



Auburn Highschool Cheerleaders perform during the Nemaha County Fair Parade

More Parade Photos Inside

*Voices from the Valleys of the Nemaha*

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

**Writers this month**

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

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*Editor's note:*

*Seven years of this publication are online at:*

[www.yourcountryneighbor.com](http://www.yourcountryneighbor.com)

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# COVER PHOTO

Stephen Hassler

July was a good month for Nemaha County Events. The cover photo is of the Auburn Highschool Cheerleaders and was taken on the night of the first parade. More parade photos are in color on pages 8 through 10 including *The Brownville Freedom Parade* and Highschool Marching Bands.

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## Photo Show At Lyceum Extended Through August!

Some of my best 'Country Neighbor' photos are on display through August in the Lyceum Restaurant in Brownville, Nebraska. Featured are photos of Bald Eagles, Snow Geese, Cardinals, barns, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebraska City's Arbor Lodge, some Brownville scenes, and a "Best in Show" award winning photo taken of Sandhill Cranes near Kearney, Nebraska.

The Lyceum Restaurant is open Wednesday through Sunday from 11:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Framed photographs are for sale, but are mainly for your viewing pleasure. Which one is your favorite?

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## 'Hearts on Fire' Free Concert

Sat., Aug 18, 3pm-10pm at *Legion Memorial Park*, Auburn, NE

Free concert to promote awareness of the Stella food pantry. This food pantry provides food to the needy in Nemaha, Otoe, and Richardson Counties of Nebraska.

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## Extra Help for People with Medicare Part D

By Mary Ann Holland

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educator

There are more than 280,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Nebraska according to the Senior Health Insurance Information Program [SHIIP] of the Nebraska Department of Insurance. Most are enrolled in Medicare Part D, the prescription drug benefit, either through a stand-alone prescription drug plan or a Medicare health plan. Thousands of seniors are considered to be 'low income,' due to limited income and resources, according to federal poverty guidelines.

The Extra Help benefit is a program for people with Medicare who, because of their financial circumstances, need assistance paying for their medications. The Extra Help benefit is accessible through the Social Security Administration.

Medicare beneficiaries may not be aware they can apply for financial assistance. Currently, only 26% of those eligible have applied for and are receiving the benefit available to them. The assistance is estimated to be worth about \$4,000 per year. This benefit pays for Medicare prescription drug insurance premiums, annual deductibles, coinsurance, and co-payments on medications.

The 'extra help' benefit, also called 'low income subsidy' [LIS], is a Medicare program to help people with limited income and resources. You can apply for Extra Help anytime; there is no enrollment deadline. To apply, contact the Nebraska SHIIP at 1-800-234-7119, or call the Social Security office at 1-800-772-1213, or apply online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). Social Security will receive and process your application, then notify you if you qualify for the benefit.

In 2012 to qualify for this program you must be:

- An individual with annual income less than \$16,755 (\$1,396 per month), and an asset limit of \$13,070.
- A married couple living together with annual income less than \$22,695 (\$1,891 per month) and assets limited to \$26,120.
- Even if your annual income is higher, you still may be able to get some help. Examples where your income may be higher include, if you or your spouse support other family members who live with you, have earnings from work, or live in Alaska or Hawaii.

When looking at assets, your car, the home you live in, household items, burial plot, burial expense funds of less than \$1,500, and life insurance policies DO NOT count toward the asset limits. Assets that ARE counted include money you have in bank accounts (checking and savings), CD's, IRA's, stocks, bonds, savings bonds, mutual funds or other investments, farm or ranch land not connected to your house and any other property you own (i.e., summer house, rental property).

If you qualify for Extra Help and enroll in a Medicare drug plan, you will receive the following:

- A 'Notice of Award' letter from Social Security as proof you qualify.
- Help paying the Medicare Part D premium, annual deductible, coinsurance, and co-payments.
- You will not have a "coverage gap"
- If you were not previously enrolled in a drug plan before qualifying for the benefit, you must enroll in a prescription drug plan. The late-enrollment penalty will NOT apply
- If you're getting Extra Help, you can switch to another Medicare drug plan anytime if you have medications that are not covered by your current plan. Your new coverage will begin the first day of the next month.

