

Your *Country* Neighbor **Free!** March 2022

Auburn • Brownville • Cook • Falls City • Johnson • Nebraska City • Nemaha • Peru • Rock Port • Syracuse • Tecumseh • Verdon



Bobcat “Athlete of the Month” for January,
Maddy Duncan, Hamburg, Iowa.



Migrating Snow Geese, 02/20/2022, Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge.



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Your Country Neighbor

Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

Plus, peruse the happenings in a Nebraska town on pages 6,7,8,9.

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"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 make them feel."

Maya Angelou

This Month's Writers & Contributors

Devon Adams 13

Angela Allgood - Peru City News, 6,7,8,9

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Stephen Hassler 2, 14

Merri Johnson 12

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Thank You!

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Covid in SE Nebraska

Stephen Hassler, Peru

New "Positive" Cases of Covid-19 in Southeast Nebraska Counties

<u>Date Range</u>	<u>Nemaha</u>	<u>Otoe</u>	<u>Johnson</u>	<u>Richardson</u>
01/05 - 01/18	96	271	50	145
01/19 - 02/01	131	313	32	182
01/25 - 02/07	87	192	29	160
02/07 - 02/21	31	63	12	55

The Omicron variant hit its peak near January 25th and cases are now at a pre-omicron level. A new variant on the horizon is called Omicron BA.2. Research is ongoing to determine its threat level as compared to other variants. Initial reports suggest that BA.2 could be at least as contagious as Omicron. When in a public setting, wear an N95 mask and wash hands often. Keep informed. Avoid infection; avoid infecting others.

Track Covid-19 in your county. Search covid case updates.

Google; **county, state, covid.**

Wear an N95 mask.

Readers, Please Note:

The article to the right was written more than a decade ago by Frieda Burston (now deceased), who used to be a regular contributor until her death sometime before 2008. I was reading through some old material and was re-awakened by the rich history that Frieda brought to *Your Country Neighbor*, so I will try to find room in future issues to share some of Frieda's stories. Here is part 2 of 3 parts. >>>>>>>>

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JESSE JAMES' HOUSE (2nd of 3 Parts)

by the 'Late' Frieda Burston

Continued from February

Po' folks, but not shif'less. Very shifty indeed. Mama ripped apart Brother #1's shirts and pants when he outgrew them, and resewed them inside out for fresher color— by hand, mind you, there being no sewing machine— for Brother #2. Normally, they would then have been ripped apart again and resewed into dresses for me. But by the time Brother #2 had outgrown Brother #1's clothes, there was nothing but acres of mending and darning to hold the original threads together. So I wore party dresses all the time. Party dresses? Yes.

Mama's cousins back East used to send her a box of their old clothes to cut down for me, every year. Well, what kind of old clothes are always nice enough to give away to your cousins? Clothes you rarely wore, and took good care of, when you did. Party clothes.

So every year Mama unpacked a box of gorgeous bead-encrusted glamor-fabric dresses, and every year I helped her turn them into my school dresses. Mama would sit by the kerosene lamp at night, and snip the threads holding on one bead at a time. I'd catch them and corral them in paper twists to save for stringing fun. Then Mama would take the dresses apart, wash them to remove the thread holes, and turn them into my school dresses. So while other girls wore cotton dresses their moms had put together from sugar bags or flour bags, I went around NOT playing games because my party dress fabrics would come apart with any strain. I had to be on my best behavior all the time.

Now Mama had left behind some friends in the old neighborhood, when we went to Kansas and lost everything. She hadn't lost the friends, and when the holiday season rolled around at the end of summer, Mama used to take us kids, load us with garden goodies, and walk back to visit the old friends. Then others would gather, and the ladies would shoo all us kids out to go play and let them saucer their tea in peace and quiet.

