

Your *Country* Neighbor

Free
August 2018

Auburn • Brownville • Cook • Falls City • Hiawatha • Johnson • Nebraska City • Peru • Rock Port • Sabetha • Syracuse • Tecumseh

A Magazine for Small Towns and Rural America



Auburn High School Marching Band in the 2018 *Nemaha County Fair* Parade.



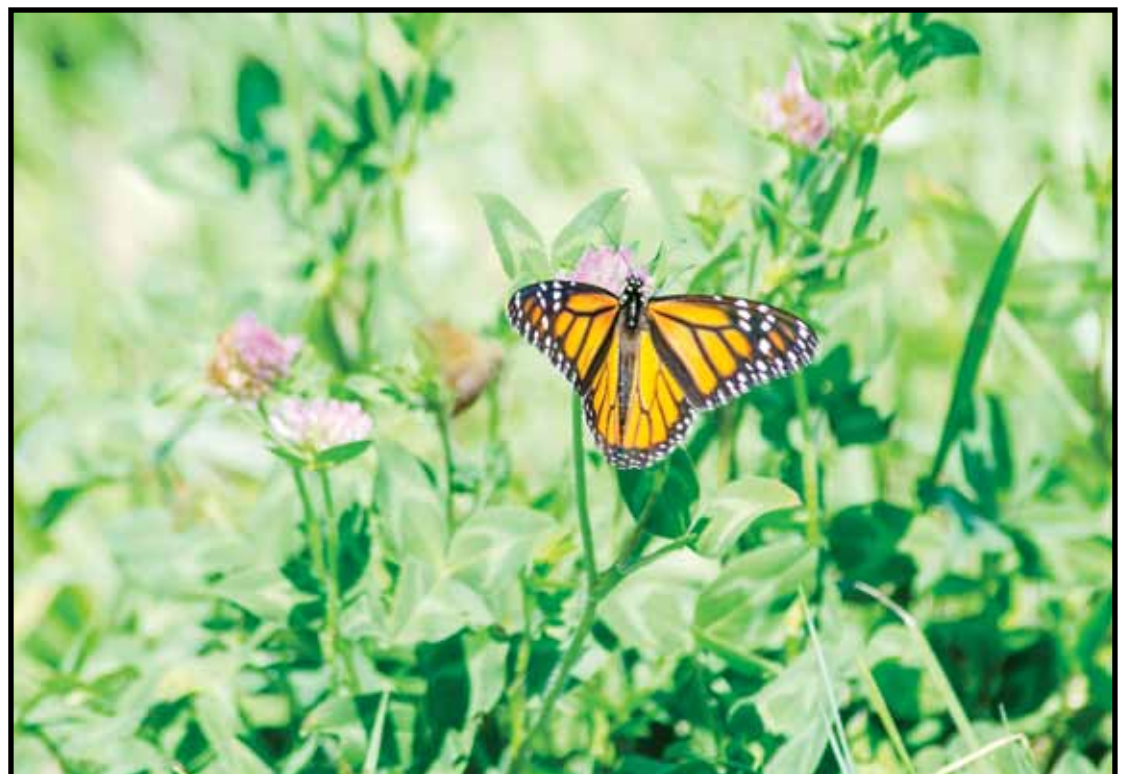
In Brownville... July 4th.

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Your Country Neighbor

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



I’ve only seen two Monarchs this year. This one along H-67 Southeast of Peru.

'Welcome to Medicare' Class August 30 in Nebraska City

Mary Ann Holland

Guitar Poems

Steve Adams



Lots of people
In lots of pain
People with houses
Standing in the rain

It's like a dream
But you're not asleep
And you know
The mind's the first thing to go

Standing on the corner
And what do you see
Lots of crazy people
Walking past me
They all seem
To have someplace to be

Lots of people
In lots of pain
People with houses
Standing in the rain

The Nebraska Senior Health Insurance Information Program [SHIIP], a division of the Nebraska Department of Insurance, is pleased to host the "Welcome to Medicare" workshop. Medicare eligibility, enrollment, affordability and other insurance basics will be covered.

