

Your

Country Neighbor

FREE!



September 2007



One of many new Wind Trubines along the Rock Port Bluff.



September 1st was a beautiful day for a football game, and for just about anything else. Peru State College had its opener at home against Jamestown, North Dakota. A good crowd, a good day, a good time to be alive. It would have been better if we didn't take winning so seriously.

Voices from the Valley

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Award winning photo by Christian Farwell. See page 9.



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In Missouri: Mound City, Rock Port.

In Kansas: Axtell, Baileyville, Beattie, Centralia,
Fairview, Hiawatha, Home, Sabetha, and Seneca.

In Iowa: Hamburg, Riverton, Sidney.

Your Country Neighbor

"Your Country Neighbor" is a publication that
promotes the American value of "rural living"
by presenting country and small town life in
photos and essays from people who live here.
Their columns include stories, poems, and an
occasional editorial or news release.

A notable presence is the photography. Plus
there is a web site that shows off more photos,
and contains archives of the recent two years
of this publication. You can view it at:

www.yourcountryneighbor.com

Your

**COUNTRY
NEIGHBOR**

Voices from the Valley of the Nemaha

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Thank you!

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www.yourcountryneighbor.com

See 'Country Neighbor' Pictures in
Syracuse, Nebraska at:

The 5th Street Centre

430 5th Street Syracuse, Nebraska

**Among the artworks displayed are two award
winning photos by *Your Country Neighbor*
Photographer, Stephen Hassler.**

VISIT

***Dramatic Expressions
Photography***

by *Your Country Neighbor* Photographer,
Stephen Hassler

www.YourCountryNeighbor.com/Photography.htm

Editor's note: Joe Smith has been contributing to Your Country Neighbor for about five years. His articles have ranged from tender and joyful, to unorthodox and spiritual, to outrageous and tragic. Recently Joe published a book. Here is an introduction to Joe by his own hand, and an introduction to his book's topic.

Joe Smith was born in Roswell New Mexico and lived in Roswell for over 22 years. He married after one year of college. College wasn't what he wanted. He worked on several ranches. For a short while he worked in a saddle shop in Colorado Springs, before moving back to Roswell for another 5 years. He worked for the Public Service and then farmed west of Roswell on the Hondo valley area. He and his wife Marta then moved to the Deming area, south of that town about 15 miles. They stayed there seven years before moving to the Tukumcari area. They were still searching for something. While in Tukumcari, he ran a welding shop as well as farming.

His wife's aunt called one day to say Marta's uncle had died and she wanted Joe and Marta to come up and farm his place. So in the Spring of 1966 they loaded all their stuff and moved to Nebraska, where they've lived ever since. They both do a lot of dowsing for people, finding water wells and even oil wells, and teaching dowsing whenever they have the chance.

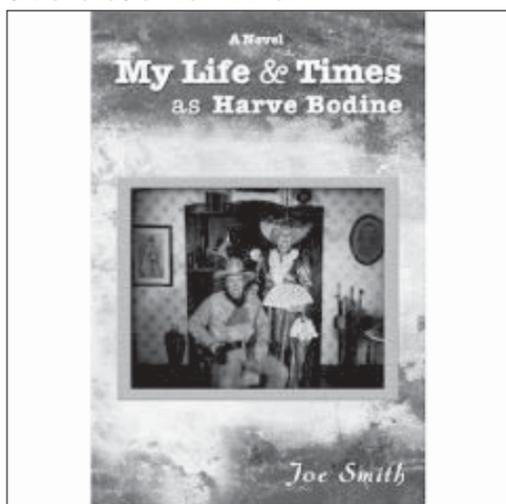
They go to a lot of dowsing conferences. At one of them Joe met a lady who was a psychotherapist. She said she did past-life regression for people. She did one on Joe, and one of the past lives he had was Harve Bodine who rode with Quantrill during the Civil War. Harve didn't like Quantrill though, and left before the war was over.

Joe and his wife were in Cimarron, New Mexico one day while visiting her brother who lived at Miami, New Mexico. The brother told them about the big sweet rolls they had at the hotel there. He said they were as big as cow pies. When they walked in the door Joe knew that he had been there before but when? It was déjà vu for sure.

A long winter gave Joe lots of time to write the story, and the story seemed to write itself. He had no idea where it was going but it seemed to tie together very well.

The book has some *clean* love scenes and tender moments. The location includes Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and several other states.

It is available online at Amazon.com. The ISBN: 978-0-595-45444-0.