This year the older boys tore off up the hill behind the houses and into a neglected dirty little woods. The older girls followed. I was trailing everyone because I had to be careful of my dress— a pale green little cloud of ruffles blowing around me. By the time I got into the woods, I saw them headed for an old shack. The boys ran in through the door and were frolicking around on the warped pine floor. The girls couldn't jump from the ground to the front stoop, so the girls ran around to the window at the back. The other girls climbed in through that window, but it was too high off the ground for me. The land sloped up at the side, so I went that way. There was a splintery window frame there that I could climb through, but it would ruin my dress. What to do? I looked around to see who was watching. The boys had jumped out of the shack and were running uphill again. The girls followed. If I didn't hurry, I'd be alone, lost in the woods. There was no path around the house. I had to go through.

I reached under my dress to my cotton petticoat, and rolled it up around my chest with my dress inside. Then I scrambled over the window frame. Splinters tore into my belly button, but I couldn't stop to cry. My dress was safe. I ran through the house, jumped out of the door, scrambled up out of the pit, and ran after the vanishing crowd. That night when Mama helped me take off the fragile green dress, she saw blood on my petticoat, and found the splinters embedded in me. She went for the splinter-needle and burned it to sterilize it. Then she operated, while I cried buckets. Creolin was more merciful than iodine, but it burned too. She burned the needle again and stuck it into an old candle to keep it sterile. Po' folks Emergency Medicine. I went to sleep in an old outworn, outgrown shirt of my brothers', but I spent most of the night running after the crowd in my sleep. I still spend some sleep time chasing through woods after glimpses of disappearing feet—

>>>> 3rd and Final Part in April <<<<

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Snow Geese, Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge, 02/20/2022

Report on the Brownville Potato Bake

John Lokke, Brownville

Arrived at Potato Bake at 5:00 P.M.

Free Will donation provided attendees with one big potato, choice of four toppings: Broccoli and Cheese; Chili; Chicken and Sauce; Liver and Onions.

The latter was surprisingly good on a potato. Also included were a salad, choice of tea, coffee or water, and one of several desserts. A lot of bang for the buck. Participants trickled in slowly at first. I stayed about an hour, and by that time, the hall was pretty much full.



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PERU CITY NEWS

Communication • Information • Pride In Community

Heroes of Fire & Rescue

by Brent Lottman

Peru Emergency Services is an all volunteer organization comprised of the Peru Volunteer Fire Department and Peru Rescue Squad.

The Fire Department currently has 21 volunteer firefighters and there are 9 EMTs on the Rescue Squad. Of the EMT's 7 of those are members of the Fire Department as well, for a total of 23 responders.

The Fire Department is allowed by law to have 25 members. The Rescue Squad is allowed the same number by ordinance. How many members are needed is a tough question. From an EMS perspective, 3 or 4 responders can frequently handle a typical medical response. From a fire perspective, there are a lot of variables... a car fire can easily be handled by 3 or 4 firefighters while a structure fire or grass fire can sometimes require 20 or more to adequately deal with the situation. Vehicle crashes are another scenario that can be manpower intensive. EMTs are needed to care for and transport patients while firefighters are needed to stabilize vehicles, perform extrication and deal with other scene issues. The number of people involved in a crash also figures into needs, a single vehicle crash with only a driver has less people needing transport than a multi-vehicle crash with numerous patients. Automatic and mutual aid agreements are in place with neighboring departments to allow for additional responders. These agreements work both ways, as other departments help Peru and Peru helps neighboring departments. An exact number of desired volunteers is tough to pinpoint, but if the Fire Department rolls were full at 25 and there were 12 or more EMTs it would make response much easier. Because both departments are volunteer there is no guarantee that all or even a majority of the members will be available at any given time.

The Fire Department averages about 15 calls a year and the Rescue Squad averages about 50 calls a year. These numbers include false alarms and standby at ballgames and other events. There have

Continued on page 7 >>>>



Hwy 67 Fire Contained

by Angela Allgood

February 9th, on Dr Daryl Long's farm west of Peru, a grass fire originating from a burn-barrel's ember, spread with the wind east of the farmstead to the county road.

