

# Free! Your *Country* Neighbor

Take One Home

October 2025



Sweeten your Coffee Break with these Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha River.

Brownville Historical Society

*Old Time Autumn*

**Saturday, October 11**

**A Celebration of the Past**

8:00 - 9:30

Cars, Carriages & Coffee

10:00 - 2:00

Museums Open

11:00

Lorretta's Donut Wagon

11:30 - 12:30

Creamed Chicken over Biscuits

1:00

1st Nebraska Volunteers Brass Band

**Sunday, October 12**

**Museums Open 11:00**

**Paid for by Nemaha County Visitor's Committee**



AppleJack Parade; Nebraska City, September 20, 2025

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Nebraska City High School Pioneers Marching Band

AppleJack Parade, September 20, 2025

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“Your Country Neighbor” is delivered to the following communities in Southeast Nebraska & NW Missouri.  
**Auburn • Brownville • Cook • Falls City • Johnson • Julian • Nebraska City**  
**Nemaha • Papillion • Peru • Rock Port • Syracuse • Tecumseh • Verdon**

*Your Country Neighbor*

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

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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

*“Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very  
important that you do it because no one else will.”*  
Ghandi

**October**

*by a country neighbor*

October doesn’t wait—it arrives with purpose.

Geese will soon call from high above, their ragged formations  
pointing south. The maples and cottonwoods will finally give  
in, their leaves falling in earnest—scattering across yards, fill-  
ing ditches, crunching underfoot. Jackets come down from the  
closet hooks, and the first wood smoke curls above the rooftops.

The mornings carry more bite, the evenings close in sooner.  
Porch flowers droop, their summer shine fading. Football shifts  
from warm-up to reckoning, every game mattering a little  
more.

Friday nights belong to football, but the mornings carry the  
sharp scent of harvest on the wind. Church suppers and chili  
feeds are on the calendar, along with traditional festivals in  
some communities; Old Time Autumn, Germanfest, and the  
café crowd argues whether this Winter will be hard or mild.  
Porch rockers are traded for kitchen tables, and the talk shifts  
from gardens to firewood.

In the trees, squirrels scurry with urgency, their frantic digging  
a reminder that frost is no longer a far-off idea but a guest al-  
ready on the way. The light sharpens, almost metallic at times,  
and the fields take on that unmistakable hush before the harvest  
rush.

One week you’re still grilling outside, and the next you’re  
looking for your gloves. It’s the month of in-between—of stor-  
ing, bracing, and remembering how the cold feels.

But early Autumn can be an extension of Summer, at least for  
some days. An afternoon at a ball game can feel perfect.

And when the early darkness settles, there’s a kind of comfort  
in gathering around a table at Valentino’s—whether it’s the  
warmth of the buffet or a pizza shared with friends—simple  
rituals that make October feel just right.

Here’s to a month of gathering in, and holding close.



## Seven Sisters -- Haunted?

*by a wandering neighbor*



In Otoe County, southeast Nebraska, there is a stretch of road locals call Seven Sisters Road. The name ties to a century-old legend of murder and haunting that still stirs curiosity today.

According to the story, a farm family once lived near a series of seven hills not far from Nebraska City. The son, embittered after a dispute with his parents and sisters, waited until his mother and father left one evening. Slipping into the shadows, he summoned—or in some versions, dragged—his seven sisters outside, one at a time. Leading each to a different hilltop, he hanged them from trees until all seven were dead.

No records have ever surfaced to confirm the crime, nor has evidence of the sisters' graves been found. What became of the brother remains unknown. Yet the tale survived, told and retold as the hills themselves were gradually altered by road-building and farming. Only four of the original hills are distinct today, and the trees said to have held the bodies are long gone.

Still, people claim the land holds echoes of that night. Strange accounts abound: drivers speak of engines cutting out without reason, headlights flickering, speedometers freezing, or car windows rolling up and down on their own. Others insist they've seen shadowy figures along the roadside, or glowing red eyes peering from the trees. Some describe screams in the distance, or the eerie tolling of bells from a small private cemetery nearby.

Ghost hunters and thrill-seekers alike still travel the winding hills of Seven Sisters road, hoping to glimpse or record something otherworldly. Though officially known today as L Street, for many it will always be Seven Sisters Road—one of Nebraska's most chilling legends.



### Blayne Behrends

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Migrating Monarch in an Omaha Zinnia garden. 9/18/2025

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

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***(See details below and schedule on page 1)***

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## Age

Alice Minick, December 1935

I have scaled the wall of age,  
Its tumult, care, sorrow and pain,  
Its dangers, remorse and woe-  
All delegated into forgetfulness,  
Nevermore to rise my soul to dim,  
Or my faiths' castle to destroy.  
The lamp of life illumines my path,  
While proudly sailing o'er the mist of time  
Thy beckoning hand I can see,  
No storm, no dizzy height to fear  
The crags, the floundering tide  
Where desolation reigned austere.  
Now, calmly I onward sail,  
My barque steering into port,  
Knowing Thou, my Guide, art near  
To illumine the remaining days  
Of pilgrimage that I can claim,  
While journeying to my home.

*Alice Minick came to Nemaha from New York when she was 12 years old, in a covered wagon with her parents. Alice passed in 1938 and is buried next to her husband in Brownville's Walnut Grove Cemetery.*

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



## BROWNVILLE FINE ARTS ASSOCIATION

### 2025 Speaker Series & Art Exhibition

#### Speaker Series Schedule

**Saturday, June 21 • 10:00 a.m.**  
**"IN CONTACT WITH NATURE"**  
by Sue Kohles

As a former employee of NSA, Sue is very familiar with the Furnas Arboretum. Her program will include a presentation and a walk highlighting the innate human connection to nature and the benefits of spending time in contact with nature.