References used for this article include: *Medicare & You 2012* handbook, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; *It's Easier Than Learning The Twist*, Social Security Administration, Pub. No. 05-10525, March 2012; and, *Savings for People with Medicare*, brochure developed by the Nebraska Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), Department of Insurance, 2012.

This article was written by Mary Ann Holland, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Educator and Trained SHIIP Professional. She can be reached at the Cass County Extension office at 402-267-2205, or by e-mail at [mholland1@unl.edu](mailto:mholland1@unl.edu)

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# Poetry by Devon Adams



## PENCIL PORTRAITS:

8"x10" \$30 (Mat size is 8"x10" and image size is 5"x7")

11"x14" \$45 (Mat size is 11"x14" and image size is 8"x10")

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## CLOVER BEND

It's all gone now,  
lost in the furrows  
of a plow, churned  
under the dirt in bits  
and pieces of the past.  
No more school, or store  
or picket fence, or roses  
growing by the door.  
There are whispers  
hanging in the silence  
of the intersection where  
the cross streets joined  
in the little tiny town,  
but they are only former  
residents, sighing in their  
sleep in other cities far  
from family roots beside  
the rolling river bend.

## DIZZY

On a lazy summer day  
I watched the ants weaving  
paths in the grass, and the  
bees sawing cuts in the air,  
and the butterflies doing dips  
and rolls in the rivers of pollen  
that floated on the breeze.  
The finches were flitting past  
the swooping jays, and barn  
swallows were doing fighter  
plane acrobatics at warp speeds.  
The red-tail hawks were working  
tandem spiral patterns on a lower  
plane of motion than the turkey  
buzzards, who hold the whole sky  
in their long black spiky fingers.  
The mail plane chugged along  
it's route, but was overshadowed  
by the muted roar of the giant jet  
cruising at thirty thousand feet,  
seeming to crawl through the clouds  
because it was so far away. And then  
the daylight meteorite burned a white-hot  
hole between here and there and that  
put everything in perspective.

## LITTLE PEOPLE

Granted, they are short,  
but locked inside those  
child size heads and bodies  
are the souls of the adults  
that they will be some day.  
If you squint your eyes and  
listen to the cadence of their  
speech, and the movements  
of their limbs, you will recognize  
in them the copies of yourself  
and their other parent, or the  
echoes of the generations  
that stare back at you from  
old photographs that live inside  
the boxes in the dusty attic.  
Of course we think our time  
on this old earth is limited and  
then we will disappear forever.  
But then again, take one more  
look at those children out there  
playing in the shade of the oak  
that was an acorn long before  
there were cars and planes.

## SUMMER SWIMMERS

They look like scrawny chickens,  
with their feathers all askew, and  
the colored patterns dimmed by  
water dripping from their wings.  
Blue jays have raised some busy  
children, who like to play in all the  
water baths that sit around the yard.  
They still travel as a group, and hang  
around and watch each other belly flop  
into the shallow pans of water. After  
frantic dips and wiggles and dancing  
in the waves, they fly to the power line  
to spread their wings in homage to the  
god of sun and heat that dries them back  
to flashy flags of blues and white and black.

## FAST AND FILLING

Fast food burgers oozing cheese  
between the bacon and the onion  
wait for the rest to be prepared.  
Fries popping in the oil, tasting  
better than they smell, will be  
served along with extra slices  
of tomato in a fresh green salad,  
drowning in a dressing that will  
wrap around your heart and  
smother it with love and calories.  
But do not forget the salty bits  
of crunchy croutons, so they  
can soak up all the extra drips.  
Hurry up and finish all the heavy  
handed grease and goo, because  
the best is yet to come. We are  
presented with a cold swirled twist  
of soft ice cream, drooling drizzled  
chocolate that is topped with sprinkles  
and some whipped cream spray that  
would be lonesome without the hot  
curls of caramel cascading down  
the slippery slope.

## A House Inspection

Shirley Neddenriep

People inspect houses. Sometimes they run a white glove along your plate rail. Wow, that is nervy. But I do like looking at other people's homes to find answers for restful living. A home I recently visited featured chimes that swayed and tinkled by the gentle movement of air blown towards the chimes by a strategically placed fan. "Why didn't I think of that?"