There were no injuries and it was mainly dry vegetation that burned; however, a granary also caught fire and was a total loss.

Peru, Auburn and Brock-Julian emergency vehicles responded as well as a local farmer with a tractor and disk.



Vehicle leaves 5th Street at the college curve; story page 9.

been times where the departments have gone months with no calls and had 3 or 4 calls within 24 hours. The largest number of calls that I recall were 17 calls in a 2 week period about 20 years ago.

Of the current members, I have been on both departments the longest, just over 28 years. Barb Decker has been a member of both departments for just a few less months.

Applications can be obtained by contacting any member, though Brent Lottman or Miranda or Barb Decker typically have them. Peru Emergency Services does have a Facebook page or the email for the Fire Department is: peruvfd@gmail.com. The application is voted on by the Fire Department or Rescue Squad (as applicable) and then submitted to the City Council for approval.

Training to become an EMT is about a 4 to 5 month class, though many of the classes have become blended so a lot of the class is accomplished on-line. EMS training is conducted monthly at meetings and the City will pay for attending conferences. Most fire training is conducted at monthly training sessions. The State Fire Marshal's Office does offer training and we sometimes host it here on topics that may be one evening to Fire Fighter certification that takes several months. State Fire School is held in late spring each year in Grand Island and several members usually attend that training. Most of this training is at no cost, and training that has a cost is covered by the City and Rural Fire District.

There are a number of different calls that I recall, some where a person has not survived and these are by far the worst. However, there have been calls where a person has been extricated and survived or their condition has improved and even cases where CPR has been performed and the person has survived.

The funding for day-to-day operations come from the City and the Rural Fire District. We do pursue grants and other funding to purchase new or upgrade equipment. In the past couple of years funds have been received from USDA to replace an ambulance and the City's fire truck. They also provided funds to purchase a power load stretcher and a cardiac monitor. We have been fortunate to receive funds from the Nebraska Forest Service most years to assist in replacing bunker gear, air packs and other equipment. There are several other governmental and business sources that we have also received funds from occasionally.

We are always looking to improve the abilities of both departments. Equipment out-dates and has to be replaced that accounts for a lot of funds. We are always looking to improve and find more efficient equipment to fight fire, perform extrication and provide medical care.

If you or anyone you know of that lives or works in Peru or in the Peru Rural Fire District would be interested in volunteering to assist your neighbors in a time of need we would ask that you join us. You don't have to have any experience, just a willingness to volunteer and learn. There have been a number of people that have gone to college at PSC, joined the Fire Department and/or Rescue Squad and have made a career of it. There are several who have made a career of emergency services, joined paid departments and some have promoted to command positions within large fire and EMS agencies.

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Student Life

by Ean Miller, Sophomore at PSC

With Spring Break close, and frigid temperatures beginning to rise, students at Peru State College begin to make plans for their week off from classes.

Many will stay in-state and spend time with their families, while out-of-state students may venture homeward while given the opportunity to travel to where home may be.

Of course, there are the adventurous few who will use their week of leisure to explore and experience new places. Texas, Florida, North Carolina, California and more, prove to be popular coastal retreats for students looking to leave the plains for the beach, and the snow for the sun. But until then, students are stuck on campus, where Peru Theater Company shows and home games are the main source of entertainment and excitement.

Baseball and softball have begun- and with that comes excitement and stress for some- the cafeteria that employs many baseball players is experiencing shortages as employee-athletes travel beyond the borders of Nebraska to play ball games.

Generally, the cafeteria doesn't see much business during most of the meals- so perhaps it's not a massive issue- just one that may be noteworthy to those with an empty stomach on campus.

As covid-19 cases seemingly drop from the winter break-induced spike, more students feel comfortable going mask-less and interacting more. However, while cases have been declining, one could only imagine they will once again rise due to the spring/midterm break travels that many students will embark upon.

