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Northern Cardinal, May 9, 2020.

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

Your Country Neighbor

Your “2-cups-of-coffee” companion

Including local photos and articles

with the flavor of rural America.

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Your Country Neighbor

Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha

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“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

June Writers & Contributors

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Thank You!

**Your Country Neighbor
can be found online at;
yourcountryneighbor.com**

**Inform your relatives
and friends who live outside
our ‘country neighborhood’
and those “stay at home” folks.**

It’s Not All Black And White

Devon Adams, Peru

From the shock waves on the ground due to the attack of the Covid-19 Virus, it would appear that this country has suffered the equivalent of a meteor impact. Our economy is in dire straits due to the lockdown of businesses, and also the virtual house arrest of our citizens in an attempt to reduce the number of deaths from a silent enemy who invades our bodies like a black ops squad. Before the raw breath of sickness even hints at it’s presence, we may become stealthy spreaders of the nasty spiked virus particles. The actual truth is that the majority of people never get sick after they’ve been infected, and the ones who do fully recover. Vulnerable groups who are elderly and/or have pre-existing health problems find themselves in the crosshairs of the rifle scope of the virus. They realize how precious life is, because it is a time-limited condition. The threat of being shot down from a sniper who is hiding invisibly inside the air is appalling.

The measures that have been installed to try to control the rates of infection and death have been based on moving targets of information related to the nature of the virus. We know more now than was clear at the start of the “war.” But time only goes one way, and that is forward, so we have to start here and now in our battle to regain the ground we have lost.

Not everything related to the virus has been a disaster. As a country, we can see that by locating so many of our manufacturing resources in China, which includes drugs as well as medical equipment, we have placed part of our future well-being in the hands of a foreign country that wants to replace the United States as the most powerful country in the world. But that realization also gives us the opportunity to bring back home all those jobs, and also the control of manufacturing, thereby creating millions of new jobs that can revitalize our economy. The massive incentive to produce needed medical equipment, vaccines and prophylactic drugs to control the virus has resulted in new discoveries and methods of faster research. Thousands of companies have discovered that it is financially beneficial to let employees work at home, resulting in less infrastructure costs to the companies, not to mention giving workers a break on gas money. In the future, our entire business structure will no doubt be affected by the heart-wrenching decisions that have been made in this battle with an unseen enemy.

On a daily basis, it is excruciating for people to confront and control their panic in the face of job losses, depleted or empty

Continued on next page >>>>>>>>

<<<<<<< *Continued from page 2*

bank accounts, and uncertainty about the future. But the world is not a black and white picture, it's not all good or all bad. Even images without color have many shades of gray that define the quality of a scene: moonlight is a brush that paints details in terms of silver and iron and pewter.



Photo by Devon Adams, Peru

In the brilliance of day, abundant variations of color combine to reveal dazzling displays of beauty to the eyes of those who both want, and need, to see them. In the aftermath that follows the antics of a belligerent summer storm, the clouds roll away and sun rays point at a tiger swallowtail butterfly serenely sipping nectar from the heart of a perfect dandelion, as a magic double rainbow appears on the back bumper of the storm. Hope is always here, but you have to look for it.



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Friendly Finches??



Bald Eagle feeding her little one(s). Near Rock Port, MO



White Egret landing along channel, Highway 136, near Rock Port.



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Entertaining Children On Long Road Trips

Dorothy Rieke, Julian

How do you entertain your children on long motor trips? The key to a calm, pleasant trip is keeping children occupied with interesting things to do.

No need for expensive electronic games and gadgets. Some old-time activities such as reading, coloring or playing games intrigue and delight children.

Suggestions are as follows:

Beginning with the letter A, children find objects or animals along the road beginning with A. (attics) Then, they find something that begins with B.

Each child selects a color. Then, a contest begins with how many cars, trucks, and SUVs they can spot of that color. Winners are those who spot the most cars of their color.

Several of the following activities take preparation before the trip:

Play car bingo. Before leaving on a trip, make cards with pictures of kinds of colored cars. Five pictures across and five pictures down. When the child sees that kind of car, he uses a sticker to mark that picture. The first one with cars going down or across the cards wins. This can also be done with colors of cars.

Make a list of items along the road such as windmill, silo, barn, cow, bridge or other things. Ask children to mark off the items they spot.

