking soda and vinegar, they're appalled. If I use hemorrhoid cream around my eyes, they're horrified. When I vacuum my cheeks to 'plump-up-the-collagen,' they have fits.

They have *better ideas* for making their old mom beautiful and it has nothing to do with vinegar, baking soda or hemorrhoid cream. They gave me some new-fangled facial crème and insisted that I use it. They fed me nutritional drinks and urged me to do work-outs.

They traipsed me here and there—to the gym, to the runner's track, to the tanning salon... But it was the trip to the Hairdresser's that really put me on edge.

It was a wild, windy day that did not bode well for a Country Mama such as me. If I'd had any sense, I would've never ventured out of bed. "Mother, you are going! You'll be beautiful!" my eldest daughter said as she hustled me toward the car. "I'm taking you to my hairdresser's home, instead of a salon, to make it easier on you! Mom—I can't believe you're 50 years old and have never been to visit a beautician. That is a crime!"

I protested and fussed, but it did no good. Karissa drove

me to the home of her personal hairdresser and marched me up the steps.

It was there on the doorstep that things began to go wrong. If I'd had a lick of common sense, I would've turned tail and run away right then and there. The young beautician appeared in the doorway looking tousled and sleepy-eyed, her hair blowing in the wind. She was just a kid and she had obviously overslept. To make matters worse, her home was undergoing some serious remodeling. It was a disaster area that made Joplin, Missouri look pristine. The strong winds blowing outside only highlighted the irony—causing the windows to rattle, and the whole house to creak. In the background came an insistent yapping. Terriers causing terror. Just my luck. Nervously, I went inside, edging my way past all the building supplies and debris and settled myself into the chair near the window. I sat there primly, awaiting my fate, fearing the worst. I didn't have long to wait.

The beautician sighed as she began working conditioners into my hair. "You know," she said, "yesterday, I had some kind of a mini-stroke while I was at work. I couldn't function. Couldn't even speak. I finally had to come home."

I stared at her mutely. Things were going from bad to

worst...and fast! Here I was, entrusting myself into the hands of a gal who was having trouble functioning, herself. Was I even sane?

The beautician went on rambling. The terriers went on yapping. My daughter went on smiling reassuringly while the hairdresser worked away on my tangled locks.

I gazed at the red-curtained window in front of me, trying hard not to fret, but it wasn't easy. God only knows how I would survive this ordeal!

Why did I let my daughters talk me into this? My thoughts ended abruptly. From outside, came a strong gust of wind that shook the house to its core. The window in front of me made an eerie noise, a strange moaning sound that raised the hackles on my neck. Then suddenly—as God is my witness—the whole window pane plunged toward me, frame and all.

It shattered at my feet, barely missing me. My daughter and I gave a horror-stricken yelp, but the beautician hardly blinked. She heaved another sigh and after a moment or two of silent contemplation, she went on tousling conditioner into my hair with her fingers. "Stupid window!" she said. "That's happened before. I'll clean up the mess later."

I stared out the window—bereft of its curtains and glass.

The wind blew in unchecked now. Dear Lord in heaven! What would happen next? One thing was for sure. Something around here needed a makeover, and it certainly wasn't me.

Without missing a beat, the two girls went back to their chatter, and I sat there frozen and mute waiting for the ordeal to end.

It seemed to take forever, but the session ended at last. Smiling, the girls showed me a mirror. With trepidation, I peered into the glass, terrified of what I'd see.

I stared.

Remarkable! I'd been transformed. This young gal might not be functioning well, and her house might be total chaos, but by golly—she sure could do hair.

I stared at my reflection. I looked younger somehow. It had been worth the agony of yapping dogs, and breaking glass and blowing wind.

To be beautiful requires diligence and risk...and I had survived the test. My daughter beamed. "Oh Mother, you look so good!"

What can I say?

I'd risked everything...and I'd escaped with my life, folks. I escaped with my life!

Whisler's Hunting & Fishing Report



by Josh Whisler
Photo Submitted by Author

Fishing:

The Missouri River flow was low this past month due to several things. One was there were no thunder storms that left an abundance of rainfall. And the other thing was the inspection of Gavins Point Dam Gates and Spillway. The gates at the dam last year, as we all know, were open to a record flow that flooded all of the Missouri Valley. Now the Corp of Engineers are looking to see what damage might have been done by running the record levels through the dam. Some folks have other ideas of what is going on too - due to you DO NOT always get the straight scoop from the Corp: "They let too much water loose last summer to take care of tourism in North and South Dakota and now they need some water to float their boat docks up stream of the dam this year so now the flow is shut completely off." There could be some truth to that theory, whatever the reason for the flow up or down, the fish are biting.

A lot of Blue Catfish, but the Channels and Flatheads are coming on. What are they biting on you ask? Chubs mostly along with cut baits and the old reliable - night crawlers. Missouri River Rules still apply "Big Bait - Big Fish".

The boat ramps that were not destroyed by last year's flooding are all accessible and there are a lot of places to bank fish as well. So get some bait and give it a try before the bugs get very thick. The cool nights, the winds, and the low river flows

have kept them down for now. I'd still take the Deet if I were you.

Hunting:

Spring Turkey Seasons is coming to an end with some turkey taken early due to the unseasonably high temps but as of late the toms have not been coming to the call and if they did the cover is so dense that you may not even see them creeping around at all. As long as the Toms are strutting there are turkeys to be had - so don't get discouraged - just keep at it.