Peru City News

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Peru City News
is a volunteer project promoting
**Communication, Information,
and Pride in the Peru Community**

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Thank you to everyone who participates!

St. Clara's Altar Society Soup Supper

By Angela Allgood

St. Clara's Altar Society hosted a soup supper on February 20, 2022 from 4:30-6:30 at the Peru City Hall. They had Turkey Noodle, Cheese Potato, Chili and desserts. I tried the chili and it was delicious! And the desserts... yum!

I sat and talked with Cecelia Marnell, Kathy Tynon, and Peggy Groff. I learned that this was the first year for the soup supper. The Altar Society usually hosts the sloppy joe fundraiser during Old Man River Days.

The Altar Society is a part of the Falls City Deanery where they pay dues. Part of the money raised helps pay those dues as well as upkeep of the church and helps modernize the church kitchen. They have in the past helped a family in Peru who was in need. They also help with the Peru State College Newman Center and have fixed Thanksgiving Dinner for college students before.

Cecelia Marnell has been the President for five years and stated that there are ten people in the Altar Society. She stated that they meet about four times a year. Peggy Groff stated that Covid has really changed the way they have to fundraise. She stated that people are finally getting back out into the community to meet and do soup suppers and other community meals.

Tuesday Literary Club Reads

by DiAnna Loy

The book talk at Tuesday Literary Club this month was *The Missing of Zangrabar* by Steve Higgs, shared by Cecilia Marnell. It was obvious by her enthusiasm that she enjoyed this book. From funny faces, to interesting voices, and lots of laughter, she kept everyone interested in her review.

As we start the book we join Patricia Fisher as she goes to her best friend Maggie's house to pick her up to go get their hair fixed. When she arrives at Maggie's house she realizes that she has the date wrong when she finds her husband, Charlie, in bed with Maggie. In shock she returns home, cleans out all their bank accounts and packs most of her belongings. Patricia has been married to Charlie for many years and has been content to let him be the center of attention. Charlie has the high profile, good paying job, wears sharp clothes, and drives a new car while Patricia has been willing to clean other women's houses for spending money, wearing out of date clothes, and driving an old car. Not having anywhere to go, Patricia decides she will go on a cruise. At the cruise office she discovers the next cruise boards within a few hours and is a yearlong, round-the-world cruise that will cost nearly all her money. Not knowing what else to do, she writes the check and boards the ship to find herself booked in the most elite stateroom on the ship.

As she boards the ship, Patricia meets Captain Alastair Huntley who is quite surprised when he checks her ticket; she does not look the part of the normal person residing in the luxury suite. He escorts her to her suite and after quickly turning her over to her personal butler, Jerome, who comes with the suite, he hurries away to greet other passengers.

On the ship, Patricia will also meet and become involved with Jack Langley, Commander Schooner, Flint Magnum, Barbie, and Shaun Metcalf. Some of the characters are helpful to Patricia and some... not quite so much. In fact, some of those she meets have a habit of later turning up dead.

At the end of Marnell's talk all of the members indicated they would be interested in reading this book or other books in the series. I was so intrigued I borrowed Marnell's copy and read it immediately.

Happy Reading!

Jack-hammering!

by Angela Allgood

Excitement is in the air! I hear a jackhammer and I see huge hunks of flooring coming out of the old grocery store! That can mean only one thing ... progress is happening! Keep track of progress through PCN or look over there when you drive by.

Mason's Soup Supper

by Angela Allgood

Mason's Soup Supper

March 6th

4:30 to 6:30 pm

City Hall

Vegetable Beef

Chicken Noodle

Chili

Ham and cheese sandwiches

Desserts

Money raised for scholarships from the Peru Masonic lodge and Brownville Order of the Eastern Star.

Peru Clean-Up Day

by Angela Allgood

Mark your calendar!

The City of Peru and Peru State College

will host Peru Clean-Up Day

April 29, 2022 from 9-11 am.