**Saturday, July 19 • 10:00 a.m.**  
**"THE CHILDREN'S BLIZZARD"**  
Discussion by Dr. Bill Clemente

Book written by David Laskin. "This account of the 1888 blizzard reads like a thriller." - "Entertainment Weekly" - "...gripping true story of an epic prairie snowstorm that killed hundreds of newly arrived settlers and cast a shadow on the promise of the American frontier. January 12, 1888, began as an unseasonably warm morning across Nebraska, the Dakotas, and Minnesota, the weather so mild that children walked to school without coats and gloves."

**Saturday, August 16 • 10:00 a.m.**  
**"I AM A MAN: CHIEF STANDING BEAR'S JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE"**  
by Joe Starita

Joe Starita tells the enthralling story of how Chief Standing Bear peacefully fought for Native American rights. (Humanities Nebraska)

**Saturday, September 13 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**  
**BROWNVILLE STREET ART & STUDIO TOURS**

Artists will have their studios open for guests as well as other artists visiting Brownville with their works for sale.



**Saturday, September 13 • 10:00 a.m.**  
**CHALK ART DEMONSTRATION**  
by Amy Sell

Amy Lynn Sell is a Kansas City creative artist. She uses the temporary form of chalk to create images that pull you in and make you smile and become part of your experience when you're there.

**Saturday, December 6, 2025**  
**Brownville Tour of Homes**  
**10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**  
**Rohman Garden Tree Lighting**  
**& Christmas Carols**  
**5:30 p.m.**



## Art Exhibition Schedule

### Schoolhouse Art Gallery

427 Main Street • Brownville, Nebraska

Art exhibits open Thursday, Friday, & Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If you would like to see the show at other times, please contact 402-414-2082.

**May 29 to June 29**  
**"PAINTS & THREADS"**

by Carol Skinner Hammond

**Artist Reception: Friday, May 30, 6:00 p.m.**

Show includes watercolors and acrylics paintings of florals and landscapes. The stitchery pieces are created from wool, silk, and cotton fibers embellished with hand stitching, beads, buttons, lace, ribbons, yarns, and trims of all kinds.



**July 3 to July 27**  
**"CLEARVIEW STAINED GLASS"**  
by Deb Costello

**Artist Reception: Friday, July 11, 6:00 p.m.**

Stained glass transforms light. The constant changing conditions of daylight, coupled with the refractive properties of color, texture, and transparency within stained glass, permeate the space with a constantly changing palette of color. Deb generally uses the traditional medium of leaded stained glass, to create conventional and unconventional glass art. She has also ventured into fused glass (kiln work) as an additional enhancement to her designs. She creates unexpected imagery, hoping to offer the observer a fresh view of this vibrant classical art form.



**July 31 to August 31**  
**"OUT OF THE CHAOS COMES BEAUTY"**  
by Jodie Leabee

**Artist Reception: Friday, August 1, 6:00 p.m.**

Jodie has been creating for as long as she can remember. Ten-plus years ago she started pottery. It has taught her patience and has been a lifeline through many ups and downs. Jodie is grateful to have found a way to bring joy and beauty to herself and share with others.



**September 4 to September 21**  
**"SOME OF NEBRASKA'S FAVORITES"**  
Artist Reception:  
**Friday, September 5, 6:00 p.m.**

Mary Lauber - Jewelry  
Susan Sisco - Pottery  
Natalie Sisco - Glass and Pottery  
Cate Wycoff - Watercolor



**October 7 to November 2**  
**"A SEAT AT GRANDMA'S TABLE"**  
by GK Callahan

Installation includes integrating artwork with elements of corn, pheasants, and a harvest table. There will be story collections, photos and recipes evoking memories of home and the past.



Follow us on Facebook: Brownville Fine Arts Association

## Flatwater Folk Art Museum

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# This Halloween Watch Out For Trick-or-Treaters



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PSC 3, Avila University 1 -- September 6th, Al Wheeler Activity Center.







**It's Medicare and Medicaid  
Renewal Time**

(As part of the Peru Educational Forum)  
Marty Peregoy

Peru Educational Forums will host Lisa Stock, Tuesday, October 21st at Plum Crazy Lady. She will be presenting information on choosing the appropriate Medicare/Medicaid insurance coverage for your health, bank account, and circumstances. She will also include information for parents of disabled individuals.

The open enrollment period for Medicare 2026 is October 15 – December 7, 2025. If you have Medicare, the month of October is your opportunity to change your health coverage. If you are dissatisfied with your current coverage or wonder whether your previous choices are the best for your current situation, Stock can help you make sense of your current upcoming options.

Stock works with both Medicare and Medicaid programs on a daily basis as an independent healthcare resource licensed in three states, and she has been managing the complex health care needs of my disabled adult child for over a year.

If you've ever tried to find the answer to a Medicare question online, you know that you are bombarded with hundreds of articles, and making sense of them is difficult, if not impossible. At times you don't even know what questions to ask to find the information you need.

PEF Continued on page 8 >>>>

**T. J. Majors**  
John C. Chatelain

Thomas Jefferson Majors was born in 1841 in Libertyville, Illinois. His parents, Sterling P. and Ann Majors, were born in Kentucky, he in 1819 and she in 1820. They married in 1838.