Joe's Book

Writing A Novel

by Joe Smith

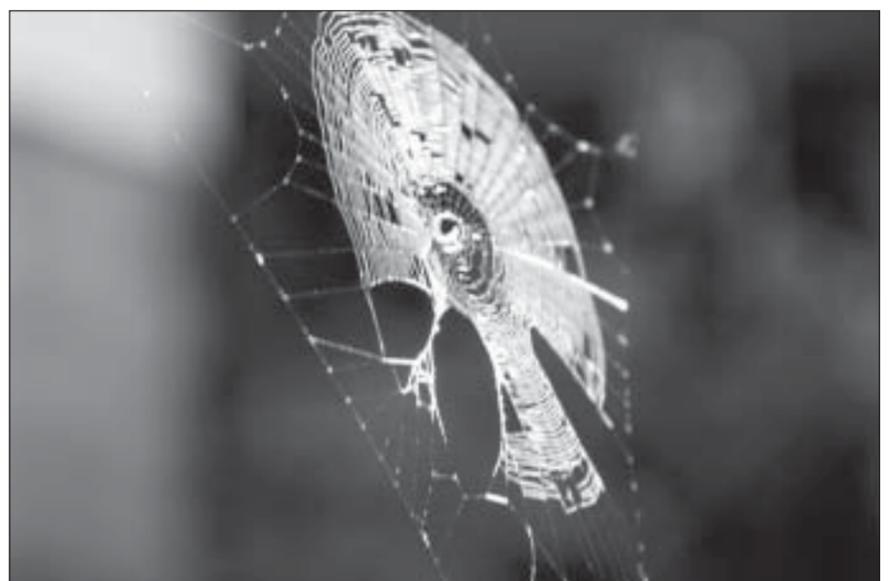
About 20 months ago I started a novel about a past-life experience. Yesterday I got 25 copies of the book. That sounds real easy -- write a book and get it published. Take it from me, it is not easy. It takes untold hours just to get it written. That was the easy part. Finding someone who would publish it was the next thing. That is not cheap, not the place I went any way. The story has to be edited several times. A friend and my wife went through the story several times to correct mistakes. The publishing company will edit for you for a price, which I couldn't afford and besides that, it would change the story. It has a lot of cowboy lingo in it and a few cuss words and some sexy parts.

I talked to another author friend of mine and she told me that novels don't have to have perfect grammar. That's when I decided it would go as I wrote it not how some English professor wanted it. During these 20 months I probably reread the story several times, found many small mistakes, and corrected them as did my wife. It was a family and friend project. It will make me think twice before I write another one.

I would sit down at night and start writing and do this night after night. My wife would correct it as we went. My spelling and typing got a good workout. If I had known back in high school what I know now I would have paid more attention. During those years all I thought about were horses and girls in that order. While writing the story, I would have no idea where it would take me next but when I started writing it all came together. How, I have no idea. It was almost like the main characters were doing the typing. I knew a lot about the areas and that helped and the characters in the story all reminded me of people I knew 55 years ago. I embedded their actions into the story as well. A lot of the story made me cry as I wrote it. I cry at the drop of a hat anyway. There are some tender love scenes, true to life feelings. I had a lot of fun writing the story during the long winter nights. It beat TV all to hell. The title of the book is, "My Life and Times as Harve Bodine." The ISBN: 978-0-595-45444-0. Try it, you might like it. Joe Smith



Balancing Act



A spider web near my driveway

Diary of an Unemployed Housewife

by Merri Johnson

Our wedding anniversary is September 7. Thirty-six years! I remember my in-laws' 40th anniversary. The kids hosted a church hall open house for them. It was what my mother-in-law wanted; a sort of social stamp of respectability, I guess. It's the only time I remember my father-in-law inside the church, except for his funeral eight years later.

The church hall celebration isn't exactly our style. We've marked a few of the milestone years with celebrations like a hayride and bonfire (our 15th, when we were a young farm family), a Caribbean cruise (25th, don't you know, and my husband got seasick), an impromptu theme visit to Baskin Robbins' on our 31st anniversary (as I recall, they only had 29 flavors on hand), and numerous restaurant dinners.

And always flowers from my husband. Except for the one year I told him I didn't need a gift and he believed me. I explained that flowers don't really fall into the "gift" category; they are part of the anniversary day, like the sun coming up. He hasn't forgotten.

My sister and brother-in-law have solved the anniversary gift conundrum perfectly. Each year they consult the anniversary gift guide. The "traditional" list refers to the first anniversary as "paper" and the tenth as "tin." All the early years are common and inexpensive items. You have to stick it out to 25 before you get to the precious metals. Plus, they start skipping gifts completely every five years once you make it past 15. What's up with that?