Make lists of the 50 states. Ask older children to mark off a state when they see a car license from that state.

Make a flannel covered board from any large box. Then cut out figures. Paste flannel on the back of the figures. Let the children make up stories about characters on the flannel board.

Items like Play-doh, puppets, magnifying glasses, craft kits, color books, and other items often keep children occupied.

Hand out reward tickets for good behavior. These tickets can later be exchanged for small gifts.

With some planning, road trips can be pleasant journeys with every family member enjoying the ride.

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Grandma's Library Photo by Janet Sobczyk

Grandma's Library

Janet Sobczyk, © 2020, Omaha

“If you build it they will come”
says a movie quote that's wise
but for my new home
not a Field of Dreams did I devise
but a space for grandchildren
someday, to play and read.

Built before the first was born
white shelves with books old and new
tubs for toys, a rocking horse
a rack with dress-up clothes, too
while visions of happy children
danced through Grandma's head.



The Lady Cardinal, hesitant to visit the bird feeder.

DANCING WITH DAD

She is an enchanting wisp of an angel, with a twist of devilish sparkle in her eyes. At age five, going on twenty, she commands an audience like a queen in a crown, or a bee in a bonnet. Serenity isn't her style, as she is always in motion, in high gear. But in the blink of a blue eye, her attention will freeze on the flight of a butterfly tasting nectar in Grandma's garden, or on the roar of an engine revving for a run in the mud. Dad is speechless with the wonder that is his daughter. His world spins on her smile, or her tears, which cut into his heart. Today, he will dance with her, and as she stands on his shoes, they will swirl around the room until the music is over, but the love will never, ever stop.

COME TOGETHER

It's a brand new concept, to have people separated, like they themselves are lethal weapons. A safety measure that appears to be designed to make us afraid of each other has changed our customs. Weddings will be looking very strange this summer, with spaces between people instead of hugs and kisses. No one knows how long this will continue. What matters most to the brides and grooms, however, is the ceremony that is all about them, and the joining of their families for the future. For that, they should know that no matter the distance between their bodies, their hearts will all be joined together.

P o e t r y

Devon Adams, Peru

WHO LIVES DOWN THERE?

Next to the deer trail by the timber, there is a hole going down into the dirt. A big hole, with room for a good-sized monster. It isn't unused. There are no weeds or brush around it's edges, and the grass has been flattened on the side where the body slides down. It's very quiet there, with no echoes of voices drifting up into the light of the sun. But who could it be living there, going down deep to sleep? There are no bears near here, and they would get stuck in the hole if they wanted to see the bottom. It is someone with strong muscles who has claws to dig in the earth. Maybe a badger, with stripes on his face, like war paint, who doesn't like company. I could ask the cottontail who lives under the brush pile, but I don't speak rabbit. So, maybe I'll wait and watch, and be ready to run, and see what comes out, or goes into that dark tunnel under the blue of the sky.

TRACES OF THE "TRAIL"

Like the shadows of old river channels, and the railroad tracks that used to be there, another feature of the blue bluffs of the Missouri River is going away. The limestone ledges that holdup the hills have seen more years than humans can imagine. Before the glaciers or the river, they were sediment under the old sea that covered the middle of the country. Then rocks grew into western mountains, sand blew into sand dunes, ice plowed grooves, rivers started running, and it looked like Nebraska. The indian tribes knew how to live on the land without changing it into a place that doesn't make sense. The bluffs were a good place to be, and their graves and ghosts will tell you that is true. Now the Steamboat Trace hiking trail is being eroded by water doing what water always does, despite puny attempts to control it by people who don't understand that they aren't writing the rules.

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BEE CALM

It was a lovely spring day. The sun was shining, the wind was reasonable, and the temperature was warm. The timber and brush were lush with things growing green in the hollow that falls down the hill to the creek that runs to the river. The air was empty, without buggy bad guys that bite. Birds soared, being beautiful. Then the show began, and the space got crowded with busy fuzzy bodies buzzing all at once in one place. They flew low to the ground and then lower and lower, as they gathered in a swarm on a log. They looked like a sweater, knitted together, hanging there. Their hive was too crowded, so half had moved out and about in a search for a house in a hole in a tree. Then some nice people came to help. They boxed up the brood and drove them to a new home in a box in a field. And that's where they are today, honey bees making honey!