The Welcome to Medicare workshop will be held on Thursday, August 30th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Learning Center in Nebraska City, 819 Central Avenue.

As you or a family member approaches Medicare eligibility, the task of understanding the program can be daunting. Mary Ann Holland, SHIIP Certified Medicare Counselor, and retired Nebraska Extension Educator will be the presenter. This event is co-sponsored by Southeast Community College and the Nebraska Senior Health Insurance Information Program [SHIIP].

Tuition is being provided by the Nebraska SHIIP. There is no cost to attend the workshop, however participants must register to ensure adequate handout materials. To register, please visit the www.doi.ne.gov/shiip, or call 402-471-2841 at the SHIIP office.

Nebraska Senior Health Insurance Information Program [SHIIP] offers free, unbiased Medicare counseling and education to help seniors and people with disabilities make informed decisions about health insurance. Services are provided statewide by 350 certified volunteers. Nebraska SHIIP is federally-funded and is coordinated by the state Department of Insurance.

Tourists! Visitors! Welcome!

You will have a good time exploring communities in the Valleys of the Nemaha River. Take this free publication home with you to use as a reference for your next visit to the area.

Readers!

Returning this month are most of your favorite Nemaha Valley columnists. This 16-page issue can be your 2-cups-of-coffee companion.

Viewers!

In this issue you will find some of my recent photographs of wildlife and rural landscapes of Southeast Nebraska.

Shoppers!

Keep up with local businesses and news of what's special this month. And please thank them for advertising in "Your Country Neighbor".

August Writers

Devon Adams
Steve Adams
Stephen Hassler
Mary Ann Holland
Merri Johnson
Vicki O'Neal
Janet Sobczyk
Marilyn Woerth
Merlin Wright

Thank You!

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Wildflowers along Scenic H-67

Where Life Is Good

Marilyn Woerth

Egads, it's family vacation time. You may wonder why I call it a family vacation since we are empty nesters. Every so often, we take all our immediate family members on vacation with us. This usually consists of grandparents (us), sons, daughters-in-law, and grandsons. The logistics for getting all three families to the same place can be daunting.

Last trip was over five years ago when we went to Florida, to Disney World. Two families flew, and one family drove. Of course, there were the glitches: exchanged timeshare, facility in Orlando had put in new security gate codes, first family there did not have them, no one knew the new numbers, and finally someone reached someone (office closed) who gave them the correct codes. We were in Dallas airport and not much help. But it all worked out and the rest of the vacation turned out pretty wonderful considering different life styles, grandsons and siblings having the usual love/can't stand each other relationships. We all look fondly back on that trip.

So here we are again, this time just north and west of Houston. So far, a week before the trip, grandma (me) and grandpa made contact with poison oak (some Boy Scout leader hubby is). No hugs for or from any one the first few days.

Since Steve and I were already in Emporia, Kansas we left from there. Eldest son left the day before from the Omaha area; they planned to take two days, and the furthest son left same time we did but from Ames, Iowa. Somehow, we all managed to get to the same place just hours from each other. And grandpa only got lost once in Dallas because he relies on an antiquated Garmin instead of grandma's smart phone, which by the way got us back on course. We have two units, us (hubby and I), and grandsons in one unit, and the parents in another. They were thrilled and so was grandpa.

We are on day three and as usual, a few mishaps. Yesterday, parking lot at Houston Aquarium was full and two cars in two different parking garages. The first one cheaper and no problem, the second one two dollars more and they closed two of the entrances before we got back. Finally, found a service worker to take son to car then he drove back to pick us up. Daughter-in-law also split her big toe open on uneven sidewalk getting there. So far, Houston -2, family 0.