Mark your calendar now and start thinking of items to

put out on the curb!

More information will be in the April Peru City News edition!



Around the College Curve

By Angela Allgood

On February 6, 2022, at 2:43 am, a 2011, Hyundai Azera heading south-bound, left the road at the college curve on 5th Street. The police report states, "the vehicle left the roadway at a high rate of speed and went through a fence, a light pole, off a retaining wall, and landed in a parking lot."

Damage to the fence, light pole, and retaining wall was approximately \$12,000.

The car was licensed in the state of Kansas, and it was reported that the driver of the vehicle left the scene of the accident. Damage to the vehicle was estimated at \$10,000. The report of possible head injury could not be confirmed.

The scene was cleaned up by 7:30 am, but at that time the vehicle had not yet been towed away.

This is the second time in recent years that a vehicle left the roadway from this curve, damaging the fence and retaining wall.

Who is on the Ballot?

by Angela Allgood

Marty Peregoy is the only Incumbent who has signed up as Council member again. New candidates have until March 1st to register.

Sign up at the Nemaha County Courthouse by March 1st to be on the May ballot as a candidate for Peru City Council!



St. Clara's Catholic Church

604 6th Street

Pastor Fr. Timothy Danek

Mass - Sunday 8:30 am

Confessions - Sunday 8:00-8:20 am



Peru Community Church

520 Nebraska Street

Pastors Raymond & Rebecca Girard

Services - Sunday 10:45 am



614 5th Street

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Services at Peru City Hall Sunday 10 am



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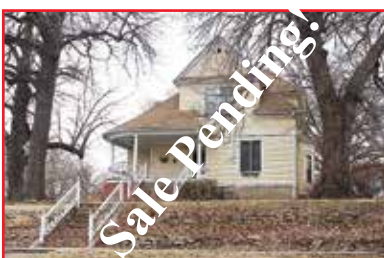
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March

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

March into March
Let the winds blow
Inhale the scents of warming leaves
Budding and unfurling on trembling trees
Do not fear the long eared hares
Or spotted does tiptoeing in the night
Inhale the sunshine
Be full of delight
Why? March is here
Just be aware

Pax

March was once the first month of the Roman year. March is named after Mars, the God of War. We are at War with winter, with old habits that are hard to break. Maybe we should name a new month pacific or pax and be at peace with ourselves, our past, each other. Just a thought...

Sheila Tinkham

Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

I recently spent a weekend visiting my mom in a nursing home in northwest Iowa, where she was recuperating and rehabbing after a spell of high blood pressure and general weakness. A combined total of eleven children and grandchildren and their spouses took multiple turns keeping mom company, making arrangements for changes in care, and getting her moved from hospital to nursing home and back to her assisted living apartment over the course of three weeks. All of those family members lived within one-to-three hours of mom, so travel time was really not an issue. It was all well worth the effort, as she is more mobile and energetic now than she had been for a while.

But it causes me to ponder how my own measly little family of two kids and their spouses and two grandchildren would handle such a situation for either me or Hubby someday. Our son's family is only an hour away. But our daughter lives in Georgia, so spur-of-the-moment caretaking is not an option for her. We both have five siblings, but of course, they will likely be needing assistance from their own kids and grandkids at the same time, so we can't count on them to pitch in. Our best plan of action is probably to relocate close (next door would be good!) to one of our kids as soon as we suspect that we are about to become a burden.

We are reminded on an almost-daily basis that we are not the physical or mental giants we once were. O.K., we were never exactly "giants" in any sense, but we did used to be more physically fit and mentally sharp than we are now. I would give you examples if I could remember what they are.

Forgetfulness notwithstanding, we are preparing for a road-trip to family and friends in Texas and Arizona right now. We have made this trip several times, and with satellite travel directions and printed maps, we figure we can find our way there again.

