



Nebraska City Pioneers Marching Band; Arbor Day Parade, April 27, 2019.



Women's & Men's Ball, pp 13 & 14.

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**The End of Spring Football Practice  
The PSC Annual Blue/White Game.**

# ***Your Country Neighbor***

*Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha*

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

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## **Cover Photo**

The Arbor Day Parade in Nebraska City was well attended considering the cool, cloudy, and windy day. Earlier, the 5K run at 8:00 a.m. had perfect weather. Results are posted at ;

<https://arbordaynebraska.itsyourrace.com/event.aspx?id=11766>

PSC sports wound down in April with baseball, softball, and the Blue/White game. Enjoy the photos on pages 1,2,8,13,14.

(Not much action at the Eagles's nest this month, but I did get a photo of a Bluebird while I was there. It is on page 9.)

## **May Writers**

Devon Adams

Stephen Hassler

Merri Johnson

Dorothy Rieke

Janet Sobczyk

**Thank You!**

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## **TURN EACH DAY INTO A GIFT**

Dorothy Rieke

Do you have a friend or acquaintance who makes you feel like a “million dollars” just by making an appearance? These are individuals who have the special capacity to make others feel wonderful. In fact, their appearance is like the bright sun’s arrival on a rainy day. They exhilarate, please, and delight making you feel as if all your dreams have come true.

Perhaps the reason for this response is that these people are intensely interested in you and what you are doing. They are often encouraging and complimentary. In other words, they take time to care.

In this busy modern world, we need more people showing their interest in others while displaying certain characteristics and practices. The following lists some traits these individuals have in common.

**SMILE AND BE PLEASANT.** Nearly everyone appreciates a cheerful greeting and a pleasant manner. In fact, smiles often set the trend for the hours ahead with relaxation and good feelings.

**DO SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR SOMEONE.** Doing something for others brings happiness. Utilizing certain practices and personal characteristics, one can influence another person’s life in a positive way. Practices of this kind are rewarding because “The joy we bring to others is the joy that comes back to us.”

**COMPLIMENT OTHERS.** Sincere compliments are praising, commending, or paying homage to someone. These compliments, well-deserved, not only serve to encourage but demonstrate support. They are invaluable for building self-respect and esteem.

**INSPIRE OTHERS.** Inspiring others amounts to encouraging and motivating with hope. Inspiration serves to increase faith.

**BE KIND AND COMPASSIONATE.** Kindness and compassion casts a rosy glow over others making them feel special. Some of that glow often spreads over those who originate these actions.

**DISPLAY A POSITIVE ATTITUDE.** A positive attitude conveys workable attributes that are beneficial, constructive, and helpful. Those with “plus qualities” influence others in their pursuits. It is said that “everyone lives under one of two tents, content or discontent.” Contented people are positive and forward looking.

**GIVE OTHERS YOUR LOVE.** Everyone needs love and devotion. Love includes steadfast enduring loyalty and faithfulness. It is a feeling of profound awe and respect. In most forms, it includes respect, esteem, and affection.

**DENY YOURSELF.** Denying yourself is all important to attitude, self-respect, and self-worth. Selflessness, not selfishness is a valued commodity among friends and associates. Giving up or giving in may be required in relationships.

**CONSIDER OTHERS’ FEELINGS.** It is best to think of others by putting yourself in their position. Try to see their “side of matters” always practicing caring and respect.

**BE FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.** Friendliness and helpfulness are valued traits for relationships. Everyone enjoys approachable, amicable, neighborly individuals. These are the people who come through in times of trouble.

Developing the above characteristics will elevate your life to one that will please you and others. Good friends make life special. Turn each of your days into a gift and enjoy the benefits!

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## Mainstreet Bank Collaborates with Peru State Art Students to Create New Seal



From left to right: Dr. Dan Hanson, president of Peru State College; Taylor Peterson, Peru State art student; Joyce Douglas, Andrew Smith and Rob Walker, vice president and manager at Mainstreet's Peru location.