T. J. moved to Peru around 1859. A year or so later he caught Pike's Peak Fever for gold and started for Colorado. On his way west he met disappointed gold-seekers returning east, so he returned to Nebraska City and stayed with an uncle, Alexander Majors, a partner in the firm of Majors, Russell and Waddell, freighters and the founders of the pony express.

On June 25, 1861, T. J. and his brother, Wilson E. Majors, father of A. Dorsey Majors, for whom Majors Hall at PSC was named, joined the 1st Nebraska Infantry. Tom served as a First Lieutenant at Donelson, Shilo, Corinth to Memphis and Helena, Arkansas. He re-enlisted and was sent to the Indian Wars. While in the army, T.J. sent money home to invest in land. His father bought 800 acres, including Pike's Peak, a hill in northwest Peru. 1

T.J. mustered out on July 1, 1866, with the rank of Colonel. 2 After the war, he served in the Nebraska Territorial Council, later in the Nebraska Senate, and then the United States Congress. Majors was elected to the Nebraska House of Representatives in 1889, and was Lieutenant Governor, under several governors, before serving as President of the State Board of Education. 3

While he was in the state Senate, Nebraska was selecting the location of its institutions, most notably the capital city. T. J. agreed to support the plan to move the capital from Omaha to Lincoln in exchange for a Normal School for Peru. After securing the deal, Majors inquired of fellow Senator, William Daily, "What's a Normal School?" "Damn if I know", responded Daily, "but if it has anything to do with education, I am for it." 4

A new innovation in education, Normal Schools were popping up all across America. Majors authored legislation establishing Peru's college. Its purpose was the instruction of persons, in the art of teaching, pertaining to a good common-school education. Nebraska ensured it would have highly trained teachers for its growing, expansive population. 5

As the population expanded westward, sentiment arose that the college should be moved to some more accessible location. At age 88 and still president of the State Board of Education, the old soldier went to war once again. Due to his substantial influence, Peru's college survived and went on to flourish. T. J. Majors died in Peru, July 11, 1932 at the age of 91 and is buried in Mount Vernon Cemetery, in Peru. 6

The stately T.J. Majors Training School, with marble stairs and corridors, mosaic tile floors and frontal columns, was completed in June 1917, capping off the 50th anniversary of the college, creating a lasting tribute to Peru's venerable old citizen. 7 His imposing two-story brick home, built in 1898, stands at the northwest corner of Peru. It is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. At various times, Frank Majors, Harry Leahy, Robert and Lucy Majors, and Mr. and Mrs. Ross Adams resided in the home. 8 T. J. Majors also owned the grand Hotel Delmonico, which stood on the southwest corner of 5th and California Streets, later owned by Sterling Whitfield, who razed it in 1927. 9

1. Across the Wide Missouri, 24-25
2. The Normal on the Hill: 38
3. Ibid, 38
4. First College: Shaping the Future Since 1867: 9.
5. Ibid: 9
6. Ibid: 87
7. Ibid: 64
8. Across the Wide Missouri, 24-25
9. Ibid. 106

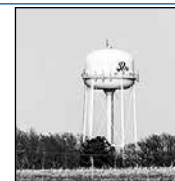
# PERU CITY NEWS

*Communication • Information • Pride In Community*

A volunteer project

supported by the Peru Community.

Thank you to everyone who participates!



## Tuesday Literary Club Reads

DiAnna Loy, Tuesday Literary Club

Since no book was presented at our September planning meeting, I am going to share with you a book both my husband and I read this month. It is a bit different from the books I normally bring to you but different isn't necessarily bad. Let's spend a bit of time looking at the book *Too Old For This* by Samantha Downing.

The book starts with us meeting Lottie Jones, a woman in her mid 70s. Lottie lives alone in a rather large home in a nice neighborhood of large, nice homes in Baycliff, Washington. Lottie has one son, Archie who is grown and is a corporate lawyer. Lottie has lived in her home for the last 40 years when she moved from Spokane to restart her life. Lottie had been accused of multiple murders but had later been cleared of those crimes. The city of Spokane had provided Lottie with a large cash settlement, assisted her in changing her name, and sealed her records. Lottie immediately moved with her son to get him away from the bullying Archie was receiving at school and to get a clean slate for her to start her life anew.

As we join Lottie, she is relaxing in her recliner when there is a knock on her door. She is not fond of unexpected visitors, so she waits for the visitor to go away. When that doesn't work, she finally goes to the door and asks who's there. The visitor announces herself as Plum Dixon and states that she has been calling, trying reach her. Lottie finally lets Plum in the house and leads her to the kitchen where she proceeds to serve her tea and cookies. Plum tells Lottie that she is making a docuseries about people who have been wrongly accused of a crime. Lottie asks how Plum found her and Plum says it was through public records. Lottie is doubtful of this since all of her records were sealed. Lottie makes it clear to Plum that she doesn't want any of her past brought back up to public scrutiny. Plum informs Lottie that she is going to make the docuseries whether Lottie cooperates or not. The next thing Lottie knows, she has taken her old umbrella out of the stand by the back door and bashed in Plum's head! Wow! Maybe she wasn't wrongfully accused of those other murders!?!

Folks, this all happens in the first few pages of the book. As the rest of the story unravels, we follow Lottie as she hides Plum's murder and then deals with the fallout from her actions. She tries to go about her normal life but something or someone always seems to get in the way. No sooner does she deal with one situation than another pops up. She still must take care of her grown son and his coming marriage. She has friends that claim a portion of her energy and time as well as attend the same church she attends. She has decisions to make concerning her big old house and where she will live if she sells it. And when she least expects it, another person shows up on her doorstep wanting information about where Plum might be. Oh, and did I mention she has someone trying to blackmail her?