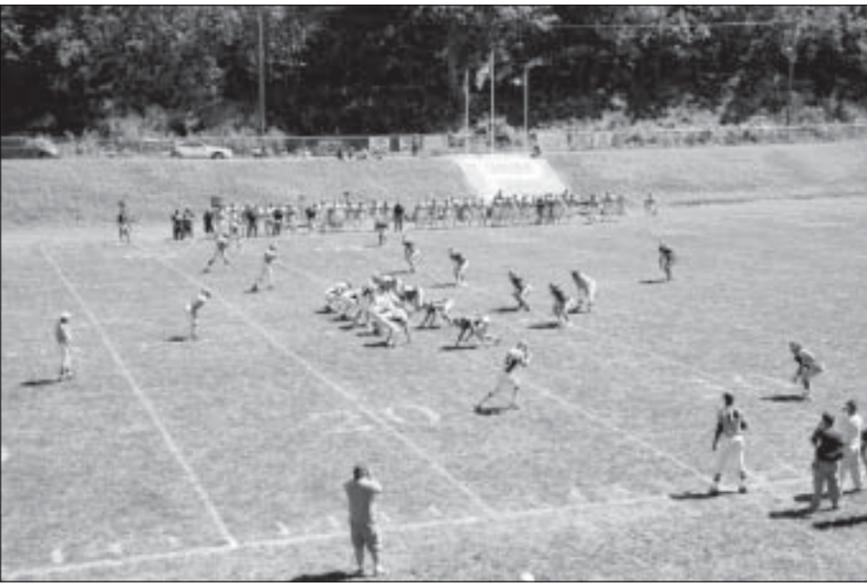
The "modern" list, on the other hand, jumps right into the upscale gifts with clocks in year one and diamonds after only ten years! And there's no skipping years. You keep right on accumulating more gems and even furs and cars every year from then on. Elizabeth Taylor must have created that list.

My sister and her husband are traditionalists. Of course they haven't gotten to year 16 yet when the gift ideas run out. They may have to switch to the modern list and go for the silver hollowware. I guess that would be something like candlesticks. I'm not too up on my silver terminology. For the record, year 36 is a no-show on the traditional list. If we were of the modern inclination we'd be picking out bone china right about now.

But you know, after 36 years, you don't really need more china. In fact, you don't really need to celebrate on the "actual" day, either. Or actually be in the same state on the actual day. This year, my husband will be in the Northeast on our anniversary for a long-overdue visit to his brother and sister and their families. It's OK because I'm going to my niece's wedding in Tucson in October without him.

Don't go getting the wrong idea now. We still care about our anniversary. In fact, I used it as an excuse this year to FINALLY get matching, assemble-yourself nightstands for our bedroom. My daughter was aghast, exclaiming that she had better darned well get something more impressive than that after 36 years. I told her I was pretty excited about it. I mean, after 36 years of mismatched, handmade tables that looked more like plant stands than nightstands, I finally feel socially respectable in the home furnishings department. My mother-in-law, God rest her soul, would understand.

Your Country Neighbor



Peru State College Hosted Jamestown, North Dakota on September 1st.



There was a good sized crowd in the Oak Bowl.



The PSC defense got a workout.



After this weekend, more people know that there's a Jamestown in North Dakota and a Boone in North Carolina.

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The Yellow Bowl

by Shirley Neddenreip

"Well," commented the farmer, "Now you are done with it." I had come home empty-handed from an auction and explained the events leading up to my failure to bring anything home. That should have been a good thing, as there is enough of stuff around this house. One upstairs room is blocked with "stuff."

Upstairs closets bulge and the other day I found a Christmas table runner which I had made, stored, and forgotten. That pleasant surprise made up for other items of questionable value - sweaters from dating days stored in their original bags from the cleaners, gold plates from our 50th wedding anniversary in the original boxes. If space were at a premium some of the stash would go. At the auction I wondered at the amount of stuff all kept in a smallish house, where and how did it fit?

But the thing was this: I had been asked by a friend to bid on Aunt Mabel's favorite mixing bowl. Thus, coming home empty-handed meant one thing; failure.

Although I knew neither Aunt Mabel nor her favorite bowl, at the auction I made a good guess at which one it might be. The yellow Pyrex bowl I picked probably had been the largest of a nest of bowls and survived because of its size. The smaller ones were more likely to have been in daily use and ultimately dropped and broken. To me, this 'nesting of Pyrex bowls deduction' was indicative of age. I found a comfortable kitchen chair from which to keep vigil and keep a sharp eye on the yellow bowl. From my place I could track the auctioneer's methodology as he ran the static-like chant over and over.