Peru State art students enrolled in Art 333, Design Studio, worked closely with Mainstreet Bank to develop a new seal for the rebranded bank. The students worked to combine meaningful symbols from the Bank's 100-year history and its role in Nebraska business and agriculture.

The medallion has two dates. The first, May 1, 1890, is the date of the bank's founding. The second, June 1, 2017, is the date of the bank's renaming to Mainstreet Bank. Mainstreet Bank was formerly known as Farmers Bank of Cook.

Joyce Douglas writes, "I loved working with the students. They were unbelievably creative." Douglas is the Vice Chairman of the Mainstreet Bank Board and Vice President of the Bank. She also serves on the Peru State College Foundation Board.

Andrew Smith (Auburn, NE) writes, "Working alongside my colleagues within the 2018 Design Studio allowed me the great opportunity to lend my skills and ideas to create something that will last forever. Our clients over at Mainstreet Bank were such a pleasure to collaborate with, and the work that we all put in truly shows." Smith continues, "I am grateful for the invitation to the medallion unveiling. Seeing the time and energy our Design Studio had put in come to fruition gave me an overwhelming sense of accomplishment and pride." Taylor Peterson (Blanchard, IA) adds, "Working alongside Mainstreet Bank to create such a memorable piece was truly a great opportunity. The entire experience was even better because I had the chance to collaborate with not only the Mainstreet Bank personnel but with my fellow peers."

In honor of the partnership with Peru State art students, Douglas announced a new scholarship for art students. A total of five \$1000 scholarships will be given, including two given to members of the design team not yet graduating and returning in the fall of 2019. Douglas adds that Rixstine Recognition in Lincoln was also key to the project's success. "Tim [Hoffman]'s staff worked with the final drawing to prepare the vector artwork so the foundry could prepare the final product."

Mainstreet Bank has seven locations in Nebraska including Cook, Peru, Louisville, Syracuse, Tecumseh, Virginia, and Wymore. A medallion was created for each location.

An eighth medallion was created to hang at Peru State College. It will be placed inside the new Performing Arts Center, outside the new Mainstreet Bank Lighting Booth. Peru State student involvement led to the inclusion of the Bobcat head at the bottom.



Very little activity during my April visit. Either this is the male, and the female is hidden behind him, or this one's mate is out hunting. I hope to have the chicks in a photo in June's issue.

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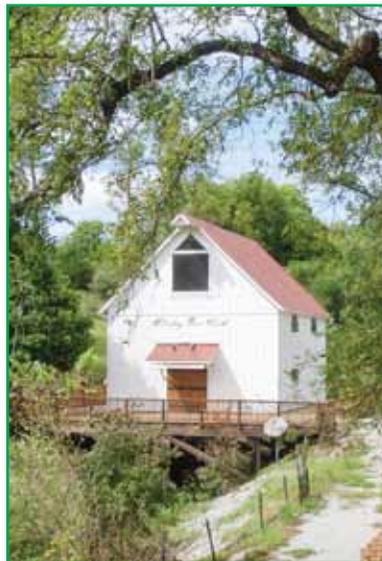
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canyons of corn and halls  
of timber.

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Swallows, who can make the  
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their performance skills. Their  
prey is bugs, who never know  
what hits them as a flying mouth,  
gaping open, sucks them in like  
a vacuum cleaner on steroids.

#### HOW MANY HOURS?

When we are small  
and others are tall,  
we wonder why time  
is so slow when we  
want it to go fast.  
A week is forever,  
but a year is a word  
that parents use as  
if it means something.  
Our world belongs  
to us, and we fit  
others into it only  
if we want them  
to be there. Then  
we grow up, and  
when mother's have  
babies, the secret of  
time is revealed to  
them like a lightning  
flash. The memories  
of owning a day, or  
a week, disappear.  
Mothers' days, from  
the instant of a birth,  
belong to her child,  
because love goes  
on forever.