Maybe murder mysteries aren't your cup of tea but this one is written from a different perspective than we usually see. Instead of looking at it from the police's perspective, we know everything the serial killer is thinking and feeling and the frustrations they are experiencing. If this one isn't for you, I'll be back next month with more of our usual reading. Until then...

"Happy reading!"

<<<< PEF Continued from page 7

Medicare information in Stock's presentation includes selecting the best plan for you among Original Medicare, Medicare Advantage or Medigap policies, with definitions of the various parts, including A, B, C, and D.

If you or someone you care for also qualifies for Medicaid, she can help you navigate the different programs available based on their social security disability income. With her previous experience as a Special Education teacher, Stock is able to help parents find the best match for their child's situation, and her knowledge is wide-reaching.

Stock's presentation will be held at Plum Crazy Lady, 620 5th Street, Peru from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Brenda will be available to make her delectable smoothies, tea, coffee and other beverages. Should your need for information or privacy exceed the time allowed, Stock will be happy to schedule a time to talk with attendees individually.

## *Peru City News*

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

*Peru City News* is supported

by Peru Community Members.

Thank you to everyone who participates!



## A Prairie Love

Chapter Seven: Smoke Signals  
February 1924

The snow had finally stopped falling, but the cold held steady. Cora rose before dawn, stirred the stove with mittened hands, and made oatmeal thick enough to stick to the ribs. At school, the children had taken to sketching pictures of spring birds they missed—robins, meadowlarks, even a red-winged blackbird someone imagined perched on a fence post.

Lyle hadn't come by in over a week, which wasn't unusual in weather like this, but it left Cora uneasy.

One evening, she noticed a column of smoke rising in the far field, just beyond the cottonwoods. Curious, she bundled herself and set out toward it. The snow crunched like sugar underfoot, the sun dipping low behind her.

As she passed the old windmill, its blades frozen still, she felt a quiet longing stir. The silence of it echoed her own waiting. She found Lyle near the fire, boiling coffee over a small flame beside a half-finished woodshed. He was surprised, then smiled wide.

"I didn't think you'd come."

"I saw smoke," she said. "And I hadn't heard from you."

He poured her coffee in an enamel cup and handed her a biscuit wrapped in waxed paper. "Didn't want to walk all the way to your door with nothing to show."

She laughed. "Is this supposed to be your cabin?"

"First step," he said. "Digging out the frost to pour a footing once it thaws. Planning helps me feel the days moving forward." They sat together on a cut log, steam rising from their cups. A hawk circled above them, silent and precise.

"Did I tell you," she said, "my landlord might not renew the lease on the schoolhouse?"

"You could teach anywhere."

"Not like this. Not with the creek and the cottonwoods and your fire in the distance."

He turned, serious now. "What if you didn't have to go anywhere?"

She didn't answer—not yet. But she took his hand and held it inside both of hers.

The fire crackled on, steady as a promise.

*Continued next month.*

## Letters from the Prairie

January 17th, 1888,  
Nemaha County, Nebraska  
Sixth Letter from Anna Wilhelmine Bauer  
to her sister, Klara in Germany

Dearest Klara,

The year has turned, and we find ourselves deep in snowdrifts and silence. The wind speaks sharply through the cracks in our cabin walls, and each night we bank the fire high and wrap the children in extra quilts. It is not the cold that wears me most, but the stillness.

Winter here is long and lonesome. Yet there are comforts. Johann built a sled for the children from scrap lumber, and they laugh like gulls as they fly down the hill behind the barn. Lena made a scarf for her doll, and Jakob tried to trade it for a handful of raisins. Children still bargain, even with so little.

This past Sunday, the neighbors gathered in our parlor—just six adults and more children than chairs—for songs and coffee and Scripture. We sang *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* and shared stories by lamplight. I baked a ginger cake with molasses, and Mrs. Weber brought dried apple slices. It reminded me that even in a world of scarcity, fellowship makes a feast.

I must tell you, I dreamed last night of Mama's kitchen. I could almost smell her bread rising on the stove. It woke me in tears, but not sorrowful ones. Memory can be a form of comfort.

Our hens are not laying much, and we're watching our flour. But we are well, and the children are growing. I try to write one line of thankfulness each night in my journal. Yesterday's line: "The wind may howl, but it cannot enter."

With my love,  
Anna



Seventh letter coming next month.

## Chapter 4: Watchers on the Shore

Spring 1804, Along The Missouri River  
We'd been on the water near three weeks when I first saw them—eyes like lantern glass, glowing from the shaded bank.

I didn't speak of it right away. There are things you keep to yourself in a new land, especially when you're the type that listens more than talks. It wasn't fear, exactly. More like reverence. A kind of awe that silences a man.

The keelboat was steady that morning, the men rowing with easy rhythm. Sergeant Ordway was humming to himself—some Virginia reel—and Private Shannon was grumbling about a blister on his thumb. Captain Lewis had his journal out again, his eyes sweeping the eastern bank. Captain Clark stood behind him, squinting at the distant ridge.

But I watched the river.

A buck emerged first, high-shouldered and calm, followed by a smaller doe. They drank side by side, unbothered by our presence. Behind them, a fox slipped through the underbrush, gone before my mind could catch the shape of it.

"Three wild turkeys roosted above our camp last night," said Corporal Warfington, wiping sweat from his brow. "Dumb as fenceposts, but good eatin'."

"Best let 'em be," said Drouillard, the half-blood interpreter with a hunter's quiet. "This land's got more mouths than we do. Take too soon, and the hills won't forgive."