Professional people also inspect homes. They are known as Home Inspectors and are paid to look at your home and cite defects. A top to bottom home inspection costs \$600, depending on the size of the house. An inspector came to my house May 17 this year and spent the day climbing, looking, writing, saying "HmMMM," a lot. At the end of the day he issued a 14-page report.

Most of it had good comments for a structure mostly 140 years old. Not all of it is that old, just the tall part. He used ladders to scramble up to the gabled roof and took a photo from way up there. If this would have been done when the sons were young boys, they would have been up there with him, inspecting the chimney, the TV antenna and no doubt testing the slope of the roof and how close one could get to the edge without falling off.

The home inspector had the roof all to himself that day and declared its asphalt shingle material Satisfactory. The company uses a grading system from S (Satisfactory) to NI (Not Inspected). In between is a D (Defective). Just like a student at school, a home-owner does not want a "D" in his report.

My report showed a "D" on the Fascia: aluminum clad "*Aluminum fascia is blown off at west gable end of garage. Recommend repair.*" It is appreciated that the Mission Group Girls and their sponsors fixed that problem in June. The young women learned ladder safety and how to measure, trace and cut metal for the repair. Later this hot summer the group packed up and traveled to Parsons, Kansas, to spend a week performing the same type of home repair and yard maintenance for folks who live there and have difficulty with keeping up their homes.

Another "D" on my house report read: *Window wells: Metal - recommend adding window well covers.* This is the kind of house issue a person knows about but doesn't act unless an inspector comes along. Its done. Home Depot has all the supplies one needs to 'get 'r done,' but the home owner must be willing and able.

A friend helped with the window well covers, as well as the underground PVC drain pipe. Don Carter, the inspector wrote: *the ...pipe located by the garage is broken. I believe water is running under it instead of through it. Recommend repair.* The friend and two sons tackled this problem using several approaches.

Now there is a trench in the front yard to prove the pipe drains. The drain needs to be extended 10 feet out into the sloped yard. It also needs to be sheltered at each end with some kind of wire enclosure. Leaves need to be kept out at the top end. Animals need to be kept out at the bottom end of the drain pipe. And that is just a start on this home inspection and resulting actions.



Carol Carpenter

Bumblebee on a Monkey Flower  
taken last summer by Mozingo Lake.



Picking Strawberries; Submitted by Gene & Marsha Wilhelm

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**Diary of a Part-time Housewife**

Merri Johnson

I want to clarify for all readers of HELOISE, the homemaker advice columnist in the Omaha World Herald, that I am not the "Mary in Nebraska" who sent in the recent tip concerning repacking appliances for return to the manufacturer. If you didn't read the tip, I'll quote it for you here.

*This hint may help others repack a box with appliances, or electronics with several parts. Sometimes there is a need to do this, such as when returning it to the manufacturer. Also, if I am not using something for a while, I pack it up and put it in storage. Well, today I had an epiphany when I looked at what was involved, and I thought, "How will I ever remember how all this went together?" I grabbed my camera and took pictures of how it looked. Now all I have to do is print off the pictures and include them in the box. If the object doesn't work, this time the repacking job will be a breeze.*

Granted, the photo idea has merit. I recommend that manufacturers start doing this on their end and save consumers the trouble. Or maybe not. There is a distinct possibility that the quality of the photographs would be of the same caliber as the instructions in most product manuals, in which case you'd be throwing the photos out and just jamming everything into the box willy-nilly anyway.

Regardless of how clever the photo idea is, who really repacks that many appliances and electronic gadgets? Perhaps someone who spends a little too much time watching QVC or going to the mall? Someone with a constant case of buyer's remorse? Or maybe someone with a husband who insists that she return the new and improved model of whatever she just brought home and get out last year's model – the one that's perfectly repacked away on the storage shelf.

On the other hand, if Mary really does buy that many items that don't work and have to be returned to the manufacturer, perhaps she should subscribe to Consumer Reports and quit buying junk.

Then again, perhaps she truly is a paragon of organizational forethought. In that case, send that woman to Washington! We could use people like her in government: people with the ability to anticipate failure and plan the most efficient way to return a defective item... or a defective government program... or even an entire defective government agency!!

Even if Mary in Nebraska isn't destined for greatness in Washington, at the very least, she could have a career writing advice columns.