# Poetry

by Devon Adams, Peru

#### COLORADO CLEAR

On the long slope from  
from the bottom of the  
Missouri River Valley  
to the tops of the Rockies,  
the air changes costumes,  
like an actor in a melodrama.  
Along the ancient bluffs  
of the muddy rushing river,  
there is almost always a  
veil of moisture or dust that  
lies on the land like a ghost.  
You can see through it, but  
clarity is compromised and  
details can be fuzzy. Warm  
months fill up with humidity,  
until distance is only a guess,  
and heat adds waves in the  
air that turn the view into a  
smudge. Rain briefly clears  
away the curtains, but not  
for long. In winter, the haze  
is a cold chill that freezes  
into flakes of snow and ice.  
So, you take a trip out west.  
The air dries out on the way  
to the mountains, and by the  
time you're driving up the  
steep, twisting roads of  
precarious gravel, hoping  
your car doesn't skid into  
eternity, you realize that  
distance is smacking your  
eyes with amazing detail  
that is enhanced by a lack  
of lowland oxygen and no  
moisture to speak of. It  
is cinematic magic that our  
multiple pixel cameras love.  
The wonder of it all is that  
the high mountains are  
younger than the gentle sweep  
of the sweet, rolling prairies.

#### WHO IS SHE?

She looks lovely  
in the soft silk  
dress with roses  
on the pockets.  
Her shoes are  
supple sandals  
that are tapping  
to the beat of a  
rock band from  
the '60's. Always,  
from childhood,  
she's worn her  
hair long, and now  
it is elegant in the  
French twist of a  
braid piled on top  
of her head.  
As she dances  
past a mirror on  
the wall, the woman  
looking back at  
her seems familiar,  
and sort of old,  
but a name won't  
come out of her  
smoky memory.  
Maybe she'll ask  
her to come for  
coffee sometime.

#### OLD FRIENDS

This morning they  
were waiting for me  
to find them. With  
fresh faces smiling  
at the sun, they had  
come back from the  
long, cold winter.  
For awhile, as they  
had stared at the  
calendar hanging in  
their brown bedroom,  
they worried that the  
snow would never melt,  
and that their roots  
would die in the dark.  
Then the sun finally  
climbed her ladder and  
made the snow blanket  
melt. Now the violets  
are blooming under my  
kitchen window, and  
we are all delighted to  
see each other again.

#### WATER LOGS

Maybe someday they  
will perch on a perfect  
lawn, a rustic accent  
surrounded by flower  
beds. The silver sheen  
of their bare bodies will  
glow in the warmth of  
the sun, and cats and  
people will sit on them.  
Their rough bark coats  
were stripped away by  
the violent currents of  
flood waters, and their  
sharp limbs were broken  
in collisions with debris.  
They too are displaced  
residents who have no  
home left. The soil in  
which they were born  
melted and washed  
away to become the  
mud in the Missouri River.



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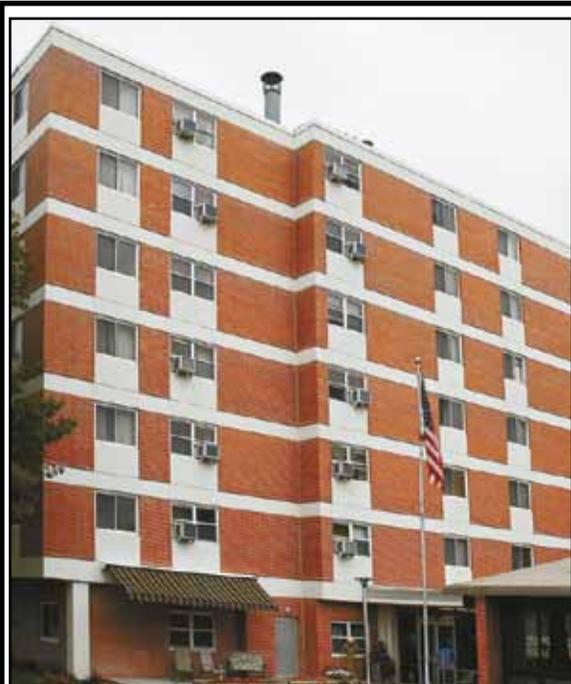
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Bluebird, April 19,2019 Near Dawson, NE

## Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson



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I am actually sitting in my screened porch writing this month's column. It's Easter Sunday afternoon and I'm being serenaded by the rippling song of romantic house finches, accompanied by an undertone of the cooing of mourning doves, the soft plunking of bamboo wind chimes and the constant wooshing of the wind through trees that are finally leafing out.