Instead of moving along the table of stuff as I expected him to do, helpers brought boxes of items to him. Items of no interest

whatever passed directly in front of me on their way to the auction block.

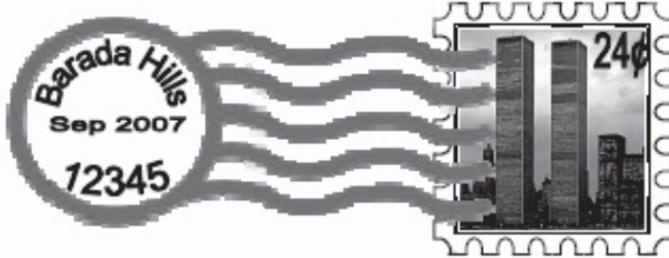
The thing about an auction is that one sees old friends. Folks I had not got to visit with in years came by. Little mini-reunions happened. People blocked my view at times and the sale persons kept shoving boxes of 'stuff' in between me and the yellow bowl.

The auctioneer continually warned "Watch for items being brought up from behind!" "Watch!" he repeated. The yellow bowl sat at the end of a table directly in my line of vision when it wasn't blocked by boxes or people. I watched. Helpers near to the auctioneer wore yellow ball caps. I had to discern whether the glimpse of yellow was a cap or the bowl!

In this way I passed the better part of one hour. By assessing the order of selling I concluded the bowl would not sell for approximately one more hour. I became involved with a mini-reunion. Suddenly there was the yellow bowl being held high in the air with rapid-fire bidding all around it! My scramble to bid came too late! The bowl sold to another, and for a low price too!

Watch! Wait! Relax. Regret. Be thankful not to have to carry the heavy bowl, nor deliver it to my friend. For the friend lives far away and the postage would have been more than the monetary worth of the bowl, not considering sentiment, which is priceless anyway. After a few years the bowl might be auctioned again, circling around the nation like antiques do, first here, then there, and sometimes back again, like rain.

"Well," my friend consoled us both by phone, "You went. You tried." Indeed. What is that old saw? It is better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all? As the farmer said, "Now you are done with it." In a split second I was done with it and the yellow bowl forever disappeared into anonymity.



Ready or Not...!

by Vicki Harger

“Life is so dull.”

That’s what my co-worker, Rose, told me the other day after work.

“The most exciting thing I do in life is to read your column each month,” she said. “And it’s the same for my sister, Tressie. She saves your articles, then gives a party for her lady friends at the retirement center—they read aloud about all your adventures—”

My friend stopped talking and looked at me. “You have so many adventures and I don’t have any! I’m wasting my life...trying to rush through the month so I can read about your next adventure.”

Oh dear. Somebody needs to get a life.

“Rose,” I said. “One of these days, your life isn’t going to be dull any more. It’s going to become very adventurous for you. Mark my words.” Rose just looked at me. I doubt she knew what I meant.

I left my workplace in a thoughtful frame of mind. Driving to Brownville, I parked at the boat ramp and sat there staring into the turbulent current of the Mighty MO. I knew that something needs to be said to the folks out there—all of the Tressies and Roses and the Lord-knows-who-else. All those people out there who are living in a cocoon of denial—who have no idea of the “adventures” awaiting them, just around the corner.

I left my car and went to sit down on the bank of the river. Taking out my notebook, I stared at the blank page. I needed to write things down. I needed to tell the truth, whether folks believed it or not.

Actually, I’m not a brave, adventurous soul like my friend, Rose, thinks I am. I’m really a ‘fraidy cat. For instance—when my friend, Bobby, took me for a fast ride on his motorcycle, I pounded on his back and screamed till he stopped.

Bobby was not awed by my bravery.

And what happened to me the other day was ridiculous. Crazy Vic somehow got locked in the hot foyer at church and nearly melted down in a panic-stricken puddle before someone came to the rescue.

My pastor was not impressed.

I thought about all this as I sat on the banks of the Mighty MO. In truth, I am not bold and adventurous and brave, at all. I’m just soft and coddled.

I sighed and stared up the river at the old fashioned town of Brownville—a beautiful town full of historical old buildings. My great grandparents were married there in 1855, then went to live on the same farmland where I live today. They lived creative, adventurous lives...They had to, because they never would’ve survived otherwise. They didn’t have a mental meltdown when things went wrong. When there was little to eat, they scrounged up shriveled turnips and rutabagas from the cellar. When there was nothing to wear, they patched and stitched and mended.

How would the average American stand up to such challenges, today?...That’s the question plaguing my mind as I sat on the banks of the Mighty MO.

The truth is—we wouldn’t fare well. Hurricane Katrina proved that.