He had a way of speaking that stilled a man. Clark nodded in agreement.

The prairie beyond the trees seemed to shimmer—miles of waving grass dotted with bursts of yellow and violet. Prairie dogs yipped and vanished, like dust stirred by the wind. Overhead, a bald eagle circled, its wings wide as a barn door.

Later that day, we saw signs of bear—prints along the mudbank. York, Captain Clark's manservant, pointed it out.

"You can smell 'em," he said, sniffing the breeze. "Musky. Like damp wool and vinegar." I caught the scent, too. A warning, low and deep in the lungs.

That night, near the fire, the men traded stories about beasts they'd heard of—wolves with eyes like coals, snakes that swallowed hens whole, cats the size of mules stalking the high ridges. Captain Lewis, half smiling, reminded us to note each encounter. "This land speaks through its creatures," he said. "And it will not repeat itself for our benefit."

I wrote down his words.

There was a pause then, the fire snapping. From across the dark, the long howl of a lone wolf drifted toward us, carried by the river wind. No one spoke after that. We simply listened.

*Continued next month.*

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# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*



## Heartland Workers Center Opens Registration for the 2025 Online Family Leadership Institute (FLI)

### Six-Part Virtual Series Empowers Families to Lead with Purpose and Confidence OMAHA, NE

**(September 10, 2025)** — The Heartland Workers Center (HWC), in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Education and Project ASSETS, is proud to announce the return of the Family Leadership Institute (FLI) for its 2025 online series. The engaging and interactive program will take place virtually over six sessions this fall:

**Thursdays :** October 16, October 23, October 30, November 6 & November 13

**Time :** 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM (Central Time)

**Registration is now open :** Click here to register

Since launching in 2022, FLI has welcomed **475 participants across four cohorts** from communities across Nebraska, helping individuals unlock their leadership potential, strengthen family bonds, and become effective advocates for their children, neighborhoods, and futures. The curriculum is built around self-discovery, goal setting, and community engagement, equipping participants with the tools to support educational success, career development, and lifelong well-being.

“At the Heartland Workers Center, we believe strong families are the foundation of strong communities,” said executive director Lina Traslaviña Stover. “FLI reflects our mission to empower workers, develop leaders, and build collective power. Through this program, we’re not just teaching skills—we’re fostering transformation.”

### What Participants Can Expect

- Culturally responsive and engaging online learning
- Opportunities to reflect on personal and family goals
- Tools to support children’s academic achievement
- A welcoming community of fellow learners and leaders
- Certificates of completion Why FLI Matters

### Why FLI Matters

The Family Leadership Institute is aligned with HWC’s core values :

- Empowerment : We believe everyone has the potential to lead.
- Community : We are stronger when we unite across neighborhoods, cultures, and experiences
- Equity : We work to ensure all families have access to opportunity, resources, and voice.
- Leadership Development : We help individuals turn their vision into action.

This program directly supports HWC’s mission to empower immigrant and low represented workers to be leaders in their workplaces and communities. It is also a key part of our vision for a just and inclusive society where all individuals thrive. These virtual sessions culminate with a graduation ceremony for the families in a place, date and time to be announced.

### Join Us This Fall

Whether you’re a parent, guardian, or community member looking to grow as a leader, FLI is for you. Let’s build a stronger future—together. For more information, contact us at:

**Heartland Workers Center**  
**[hwc@heartlandworkerscenter.org](mailto:hwc@heartlandworkerscenter.org)**  
**[www.heartlandworkerscenter.org](http://www.heartlandworkerscenter.org)**

## Thank God

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

No matter how I feel  
No matter what kind of sleep I have  
I wake up  
Thank God to be American  
Thank God for the freedoms we enjoy  
Free to watch football, baseball, volleyball  
Free to change jobs  
Free to move and travel  
We find these “truths to be self evident  
Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”  
We have the freedom to be whatever we choose to be as long as  
we hurt neither ourselves nor others in the process.

## Reveries

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

I heard David from Colorado  
“Nebraska is buggy”  
Compared to Colorado maybe  
But in Savannah, Georgia along with the stately mansions and  
lovely round parks  
There were bugs, flying huge American cockroaches  
That went splat when you stepped on them  
And they were flying through the air all the time  
Along with ants and my favorites: hungry mosquitos  
whose yellow fever victims  
Lay in oak moss laden shaded cemeteries with ancient tombs  
All summer and spring mosquito trucks weaved around downtown  
Savannah shooting off sprays of mosquito killing liquid  
There is a story by Kafka which I won’t read because  
a man wakes up as an insect  
In Savannah, the heat, the tropical air, the languor of Southern living  
We humans were the interlopers while the bug  
it was their natural domain...  
I miss much about Savannah, but not the bugs.... never the bugs...

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# ARBOR CITY NEWS

## *Morton-James Public Library Calendar of Events October 2025*

**All activities held at Morton-James Public Library (unless otherwise noted), 923 1st Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410**  
For questions call 402-873-5609 or visit [morton-jamespubliclibrary.com](http://morton-jamespubliclibrary.com)

### **All Programming is Free and Open to the Public**

**Story Time with Kimmel Orchard Scarecrow theme**  
**Wednesday, Oct. 1st 10:00AM**

#### **Yarn Crafters Club**

**Wednesday, Oct. 1st 1:30PM-3:00PM**

Join us to work on your crocheting or knitting on the first Wednesday of each month. This is for all levels of crafters. Bring your project and materials. Club members will be here to help those beginning, and MJPL will have some patterns available. Free to attend. Everyone is welcome who is 15 and older!