Today, we are relaxing by the pool with youngest son's family; oldest son is visiting with his wife's aunt's family. And I'm writing my article. Wish I could say with a tropical drink in hand but a bottle of water is more the truth. Tomorrow is the Houston/Johnson Space Museum Center, Wednesday we go to Galveston for two days then back to the Lake Conroe area where the condo is for one more day. And I must say, I love every minute of it, listening to the grandson's exchanges, sons catching up, learning more about my daughters-in-law. Also, watching my husband loving and patiently playing with the boys. And I got to help the youngest one keep all the bad guys from the rest of the family that were playing a board game. I was even transported back to an alien universe. Love that kid's imagination, and playing along with it.

Family, one's heart fills with pride and joy and contentment (even though once in a while I need to tag team with grandpa for a break). And yes, we will do it all again. Because we live in a place where life is good. (And I don't care how clichéd that is, it's true.)



The Brownville Freedom Run (5K, 10K, 1/2 Marathon), is a great way to start a 4th of July holiday!



The Brownville Freedom Day Parade!



Caffeine Musings

Merlin Wright

MAYBERRY. That town name makes most people think of the Andy Griffith show. One of my coffee friends likes to hunt quail and there is a good hunting area in Pawnee County. We don't know if he shoots quail or shoots at quail or just looks for quail. The hunting area is near the ghost town of Mayberry, Nebraska. The farm where my family lived was a couple miles northwest of Mayberry. About halfway to Mayberry was the rural one room school where I learned to NOT call the teacher by her first name. It had been OK to call her Lulu before September of that year. She was our neighbor and recently out of high school. Writing Miss Pfister 50 times on the blackboard during recess helped me remember that lesson.

Later when I attended school at Lewiston we often heard the whistle of the small locomotive passing near our school. That train was called the Rock Island line and it came from Gage County, stopped in Lewiston, proceeded to Mayberry, Steinauer, Pawnee City and Du Bois before entering Richardson County. A 1930 map available on the internet shows the whole railroad name was Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific. Further south in Pawnee County were the towns of Armour, Burchard, Violet and they were served by the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad which continued to Pawnee City and then Table Rock.

In 1930 my father and his family farmed in Johnson County but Mayberry was the closest railroad with livestock pens. My father told me that they had no truck and would haul pigs to Mayberry in a wagon pulled by horses. The train would have brought lumber and groceries to the town's three stores. Mayberry had a post office until 1934. The town also had two grain elevators, a barber, a doctor and a livery barn. A church was built in 1899. There was a brick factory and a depot. When I was a youngster in the late 1940s, Mayberry had no businesses remaining but the nearby town of Lewiston still had two grocery stores, a bank, a post office, grain elevator, lumberyard and filling station. Now if you want to spend money in the Mayberry area you can stay overnight in a cabin at the Dana farm or in Lewiston you can buy lunch at Jeannies. Lewiston still operates a K-12 school.

According to the history of Pawnee County, Mayberry was first called Gartner. In 1887 the railroad was built through the Gartner farm and they built the first store. A man with the last name of Mayberry got a post office moved to town and then the town name was changed.

Until next month, keep the coffee perking.



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For some, running is a family thing. Pictures after the finish, Brownville Freedom Run.

Summer and I

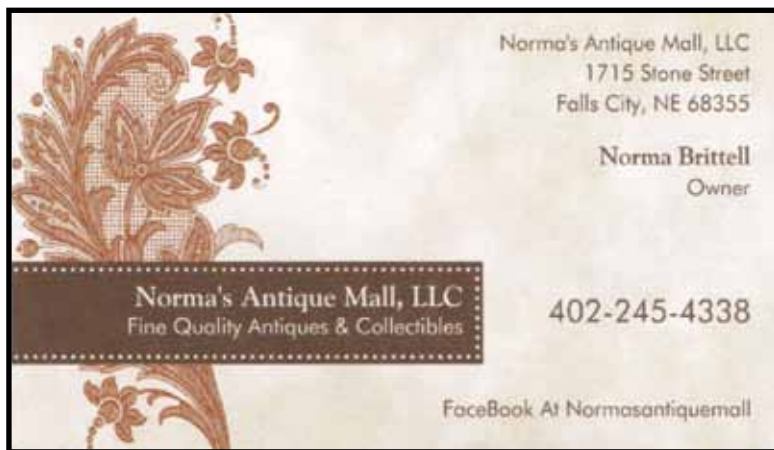
Janet Sobczyk ©2018

We start at a leisurely stroll
on a warm, sun-drenched path stretching to the horizon
no hurry, no worries
with plenty of plans and high hopes.