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A Monarch Butterfly tastes my Iris blossom.

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Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

I love gardening, yard work, and just plain puttering outside. Anything to be outdoors. This spring I gave in to my impulse to add more native perennials and wild flower beds for pollinators and other insects. In recent years, I have been able to talk myself out of it on the grounds that I would then have to take care of more plants. But the death of two large ground-cover junipers, and the existence of a weedy, full-sun spot in the no-man's land around the electrical box out back were too big a temptation.

So, I cleaned up the weedy patch and planted about fifteen dollars' worth of wildflower seeds that then required daily watering for two weeks. Something is growing there now. But until I see blossoms, I won't know for sure what it is. Hopefully, it will be the colorful oasis behind the shed that I envisioned during the three hours I spent pulling a wheelbarrow full of weeds.

Removing the dead junipers was even more work. I used a hand clipper to remove the branches and then enlisted Hubby's help to deal with the stumps. After digging and hacking the first one, he resorted to pulling the other one with a rope tied to the pickup hitch. Probably could have just yanked out the entire shrub that way without bothering to remove the branches first. But my brother-in-law had snapped a chain trying to do just that one time, so I was leery of that idea. Perhaps his shrubs had deeper roots. Anyway, the removal of the shrubs created a part sun-part shade border along a wooded area south of our house. That space is now planted to yarrow, penstemon, bee balm, mint, goldenrod and a couple of mystery plants I got from a friend.

I am excited to see all my new plants in bloom, along with the other landscaped areas in our yard, and the vegetable garden Hubby and I finished planting a few days ago. I guess I have at least two thousand square feet of non-turf area that requires some degree of maintenance now. That doesn't even count the wooded area where tree seedlings and numerous other undesirables are constantly getting ahead of me.

Which brings me back to my opening paragraph and the repercussions of giving in to my impulse to plant things.

All that extra gardening – satisfying as it was – caught up with me on Friday afternoon. I was putting in a few more new perennials and annuals when my right knee announced in no uncertain terms that enough was enough. I could barely put my weight on it to limp across the yard and back to the house. Hubby thought I should get it checked out immediately, but of course, it was late Friday afternoon, not exactly the easiest time to get a doctor's appointment, even without a corona virus pandemic to complicate things. So, I did a little online research and diagnosed myself with water on the knee. Except for lack of swelling and redness, the symptoms seemed to match. I began elevating and icing my knee and hobbled around on a two-dollar pair of kid-size crutches purchased at a garage sale a few years prior. (My granddaughter thought they would be fun for playing doctor at the time.) I felt just like my mom, who has to use a walker all the time. It is a real nuisance.

I am happy to report that after four days of relative rest and icing, my knee is much improved. I'm not ready for hiking or getting back on the treadmill yet. But, Hubby can transport my gardening tools around the yard as long as I am still using crutches, so I can finish planting annuals and pull whatever weeds I can reach from my rolling garden seat. Where there's a will, there's a way!

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Window On Fifth Street

Stephen Hassler, Peru

Even considering some difficult times with which I've been challenged over the last 20 years, my life here in my favorite small town has been blessed. And when I gaze out my Window on Fifth Street, I notice the past is becoming more blurry with each passing year, but my fondest and sharpest memories come from impressionable years, extending from Kindergarten at a one-room country school until my 16th birthday.

Today I still don't feel as if we were that bad off growing up. My brother, sister and I didn't know we were poor, except for holes in our jeans. When the church had "help for the poor" events, we gave away our more raggedy clothes thinking they were better than having no clothes at all. I remember one time pulling old cans of food from the back of the lower kitchen cabinet for a food drive. There were only a few; one had no label. Volunteers must have thrown our contributions away in disgust. And I hope they did.

My father bought the farm with delapidated buildings in the Spring before my 5th birthday. My brother was two and my mother was pregnant with my sister. Mom didn't want to get out of the car when dad drove up to the gray, unpainted house, and she was not a picky person, having grown up in Omaha during the depression. The house was not insulated. There was no phone and no indoor plumbing. We carried water from the windmill pump 100 yards away. The barn was leaning as if it could collapse at any time.

The living situation improved over the next five years. The neighbor lady complained to the phone company about no lines to the home of a pregnant woman with small children. A new electric motor beneath the windmill platform pumped water uphill to the house. Eventually we added propane heat and a bathroom. No more burning corncobs in the woodburning stove, bathing in the wash-tub, or driving to the neighbor's to use their telephone.