Look out, Heloise, you just might have some competition.



I'm convinced the Nuthatch is as comfortable upside down as otherwise.

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## The Face of Drought

by Karen Ott

Record-breaking widespread intensification was the term used by the National Drought Mitigation center this week to identify the jump from 13.5% to 20.5% in the most severe categories of drought. As it stands today, July 27, 2012, every state in the nation is in some stage of drought with 90 to 100 percent of the topsoil short, or very short, of moisture in Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri...and Illinois, which saw its drought rating rise from 8 percent extreme/exceptional to 70%. (Nebraska catapulted from 5% to 64%)

Pastures and rangeland in an area stretching from Colorado's high plains to Ohio, and from Oklahoma on up to the Dakotas, are in poor or very poor condition; a full 40% of all U.S. agricultural counties have been deemed disaster areas.

The nation is wounded, incubating hunger and dust-bowl-era black-blizzards, in its heartland.

Here in the panhandle we've had a few days reprieve from the heat, but the weekend forecast calls for the return of 100 degree temps...and monsoon rains. We've been hearing this 'monsoon' salt-in-the-wound twaddle for about two weeks...and I'm sick of it. Even my 7 year old grandson knows better. After one such forecast he said, "Grandma, you know they always lie."

With the heat comes bugs; every sort of crop-damaging creature seems to have taken up residence in the panhandle this growing season. Besides the usual little beasties there are sugar beet web-worms, back after a thirty year hiatus, and poison-injecting thrips, a pest no one had ever heard of until a few weeks ago when they boldly launched a formidable invasionary force into fields of dry edible beans. One of those 'monsoon rains' would certainly help the

<<<< Karen, Continued from page 10

situation,...but I'm not holding my breath.

My across-the-road scarecrow, dressed in overalls I bought at goodwill and a pair of old irrigation boots, is a bit bedraggled this summer. A wild wind stole-away one of his gloved hands.....and in the absence of rain he hasn't had a good bath in months. Perhaps that's why he hasn't frightened away the hoard of raccoons which have successfully eaten every ear of sweet corn we raised this year. Television may portray Coons as cute and cuddly, but in reality they are rancorous critters. Farm dogs might take on a young raccoon, but they know better than to tackle one full grown.

I'll be observing my birthday tomorrow... marking another year of life on this land I love. Despite the drought, and the hardships it brings, I'd rather be here than anywhere else.

I consider myself a lucky woman.