#### **No-Carve Pumpkin Workshop with Kimmel Orchard**

**Wednesday, Oct. 1st 7:00PM-8:00PM**

Decorate a pumpkin and enter it in the No-Carve Pumpkin Decorating Contest at the Kimmel Orchard Apple Barn. **Call to register 402-873-5609!**

#### **Afternoon Story Time with Kimmel Orchard**

Pumpkin theme

**Thursday, Oct. 2nd 4:00PM-5:00PM**

#### **Humanities Nebraska - Terry Lane Buffalo Bill**

**Thursday, Oct. 2nd 7:00PM-8:00PM**

William F. Cody reflects on his life as express messenger, teamster, buffalo hunter, scout, actor, showman and builder of the West through a series of true-life adventures--from Bill's perspective, of course.

#### **Paint Together- Gnome**

**Saturday, Oct. 4th 10:00AM-12:00PM**

Paint your own Gnome! Free to everyone 8 years and older. Must have a partner to paint for class. Registration required in groups of two. **Call the Library at 402-873-5609 to reserve your spot!**

#### **No-Carve Pumpkin Workshop with Kimmel Orchard All ages welcome!**

**Saturday, Oct. 4th 2:00PM-3:00PM**

Decorate a pumpkin and enter it in the No-Carve Pumpkin Decorating Contest at the Kimmel Orchard Apple Barn. **Call to register 402-873-5609!**

#### **Lego Club**

**Monday, Oct. 6th 3:30PM-5:00PM**

Join us at the Library in the Kimmel Gallery every first and third Monday of the month from 3:30 - 5:00 pm for Lego Club! Free build with Lego's at the club or bring your own sets to work on. Ages 8 and older. No reservations, free to attend.

#### **Library Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, Oct. 8th**

**4:00PM-6:00PM**

#### **Not-So-Scary Ghost Story Time**

**Wednesday, Oct. 15th 10:00AM**

#### **Evening Book Club- Never Let Me Go**

**by Kazuo Ishiguro Wednesday, Oct. 15th 5:30PM**

Evening Book Club meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 PM. Anyone can join and there is no registration. New members are always welcome!

#### **Not-So-Scary Ghost Story Time New time offered!**

**Thursday, Oct. 16th 4:00PM**

#### **TEEN Fortnite Party**

**Friday, Oct. 17th 6:00PM-7:30PM**

(Ages 13-18) Free! No library card required, but you Call the Library 402-873-5609 sign up to attend or visit to sign up! Dress as your favorite Fortnite skin (no weapons) and get ready for an epic time with music, good vibes, and themed snacks Everyone will leave with their own personal med kit, and we'll end the party with a chance to win v-bucks. Practice your emotes before you come so you have a chance to win!

#### **Writers Workshop Saturday, Oct. 18th 10:00AM**

Join us for a roundtable-style writers workshop! Share writing and give feedback to others. Zoom option available. Please email [mjplibraryww@gmail.com](mailto:mjplibraryww@gmail.com) to have a Zoom link sent to you if you cannot attend in person. Bring a short piece of your writing to share! This program is for writers aged 18 and older.

#### **Lego Club**

**Monday, Oct. 20th 3:30PM-5:00PM**

Join us at the Library in the Kimmel Gallery every first and third Monday of the month from 3:30 - 5:00 pm for Lego Club! Free build with Lego's at the club or bring your own sets to work on. Ages 8 and older. No reservations, free to attend.

#### **Library Closed for conference**

**Tuesday, Oct. 21st from 4PM through Thursday 23**

#### **Day Book Club-How Lucky by Will Leitch**

**Tuesday, Oct. 21st 2:00PM-3:00PM**

Afternoon Book Club meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 2:00PM. Anyone can join and there is no registration. New members are always welcome!

#### **Trick-or-Treat through the Library**

**Friday, Oct. 31st 5:00PM-6:00PM**

Costumes encouraged! All ages welcome.

#### **Kimmel Gallery**

#### **Exhibit for October**

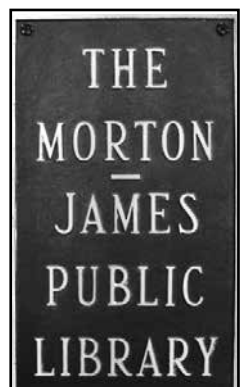
#### **Laurine Oetgen Kimmel**

This 22 piece exhibit showcases her plein air paintings, depicting old barns, song birds, homesteading/pioneer days, and family farmstead outhouses. The exhibit will run through October 28 and be available for viewing during regular Library hours of Monday-Thursday 9-6; Friday 9-5 and Saturday 9-1. The free exhibit is open to the public during the listed hours.

#### **Exhibit courtesy of**

**Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts**

**Note: Library Closed for conference  
Tuesday, Oct. 21st from 4PM - Thursday 23**



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*



Considered one of the best quilt and needlework shows in southeast Nebraska, people flocked to this Nebraska City show during AppleJack to view the scores of member-made quilts and other needlework items on display.



Featured Quilter Sara Velder Brought Talent & Whimsey to Heritage Needlework Guild's Applejack Show  
*Photo submitted by Nancy Feeney*

## **Heritage Needlework Guild Once Again Puts the Spotlight on Thread!**

Nancy Feeney

With its 200 entries on display, this year's Heritage Needlework Guild's Quilt Show ranked among the top shows over the past years. The area quilters and lovers of all things thread once again turned this show, which is an annual Applejack tradition, into a huge success. During this 3-day show, 300 people slowly walked among the beautiful and diverse quilts, admiring the skill and imagination needed to create them.