The barn was straightened, and it and other buildings were painted, except for the highest peak of our "Sears Catalog" house. My father couldn't reach it with his ladder and paintbrush extension, so it remained "gray."

I went to the one-room country school until graduating from the eighth grade, the year the community consolidated and school buses came to haul us to town.



When my mother first saw the house, she didn't want to get out of the car. This photo was taken in 1951. Painting has begun on the porch.

One day after college and marriage, I drove the three hour trip from Omaha to visit the old place. I wanted to see where the house and barn once stood, where the one-room schoolhouse had been, and the road, the bridge, the creek.

The little school was no longer there. The dirt lane on which I rode my bike from the house to the roadside mailbox no longer existed. The buildings were gone; the barn with its stanchions and hay loft, the swooping barn swallows, the corncrib where my dog crawled under the floorboards to have her puppies, and the windmill where I pulled with my entire weight to engage the blades with the wind in order to pump water to the cattle tank. No more even, the weedpatch where I searched for my baseball, or the tree-break where three children played fantasy games for hours, or my favorite climbing tree where I could gaze across the whole farmyard, daydreaming in the Summer-time. The land had been leveled, the creek had been straightened, the stage had changed.

As I gazed over the sloping fields, I couldn't connect present day reality with my memories of growing up. I couldn't quite imagine where to place the house or the barn or the windmill. Only the sun, sky, and summer wind remained unchanged. Crops grew there now, not children.

There seemed to be an unkind resistance between present day reality and my memories; a barrier that was trying to deny my experience, or even deny that my past even existed. But there was no barrier that could deny the memories of my childhood. I stood on that country road gazing over the fields of grain and the stillness, nodding my head. It was all here. And I loved it.



Campus Of A Thousand Oaks

Peru State College Campus Photos



One of the "Thousand Oaks"
This One By Delzel Hall



T.J. Majors



T.J. Majors



New Library, Old Gym



Student Center



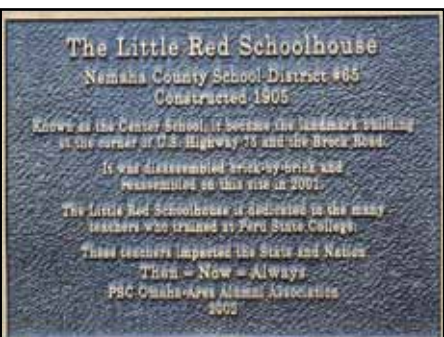
T.J. Majors



The President's House



Roof Repairs On The Wheeler Activity Center



The Little Red School House



Football Stadium
Your Country Neighbor



Peru State College

Teaching Excellence, Golden Leaf Awards, Next Foundation Director



Dr. Darolyn Seay Named 2020 Teaching Excellence Award Winner

Peru State College associate professor of education, Dr. Darolyn Seay, was named the College's 2020 Teaching Excellence Award winner.

Seay shares her motivation for teaching, saying, "If I can help contribute even in the smallest amount by encouraging happiness and quality of life, then maybe this will create some type of domino effect with the bigger picture impacting even more people further down the road. Success happens when somebody believes you can accomplish great things. I want to be that person that believes in my students and helps them reach that full-blown potential."



Darolyn Seay

Seay believes in supporting students both inside and outside of the classroom. She states, "In order to successfully serve my students in an advisory role, I must be available to offer support in and out of the classroom. My background in guidance and counseling has shaped who I am as an educator, advisor, and mentor who is continuously working with students to help problem solve, strengthen confidence and promote self-efficacy." "I want my students to know that they are valuable, and have much to offer. Most importantly, I want them to know that nothing should be out of reach if they work hard enough."

Seay advises 2020 graduates, "Surround yourself with people that believe in you and that provide constant support. Continue to accept opportunities that come your way and never second-guess your potential and self-worth."

Seay concludes, "Allow yourself time to become familiar with your new career; this familiarity and confidence will not happen overnight. Be patient, success will be the result of your persistence and hard work."

Seay joined the Peru State College faculty in 2008. She teaches courses in educational psychology, teacher education- principles and practices, and teaching science in the elementary & middle schools.