On the way from Texas to Arizona we will be spending a day and a half at the Big Bend National Park on the Rio Grande border with Mexico. We have researched hiking trails within the park and selected several that we think we can manage. In preparation, we have been walking pretty regularly and hiking at Indian Cave State Park. Even in this cool weather, I notice that a 90-minute hike is plenty. Just last year, I think we typically hiked two hours or more at a time. It will probably be a bit warmer in South Texas, which could make the hiking a bit more challenging. Hmmm. The scenic drive through Big Bend is probably pretty awe-inspiring, too. We should set aside enough time to do that, along with a short hike or two. Just a thought.

Once we get to Arizona we plan to do some desert hiking near our friends' home. By the time we head back to Nebraska, we will either be in shape or too tired to care if we ever take another hike.

My mom was never a hiking enthusiast. In fact, she only took up intentional (albeit sporadic) exercise when she began having some mobility issues in her eighties. Yet, she has now reached the age of 96 and has only briefly used a wheelchair to get around. Our son says she is a tough old bird. I guess he's right. If I live as long as my mom, I hope I'm as tough.



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ST. PATRICK'S POTATOES

So, the legend says that potatoes are to go in the ground on the day named for St. Pat. or you will have bad luck. But if you do plant on March 17, you might have to scoop snow before you can dig in the dirt. Or if snow has melted and made mud, it may be tricky to get sticky. Once they are in the ground, the sun may not shine and spuds will be duds if they rot. Then you'll have to plant again.

You do realize that there are potatoes in the grocery store? Weeds will grow at any time, anywhere, and deer will be glad you saved salad just for them.

SACRED SKULLS

Glowing like ivory in the soft evening light of an early Spring were fragments of bone nestled amid the tattered leaves of a distant Autumn. Among the bareness of legs and ribs, the skull stood out like a sacred relic from an ancient religion. Smooth and clean, with no contamination from skin or hair, it was perfectly shaped, like a finely crafted sculpture. Balanced in it's symmetry and dynamic in design, the shape was the perfect form of a predator. The lower jaw was missing, but the alignment of upper teeth, their sharpness gleaming, screamed of bloody kills by a practiced hunter. Nearby were other bones, where the cold breath of death still hung over a raccoon skull, polished by weather, haunted by wild spirits.

SPLISH SPLASH!

The rowdy crowd is fluffing and puffing up their feathers, waiting for a chance to dip and dive. It only takes one to start the show, and all the other birds take notice. First are the crowders and the pushers; sparrows are greedy little souls. Four or five at a time hop into the old skillet and wind up their wings as if someone twisted a key. Drips and drops explode like a fountain, dousing others waiting their turn. Then cardinals and robins show what muscle and size can do to a pan of water. Last are tiny chickadees, finches, warblers and nuthatches, who really just wanted to drink. They have to scramble to avoid an invasion of cedar waxwings, whose squadron lands with precision, followed by the rowdy carousing of a military shore leave.

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MARCH MADNESS

Gym walls echo from basketballs bouncing between men fighting to win their way to the top of the heap of teams competing for the title of Best of the Best. Families have charts on walls with blank brackets that fill with victories from game after game, as days go by like ticks and tocks on a nervous clock until time stands still. A shrill buzzer sounds, sending shocks down the backs of flocks of spectators, standing stunned. A win! And a loss, until next year, when it happens all over again.

SUN TIME

By now the sun is leaning toward the top of the sky, and it's time to jump ahead of nature and pretend that the earth will agree with you. It isn't true. A lie can't be true. There is only real time, set by the spin of our planet and the invisible umbilical cord that tethers us in our orbit to the fireball that keeps us alive. Daylight Savings doesn't exist!!

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Obtain Your Bliss Through Good Health

Dorothy Rieke, Julian

Authorities tell us that starting each day with optimism and hope affects daily events as well as how we feel. In fact, those who begin their days with complaints and frowns are eighty per cent more likely to suffer various ailments. One person stated, “Your thoughts are the architecture of your reality.”