The wind has been gaining force all day, and I'm keeping my fingers crossed that we are not in for a storm this evening.

I spoke with my daughter in Georgia earlier this afternoon. On Good Friday, they were under a tornado watch and had some wind damage to a portion of their backyard fence. Mother Nature delivers both pleasure and problems. And often, a bit of humor.

Take our daughter and son-in-law's adventure with vermin recently. A tail of some critter or other poking out from under their riding lawnmower in the garage alerted our son-in-law to the presence of something peculiar. Our daughter thought it might be a possum. But, it was determined to remain under the mower, so they devised a plan to scare it out without harming it.

They placed a barricade of boxes along one side of the mower and then started the motor – being careful not to engage the blades. The critter, no doubt trembling with fear, still refused to budge. But a rev of the engine eventually convinced it to seek other shelter.

Our daughter said it shot out from under the mower, exited the garage and ran onto their front porch where it attempted to scale the wall. When that failed, it ran out into the yard, leapt about madly for a bit, and then ran off around the corner of the house.

It was a pregnant armadillo...or a very overweight one. My money is on pregnant based on its apparent "nesting" behavior. I'm guessing it's a first-time mom given its poor choice of a place to give birth and raise babies. Not that I know where armadillos typically have their babies, but somewhere softer and further from people seems likely.

We have our own unwanted rodents in our yard again this year. The cute, but troublesome, 13-lined ground squirrels are back. Last summer we installed sonic noise makers around the front of our house to repel them when we discovered they were tunneling under our driveway. We thought that had done the trick. But just today I found a newly excavated den, complete with a nearby "back door" in the lawn a few feet from our pond. As a member of the Nebraska Master Naturalists organization, I am supposed to respect all wildlife. And I really don't want to harm them, but the opening to that den is big enough to catch a toe in and sprain an ankle.

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## Thinking About Lost Books

by Janet Sobczyk, 2019

Today the spring weather beckoned me to clean, and my husband did some rearranging in the basement. He came across the small, college-dorm-sized 'frig we have that hasn't been opened since we moved last July. He checked inside. What's that green thing?! A moldy packet of beef jerky? No. It was the manual to the 'frig... almost unrecognizable. It must've been slightly damp when plopped in there for safe-keeping. Now it's useless. Not to mention gross.

It reminds me of the time a box of our books got damp. I didn't consider it a big loss because it was my husband's college textbooks from the 1970's. The smell of mildew made me nauseous; the dumpster became their fate. But it struck him as sad. A tangible piece of his youth was lost.

The thought of those damaged books reminds me of a photo I took of discarded reference books. I snapped it in the waiting room of a grimy auto repair shop.



During my wait I wrote a cinquain poem about it:

Old Reference Books ©2017  
Haphazard piles  
decaying  
stacked up  
like plague victims  
in a narrow pauper's grave.

Mildewy books also remind me of the time our neighbor's basement flooded from a burst pipe. They were gone on a winter vacation and we had agreed to look after their house. When we discovered the water shortly after they left, we worked quickly to salvage photos, papers, and her wedding dress. Most of their items were in plastic tubs (thank goodness!), which taught me the value of investing in plastic instead of cardboard boxes.