Seay serves as the higher education representative for the state of Nebraska Professional Practices Board, a position appointed by the governor. The board reviews and acts on decisions regarding revocation or suspension of teacher licenses in the state. Other activities include advising undergraduate students, serving as vice president for the Project Response Organization, advising the Peru State Education Association and facilitating Dr. Seuss Day.

Seay received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and master's degree in Education – Guidance and Counseling from the University of Central Oklahoma, and her Doctorate in Curriculum and Teaching from Northcentral University.

Golden Leaf Awards

The Peru State Times, the college's student newspaper, earned three Golden Leaf Awards from the Northern Plains Collegiate Media Association (NPCMA).

The spring conference, which was to be held in March at Chadron State College, was canceled but continued forward with the Golden Leaf Awards student media competition. The Golden Leaf Awards are presented each spring, recognizing student media excellence in print, radio, television, and web.

The Times competed against other NPCMA members schools, including Wayne State College, Chadron State College, Doane University, Hastings College and the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The judges for the newspaper competition are working journalists and editors from around the country.

Marivelle Magaña contributed to this release.



SaraBeth Donovan

PSC Foundation's Next Executive Director

PERU STATE COLLEGE NEWS

Phi Beta Lambda brings home 57 Awards

Including 9 first place finishes from State Leadership Conference

Peru State College had 24 students compete in the virtual 2020-2021 Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) State Leadership Conference. Peru State's PBL chapter earned 57 top-eight awards including nine first place finishes this year and four chapter awards. This year the competition was carried out remotely due to the current global health crisis.

Dr. Sheri Grotrian, professor of business and Peru State's PBL advisor, writes, "This year, due to the pandemic, Nebraska Phi Beta Lambda needed to be innovative in taking their annual state leadership competition online via Zoom. From the advisor perspective, we all felt it was important to try and get the event to still be held one way or the other for the students' sake. In my communication with our group of students, I explained to treat this as they would any other competition, and in fact, this was going to be a test-run at some experiences they may encounter in their futures when working with organizations that have locations across the globe—and technology is how people continue to be brought together."

"In the end, it was a valuable experience, and I believe students were grateful for the opportunity to still compete. I loved seeing first-hand how the students persevered in this time of uncertainty and once again performed at a high level against students from across the state."

The top two, in production or performance events, or three, in objective tests, places in each event are automatically eligible to compete at the National Leadership Conference in late June.

Students can compete in only two events at nationals, and since Peru State has several students who have automatically qualified, other students may move up in the standings as participants decide which events they will enter.

The Peru State College PBL chapter was again recognized with a Gold Level Excellence Award. Gold Level Excellence is the highest level possible and shows that the chapter contributed to regional and national conferences, PBL public relations, community service, and fundraising. Peru State was similarly recognized in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Individual Events * indicates automatic qualifier to Nationals in this event.

Ashli Becker (Yankton, SD)

2nd place – Cyber Security*

2nd place – Project Management*

3rd place – Entrepreneurship Concepts*

3rd place – Retail Management*

4th place – Marketing Concepts

6th place – Management Concepts

Stacy Bohlken (Palmer, Neb.)

7th place – Contemporary Sports Issues

8th place – Sports Management & Marketing

Dawn Castle (Imperial, Neb.)

2nd place – Sales Presentation*

4th place – Future Business Executive

6th place – Client Services

Rozlyn Cole (Wymore, Neb.)

2nd place – Future Business Executive*

Who's Who in NE PBL

Azlyn Fendrick (Lincoln, Neb.)

4th place – Business Communication

Chris Giittinger (Nebraska City, Neb.)

7th place – Microeconomics

Sara Granfors (Seward, Neb.)

5th place – Insurance Concepts

Austin Guhde-Egger (Auburn, Neb.)

1st place – Computer Applications*

1st place – Network Design*

1st place – Networking Concepts*

2nd place – Computer Concepts*

2nd place – Programming Concepts*

3rd place – Cyber Security*

Elected to be 2020-2021 Nebraska PBL Vice President of Technology

Spencer Kerwin (Omaha, Neb.)

2nd place – Help Desk*

Tory Lamkins (Union, Neb.)

3rd place – Business Communication

5th place – Organizational Behavior & Leadership

Kelsi Leininger (Shenandoah, Iowa)

1st place – Organizational Behavior & Leadership*



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