Because our minds are incredibly powerful, our attitudes affect every aspect of our lives for better or worse. It’s a sort of “I think I am well, therefore I am.”

Attitudes such as joy, love, sadness, happiness, anger, envy, and even certain kinds of thoughts have a great effect on health as well as life events.

Happy people, who are grateful for being alive, experience better health by being thankful, recognizing their blessings as well as being optimistic and hopeful. For some, attitude may be keeping them from having good days. In fact, daily recognition of our assets is a “plus” in the wellness game.

We have all been told that positive attitudes and positive thinking have a direct bearing on events in our lives. The power of positive thinking definitely can alter our attitudes and indirectly affect our health.

Actually, thoughts create our attitudes. Negative thoughts may mean that your body is releasing stress hormones which cause conditions such as high blood pressure, stomach ulcers, headaches, heart problems, and muscle aches.

Having positive attitudes helps prevent these health problems. So we must try to be masters of our thoughts affecting our attitudes which improve health and create feelings of happiness

One way to influence your life is to believe in yourself, Believe that you will feel better, and send this message throughout your body. Let go of those negative thoughts and actions because those affect your health.

Of course, having a positive attitude is no guarantee that certain health problems will not occur. However, it will reduce the possibility of some health issues. It is important, then, to be positive and “get happy.”

The following guidelines will help all of us accomplish this:

1 Decide what matters most in your life and forget about anything else. Don’t dwell on the mundane or unimportant in your life. Focus on what is important at the time.

2 Set goals for a happier life. A life without goals is a life without direction. Decide your direction and set a goal to achieve. Goals eliminate haphazard, needless actions while directing us toward achievement. Successfully completing goals build self-esteem and feelings of attainment.

3 Develop hope and optimism. Optimism is a shorter termed positive outlook. Hope is enduring faith that prevails through all circumstances. Both mean looking forward with anticipation for what will occur. Things are not always going to work out as we planned. Events will improve because with time, there is always change.

4 Be happy because that encourages friendships. Friends support, assist, and encourage. They represent a treasure in disguise. Let your friends know you value them.

5 Feel comfortable with yourself by abolishing any guilt you may have. The past is over. Any remorse should be forgotten in favor of looking to future days with hope.

6 Serve others. One of the best activities to create a good attitude is serving others. Any attention brings joy to others who are often lonesome. It also makes us feel good when we take time for another person.

Bliss means being on cloud nine or in seventh heaven or experiencing a feeling of walking on air. Actually, it means a state of extreme happiness. Good health brings all those feelings plus an appreciation for life. It is important to set our minds on being healthy. Following certain suggestions can change our lives into a state of bliss.

Window From The Past

Stephen Hassler, Peru

One evening on my porch in early Spring it felt like a quiet Summer evening; seventy degrees and very still. It was between dusk and darkness, and the birds had ceased their evening chatter. My laptop computer and I were in a comfortable chair not quite of living room quality. As the darkness approached, the street lights awakened with a gentle glow, then brightened to half-way. The gray-blue sky darkened to a satin black, and the silhouettes of the trees blended into the dark, distant hills.

The sudden change in light made me feel as if there were some other place I should be, as if I were staying up late on a school night and my mother would catch me at any moment. I paused to deepen my awareness of the magic feeling, but moment by moment my eyes registered fewer and fewer shapes and the stillness said nothing to my ears. Various memories teased my senses. One was of my father carrying milk pails to the milk-house, the country yard-light illuminating the side of the barn, the warm white stuff, sloshing over the rims, and kittens scampering at his heels. Another was of me with my first steady girlfriend watching a full moon rise over the Missouri River, and below the overlook, a barge’s pusher-tug swept it’s spotlight from one bank to the other while chugging up the river.

There seem to be moments in my memory that would leave holes in my life if they were absent; special Summer evenings, perfect Friday afternoons, or a Winter’s snowfall watched through the dining room window. When life is tedious such moments are like beacons that flash, and then they are gone, but they are reminders that there is more in life than tedium.