In the face of widespread devastation, our society dissolves into hunger, chaos, and lawlessness. How many years—even decades—had experts predicted the arrival of a devastating hurricane and flood to New Orleans, and yet neither the government nor the citizens were prepared!

Katrina should’ve been a wake-up call to every American. We should’ve recognized our extreme vulnerability. But people just shrugged it off and said: “It can’t happen to me.”

I sat staring into the Missouri River at the odd turbulence that boiled up unexpectedly within its depths: Strange eruptions arising from unseen sources. I watched them warily. They were like the trouble brewing beneath the surface in America.

Our government officials have warned us for years of a coming crisis—a pandemic, or natural calamity, or massive terrorist strike. But we haven’t prepared. We can’t conceive of such a catastrophe. Our idea of a crisis is losing an e-mail in cyberspace somewhere, or running out of pretzels during a Superbowl game.

A massive EMP strike that melts down the wiring of every computer and electronic device in our homes, stores, gas stations and workplace is beyond our comprehension!

Our military has been stretched to the limit in the last few years, and so has our financial resources. China loans us countless billions to finance this Iraq war, and we can’t even pay the *interest*. Wall Street and the US economy face grave uncertainties which affect stock markets around the world.

What if events spiral out of control (like the Bible predicts they will)? What if the madman of North Korea decides to launch a nuclear-armed missile? What if the crazed leader of Iran puts a chokehold on our oil flowing through the bottleneck of the Strait of Hormuz? He has already declared his willingness to start World War III. He’s already warned that he will soon strike our ally Israel to wipe her from the face of the earth.

The U.S. will be forced to retaliate. Our overstretched military will be embroiled in war on several fronts—something that our Generals have warned us against. We’ll be launched into the throes of World War III. And it could happen overnight.

Our abundant gas supply would dry up. Our lavishly-stocked store shelves would become barren. The repercussions would be catastrophic to modern culture—a coddled society without cellars and gardens and home-made remedies, a society dependant on government pensions and welfare and piped-

in necessities. We aren’t adventurous, pioneers like our forefathers were. We’re pampered and coddled, and we’ll wilt in the face of a modern-day Alamo. We have no Davy Crocketts, or Daniel Boones in our midst.

In spite of the obvious dangers, Americans have fallen into apathy—even Christians who know of the Bible’s dire predictions for our generation. We’ve heard the warnings of impending disaster for so long that we’re no longer stirred. We yawn and peruse the internet, and watch our favorite sit-coms. We continue napping in our cocoon of denial. We wallow in our It-can’t-happen-to-me mindset.

The voices of warning are growing louder. The few Paul Reveres that we have in our generation are shouting frantically, but who is listening?

ABC News just did a report on the regrouping of Al Qaeda and the increasing likelihood of a massive terrorist strike on U.S. soil. Other news services are beginning to echo the cry. Our officials are discussing bio-terrorism and a “spectacular terrorist strike unlike any we’ve ever seen.” Will it cause lawlessness amongst citizens like Katrina did in New Orleans? Will our government over-react and take away every freedom that Americans still possess? Will martial law prevail? God has the answers to these questions. I don’t.

All I know is that we’ll never survive the coming calamity, without God’s help. Adventurous or not, we’re no match for terrorists’ bombs or a smallpox pandemic, but with the help of the Almighty, we will prevail. I hope. I pray.

I stretched my stiff muscles, brushing the sand off my clothes—the clinging dirt from the banks of the Mighty MO.

Our ancestors learned to live in turbulent circumstances. They forded this very river with all its turbulence. They cleared the land with a strong sense of faith and adventure that carried them through every trial they faced.

And now we must rise to the challenge before us and prepare for the inevitable in a way that would make our forefathers proud. They wouldn’t want the land that they tamed to disintegrate into a nation of looting and lawlessness. They’d want us to calmly make contingency plans for our children and our children’s children. They planned ahead for us. We must do likewise.

And we will...with God’s help.

I got to my feet, and my notebook slid to the ground—its pages sprawling open in the dirt. I stood staring at the words I’d scribbled across the bottom of the page:

“Remember the Alamo!

Remember September 11th.

*Remember Katrina with all her calamity.
Prepare for trouble accordingly, because...
Ready or not, it will come!”*

Editor’s note: You can read previous articles by Vicki online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on “publications” when you go to:

www.yourcountryneighbor.com

Architecture, Country, And a Some Nature



Float in the Nemaha County Parade commemorating Auburn's 125th.



The Rock Port skyline has changed.



House on a hill near the hills of Peru



Majestic in all seasons, Arbor Lodge.



