



American Bald Eagle, Brownville Area







Migrating Snow Geese at the Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, February 22, 2020

***Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha***  
**A Magazine for Small Towns & Rural America**



Migrating Swans; Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge, 02/22/20

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# ***Your Country Neighbor***

*Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha*

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

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there is no path and leave a trail.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Your Country Neighbor  
can be found online at;**

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friends and relatives outside  
our ‘country neighborhood’.**

## **March Contributors**

Devon Adams  
Stephen Hassler  
Mary Ann Holland  
Merri Johnson  
Dorothy Rieke  
Janet Sobczyk

Thank You!

## Prevention of Coronavirus 2019, (COVID-19) From the Center for Disease Control

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
- CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.

◦ Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

◦ If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty. For more information, see CDC’s website noted below.

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses. CDC does have specific guidance for travelers.

*Editor’s note; Being that this is “flu season,” we should be practicing these measures already. More information can be found at the website for the Center for Deasease Control at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)*

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Mahatma Gandhi



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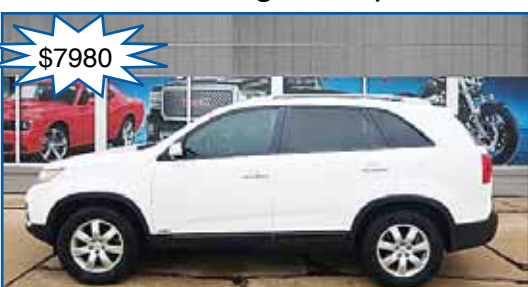
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## Understanding Medicare Late Enrollment Penalties

Medicare can be confusing. Enrollment mistakes can result in lifetime penalties and delayed benefits. You can avoid penalties by enrolling into Medicare at the right time. Depending on your individual situation, you may want to enroll into Medicare when you are first eligible at age 65, or younger if you are eligible due to disability. You may be able to enroll after 65 if you meet certain conditions that allow you to sign up later.

The Medicare Part B premium is \$144.60 per month, in 2020. This Premium goes up by 10% for each 12-month period that you could have had Medicare Part B but did not take it. Medicare prescription coverage can also have a penalty but is applied differently at 1% of the national base premium, for each month without coverage. This year's national base premium is \$32.74.

In order to avoid a part B late enrollment penalty, you must have insurance provided by active employment, either from your own or your spouse's. You can ask your employer if it is necessary to enroll in Medicare Part B, since some small employers may require it. Even if you have coverage from your employer, you should compare it to Medicare to determine which option will offer the best coverage at the lowest cost. Insurance not related to active employment will not prevent a Part B late enrollment penalty.

Medicare drug coverage is different. Creditable coverage for drug insurance can come from multiple sources, such as your employer insurance, COBRA, VA, TRICARE, or a retiree health benefit. You should keep any letters you receive informing you that your insurance is creditable for Medicare drug coverage and provide copies to your plan if they request it.

*Continued on page 4 >>>>>*




<<<<<<< *Continued from page 3*

If you have limited income and resources, you could qualify for a Medicare Savings Program, which will help you pay for Part B premiums, or for Extra Help, a program that helps with drug costs. If you have a late enrollment penalty, qualifying for these programs will erase your penalty.

You can get information about these programs and help understanding your Medicare benefits and enrollment, from the Nebraska SHIP (State Health Insurance Assistance Program), a division of the Nebraska Department of Insurance. Nebraska SHIP provides unbiased Medicare education and counseling throughout the state. To contact your local office, call the SHIP hotline at 1-800-234-7119.

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I failed to get across the river last year, so this year's access felt rewarding.



Swans among the snow geese



Swans among the snow geese





One of the Bald Eagle nests at the wildlife refuge is occupied already.



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Bald Eagle sightings are becoming more frequent as nesting time approaches.  
 This was taken from the Missouri River Bridge at Brownville.  
 Close-up photo is on the cover page.