Our pace quickens as we near July 4th
excitement builds, fireworks flash
we dash to a hilltop for a better view
flop down on the grass
gazing slack-jawed at the sky
tonight is perfect for sleeping under the stars.

The next morning the hilltop has become a waterslide
no going back, gravity has a firm hold
it pulls us, splashing and flailing
through curves and loops
zooming through the weeks to August
with eyes closed, drenched and screaming.

Suddenly the ride is over.
Summer hands me a backpack
sighs, walks away
then turns to wave goodbye.



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Poetry

by Devon Adams

SWEET, SWEET CORN

The sun is high and rain has come with high humidity that helps the bugs to hatch and search for something warm to bite. Chiggers are lurking in the grass and weeds, along with giant spiders weaving webs in rows of corn. Butterflies hang their beauty on the plumes of summer wind, as snakes slither in the dampness of the field. Dragonflies helicopter through the air, flashing bright blue paint along their fuselage. There is heaven on a cob, out among the critters and the crawlers, but you have to go in there to pick the ears. The lush green leaves are slightly scratchy on your sweaty skin, as mud grabs your shoes and sucks them off your feet. But after all of that, you'll have the tender corn to eat, as butter mixed with salt slathers down your chin and your fingers burn from holding just boiled ears. You devour rows of kernels popping loose between your teeth, like a machine stripping bark from trees. Such things are summer dreams come true.

SCHOOL SHADOWS

In the long cool shadows of the August evening are echoes of the days to come when shorts and tans and mornings sleeping late will be only memories to haunt the students studying for tests in classes that fill up their autumn months. Real life lessons come from knowing how fast time slips into yesterday, no matter how much fun was had or the amount of reluctance to move ahead. The key that opens joy for anyone is to realize that all we really have is now, and to savor it for all it's worth.

KIDS AT THE POOL

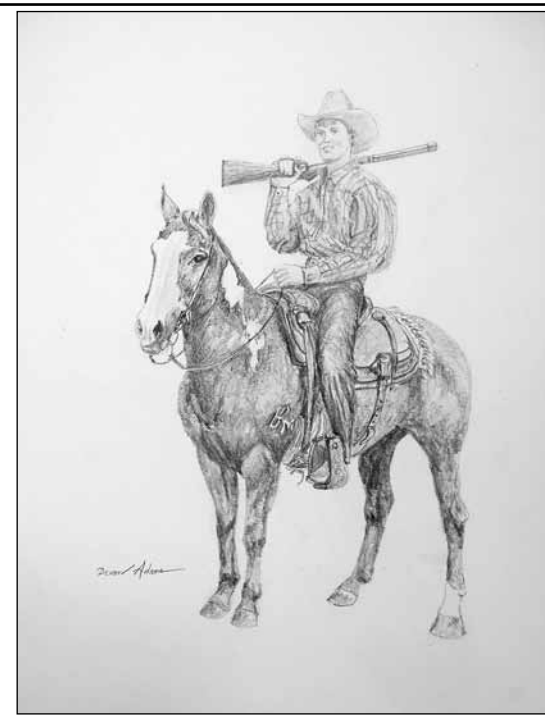
The whole family descends on the pool and the youngsters line up around the edge. Mom or Pop hops in the wading end and tells the kids to follow. They splash all at once, and water sprays away until each body is drenched, their soft young feathers sticking into spikes. Birds like water games that keep them cool, and one lesson is all they need to seek and find bird baths in every neighborhood.