I went to visit a friend the other day. It was late morning, but he had fallen asleep with the television on. These days he was more of a tired soul than the friend I used to joke with, have lunch with, visit with... and now he was becoming one of those special moments... a late evening silhouette soon to be one with the darkness, a hole in my life.

I closed my computer and went inside, knowing that the magic was gone until next week or next month when a pointed awareness would make me wish I could stop time and make the feeling last. Time doesn’t stop, but that in turn guarantees that tomorrow will bring more possibilities of special moments, as well as all the rest of life that happens before dusk, before we fade away into the dark.

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Snow Geese flying over the road where I was parked, 02/20/2022.



Trumpeter Swan, February 20, 2022.

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This little guy (or gal), seemed oblivious to me as it hiked along the shoulder of the road. It didn't appear injured, just unafraid.



Men's Basketball Wins At Home 02/16/2022

PSC 80 Culver-Stockton College 65



Henry Tanksley
(January's
Athelete of the
Month)
Honored On
Senior Night
February 16
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March 2022

Your Country Neighbor

17



Women's Basketball Wins At Home 02/16/2022

PSC 66 Culver-Stockton College 56



Peru State College News

2022 Softball Preseason Outlook

The 2022 Peru State Softball season gets underway on Sunday, February 20 as the Bobcats take on the Bethel Threshers. The Bobcats last month were picked to finish tenth in the Heart Softball Coaches’ Preseason Poll.

Last season the Bobcats finished with a record of 18-31 and were 12-22 in (Heart) play. Head coach JL Thomason enters his fourth season as head coach. Ricky Broxson returns as the assistant coach for his third season.

Fourth-year pitcher Alana Krieser sat down for an interview to talk about herself as a pitcher, her team, and the season ahead for the Bobcats. Krieser has set out personal goals for herself and for the softball team in her final season. “Going into my fourth-year pitching against these great teams, personally, my goal is just to live in the moment and win more games than to lose,” said Krieser. “Try to bring our team to a winning record.”

The Bobcats want to prove people wrong this season and change the preseason narrative about this years’ team. “Being in this program for four years I honestly was not surprised, and the team was not expecting anything differently,” Krieser said. “A lot of people doubt our team, but we have the potential to be really good this year.” Krieser continued, “Coach told us that it’s just a number at the beginning of the year nobody knows what we can really do. We are using being picked tenth as motivation and our going to come out strong and hopefully prove people wrong.”

Krieser commented about the talent on this year’s team. “This year we have a lot of returners which is really exciting for us. We have some experienced players who have got a lot of game time. We have some young players that will help us out on the field. We have some big power hitters in our lineup, and we have some speed which is big for us. If we get runners on like we can, we should be able to have a fun time on the basepath.”

The Bobcats and Krieser are looking to claim a Heart Championship this season. “This is definitely something every team works for from the first day on campus to the end of the season,” added Krieser. “With all the teams I have played for I don’t think there would be a more deserving team then the one I am playing with right now. We work so hard day in and day out just being able to prove the people wrong that doubt us would be worth it.”

Women’s Basketball Closes Season With Win On The Road At Graceland University

Here’s what head coach Ian Holleran had to say about the Bobcats season, “Today was a big win for our program,” said Holleran. “I was very excited to end the season with a win and send out our one senior Maria “Duda” Alcantara the right way.

Holleran continued, “It was another close game, and I was proud of how our team made some big plays when we needed them. Julie (Miller) had a great defensive play to get the steal, and Hailey (Ingram) came through big time with the game-winner.”

Holleran talked about the future of this young program, “Even though we fell just short of the conference tournament,” Holleran said. “12 wins is a major step in the right direction. We doubled our win total from last season and have some great momentum heading into the off-season.”

Holleran added, “I’m confident in saying we are close, and my staff and I are going to make sure we continue to build in the right direction to achieve our goal of getting this program to national prominence.”

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