As Always, Karen

## Melinda D. Clarke, CPA

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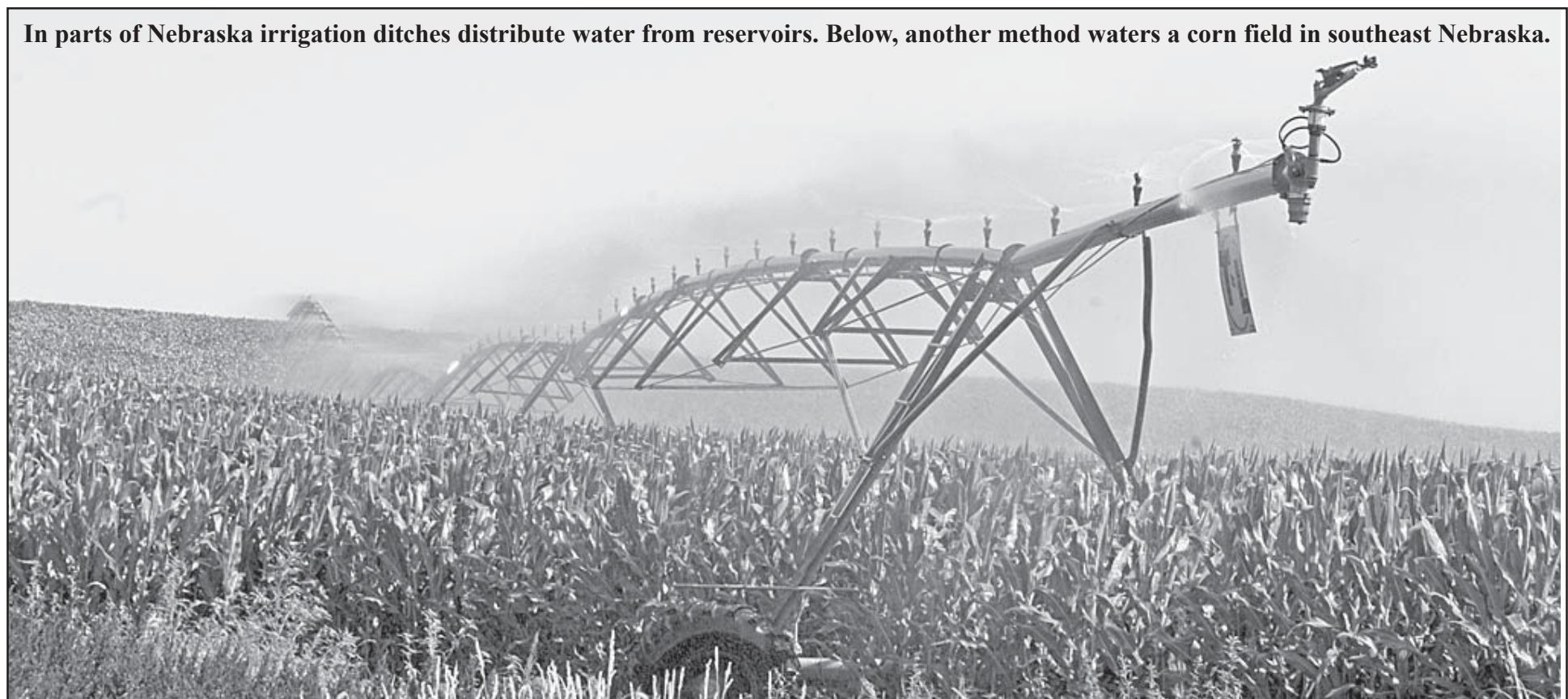
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# Poetry and



August

House wrens hush  
 cicadas shriek in the trees  
 damsel flies dart on  
 clicking wings  
 around the stagnant pond  
 hills of heat  
 shimmer across the  
 tasseled corn  
 ready for their  
 golden commencement  
 waiting on cool wings of  
 September's silver frost.

# Photography by

# Carol Carpenter



Drenched

Six inches of rain drenched  
 the valley this morning.  
 Quiet Mozingo creek  
 swam across the fields  
 sweeping two Canada goose nests  
 from the islands in the marsh.



Parched

The geese paddled across the flooded grass  
 looking for their nest and their eggs.  
 All their efforts swept away  
 in the swift morning storm.


By afternoon, the water  
 and the geese were gone.  
 Only the turkey vultures remained  
 to mop up the mess.

Like a farmer's leathery skin  
 the soil cracks from blistering sun  
 another clear hot day  
 not a single cloud on the horizon  
 wildfires sizzle western forests  
 in the parching south wind,  
 creeks and ponds sweat dust  
 while corn spreads pollen  
 over barren silks and  
 emerald leaves sharpen  
 into harsh needles in the  
 relentless July heat.


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# Whisler's Hunting & Fishing Report



by Josh Whisler  
Photo Submitted by Author

## Fishing:

The Missouri River flow this last month has been low and getting lower. Access to the river is as good as it gets. But running a boat on the river can be a challenge as low as it is. The low river levels really show the sandbars and some of them are in some peculiar places - far from the bank and right out near or in the channel. Boaters beware because the low water level obstacles could have you stranded or floating without a running motor. The high temperatures in the last month have warmed up the water quite a bit - River temperature today is 85 degrees. As anyone that knows about fishing on the river, that means Flatheads are hitting and it's time to go to night fishing for the big ones. With lower levels that means less water for fish to wander in and more changes of fish biting just about anywhere you go. As we have found out in the last couple of weeks, dark is not necessarily cool, so even night fishing has been pretty miserable staying out in the river bank. One thing I have noticed while fishing this last month though, is there hasn't been a lot of mosquitoes buzzing around. In the daylight the sand flies still like to attack, so DEET is still recommended. What are the fish biting on? They are hitting hard on chubs and cut bates (carp, shad, anything with blood in it) and the old reliable - night crawlers. Missouri River Rules still apply "Big Bait - Big Fish". Crawlers won't draw in a Master Angler Award but will fill a stringer. With potholes and creeks drying up in the last month, bait hasn't been the easiest to get either. But bait is still out there - you just have to work for it. It's time well spent for the fishing action that is going on right now.

