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A Magazine for Small Towns and Rural America





More PSC Bobcat Photos pages 6 & 9

Lourdes Central was one of the many bands that helped make this Applejack Parade one of the best!

Your Country Neighbor

Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

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Pass reception for TD, 09/02/2017, PSC v Central Methodist W 40-20 October 2017

Volume Eighteen, Number Ten

Guitar Poems

Steve Adams



- Train comes through It's a little after ten Be tomorrow morning before it's back again Things move fast and then they slow back down Hear that whistle blowing as it's leaving town
- It's easy to see at night from the top of the hill Stars are bright fog rises from the fields winds are calm October nights chill Listen closely-you can hear the whistle still

It echoes down the valley and out onto the plain There's just something about a whistle And a danged ole train

As a young man I stood out on that hill Wish I could be standing there still

It echoes down the valley and out onto the plain There's just something about a whistle And a danged ole train



"Welcome to Medicare" Class Mary Ann Holland

If you are "new to Medicare" or planning to enroll in Medicare in the near future, you will want to take advantage of the opportunity to gain a better understanding of Medicare benefits, plus identify how and when to enroll. This class is also open to family members or caregivers of those new to Medicare.

The Nebraska Senior Health Insurance Information Program [SHIIP] of the Department of Insurance will offer a Welcome to Medicare class on **Tuesday, October 10, 2017, at the Nebraska City Learning Center located at 819 Central Avenue, Nebraska City.** The class is being offered by Southeast Community College. This non-credit class will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Tuition is being provided by the Nebraska SHIIP.

While tuition is provided, it is still necessary to pre-register for this class. To register, please visit www.doi.ne.gov/shiip, or call 1-800-234-7119.





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October Writers

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Thank You!

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Thoughts of an Old Man

Once upon a time When I was old and grey I would walk using a cane

If I couldn't walk I'd sit a spell And tell the world to go to ____

While sitting a spell I would ponder And know the Lord is still up yonder

Now from this time on I'll sing a song And praise the Lord all day long He's my leader and my guide So by his laws I will abide And when I die I want to be In his heavenly company



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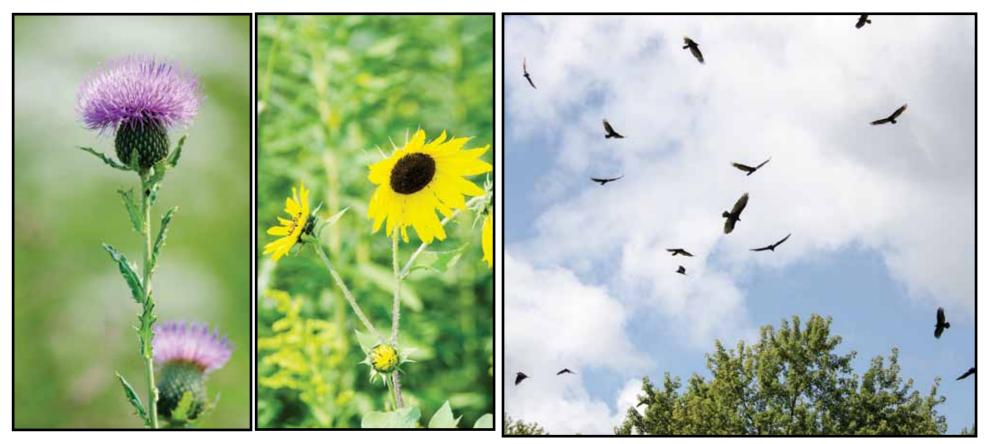
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Most of these are gone by October. October 2017

Vultures migrating, Your Country Neighbor

What's left after the lights go out?

I've been thinking about storms lately with all the hurricanes in the news. Thunderstorms are common in these central states, and my electricity 'goes out' at least once a Summer. Ice in Winter can produce the same result. The inconvenience of having fewer options when it comes to meal preparation, air conditioning, TV, internet, and illumination, motivates me to focus on what's available, such as candles, card games, and conversation.

During a category 4 or 5 hurricane I can't imagine anyone sitting around playing cards. I would be planning how to find cover for when the roof blows off. But if there is no eminent threat to life...

How does one pass the time during an electrical storm? What I do gives me some insight into what's important; those things I don't give much attention to, or perhaps I'm not aware of, during the normal hum-drum of pleasant weather.