PENCIL PORTRAITS: PEOPLE & ANIMALS

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OLD PUPPIES

Not so long ago he was a baby cuddling in your arms, sleeping in his bed, chewing on your shoes. Then, in a flash, he learned to walk beside you like a gentleman, except when a squirrel caught his bright eye and he lost his cool. Years passed, but when you looked into his eyes, he was still the puppy you remembered. Until the day that changed your life, when he had to go where you can't follow. He's still wrapped around your heart, loving you forever.

TOMATOES

My dad loved to eat tomatoes in the garden, with a shaker of salt in one hand, tomato in the other, juice running down his arm as he bit into the ripe red skin, sunshine warm and full of scent. Is there a better way to celebrate the steamy hot days of summer?

RIVER OF TEARS

On some days the tears will come and they won't stop. Your mind is locked in grief or fear or rage. It's like standing on the bank of a wild river, when you can see the other side, but can't get there. Panic won't help, but it grips your heart. But time will move on, and you will choose this path or that one, and the river will be in the distance of your memory.

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Wildflowers along Scenic H-67

Old Home Place
390 Memory Lane
Lost Coast

And the Whole World is Watching

By Vicki O'Neal



As a country gal, I really don't like technology and electronic gadgets. Nowadays, surveillance cameras record our every move. No matter where we are in public, we're on camera somewhere!

Dreadful stuff. Technology! Can't live with it—but can't live without it.

At times, I even hate my laptop, especially when it goes on the blink. Right now, I'm typing madly, not knowing when my laptop will shut down without a moment's notice. It does that sometimes for no apparent reason.

Laptops are bad news, folks, but cellphones can be even worse! They get you into serious trouble.

Have you ever been accidentally “pocket-dialed” by someone's cellphone and you heard the sordid details of their miserable life, unbeknownst to them? People screaming in the background. Fussing and squabbling...

Well—something even worse than that happened to me recently!

I was minding my own business, carrying my cellphone as usual while going through life in my mish-mashy way. I didn't know that I'd accidentally clicked on the “Live” camera which was connected to my Facebook page.

I carried my cellphone all around the house—while my little celly recorded every word and aired it to the world at large. The “Live” recording went on and on for almost a half hour.

Now, that might not be a big deal to those who only have a few friends on Facebook. But when you have 3200 friends, and about 500 followers—plus 12,000 post-reviews on 3 separate Facebook pages....

It can be rather humiliating, folks—let me tell you!

I panicked when I realized what I'd done. I tried to delete the “Live” video immediately, but Facebook refused to cooperate. I couldn't believe it.

What had I been doing for the last half hour while being videoed? Did I carry my cellphone into the bathroom with me? No. I don't think so. But what had I been doing and saying? Something really dumb, I'm sure!

12 August 2018 Your Country Neighbor

Yes. Matter of fact, I remember now. I'd been grumbling about something. And the whole world had heard me.

It was horrendous. This had to be the worst public humiliation I'd ever endured. I had to obliterate that video!

Eventually, I managed to get Facebook to cooperate and I deleted the video as quickly as possible. But then I wished I hadn't. I wished I'd reviewed the thing first to see what others had been viewing. Surely, the whole world was laughing at me.

It was surreal. I wondered if this had ever happened to anyone else before on Facebook.

I Googled the subject and was comforted to know that many people have done the same thing. I even found a news story about a man who inadvertently filmed his own murder “Live” on Facebook.

“Live” Murder on Facebook? That was definitely worse than anything I'd been through, today! I didn't feel quite so badly, now. I might be humiliated, but at least I hadn't been murdered on camera while everyone watched.

That poor man! Millions had seen his death—watching his demise over and over and over. Just horrible! Imagine how his family felt! Oh, the folly of electronics and modern “conveniences!”

Ah well. I'm mollified to know that I'm still alive, unlike that murdered man. Still alive to continue making dumb mistakes in public, as is my custom....

Life can be so unfair....Especially when you have a penchant of telling the whole world of your dumbest mistakes, like I do!