Trumpeter Swans, Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge



Trumpeter Swans Loess Bluffs Wildlife Refuge

## A FIGHT IN THE LIGHT

The garden is a delight when the sun is right on time, but when the tulips want to come up, and they can't, there is a fight to decide what the calendar means. The temperature says freeze, so the snow comes down on top of the bulbs in the ground. But the sun dial says spring, so the bulbs pop up, and grow, in the snow. Then they throw words at each other, that we can't hear. Beauty wins, either way.

## A MAGIC GARDEN

Out the back door, and down the steps, lies a plot of plowed ground that is dark and fertile. In the house, on the kitchen table, are catalogs, with pages ruffled from constant use. In the mind of the gardener are images of perfect plants living in ideal temperatures and rain. This fantasy will continue until there are real plants growing in real soil. Then the fairy dust will vanish as the genie sneezes, and the dream will get popped back in the bottle until next year. But hope in the heart is the root of passion.

# P o e t r y

by Devon Adams, Peru

## RIVER SONGS

Sounds are like music in the way the water runs and the land breathes. Gurgles of currents and bubbles that pop keep the beat, as the rivers snake down the slopes that lead to the sea. Birds sing soprano, as cows moo low, and the ghosts in the wind wail their words to the sky.

## FICKLE

Spring sprang out of the cold, and took hold of the folds of the clothes of the folks who were on the street in the city. They felt heat from the sun that hadn't been warm since before it was winter. Off came their coats and out came the smiles, as they greeted each other, and sat on the benches to chat. But, in no time at all, the sky started to frown and sent some snow down, as cloud shadows blew all around. The chill in the air was fair warning: beware of the lies that come in on sweet sighs.

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## THEY KNOW

He is very short, but he knows about his world. His parents think that children can't know what big folks know, that easy lies, and whispers in the other room will shield them from the truth. Believing that a child will forget emotional explosions that crash into his life is the same as telling him that they never happened. "Grown-ups" used to be children who could see through people like an x-ray, but they've lived with lies so long they can't remember how to see the truth.

March 2020

## DANCE IN THE GRASS

In the sun in the spring are things growing green, even though some snow is still here, with ice in the shade. Clouds roll around and send some rain down to water the flowers that are hiding in seeds. Roots start to stretch and send fingers to find the heat in the air. Bulbs burst their skins, as stalks stand up and grow tulips too bright to ignore, beside clover that covers an acre or more. The grass is soft, and tastes green if you eat it between your teeth and your tongue. A robin walks by with his eye on a worm, and he grabs it before it can hide inside the hole in the dirt. A fawn wears dots, and he spots the fox on the log by the bog by the rolling river.

Your Country Neighbor

7



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<<<<<<<< *Diary, Continued from page 10*

swap shop. Three chairs and the loveseat sold almost immediately. The one remaining chair fit nicely into a guest bedroom, so I'm OK with a net gain of one piece of furniture. On second thought, make that two pieces. We needed a side table to place between the new pair of matching chairs. So, Hubby made a lovely little Mission-style table of cherry wood from a tree we had cut down when we built our house. That is pretty cool. But, there must be something of equivalent size around here that we don't need.

Maybe I'll have to part with the chair I bought a couple years ago, thinking I would refinish and reupholster it. I got as far as dismantling it and removing the old upholstery. Now it's sitting in a heap in the basement next to the piano, just being an eyesore. But, if I ditch it, that's thirty bucks down the drain. Oh well, lesson learned. I'll console myself by taking the heavy-duty springs to the salvage yard, and chopping up the frame for our emergency scrap wood supply.



Lucky the Leprechaun

by Janet Sobczyk, Omaha © 2012

Green  
Plastic  
Moves Unseen  
Surprises me  
Where will he be next?

This cinquain (5-line) poem is about a St. Patrick's Day decoration that I put on a ledge by our bathroom sink every March. Shortly after putting him out, he would start moving around like The Elf on the Shelf. I suspected more than one person in our household was behind it, but I never asked. It was fun to see where he would be next!

## Sandwiches And Sandwiches

Dorothy Rieke, Julian

Recently, I read about a special sandwich being offered at a Nebraska restaurant. That sandwich seemed somewhat "overdone" to me. I do not know if I would buy that sandwich and eat it. If I did, I would have to be very hungry!