Although it's seldom that I find the time to read a book these days, I do try to have a good one "on hand" for when there's nothing else I can do. I've read a book by the light of my battery-powered computer screen until the lights came back on, but sometimes I just go to bed early. My mother never would have done that; she would have kept busy pacing and praying, unless we were in the potato cellar. I can imagine families sitting around in the candlelight playing cards or monopoly or just talking... or praying.

These things might not be the most important things in life, but in the darkness I become aware of what I can live without and what or who I want near to me. Another result is to have more appreciation for the options I have when the lights are on.

So when rain and lightning keeps me indoors, I find what's in the refrigerator, and put together a snack. I find a good book and read by lantern or laptop screen. But this is just to pass the time until the world powers up again.



Poetry by Devon Adams

GAMBLERS

The fields are full of corn and beans and in all the green miles and the gravel roads, there is not a casino to be seen. But the gamble is always there, in the spring and in the seeds, and in the summer of the sun, rain, wind and hail and drought. No amount of hope has any weight in the calculation of a crop, because reality is cold and sharp and measured in the income colors of red and black. It takes the courage of a soldier going into battle for a farmer to invest his heart and soul and sweat in labor that is a bet he may lose, or he may win. And here is the difference between winning and losing: in his heart he is winning simply because he loves what he does.

SAPPHIRES AND VELVET

Like the endless depth of a sapphire, or a lush velvet robe, the October blue of the sky vibrates with color. No more of the washed denim of a broiling summer afternoon, when humidity is a thick vapor hanging over your head like a wet sheet. Now the air is crisp and your mind has the edge of a sharp knife. Flaming leaves dance against the blue in a flagrant display of arrogance soon to be dulled by a killing frost. It is the time to grasp all the treasured days and enjoy their richness. Winter will bring it's own jewels, with snow sparkles flashing like diamonds on the lush ermine snow coats thrown carelessly across the fields.

OLD TRACKS

There is a bend by the river, where the limestone cliff is high and the shadows are deep. Swift currents call out names from long ago, of folks who traveled that way sailing on the water, or riding on the train whose tracks lived long after the last engine died. The tracks lay there for years, rusting, and bending with the freeze and thaw of the soil and the seasons. It was a rough walk for wild critters who chose to take the train path that was level, instead of weaving up and down the bluffs through heavy brush. The massive timbers that held the line of tracks together were like level steps, and instead of navigating stairs, critters had to step over, or step on, each railroad tie on a journey that followed the river for miles. People from the town loved to wander out that way because it was a unique kind of adventure. Then, after years of memories, the tracks were gone. Now there is a nature trail that is a pleasure, so that your eyes can gaze at scenery instead of where your feet are walking.

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RIVER GHOSTS

On the chilly end of a flaming month, bare trees shiver in a cold river fog. Hill tops rise to meet the sun, but the talking water is hidden, with only a voice to say it is there. Silent eagles perch high in an ancient cottonwood tree, waiting for light to find the fish near the sandbar. All the creatures are hidden in the mist. Movements are muffled. Predator and prey wait in the dead calm air, ready to flee or to pounce. They are a band of gray ghosts haunting each other.

And the second sec

GROWING UP?

Gazing into the past can warp your present into amazingly complex thoughts that change the way you see today. As children we have no power to change the condition of our family. We are trapped in a situation made by our parents, and only our feelings belong to us, but they can be hidden, even from ourselves. Fear may be wearing the mask of anger, or we can be spoiled to the point of demanding what we want and then getting it, even though it probably isn't what we need. As our bodies grow we often stay the same inside, and facing life becomes a problem. Envy may come to mind as others seem to have more, or be happier. Or, you think that only if you had just one more object that you covet, it might stop the ache. Maybe nothing is ever your fault, so you are always on the offensive, blaming and shaming and making enemies. Who was that child so long ago, and who are you today?

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Pass reception, 09/02/2017, PSC v Central Methodist W 40-20







Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson

It's October!! My favorite month, for a number of reasons.

Number One: Its' my birthday month, the 13th to be precise. This year it's a Friday. I can't afford to be superstitious with a birthday that falls on Friday the 13th approximately every seven years.

Number Two: The weather is fantastic. Humidity is banished (usually). Indian Summer arrives after the first frost, so we get warm days with no biting insects! And you can't beat sleeping on chilly nights with the windows open, snuggling with your honey under a warm blanket.