Country Church just north of Johnson



Milkweed pods are beginning to burst open and expose seeds with silvery, silky hair.

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The colors of September are gold and rust along our country roads.

Freshman 2007 Scholarship Award Omaha Botanical Garden

Christian Farwell received the Nebraska "Lauritzen Garden/Hitchcock Foundation" Award for his photo, "Bee Season". The award included a \$250 prize.



There were 500 entries from 150 school districts across Nebraska in this category. Christian's art teacher is Deb Kubik, K-12 Art Instructor at the Pawnee City School, Pawnee Nebraska.

A copy of the photo will hang permanently in the Botanical Gardens, and has been published in a directory. Christian's photo will be available to view in the Pawnee City High School Library during the month of September.



Sunflowers, grains, and grasses rival Springtime pastels.



This Garden Spider's web is cluttered with the lacy, winged seeds of a milkweed plant whose seed pod dried and burst in the warm September sun.



Butterflies of September have faded wings due to sun and storms. Many will migrate, some will hibernate. Others will die, a brief life ended.

September 2007



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Whisler's Hunting & Fishing Report

by Josh Whisler
(Photo provided by Author)



Fishing:

The Missouri River was up and down last month, which brings a lot of fishing opportunities, some even a little dangerous. With the blistering heat came the thunderstorms and the nasty lightning that goes with them. Being out on the water is not the best place to be when one of these monsters blow in. Scattered showers and isolated thunder storms are an understatement when it comes to rainfalls that blew through last month, some areas seeing as much as ten inches in one day. That makes for some definite re-thinking of the weekend plans, that's for sure. But the old saying "fish are biting with the river on the rise," still holds true most of the time because of the bait that gets washed out of the creeks and into the river. The fish are not going to miss out on an opportunity like that to feed up. Considering the amount of lightening and torrential rains we have had, the fishing has been pretty good. What are they biting on? They are hitting chubs and goldfish hard right now, but there has been plenty of action on grasshoppers and dough baits. "Big bait = Big Fish" is policy for this time of year. If you want to see a big one and you have the tackle, now is the time, and be prepared to hold on. The sun is really intense so take lots of sunscreen, and I shouldn't have to remind you to take the bug spray. They're even bad in the back yard.

rock to sharpen up your skills. The fish are biting too, so fitting hunting and fishing together may be difficult right now. But all those choices are what make this time of year fun. Remember, I'm not an expert but I have my share of luck. I wonder if the experts are having any luck today? So until next time "Happy Hunting & Fishing."



Lincolnite Marty Luedtke showing a nice 4-pound channel cat caught off the rock.

Hunting:

There are a lot of doves flying through right now. If they will hold up here for a few weeks the success should be pretty good. It's nothing to see groups of 20 and 30 birds together. I'm not saying they are any easier to hit, but they are here and I hope they stay well into season. Dove Season opens September 1st and runs to October 30th.

The 2007 Fall Deer Season permits are still available on a "first come first serve" basis for Residents and Non-Residents. Check the Nebraska Game & Parks website for permit availability or stop in to a commission office.

(<http://www.ngpc.state.ne.us/>)

Fall Turkey Season permits for 2007 can be bought now. All permits are available online at www.outdoornebraska.org, by mail through the Lincoln office or over the counter at any Commission Permitting office.

2007 Fall Turkey Season Dates are:

Shotgun: Oct. 14 - Nov. 10 and Nov. 20 - Dec. 31.

Archery: Oct. 1 - Nov. 10 and Nov. 20 - Dec. 31.

It's hot and sticky right now and I know hunting is probably the last thing on your mind, but it is just right around the corner. It's time to get the shotgun out and maybe shoot some

Editor's note: You can read previous articles by Josh online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on "publications" at: www.yourcountryneighbor.com

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Our LONG Trip

by Joe Smith



Just another view of one of my favorite country scenes.



This little guy seems to prefer the world upside down.

A few weeks ago we left Johnson to go on a trip. It was the American Society of Dowsers (ASD for short) conference in Vermont, and was held in a ski resort villa. The country was beautiful. The couple that we went with had a time-share, about ten miles from the lodge where the conference was held. They came from Albuquerque. We all flew into Chicago and met there on the plane to Manchester, New Hampshire. There, my friend rented a mini van, which he didn't like. He was used to smaller cars. But we had a lot of stuff. They, Ron and Susan Blackburn had a bunch of big suitcases. I thought we had a lot until I saw what they brought. We shipped our dowsing stuff by UPS direct to the headquarters at Danville.