Between the two halves of the bun were the following ingredients: a thick hamburger patty, bacon, cheese, a fried egg, slice of tomato, hash browns, and an onion ring. How did they miss pickles and onion?

This is a good example of today's sandwich offerings which are amazing with fresh, flavorful ingredients and fillings between speciality buns or varieties of bread.

How different today's sandwiches are from those we ate during the Thirties and Forties! Oh, yes, at that time, sandwiches represented a large portion of what we ate daily.

Because of economic conditions, those yesteryear sandwiches utilized what we grew or produced. Lard sandwiches were quite popular because many farmers butchered their hogs and rendered the lard. One woman told me she loved those lard sandwiches of years ago.

Recently, she purchased lard and made a sandwich. She took one bite but could not finish eating that sandwich. However, I imagine the lard from home rendering was more flavorful than today's lard. Also, today's health issues have influenced our lard consumption.

Several people in North Platte talked about eating jam sandwiches. I questioned, "You put jam between two pieces of bread?"

"Oh, no," they replied, "we just jammed two pieces of bread together. That was our "jam" sandwich!"

One man said his mother baked brown wheat bread and white bread. For sandwiches, she put one piece of the wheat bread between two pieces of white bread.

We always looked forward during spring days to radish or onion sandwiches. The radishes and onions were sliced and placed between two thick slices of buttered homemade bread.

Mother raised chickens, so we had eggs for egg salad and fried egg sandwiches.

Peanut butter was another ingredient for sandwiches. After stirring the oil into the peanut butter, we smeared it thickly over slices of homemade bread.

It was always a sad day when Mother sent me to the store for sliced luncheon meat. I grew to hate that because we had so much of it. However, I usually ate it without comment because I always had a good appetite.

During those days of Depression, women utilized what they could grow in their gardens or buy at a reasonable price. We did not use expensive ingredients or many ingredients because economy dictated our ways. Appetites were good because of physical labor, and we usually ate what was prepared without complaining.





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A photographer more serious than most

## A "Window" From The Past

Stephen Hassler, Peru

I notice a lot of the world and a lot of life through my window on Fifth Street, and every day I notice the weather. As I get older, I am becoming convinced that the most important things in life are family, friends, food, and the weather. The first three can be summarized in one word, fun. By fun I mean that it makes one feel good. Good weather can be fun, and bad weather can be exciting, which is also fun, so I guess I am saying all those elements of life are important because they are fun and good for us.

Weather is the most recent addition to my "what's important list." I'm actually surprised at myself for not including it long ago. Everyone talks about it. You find it around you everywhere you go. It's seldom the same even if you stay in the same spot, so it's seldom boring, it's often exciting, and always a topic of conversation.

I can barely stand being with some of my family members, even when it's just once a year for dinner. Maybe that's because the dinner is one of those important things, and they're interrupting it. That's unfair to say, since family is the most common reason to have big dinners. Even with friends, food is often only snacks and drinks... still important though, because it's with friends.

The weather gives us sunrises, sunshine, sunsets, clear blue skies, white puffy clouds, black stormy clouds, fog, rain, snow, and many other variations of water solids and fluids. One or more weather conditions occur near us wherever we are. If we are inside, we look out the window to check the weather, the temperature gauge, or to see if it's rain or shine. I think most people would find the weather much more interesting to talk about if they didn't take it for granted, and thought about how interesting it is.

I suppose I should mention the wind. You never notice the wind unless it's in your face (or pushing your back), or when it is blowing dust around in the air or garbage cans down the street. Breezes are nice... unless the temperature is too low, then they're not called breezes; the comment is usually, "That wind is cold!" In fact, the wind isn't cold, the air is. The wind may only be a breeze.

Breezes are welcome in Summer, except hot breezes... kind of rare. Wind is expected in March. It's good for kite flying, and since the days are warmer, the wind is not thought of as being so cold as during the Winter. I don't know of any place in the world where the weather is perfect. I've heard Hawaii, but that seems remote to me. I've heard Malibu on the California coast, but they have earthquakes, mudslides, and forest fires. Florida and the Gulf Coast have hurricanes. Arizona is hot; even 'dry heat' is hot. I've lived there. I don't care what anyone says, when it's 107 degrees, it's hot! And all people in those places can say about Nebraska or Iowa is, "It gets cold up there!" And then, there's tornado season.