Folks—it's bad enough to make humiliating mistakes...but then to tell the whole world about it! It's worse than ridiculous! What's wrong with me?

Speaking of ‘ridiculous’...That reminds me of a really stupid mistake the other day. I was——

Well, never mind. I'm going to keep THAT one to myself!

Folks...Can you do me a really big favor? Just forget everything I've told you, today!

I'll be much obliged.



High School Football Camp at PSC July 2018

Bobcat Football

Hosts 8-Man and 11-Man Team Camps

The Peru State Bobcat football coaching staff recently hosted an 8-Man and 11-Man football team camp with 11 high school teams and their coaches participating. The two-day camps allowed the teams to participate in a fully-padded camp with controlled contact scrimmages.

The 8-Man teams participating were Wausa, East Atchison (Mo.), Meridian, Brownell Talbot, Nebraska City Lourdes, and Weeping Water.

The five 11-Man teams included: Lincoln Northeast, Auburn, Falls City, Wilber-Clatonia, and Cameron, Missouri. **Eleven-Man teams are pictured on this page.**

A total of 236 high school players and many of their respective coaches participated in individual and group drills. Members of the Bobcat coaching staff provided the instruction and facilitated the team sessions. Peru State coaching assistant Lou Varley coordinated the camp.



Auburn



Falls City



Lincoln Northeast



Cameron, Missouri



Wilber-Clatonia



PSC Campus in Summer 2018



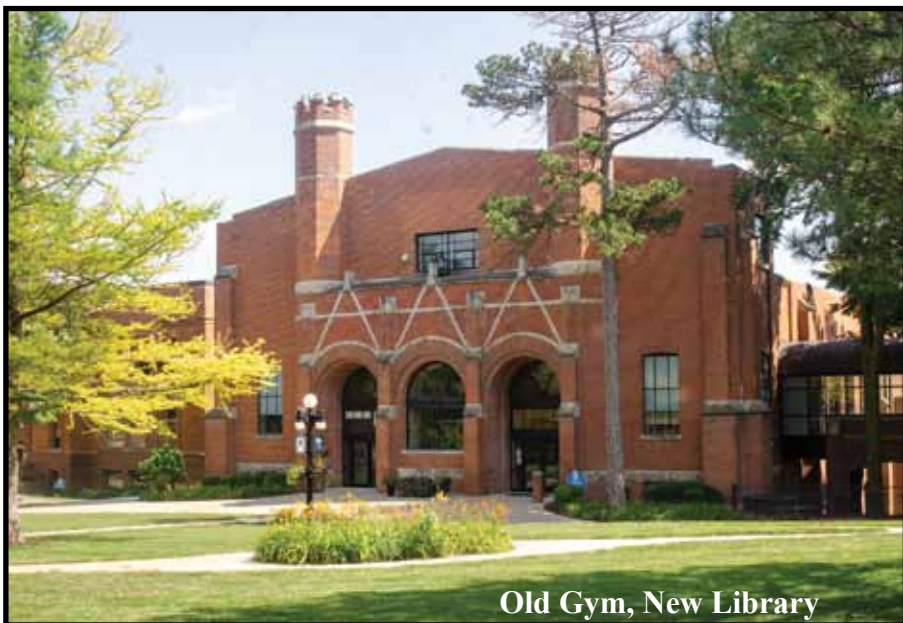
Bobcat Cheerleaders in Freedom Day Parade