Local attendees were joined by others from as far away as Lincoln and Kearney as they appreciated the skills of the Guild members who put their work on display. The colorful diversity of the many quilts drew everyone's appreciation.

Several attendees commented that this is one of the best quilt shows in the area. The members of the Heritage Needlework Guild are always proud to hear comments like this. Just like years before, dozens of Guild members worked in shifts throughout the show to make sure this Applejack tradition was once again a big success.

*Due to printing press limitations, this publication is limited to 12 pages of full color,  
and this particular page must be without full color.*

*But the Heritage Guild will have a more colorful presence in the November issue.*



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*



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Above & Below; Lourdes Central Catholic  
High School Marching Band.





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## Restrictive Mobility

Bruce Madsen, Nebraska City

So, what can you do with a broken leg?  
Since for awhile now my life's been in the dregs  
Can't move or do, I just sit and beg  
Ask others to do for me what I would have done instead

Eight weeks of this with two more to go  
Just enough time has passed for me to know  
That this experience has aggravated me so  
And this knee scooter I have, I'm ready to throw


Stupid I was or so I was told  
Don't be so aggressive, don't be so bold  
Taper your efforts, that should be your goal  
The resilience you had, you no longer hold

This information seems to be true  
We just can't do what we used to do  
For all of us this day soon comes due  
There's really no difference between me and you

But the day this happened I will not commemorate  
I'm going to forget the day and the date  
Anxiety and cabin fever I've learned to hate  
But I definitely will remember, not to drop the gate



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by Devon Adams, Nebraska City

## IN THE SPRING

After the winter  
has slept through  
the dark, deep cold,  
and the sun has a  
new slant, the new  
babies will come.  
Fresh green grass  
will catch them as  
they emerge from  
the embrace of  
Mothers who have  
held them close.  
A body clock chimes  
TIME! and they are  
pushed out of their  
wet, warm caves into  
life on earth. Fields  
will bloom with the  
tiny bodies and bright  
eyes of baby angels.

## SPOOKY ACTION

The moving light  
in the sky is moving  
closer, until it isn't.  
Gone might describe  
it, but it isn't gone now.  
The moon is holding  
on to the little drifter,  
until it pops up over  
the school building.  
But I didn't See it move.  
Because It didn't move.  
But it isn't where it was.  
Is it watching me?  
Why? Because I'm  
watching it?  
Who are you?  
Wait! Don't tell me.  
Maybe I don't want  
To know!

## RIVER DUSK

The dark shadow  
of night creeps over  
the last lingering rose  
blush of the sky,  
and objects lose  
identity and become  
ghosts in the mist.  
A chilly wind bends  
branches on trees  
still wearing party  
dresses, as a form  
moves from stillness  
to become a live  
buck. He rubs his  
velvet antlers on a  
sapling, preparing  
them for the battles  
he feels in his blood.  
Fear isn't a thought.  
He is a missile ready  
to find a target.

## THE APPLE BAR

In the perfection of Autumn,  
when the fruit was ripe with  
color and flavor, the tree was  
in complete costume, its  
leaves a shimmering fabric  
complimenting decorations  
both edible and artistic.  
Now, in the first whispers  
of winter, the dress is gone.  
The ground is covered with  
leaves that are brown and  
brittle, and fruit litters the  
frosted grass. A new treat  
is drawing a crowd. Step up  
to the "Apple Bar," folks!  
Help yourself to a taste of  
fermented fruit that will  
set you up and take you  
down into a liquor stupor  
so heavy that you will walk  
crooked and forget to fly.

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adamsdevon07@gmail.com 402-209-9377

## FADED MEMORIES

White boards cover the sides of  
the barn, weathered and warped  
by time, their old paint dry and  
flaking. Late light from a short  
day cuts the corners and cracks  
into rugged relief, highlighting  
every sliver and splinter. Scrapes  
and scars mar the walls and the  
old wood fence. Stock has rubbed  
and kicked and chewed and  
spewed until edges are chipped  
and frayed. Here is a safe haven  
from heat and cold and snow  
and rain and the constant wind  
that talks to the prairie fields.  
It is a place of rest and relief, and  
sacred peace for animals and the  
humans who love them.

## Your Country Neighbor

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



# Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

(Dear Readers: I completely forgot that my column was due YESTERDAY, so I am resorting to a re-run of my column from November 2020. I hope you enjoy it.)

Good Morning, Everyone! It's 9:00 a.m. and I've been up for four and a half hours already. What's more, I hit the road at 6:40 a.m. to drive to St. Joe for an 8:00 a.m. car service appointment. I am writing this column from my son's kitchen table here in St. Joe, while I wait for my car.

I am rarely up before the sun, but on those days when I am compelled to rise early, I find that the experience of being out and about in the dark makes me feel like part of an exclusive club, since so few others are abroad at that time. It puts me in touch a bit, psychologically, with farmers, especially those who have livestock chores, as Hubby used to.

It has been over 30 years since we farmed. But the past few years Hubby has driven semi for a farmer-friend, delivering grain to the elevator during harvest. Those of you who are familiar with harvesting corn and soybeans know that it is generally well past sun-up by the time the combines are able to get in the fields. So, even though Hubby is "farming" for a few weeks, he is not out and about in the early morning dark.

But, this column isn't about Hubby. It's about the transition from dark to daylight.

