Your *Country* Neighbor Free August, 2017 Auburn · Brownville · Cook · Falls City · Hiawatha · Johnson · Nebraska City · Peru · Rock Port · Sabetha · Syracuse · Tecumseh

Free

A Magazine for Small Towns and Rural America





Swallowtail Butterfly, Brownville Garden

PSC President Dr. Daniel Hanson and Elaine were Parade Marshalls in Brownville, July 4, 2017



Brownville Fireworks Display, July 4th, 2017 Note the smokestack silhouettes of the Meriwether Lewis in the foreground. Volume Eighteen, Number Eight

Your Country Neighbor

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

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Good Samaritan Society will host Merrymaker Performer Joe Taylor

The Good Samaritan Society – Auburn will host Joe Taylor with The Merrymakers on August 24, 2017 at 10:30-11:30 at Longs Creek Village Assisted Living and at 2:00 pm at the Good Samaritan Society.

In just a few short years, (he started singing in April of 1994) Joe has gone from a store owner to a full time entertainer. Over 4,100 shows in 19 years and seven (7) CD's to his credit and he is still going strong. Not bad for a guy who is almost 81. His greatest joy is bringing back "memories" through song, that always seem to bring smiles and laughter to those who need them the most. Joe's rich singing voice and entertaining style are always a hit.

Merrymakers were born out a belief in the positive impact of music. Area performers had been performing in nursing homes for hire on a sparse and irregular basis due to a lack of a dedicated budget. Sandy Lemke, Interim Executive Director of Merrymakers, said the founder saw the transformative effect of his music on his audience and wanted to reach more people on a regular basis.

The Merrymakers Association began serving the seniors in nursing homes in 1986 when a local entertainer met with a group of Omaha businessmen to form an organization dedicated to bringing quality music and laughter to seniors on a regular basis.

That year, eight nursing homes were given ten performances for the year.

Slowly this dream to provide the elderly and seniors with musical entertainment began to grow. Each year, more and more residents receive the benefit of Merrymakers' free entertainment. Today, Merrymakers serves more than 50,000 elderly and seniors with free, musical entertainment annually.

The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society is a not-for-profit organization that owns and operates more than 240 long-term care centers, health care agencies and retirement living centers across the country. The Society's mission is to share God's love in word and deed by providing shelter and supportive services to older persons and others in need, believing that "In Christ's Love, Everyone Is Someone."

For more information, please contact: Maria Hudson Marketing/Resource Development Coordinator Phone number (402) 274-4954 mbuitrag@good-sam.com Good Samaritan Society-Auburn

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August Writers

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Guitar Poems Steve Adams



People here today Don't even know where they be Gunny sack flat Indian hill and the ole pikes peak

Peru Blue So few even know..... what I mean..... River Rats-College brats It's who we be.... It's our family tree

Post office hill Gut Buster thrill It's where we've been and where we be It's our history

The mighty mo The old dump road Willyville and cemetery hill Scout camp - boat ramp It's where we've been and where we will be It's our home you see...





How to Pick the Best Medicare Drug Plan Mary Ann Holland

The Senior Health Insurance Information Program [SHIIP] of the Nebraska Department of Insurance, along with Southeast Community College, will present a workshop on Wednesday, August 23 on how to Pick the Best Medicare Drug Plan. The workshop will be held from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at the Morton-James Public Library in Nebraska City [923 1st Corso]. The workshop will help prepare you for Fall enrollment in a Medicare Part D drug plan, or a Medicare Part C Advantage plan.

Mary Ann Holland, Certified Medicare Counselor with SHIIP, will offer the workshop and respond to participant questions. There is no cost to attend, but registration for the workshop is required; call 402-471-2841 to register, or go on-line at www.doi.nebraska.gov/shiip. Tuition is being provided by the Nebraska SHIIP—a federally funded division of the State Department of Insurance. SHIIP does not sell insurance or endorse any insurance products. You will receive unbiased information about options available to you.

"Annual Open Enrollment begins October 15 and continues through December 7; coverage for your plan begins January 1, 2018. Once the open enrollment window closes, no changes can be made. The workshop will help you understand the plan comparison process and provide insight into making a good decision when it comes to Medicare drug coverage," said Ms. Holland.



Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30-5:30, Sat 8:30-1:00

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Poetry by Devon Adams

THE WIND AND THE EAGLES

They are born of the same fire, a burning desire to soar and to live on their own terms. Each of the majestic bodies comes from the design of a master engineer. They join together as a mating pair and produce children in their image. Not only are they a symbol for a proud and free country, but they are also a singular entity by themselves. Unique and irreplaceable, they celebrate a fierce passion for life, as they sail on the wind and reach to touch the fingers of the sun.