The loss of books feels especially distressing because I love to read and I love libraries. I recently read "The Library Book" by Susan Orlean, which is about the Los Angeles Central Library fire of 1986. It was a devastating fire that injured 50 firefighters and damaged more than a million books. I had never heard of it before, and the book explains that the nuclear reactor melt-down in Chernobyl during the same time took all the press attention. Reading it made me appreciate the heroic efforts made by the librarians and volunteers to salvage whatever they could.

That book also made me think about Ray Bradbury's book, "Fahrenheit 451" about a society where all books have been outlawed and burned. I barely remember the details since I read it so long ago, but I recall the shock I felt at the thought of burning perfectly good books. And losing their vast stores of knowledge.

"Salvaging whatever they could" reminds me of the current flooding in the Midwest. I'm lucky to be living on high ground, but photos of houses and farms submerged break my heart. Livestock and farmland have been devastated, homes ruined, books and photos and memorabilia gone. Lives were lost trying to rescue others or simply trying to escape. In her book, Orlean quoted an African saying, "When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground."

Somehow that makes the loss of each person who ever walked this earth seem larger to me. It makes me appreciate the words they left behind in the pages of books or in the stories told to their children. And it makes me want to preserve my own library. Not just my collection of beloved books, but the stories in my heart yet to be written down.

<<<<<<< Continued from page 10

So.....what to do. The first word out of Hubby's mouth was poison. But I suggested we move one of the sonic sounders to their front door and see if that works. We'll have to shovel some dirt into the holes and check to see if they tunnel right through it. Most likely if they abandon this den, they'll dig another one nearby. Birthing happens around mid-May, so they need a secure den soon. They could just go dig a den a few feet to the south – in our mini-woodland –and we wouldn't mind. But I guess they like a grassy front yard, or maybe the proximity to the pond with its rock-lined edge is what they like.

I think I'll set up the trail cam to monitor the den and see what happens. Stay tuned for further adventures with critters.



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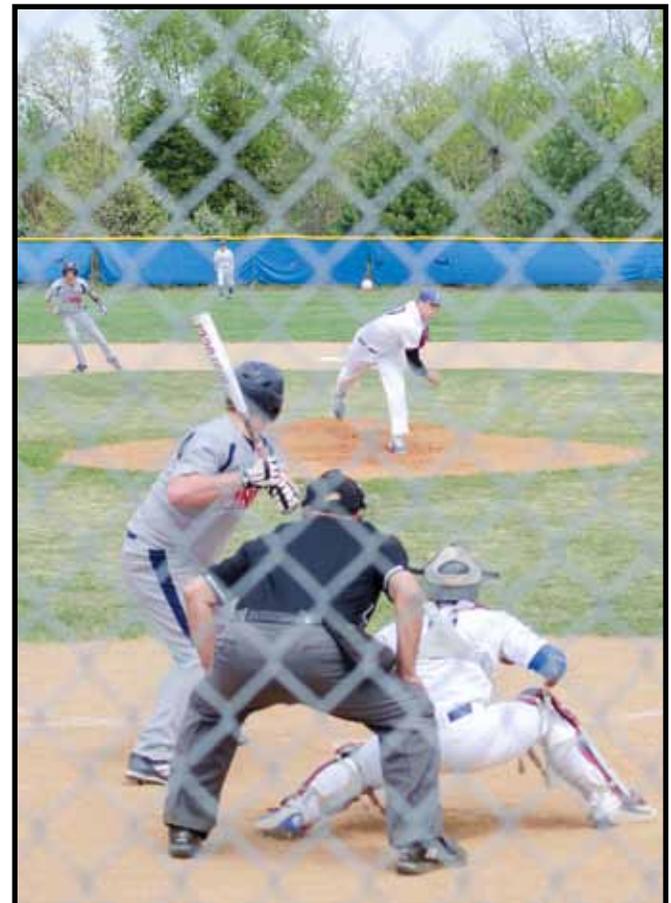
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Nemaha County Courthouse, Auburn, Nebraska



# PSC Baseball Photos





# PSC Softball Photos



# Grand Opening Celebration for Peru State College's Performing Arts Center

Peru State College invites alumni and friends to the ceremonial grand opening of the Performing Arts Center featuring musical performances, the debut of a Peru State oral history documentary, delicious food and tours of the newly renovated space. RSVP requested for the May 3 event.