All the speakers have the chance to have a table and sell dowsing supplies and other things. It helps on expenses. Ron had to be there early to attend a Trustee meeting, as he was the Vice President. I used to be a Trustee a couple of years ago. This was election year and they were having the last meeting of the Trustees and then a new group had their meeting. I went to several of the meetings as an old sage that had been there and done that, kinda trying to head off problems that a new group might have.

There was a good number of people there. I'm guessing somewhere in the 400 range. We stayed until Saturday noon and then headed to Canada to another time-share that Ron had. It was 50 miles north of Montreal, on a lake. While we were there we made several side trips, one clear to Quebec. Almost everybody speaks French in that part of Canada. It was rather funny sometimes. The people were all nice as they could be. You didn't see very many people that were fat or obese. No big beer bellies, that I saw. All the farms were neat as a pin. Corn and soybeans with some pasture feed. I didn't see near as many cattle as I thought I would.

It seems tourists all have a banner they wear to let people know that you are from the states. Florida plates we had on the rented van didn't help. Money doesn't go far in Canada. The menus at the cafes would say one thing and when you got your bill it seemed a lot more. It turns out they have over 23% taxes on almost everything. Rather expensive, me thinks. It was fun, but I don't plan on doing that again for sure.

On the way back to catch the plane we spent the night on the Canadian line with the new President of the ASD. He has 300 acres and raises cattle, has a saw mill, and has his own plane. He is a real nice fellow and will make a good president. We landed in Kansas City about 11 at night and stayed there in a motel one more night. We got home on Monday morning to see a lawn about a foot tall and a puppy dog that really missed us. Now all we have to do is catch up on all our work. It is nice to be home.

Editor's note: You can read previous articles by Joe online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on "publications" at:
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Friends who live beyond your '4-Corners' region can view *Your Country Neighbor* on the internet, just send them this address: **www.YourCountryNeighbor.com** (Capital letters optional.)

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FLYING MACHINES

by Devon Adams

The squadron flying low across the vegetation changes on a whim, from east to west, from up to down to hover. Their radar interceptors are flawless in the task of keeping things in place in space, so collisions can't occur. Each separate unit has its own communications and they appear to be exactly all alike, with black stripes on their wings and black paint on the body parts. However, they're not playing war, or even air force army games. they're simply splendid complicated flying bugs, that know more about maneuvers than military planners having meetings in the pentagon. Dragonflies can handle all the moves without using fuel or making noise. They're not out there for the winning or losing. They know what needs to meet to stay alive and their concentration centers on today, without the advance planning strategies that have a way of being wrong way down the road.

PIE IN THE SKY

by Devon Adams

Cut the moon in pieces
and serve it like a pie
without a plate, set upon
a velvet tablecloth in black
that's trimmed with rhinestones
sparkling in the night.

Things My Mother Said

by Sheri Mayhew Dowding

Look both ways before you cross the street.
Don't play in the street.
Stay in your own yard.
Stay in the lines when you color.
Don't color on the walls.
Don't eat hot bread.
Don't eat too much corn-on-the-cob.
Don't eat ice cream too fast.
Don't get sunburned.
Don't go barefoot.
Don't look directly at the sun.
Drink plenty of water.
Don't drive too fast.
Watch out for the other guy.
Listen in school; listen to your parents.
Learn to read; learn to write.
Call when you get there; call when you leave.
Drive carefully; don't speed.
Wipe your feet; wipe your nose.
Wash your hands; wash your face.
Brush your teeth; comb your hair.
Keep your fingernails clean; don't bite your nails.
Don't sit too close to the TV.
Sit in the back of the theater.
Don't smoke; don't drink; don't use drugs.
Don't drink out of someone else's glass.
Don't leave your glass unattended.
Wear your coat; wear your gloves; wear your hat.
Cover up when you lie down.
You can't beat a man at his own game.
Play fair; play honest.
When it comes down to it, family is all you got.
I love you.
My mother at age 81 thinks she has nothing to leave her children, now in their 50's and 60's, but the above is what she gave us. These are the things we will remember her by. She told us all of these things, to teach us, to protect us, to keep us out of trouble, and most of all because we were her babies, her children, her teenagers, her young adults, her adults, and now even her retired children; but always at whatever age, HERS, and she loved us, no matter what we did.

*Editor's note: You can read previous articles by
Devon Adams online in
Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on
"publications" at:
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The Face of Drought

A Farm Report from Western Nebraska

by Karen Ott

Last night, after months of ninety-plus temperatures, a cool front settled over the valley offering a heaven-sent respite from the heat. It rode in on a bucking-bronc of a storm which scattered rain, in various amounts, up and down the county; we received about two tenths, other areas got as much as two inches--with some hail.