2012 SPRING TURKEY SEASON DATES:

Youth Archery March 25 – May 31
Archery March 25 – May 31
Youth Shotgun April 7 – May 31
Shotgun April 14 – May 31

PERMIT LIMIT

- Spring – three per person per calendar year

The Spring Turkey Season is about over and it is time to turn to other outdoor activities - Camping, Boating, Fishing, or all at the same time (same weekend). The State Parks offer an abundance of opportunities to doing any outdoor activities you choose - you just need to look up the activities of your choice on the Nebraska Game and Parks Website. And give it a try. I assure you that you can find something local that will provide some fun this Summer. 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."



Sam Carmen of Peru with a 70+ pound Blue Cat taken near Peru from the bank. The fish was caught and released.

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Poetry and Photography by Carol Carpenter

Niobrara Song

She sings in me
that seam of blue
slashing the humpback grassland
rushing cold from the earth
arterial blood of plant and flower
bird and mammal
fish and insect.

She cries gently
spilling through steep valleys
wind rustling between
aspen, lodgepole, basswood, cedar
volcanic ash layers the limestone
cuddling cliffs from sparkling white
to dusky pink rippled
with smoky streaks of gray
yellowthroats and wrens dapple her banks
vireos, warblers, orioles decorate hedges
while eagles, vultures, and hawks bookend the sky.

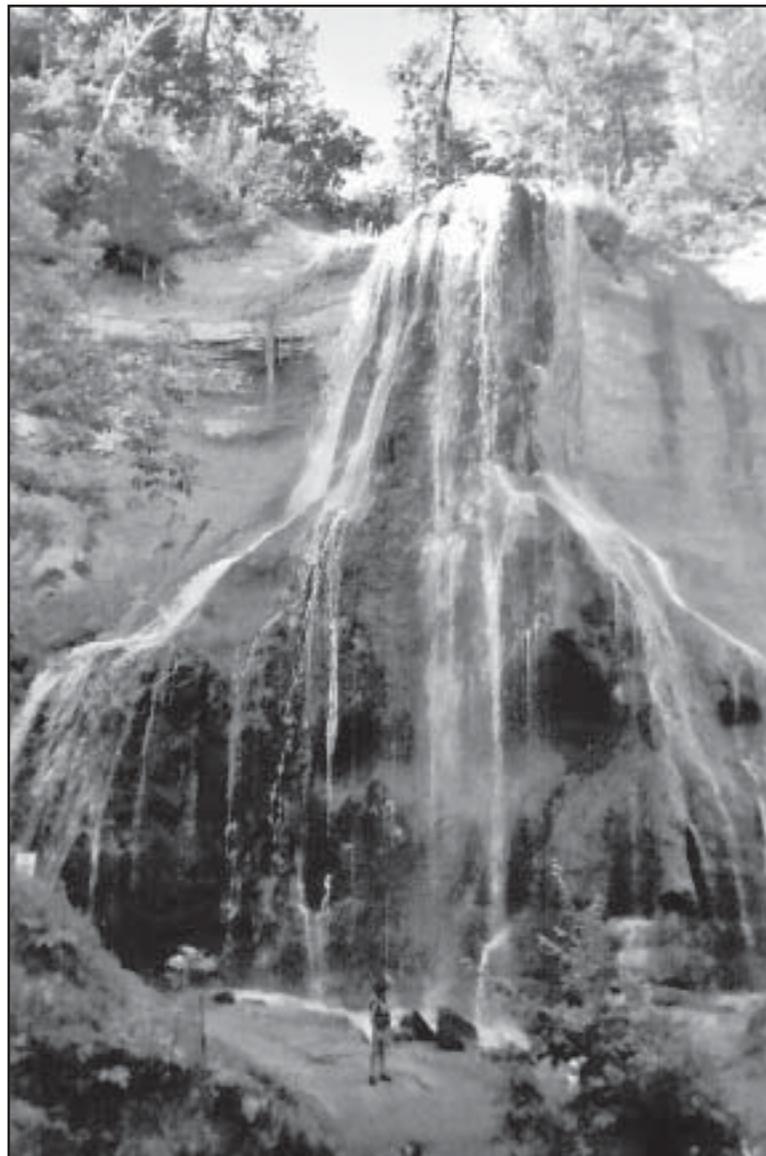
From the high plains of Wyoming
she bursts vibrantly
bubbling through the rock
of sandstone, siltstone, and shale
remnants of ancient glaciers
carve her path with quiet cascades
or tempestuous falls roaring.

Her sweet chorus
carries me
to greet
each new and
golden dawn.

Great Blue Heron

Cast serenity over me
mystic hunter of the lake
grant me, if you please
an audience in your court
where I arrive, as always, foolishly unprepared.

No gifts I bring of minnow or leopard frog.
Your amber eyes invade and calm my spirit.
On stilted legs, you charm and preen.
Teach me if you will
the importance of remaining still.



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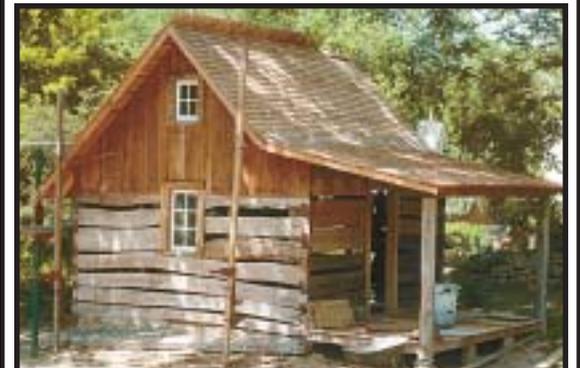
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