More and more I am accepting of the weather, especially now that I am learning to adjust to it better. I try to find ways to photograph it in its 'best light', and when I find that image, I appreciate the weather more. In any case, it's always in the amazing view through my window on Fifth Street.





# Peru State College Women's Basketball

## February 2020



March 2020

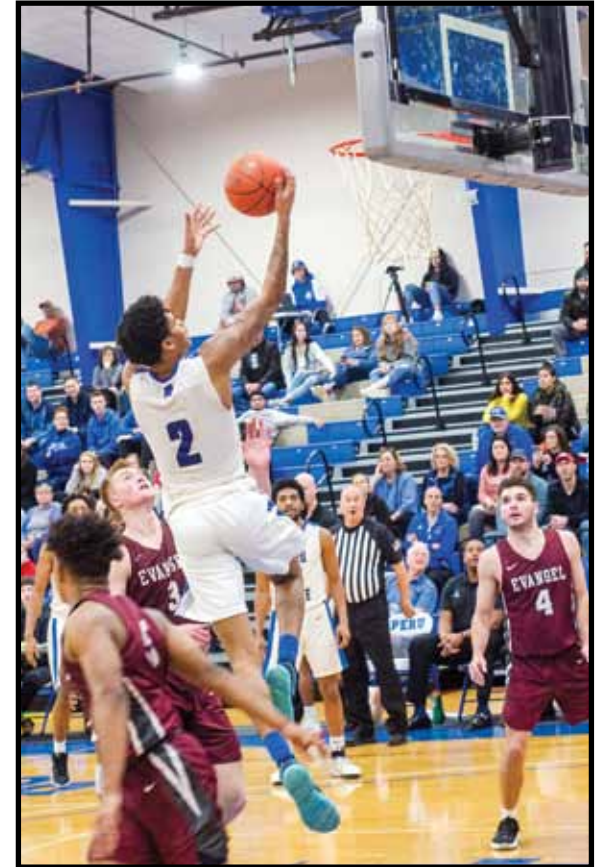
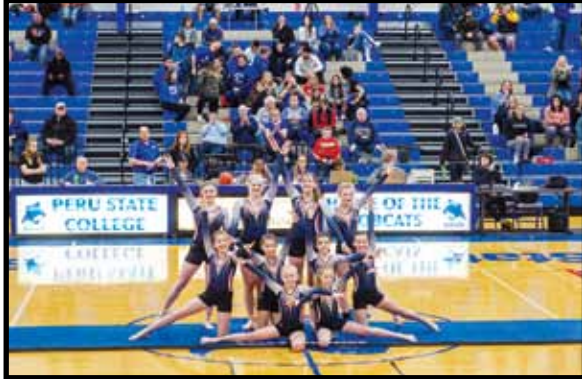
Your Country Neighbor





# Peru State College Men's Basketball

## February 2020





# PERU STATE COLLEGE NEWS

## Peru Theatre Company Spring Presentations

Spring Semester is shaping up to have a strong collection of shows presented by the Peru Theatre Company. In March, the Company will present *Fin*, a one-woman clown show about grief by Angela Horchem, Laura Lippman & Hannah Turner. The show is directed by Laura Lippman, and will be held in the V.F. Jindra Fine Arts Building's Black Box Theatre. The show will run Tuesday, March 17 and Wednesday, March 18 with both shows at 6:30 p.m.

Special workshops will be hosted by special guest Angela Horchem preceding each show. Tuesday's workshop will run from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday's workshop will be from 4 to 5 p.m.

In April, the Peru Theatre Company will produce the fourth annual "Disco Citizens" production. *Disco Citizens* features 30 original short plays performed in sixty minutes. If the plays go over time, the audience receives free pizza. Each night is different with plays performed in a changing order based on audience suggestion.