Number Three: You can pull out the tomato plants and cucumber vines – even though they may still be bearing some fruit – without guilt.

Number Four: Some years, Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, falls in October. (The date varies, as do the dates of Ash Wednesday and Easter.)

This year, Rosh Hashanah occurs in September. In fact, I'm writing this on the day that Rosh Hashanah actually begins at sundown, September 20. It concludes at sundown on Friday, September 22, which coincidentally is the date of the Autumnal Equinox. What a great combination of two events this year.

I'm not Jewish, so I don't actually observe Rosh Hashanah, but I find it enriching to my Christian faith to have some level of familiarity with the Jewish roots all Christians share. For me, it's the year 2017; but on the Jewish calendar it's now the year 5778.

I found a couple of poems about Rosh Hashanah that reflect the changing seasons. I hope you will take a few moments to contemplate the New Year happening now, rather than on January 1.

The late year – By Marge Piercy

The New Year- By Emma Lazarus

I like Rosh Hashonah late, when the leaves are half burnt umber and scarlet, when sunset marks the horizon with slow fire and the black silhouettes of migrating birds perch on the wires davening.

I like Rosh Hashonah late when all living are counting their days toward death or sleep or the putting by of what will sustain them when the cold whose tendrils translucent as a jellyfish Not while the snow-shroud round dead earth is rolled, And naked branches point to frozen skies.— When orchards burn their lamps of fiery gold, The grape glows like a jewel, and the corn A sea of beauty and abundance lies, Then the new year is born.

Look where the mother of the months uplifts In the green clearness of the unsunned West Her ivory horn of plenty, dropping gifts, Cool, harvest-feeding dews, fine-winnowed light; Tired labor with fruition, joy and rest Profusely to requite.





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Alzheimer's Affects Us All



Resilience: The Successful Caregiver's Secret Weapon

By Lee Nyberg

Resilience is a combination of confidence, humility, hopefulness, positivity, adaptability, self-control, and problem-solving ability. Sound like a tall order for Superman or Wonder Woman, let alone ordinary mortals? Anyone who has raised teenagers or learned to play golf has used resilience.

Fortunately, you're more resilient than you think, according to the American Psychological Association (APA), and you can build more resilience using these recommendations from the APA.

Maintain good relationships with people who care about you and will offer help and support, such as family and friends.

Accept change as a natural part of life. Accept what you can't change (a diagnosis of dementia for your loved one) and work to change what you can (healthy eating for you and your loved).

Approach a crisis with the idea of facing it one step at a time rather than as an insurmountable problem. Recognize even your smallest forward movement. (Today, I spoke with someone at the Alzheimer's Association about my father.)

Move toward goals with decisive action. (I bought a space heater for the bathroom so Dad's showers are more comfortable and easier.)

Nurture a positive self-view. Acknowledge you are learning and growing in caregiving skills and problem-solving. (I understand so much more about Alzheimer's. Mom's behavior is not her fault, but her disease. She's still my parent and deserves respectful treatment.)

Maintain perspective and a hopeful outlook about challenging situations. Caregiving will change over the course of your loved one's life. Being grateful for simple things can help you stay positive. (Does it really matter if my husband doesn't eat all his dinner? I am grateful I have discovered recipes for more nutritious versions of his favorites.)

Encourage an optimistic view instead of focusing on fearful thoughts. Believing good will happen in your life and visualizing what you want can keep you out of the quicksand of self-pity. (I am willing to try adult day services to get a break from caregiving instead of believing Mom will be too resistant to allow me to have some time for myself.)

Care for your own mental and physical health. Resilient people know it gives them stamina and helps them handle difficulties and emotional situations. They believe getting help is okay.

Resilience is a toolkit of survival skills. Call on these skills in your daily caregiving journey. Remember back to challenging times and consider how you handled strong emotions, the value of rest when stressed, who you called for help, and how you bolstered self-confidence and strength. Every endeavor, and especially caregiving will be more successful when you incorporate confidence, humility, perspective and a hopeful, positive and problem-solving oriented approach. Have a future in mind for yourself beyond caregiving and recognize the importance of taking care of your self in the present.

Lee Nyberg seeks to help families and those living with Alzheimer's through education and her company, Home Care Assistance. For more information visit our website: www.HomeCareAssistanceOmaha.com.





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