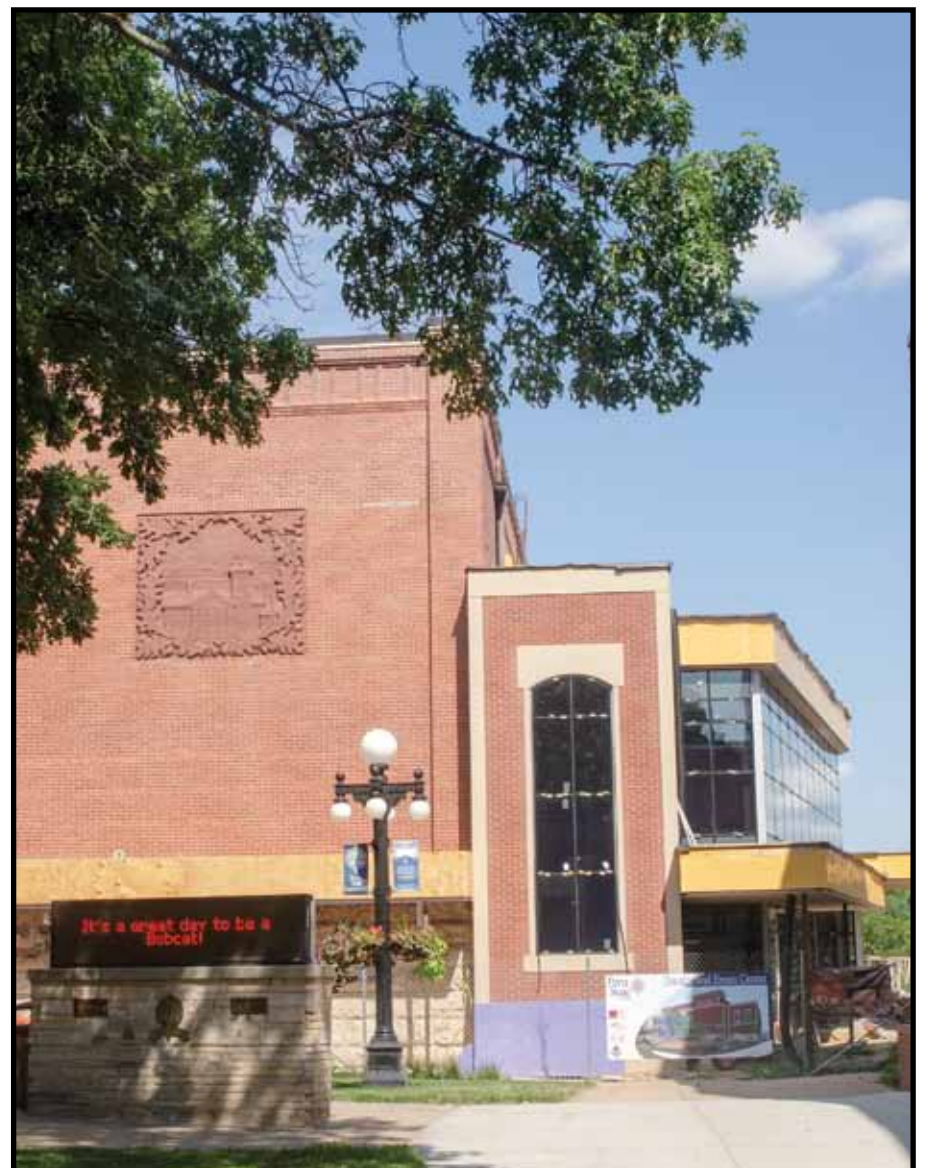
Freshman Orientation Day



Student Center



Old Gym, New Library



The new Performing Arts Center is nearing completion. See "Construction" article on the following page.

Wayne Albury named Athletic Director

Wayne Albury has been named the new athletic director for Peru State College. He has previously served as interim athletic director at Peru State since May.

Dr. Dan Hanson, president of Peru State, writes, “Wayne brings a strong commitment to character-driven athletics, a history of success as a coach, effective experience in fundraising, and a commitment to student athlete success.” Albury adds, “I would like to thank Dr. Hanson and the committee for giving me this great opportunity. I am very excited about working with the administration, faculty, staff and students here at Peru State College. I believe we have an excellent athletic staff and I am anxious to continue building on the solid foundation of Bobcat Athletics.”

Wayne is Peru State’s coach with the most wins and has more than 700 career wins in baseball. He returned as head coach of the baseball team in 2016.