Dr. Dan Hanson, president of Peru State College said, "The region is invited to enjoy a special evening of music and film that celebrates the opening of the Performing Arts Center and Peru State's history."

RSVP by May 1 to the Peru State College Foundation by phone (402) 872-2304, email [dsolie@peru.edu](mailto:dsolie@peru.edu) or by visiting [www.peru.edu/pac](http://www.peru.edu/pac).

The Performing Arts Center was originally built in 1921 and the theatre retains the sweeping curves of the time period. The new addition includes a new main and second floor lobby, costume and props workshops, dressing rooms, a green room, new bathrooms and an extended stage.

The Sesquicentennial Plaza will also be added to celebrate the College's founding 150 years ago in 1867. The Plaza will host outdoor events and a Cat in the Hat bronze sculpture. The Cat in the Hat sculpture was donated by Dr. Darrel and Peggy Long in honor of the years of Dr. Seuss activities held on campus by Peru State education students.

New facades grace the western wall of the theatre. The facades, Windows to the Past, were sculpted by Jay Tschetter. They reflect photographs gathered for the sesquicentennial book project, Nebraska's First College.

## Peru State College to provide Tuition Assistance to Students and Families impacted by the Floods.

Peru State College is participating in the Nebraska State College System's 2019 Disaster Relief Tuition Waiver Program. To help alleviate some of the financial hardships on returning and incoming students and families that were affected by the natural disasters, the College will provide financial waivers for new and returning students impacted by recent flooding. Waivers are based on need and availability.

Dr. Dan Hanson, president of Peru State, said, "It is important to the mission of the College that we partner with the region. Offering tuition assistance to students impacted by the flooding is one more way to engage with the communities that have supported Peru State College."

Dr. Jesse Dorman, vice president of enrollment management and student affairs, adds, "The College will offer this scholarship to new, returning and current college students. We feel this is the best way for Peru State to support its mission in the region."

Peru State College students and families interested in receiving a 2019 Disaster Relief Tuition Waiver can get more information here:

Returning students: Contact the Financial Aid Office for additional financial waivers at 402-872-2228 or [finaid@peru.edu](mailto:finaid@peru.edu).

New incoming students and/or families: Contact the Office of Admissions at 402-872-2221 or [admissions@peru.edu](mailto:admissions@peru.edu)

As always, there is no application fee to apply to Peru State. If you have unique circumstances, please reach out to Peru State College to see what options are available.

As partners to the rural communities they serve, Peru State and the other state colleges have already initiated temporary housing, meal options, and other needs to support current students, staff members, and community members who are in need.

The challenges caused by the flooding will affect many of our communities and students for quite some time, but Peru State College and the Nebraska State Colleges will continue to support its students and neighbors.

"The State Colleges will continue to be a community partner with and provide volunteer opportunities for students to help rebuild the affected communities and keep Nebraska strong," said Gary Bieganski, Chair of the NSCS Board of Trustees.

## Peru State College Commencement to be held Saturday, May 4

Peru State College will hold its annual commencement ceremony at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 4, in the Al Wheeler Activity Center. More than 350 students will earn diplomas this spring in graduate and undergraduate studies.

Dr. Matt Hill, associate professor of music, has been named the institution's 2019 Teaching Excellence Award winner. He will be honored at the ceremony and give a short address.

Larry Green will be recognized with the Distinguished Service Award. Green passed away earlier this spring after more than 15 years of service to the Peru State College Foundation Board.

Attendees are also invited to a catered reception on the campus quad immediately following graduation. The Hoyt Street Jazz Ensemble will provide entertainment. In the event of rain, the reception will be held in the Student Center.

Shuttle service from campus parking lots will be available. For details about parking and other logistics, please visit <http://www.peru.edu/commencement>.



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