I am currently reading "The Wind in the Willows" by Kenneth Grahame. Perhaps some of you are familiar with this old-fashioned children's book. If not, I highly recommend reading it. It is not written in the silly, simplified language of so many contemporary children's books. In fact, the sentence structure requires fairly advanced reading skills. That, combined with the fact that the characters are animals, and the story is set in England and written in the prose style of 1908, makes it especially appealing to me.

To quote the book's inside jacket (from 1966), "The delightful escapades of the four famous friends – Mole, Rat, Badger, and Toad – have enchanted children, and grownups too, for more than fifty years. In this beloved book, Kenneth Grahame created an imaginary world that is as real and vivid as life itself."

Grahame's depictions of the environs inhabited by his characters are just one aspect of the charm of the story. In one scene, Rat and Mole are out all night searching the river for a lost friend. Grahame writes,

"Embarking again and crossing over, they worked their way up the stream ... while the moon, serene and detached in a cloudless sky, did what she could, though so far off, to help them in their quest; till her hour came and she sank earthwards reluctantly, and left them, and mystery once more held field and river.

Then a change began slowly to declare itself. The horizon became clearer, field and tree came more into sight, and somehow with a different look; the mystery began to drop away from them. A bird piped suddenly, and was still; and a light breeze sprang up and set the reeds and bulrushes rustling."

Driving in my car this morning, I could not hear any birds, nor could I feel the breeze spring up, which it did, ever more strongly as I traveled south. I didn't get to watch the moon set, but as this morning's fog lifted, I did notice that "a change began slowly to declare itself." From Grahame's viewpoint, the change from night to day didn't happen in some automatic, scientifically explainable way. It "declared itself," as if it had will and volition of its own. Indeed, if nature is divine, then that is so.

It seems to me that the "mystery" of the darkness of night outdoors, particularly in the countryside, is something few of us seek out, myself included. It is so easy to stay sequestered indoors. In summer, the heat and mosquitoes are our excuse. In winter, it's the cold. Or perhaps one's bed-mate complains if one sets an alarm clock for the sake of getting up in the dark unnecessarily.

But maybe it is necessary to rise in the dark – at least occasionally – to witness the magnificent mysteries of moonlight and dawn.

Soon, we will be setting our clocks back to standard time. It will be light an hour earlier, making it easier to get out of bed and take our morning coffee outside to greet the dawn, and maybe even catch the moonset.

I will be out there. I hope you will be, too.

# Window On Fifth Street

Stephen Hassler, Peru

There used to be "sock hops" in small towns on some Saturday nights; street dances for teens. I guess the teens would dance in their stocking feet, but I'm not sure because I wasn't there. It might have just been a reference to the "bobby sox" that girls wore to the dance with their "poodle skirts".

I do remember teens driving up and down Main Street after school, much to the chagrin of the 'stuffy' adults. Cars would honk occasionally to each other as a greeting. Many adults found this annoying. Some small towns even had ordinances against such "rebellious behavior".

The following is an article I wrote several years ago and have reprinted here a few times. I think it's always appropriate this time of year. For me the article is both nostalgic and time-less. Here it is;

As I look out my window on Fifth Street, I see it's back-to-school season; school buses, football practice, and cruisin'. The freedom to get in a car and go anywhere I wanted was once just an anxious teenager's dream. Now, whenever I want, I can take my comfortable car with air conditioning, stereo CD player and power windows, and tour the rural countryside or even drive to the Rocky Mountains. This is one freedom I cherish but often take for granted. Before I received my driver's license, I didn't have that freedom of movement.

Before I had a driver's license, travel was viewed from the back-seat of an old Ford Fairlane. Often, a parent's head would obstruct my view, so I just looked out the side window and watched my world go by about 45 miles an hour. There were the ever-changing fields of grains and grasses; the lavender of blooming alfalfa or the gold of ripening oats. Now and then a train passed by on the tracks that ran parallel to the unpaved country road.

As my father steered into town, we connected with the highway and coasted down the hill to the traffic light and the drive-in on the corner. High school kids stood around in small groups with their red and black letter-jackets sipping Cokes and Pepsi's and Dr. Peppers and munching on hamburgers. Some sat in cars and leaned out of windows in conversation, or listened to the latest rock and roll song. I wanted my red and black letter-jacket. This was a new town, a bigger school, and new friends. I was fifteen and dreamt of going to college, of breaking out of my rural world and into the real world of NASA missions, the nuclear age, and muscle cars.

But my world was not the images I saw on the new color TV in the old Iowa farmhouse where I was painfully trying to grow up. My world was the school bus before dawn ten miles from my homeroom. My world was trying to learn chemistry and geometry, while having to learn English Composition. My world was one of solitude and three wishes; I wished that I were a star on the basketball team, that I were popular enough to go out on Saturday nights with the prettiest girl in school, and that I would get my name in the paper as one of those on the semester honor roll. Those three wishes were never heard by any Genie in my world. And so for me, my world in high school amounted to getting my homework done and trying not to get beat up.

It helped a lot that I got a car my Senior year. That old '53 Chevy was freedom from school buses, and freedom to go see friends if the urge came up. It was independence and image; it was a new dimension in my life. Occasionally, during school lunch break, I would drive a few friends around town, me, showing off my "wheels," and they, going for a "joy ride." And if we saw another group doing the same, an exchange of horn honks was not only a greeting, it was like saying, "How about this? This is living!"

So when you look out your window on your street, try not to shake your head in disgust at those young people who might seem a bit noisy. Not all of them are popular or athletic, and few are geniuses, and they are all struggling to fit into a world so much bigger than they are. They are trying their wings. They are exploring freedoms withheld from them while they were children. They are beginning to experience what we adults take for granted; freedom is fun!



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