## Hunting:

It's hard to believe that hunting seasons are coming back around when it's 100 degrees outside, but the seasons are: Squirrel Season open August 1st! Deer hunting seasons are set and it's time to get your permit NOW!

## **Application Period:** May 21-June 1:

Residents and Nonresidents may apply for one permit in any draw unit.

**July 9 - Close of Season** - Residents, nonresidents and eligible landowners may purchase remaining permits.

**Note 1** - Our Area of the state (Blue Southeast) is a buy unit - just buy a permit - no permit draw required.

**Note 2** - Earn-a-buck has been removed from all deer hunting units.

## DEER Seasons

**Archery** Sept. 15 - Dec. 31

**Mule Deer Conservation Area** Sept. 15 - Dec 31

**November Firearm** Nov. 10 - 18

**Nonresident Statewide Buck** Nov. 10 - 18

**Resident Restricted Statewide Buck** Nov. 10 - 18

**Muzzleloader** Dec. 1 - 31

**Season Choice and River Antlerless** Sept. 15 - Jan. 18, 2013

**Youth and Landowner** Sept. 15 - Jan. 18, 2013

**Statewide Whitetail** Buck Sept. 15 - Dec. 31


**DeSoto Muzzleloader** Oct. 20 - 21, Dec. 8 - 9

Fishing is excellent right now and it's time to think about hunting too. Check out Nebraska Game and Parks Website. There is something for everyone on the site. From fishing to camping and hunting the opportunities are endless. Get an idea and go with it - the summer is not going to last forever! 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."




This month's fishing pictures are of myself and my wife, Jackie, showing a couple of Flathead Cats caught on the Missouri River near Peru!!

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## Where to Find Your Country Neighbor

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

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

[www.yourcountryneighbor.com](http://www.yourcountryneighbor.com)



Windmill on H-67 just North of H-136, Adorned in its Summer Gown.

## Where Life Is Good

Marilyn Woerth

I have a simple philosophical question for you. Is your bucket overflowing? (Boy that could be the wrong analogy to use this year.) Mine has waned and surged lately, along with my mood swings. (A little rain would help.)

We have had one tremendous joy this year, the birth of our third grandson. What a sweet, playful baby Z is, and he is going to be a big boy. Grandma had to develop her arm muscles for this summer. Then my sister who lived the closest of all five of my siblings, moved farther away. Good news, she has moved closer to my youngest son, so we will see her and her family, fairly often, but I do miss them.

The hardest thing for me to endure, is a divorce in the family and all that it entails. That is a private matter and not for publishing, but it hurts just as much as a death in the family.

Then we had the “semi-miserable vacation”. A trip planned over the fourth of July to Colorado, for the largest fireworks display in the Rockies. Well, guess what, it got cancelled, which was minor compared to the forest fires elsewhere in the state. But then there was the heat wave and after four nights of no air conditioning (which they usually don’t need in the Rockies and most places don’t have A/C), we came home early. (We are wimps!)

In reflecting over the past seven months, one of the items that helped my bucket overflow is all the wonderful friends and acquaintances we have. Our network of friends is priceless.

One of the great advantages (I think of it that way), of living in a small town or rural community is that it takes you twenty minutes to make a trip across town which should only take two. I love stopping and talking to all those wonderful people that inhabit our area. You know the song, “Where everybody knows your name”. Those places still exist here in the heartland and they are a treasure indeed.

How special it is, not to be able to get into your car without one or two acquaintances stopping to chat? For me, very special. This past weekend, we were at a local gathering and I felt the warm blanket of friendship just wrap around me with a fuzzy, comfortable squeeze, and my bucket overflowed.

I know the young are always ready to rush off to faraway places, I guess I was that way too. But as you grow older you relish close ties to your community and the peace and quiet of the countryside (well, except for the tree frogs, crickets, coyotes, etc.). I am sure that there are some of those pockets of communities in the big cities, but I also think that there is a lot more loneliness.

I for one embrace the small rural towns, where my mail will always find me and there are always numerous caring faces. God bless the rural heartland. My bucket once again is overflowing where life is good.



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