SAY IT WITH WORDS

Some would say that communications have gone eerily silent. Not so long ago, people spoke aloud in words that had to be heard to be understood. But these days, there is a texting habit that has changed into a compulsion to type little words on a tiny keyboard that are sent to another person who then hunches over his phone and reads the message, narrowly missing the bump of the curb, open manholes, passing cars and stop lights. It is not enough to merely read the fragmented sentences, though, because current manners dictate that one must answer, immediately. So, the reply is carefully typed at a furious pace, but not fast enough to look up in time to see the back of the semi truck that is stopped in front of you.

STILL STANDING

They are an army of corn stalks, with rigid backbones, and root feet that grip the soil with a passionate love for life. Through the long light of summer they have fought to stay alive through periods of drought, punishing wind storms and flooding rains. A little way down the road is another field whose troops fought a good fight and lost. In a twist of clouds and fate, they were attacked by hail the size of baseballs on a lazy summer day that turned into hell. Now, only their broken bodies are left to weep silently for the dreams and lost profits of a farmer broken by a gamble

WHISPERS IN THE DARK

The open windows listen to the rustle of drying leaves, as green begins to lose it's hold. There have been some chilly nights, when cozy socks and jackets came out of drawers and closets. Heat isn't finished, though, and sweat isn't out of style. But on those longer nights of dark, when sleep comes in deep waves of rest, you can feel the crisp breath of autumn settling in to stay.

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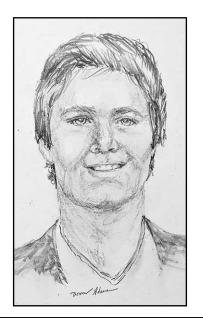
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SOMEWHERE IN THE STARS

There are ties that last for a lifetime, and then some. Like a rope that is stretched and frayed, distance and busy lives can intervene between two people, so that they lose contact. But in an instant, the bond comes back again, and they are the alternate beats of one heart, the pals who finish thoughts and sentences for each other. And even if one falls into forever before the other, it soon becomes clear that there are messages being sent and received that have a glow that comes from somewhere in the stars.

A SUMMER LIFE

Getting old takes awhile, except when it happens in the space of a summer. There are critters who live life fast, over a few months, because that is the way of their species, like butterflies, and other bugs. But they don't know short from long, only that they are here and have things to do. Having no insight into future or past keeps them from wasting energy worrying about what may come. They are content to exist inside each golden moment, as if it will be forever.





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Bumblebee on Canada Thistle Your Country Neighbor



Diary of a Part-time Housewife Merri Johnson

Hot! Hot! We're all tired of talking about the heat. But at least it's a topic most of us can agree on. Unless the topic gets off onto a climate change tangent. I'm not going there in this column.

My personal pressing concern is how to water my kitchen window box while I'm gone for four days. Portable pots can be brought in out of the heat for a few days, but the window box can't be moved. Heaven forbid my ornamental sweet potato vines should shrivel up in my absence. During our 13-day trip to Tennessee back in June, our neighbor very graciously watered all my potted plants. She has oodles of potted plants herself, so I knew I could rely on her judgment. But I hate to impose again. Also, the plants in the bed underneath the window box have grown considerably since early June. It's trickier now to step around them to water the window box. So, not only would I be asking a favor of her, I'd be putting pressure on her to not step on anything while she's at it.

I was discussing this dilemma in my latest phone conversation with my daughter in Georgia. She suggested rigging up a timer on a drip hose hung across the window box. Why didn't I think of that? It just so happens that we have a watering timer and a drip hose, neither of which have seen any action for a few years. But being my grandfather's granddaughter, I keep things like that around just in case. Those professional organizers who recommend tossing anything you haven't used in six months obviously didn't live through the depression, or have parents, or even grandparents, who did.

I told Hubby about the drip hose idea. He initially responded with his thisis-going-to-be-a-pain-in-the-neck-and-probably-won't-work groan. Would the timer still work? Did we still have the manual to explain how to set the start/stop times? Had I thought about the fact that it would probably need new batteries? Or did I think it operated magically without a power source? (Maybe I might have thought it somehow just functioned based on water pressure...) Was the drip hose usable, or had it degraded and sprung a bunch of leaks? All good questions. The only way to get the answers was to make the attempt.