Showtimes include 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. performances in the Black Box Theatre on April 22 and 23, with two additional performances on Friday, April 24, and Saturday, April 25, at 6:30 p.m.

To learn more about the Peru Theatre Company and their upcoming shows, contact Professor Laura Lippman at [Llippman@peru.edu](mailto:Llippman@peru.edu)

### About Peru Theatre Company

The purpose of the Peru Theatre Company is to provide all Peru State College students with the opportunity to participate in an active and enjoyable group, as well as gain experience in the performing arts by participating in plays, giving speeches and any other method of performance presented to an audience of their peers.

*Quentin Victor contributed to this release.*

## Bobcat Cheer Finishes 7th in Heart Championship

In its first official year of competition, the Peru State competitive cheer team finished seventh out of nine teams in the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) Cheer Championship.

The championship for both cheer and dance was hosted by MidAmerica Nazarene in Olathe, Kansas, on Saturday.

Coach Brooke Earnest was again proud of her team's efforts. Earnest noted, "This team has continued to improve and while we did not have our highest score, we did not have any deductions." Earnest added, "The Heart has traditionally had very tough cheer teams and Missouri Valley obviously is one of the best. But, for our first year, I am very pleased with where we finished."

## High School Business Contest

For the 48th year, Peru State College hosted the Annual High School Business Contest on its campus. The contest was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020.

More than 440 students from 31 Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas high schools competed for scholarships and awards.

At the end of the contest, an awards ceremony was held in the Al Wheeler Activity Center (AWAC) for final announcements and awards.

Competitions were held in 16 different disciplines, including accounting, advanced accounting, business communications, business ethics, business law, business math, computer concepts, economics, entrepreneurship, introduction to business, job interview, keyboarding (skills), marketing, personal finance, web page design, and word processing.

First-place winners in each of the 16 categories were awarded \$500 tuition scholarships for on-campus classes to Peru State. Medals were awarded to first through fifth place winners.

## Free Photoshop Workshops

Hosted by

Peru State's Ken Curtis

Peru State College recently hosted the first workshop of five that are scheduled for the Spring.

The free workshops are hosted by Assistant Professor of Art, Ken Curtis, in the A.V. Larson Design Lab, room 114.

Workshops last for four hours and are geared towards those who are beginners with no, or very limited, knowledge of how to use Photoshop. The free workshops are open to all students, faculty and the community.

To register, email Ken Curtis at [kcurtis@peru.edu](mailto:kcurtis@peru.edu), or sign the registration form on the door of room 23 of A.V. Larson



## BOBCAT SOFTBALL HOME GAMES

### MARCH

FRI 13	Briar Cliff Univ.	2 p.m. 4 p.m.
SAT 14	Northwestern College	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
MON 16	College of St. Mary	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SAT 28	Culver-Stockton College	2 p.m. 4 p.m.
SUN 29	William Penn Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.

### APRIL

SAT 4	Missouri Valley College	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SUN 5	Central Methodist Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
TUE 7	Graceland Univ.	2 p.m. 4 p.m.
FRI 10	Clarke Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SAT 11	Mount Mercy Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
	<b>SENIOR DAY</b>	
WED 15	Grand View Univ.	2 p.m. 4 p.m.
SAT 25	Baker Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.



**2020 SEASON**



## BOBCAT BASEBALL HOME GAMES

### FEBRUARY

SAT 29	Missouri Valley College	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
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### MARCH

SAT 14	Grand View Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SUN 15	Grand View Univ.	1 p.m.
TUE 17	Briar Cliff Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SAT 28	Culver-Stockton College	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SUN 29	Culver-Stockton College	1 p.m.

### APRIL

SAT 4	William Penn Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SUN 5	William Penn Univ.	1 p.m.
THU 9	Benedictine College	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
SAT 18	Clarke Univ.	1 p.m. 3 p.m.
	<b>SENIOR DAY</b>	
SUN 19	Clarke Univ.	1 p.m.
TUE 21	Doane Univ.	2 p.m.

See full schedule for both teams at:  
[WWW.PSCBOBCATS.COM](http://WWW.PSCBOBCATS.COM)

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