Wayne Albury

Previously Wayne served as head baseball coach at Peru State from 2011 to 2015. His other collegiate coaching experience includes Lambuth University, University of Rio Grande (Ohio), Union College (Kentucky), and Pikeville College (Kentucky). He also managed the Portsmouth (Ohio) Explorers in the independent Frontier League.

Wayne holds a bachelor’s degree in physical education from Union College and a master’s in health, physical education and recreation from Morehead State University (Kentucky).

The Peru State Bobcat sports teams are part of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Division I where they compete in the Heart of America Athletic Conference. Men’s sports include baseball, basketball and football; while women’s sports include basketball, cheer leading, cross country, golf, softball and volleyball.

Construction at Peru State College Slated to be finished in Fall 2018

Since 2002, the state of Nebraska, the Peru State College Foundation and friends of the College have contributed more than \$75 million to campus construction and renovation.

Major renovations over the past 15 years include every academic building, the Al Wheeler Activity Center, the Oak Bowl, the Administration Building, two residence halls (Morgan Hall and Delzell Hall) and the entrance to campus. Funding for major construction projects was made possible by state legislature appropriations in partnership with the other schools of the Nebraska State College System.

Jill McCormick, director of campus services, writes, “This summer we have over 6 major construction projects in process totaling more than \$7.2 million including a major safety initiative and a major sustainability project.”

With the completion of Delzell Hall in August of 2017, the major construction project on campus continues to be the College Theatre and activity center. The project is slated to be completed in the Fall of 2018.

As part of the Theatre project, geothermal wells have been dug for a new heating and cooling system. This geothermal project will include a second set of wells dug for the Administration Building. When both projects are completed, 30% of the campus will have geothermal heating and cooling.

Other on-campus projects include updates to the fire alarm systems in campus buildings, painting and cleanup across campus. The Al Wheeler Activity Center will have flooring work done and the parking lots for Morgan Hall and the Centennial Complex will be replaced.

Structures on the softball field are being renovated including work to repair roofs, replace older cabinets and painting. The batting cage is slated for replacement too.

The Campus of a Thousand Oaks will also see updates to its state arboretum. New labels will be placed on campus trees and the recreation trail behind the Al Wheeler Activity Center has been reconditioned.

Funding for smaller projects is made through appropriations from funds like those created by LB309, carry-forward money from previous years, or planned maintenance funds.

The Campus of a Thousand Oaks is open to the public and has many points of interest including an art museum, a historic one-room schoolhouse with Peru State museum, a state arboretum and incredible artwork and architecture. Potential students are encouraged to contact Admissions at (402) 872-2221 for a campus tour.

Peru State named third on list of best affordable small colleges.

Provo, Utah – Best Value Schools has named Peru State College third best in the nation on a list of “Best Affordable Small Colleges in the United States.”

BestValueSchools.org writes, “Sometimes called the “Campus of a Thousand Oaks,” Peru State College combines the charm of a small town with award-winning programs to make it one of the best colleges in the state.”

“But even if the countryside isn’t for you, the price of this school might be,” BestValueSchools.org adds, “All students pay the in-state tuition rate, making it affordable for anyone. This school also boasts a wide variety of unique degrees, including degrees in nuclear technology, wildlife ecology, music marketing and community music and private studio.”

An introduction to the Best Affordable Small Colleges List describes its purpose, “For some prospective college students, nothing sounds more perfect than a school where each class is an intimate setting for learning and the professors know your name. Generally at a small school, classes have fewer than 20 students and professors are more available for personal tutoring and mentorship. It is easier to make lasting connections with both the faculty and your peers.”

“In order to help students get the education that’s right for them, we’ve compiled a list of 15 of the most affordable small schools in America. Our list includes only top four-year universities, which excludes graduate schools, community colleges, and specialty schools. Our chosen schools have 4,000 students or fewer in order to ensure a tight-knit community and small classes.”

Peru State College was the only college listed from Iowa, Kansas, Missouri or Nebraska.

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