Thankfully, I did locate the manual; we had extra batteries on hand; the timer still worked; and the hose had only one rogue hole that had to be taped over. We did need a couple of new rubber gaskets on the connectors, which required purchasing a package of ten. We set everything up and things worked properly.

As I write this, we are one day away from leaving on our trip. Of course, we won't know if the system is working properly while we're gone. There is always a little nagging concern about the timer getting stuck in the open position, spewing water continuously for several days. So, I guess I will ask our neighbor to sneak a peek at our patio to check for gushing water. Other than that, I think we're good to go. I hope. Fingers crossed.

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Brownville Freedom Day Parade









Nemaha County Commissioner, Bob Hutton and Mrs. Hutton.

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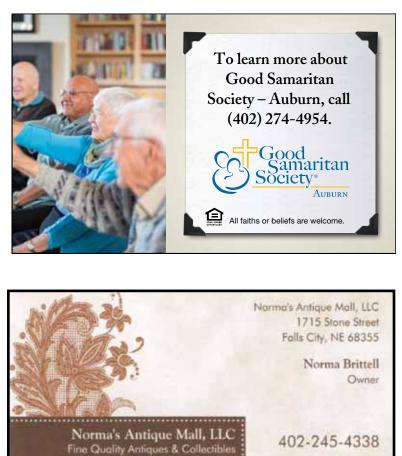
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A



Tiger Swallowtail butterfly in Brownville flower garden. July 19, 2017



Part of the Brownville Freedom Day Finale. Note the Meriwether Lewis Smokestacks.



My dad's corn never looked this good! July 2017

Alzheimer's Affects Us All



Dementia, Erratic Driving and Falls: The Big Three

By Lee Nyberg

Recognizing trouble and knowing what to do are far from the same thing, especially with problematic driving, dementia, and falls. These billboard-sized signs indicate a person is no longer safe on their own.

Before you do anything, prepare to be calm in all your discussions with your spouse (or parent) on these issues. Remember you are all adults and keep a sense of humor and perspective.

When you see unsafe driving, enlist authority to help you. Find out if new medications are being taken; these might be at fault. Inform your loved one's doctor; he/she will review the medical situation and may prescribe a driving evaluation. Because a vehicle is a weapon of sorts, hoping this situation will go away is not an option. This article has more suggestions: http://www. homecareassistanceomaha.com/seniors-and-safe-driving/.

Falls may indicate your loved one is unsafe alone at home. Act quickly—the CDC reports the first fall doubles the chance of a second one and the National Institutes of Health indicate 1 in 5 falls in adults over 75 years old results in a head injury and permanent disability.

- Add grab bars, new lighting, hand-held shower, and remove trip hazards and high storage.
- Encourage a doctor visit for untreated medical conditions and medication problems.
- Have the doctor evaluate your loved one's need for assistance at home. Bargain to bring help in, if necessary.

Your spouse or parent may resent your intrusion and decorating skills, but persist. Not only must the throw rugs go, but the furniture cannot be used as walking supports. Aging-in-place is possible and requires planning and change, as this AARP article explains: https://goo.gl/DHfyYH.

Suspect dementia? Only a doctor can rule it out. When you've observed sustained changes in memory, reasoning, problem solving, money handling, getting lost in familiar places and withdrawal from formerly enjoyed society and activities, dementia is a likely culprit. Many older adults are worried they have dementia long before you notice changes and are afraid to see a doctor. A variety of conditions can cause confusion, but only a doctor can diagnose diabetes, anemia/vitamin deficiencies, kidney or liver disease, thyroid abnormalities, or heart problems. Cajole, bribe, or by any other means, get your loved one to a doctor for evaluation. Send the doctor a letter prior to the appointment detailing what you have observed; many people with dementia are able to appear more capable for the short duration of a doctor's visit.

The presence of dementia means a person's independence, and therefore safety, is declining. The Alzheimer's Association recommends planning for the time when a person with this disease is unable to care for themselves. See their site for planning information: http://www.alz.org/care/alzheimers-dementia-financial-legal-planning.asp.

The best solutions for these serious and difficult situations take time and are a cooperative effort between you and your loved one. Explain why you're concerned and be prepared for anger and emotional upset from them. Be creative; sometimes an authority figure, such as such as a pastor or legal advisor, can help ease your loved one into cooperation.

Lee Nyberg serves older adults and their families through education on aging issues and her company, Home Care Assistance. HomeCareAssistanceOmaha.com

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