The summer storm arrived around nine pm, accompanied by jagged lightening, crashing thunder and power-pole-snapping winds--what a show. There's nothing like the fireworks of a prairie thunderstorm to make a person feel insignificant.

Sunday evening Dale and I attended an Ag appreciation supper held at the Farm and Ranch museum in Gering. We visited with neighbors we hadn't seen all summer, caught up on all the news with family members we hadn't talked to since our last holiday get-together, and even had a chance to do a little high-school reunion planning while on a hay ride. "I don't usually do hay rides in a red dress." I joked as I climbed up into the brightly painted wagon. "There's always a first time," my old classmate replied as he flicked the reins and called 'Hi-up' to his two champagne colored draft horses.

The museum is a jewel in Scotts Bluff County's crown, a shining example of what can be done with a group of dedicated volunteers. Funded entirely by donations, and a few grants, the museum has grown from a single metal shed into an impressive group of buildings and displays dedicated to the land, and the men and women who love it. For city-dwellers the museum means little more than a couple of hours of entertainment, for family farmers it's a physical reminder of a not-so-distant past and a validation of a life-style we continue to cherish.

If you ever visit the museum pay special attention to the Great Western Sugar scale house-- as children my brother and I spent countless October days in such a two-room shack watching our mother eke out a small salary weighing beets during the sugar campaign. There was no running water--we used an outhouse--no TV and only one electrical outlet, which my mother used for a small radio, and on cold days a small electrical heater which augmented the coal stove.

As we got a little older my parents allowed us to go home after school instead of insisting the schoolbus driver drop us off at the scale house. We were expected to do our chores, straighten the house, finish our homework, and start supper. I learned to cook by following the detailed instructions my mother wrote each morning, and at a very young age could make, and serve, an entire meal on my own.

We were only grade-schoolers, and I suppose nowadays my mother and father would be accused of child endangerment.

A bio-diesel plant planned for southeast Wyoming has been scratched. After Blue Sun Bio-diesel's plans to put

a crushing facility in Lingle (a few miles west of Torrington) fell through due to Burlington Northern Railroad's refusal to sign a service contract, officials decided to move the crushing facility to Yoder (south of Torrington). But the Union Pacific railroad also refused to sign a contract. Both railroads have coal contracts and said they weren't interested in providing any type of freight service that might hold up their lines.

Goshen County (Wyoming) Economic Development director said, "Without rail service it's tough to get companies like Blue Sun to come here. We can't blame the railroads for emphasizing coal, but it (coal) has basically wiped out any other rail service."

Where coal is king, and ag products a petty annoyance not worth the bother, agricultural diversification, and family farmers, are crippled. In an age when information circles the globe in an instant this part of America might as well be a third world country as far as rail transportation goes.

One last thought. I sincerely wish every person who believes farmers are going to get rich riding the high commodity prices could have been with me today when I opened our crop insurance bill. The one page statement almost knocked me over: Total Premium, \$78,280.00; Subsidy risk, \$35,800.00; Subsidy A&O \$13,733.00; Net Premium \$28,747.00; Administration Fees \$120.00; Payments, \$1,583.00; payment due October first; interest accrues on the first day of the month following the billing date at the rate of 15% per annum.

Included in the statement were instructions for paying online: 1. Open a policyholder service account; 2. Set up an e-account; 3. Pay your crop insurance premium online.

I guess they forgot to include step 4, inform your kids that college isn't all it's cracked up to be and 5, cancel your health insurance.....you can't afford it.

Men will sometimes say of women, "Can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em." The same goes for insurance companies.

Editor's note: You can read previous articles by Keren Ott online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on "publications" at:
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Country

Scenes

Dragonfly at rest on dead 'wildflower'



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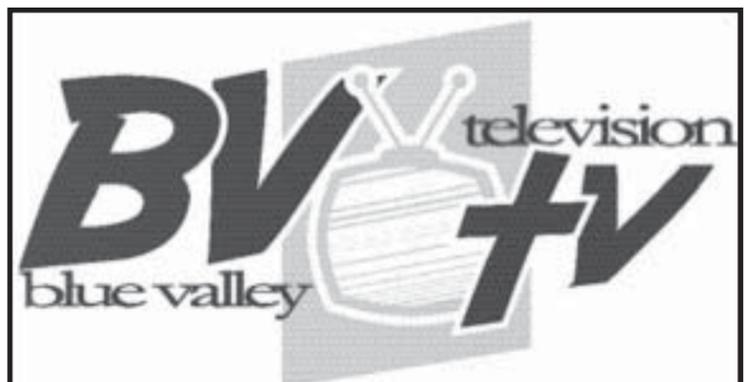
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