

Your *Country* Neighbor

Free
October 2019



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



On a stormy afternoon, Peru State College Homecoming Game was a loss to Baker University, 14 - 41.

Autumn Butterfly on a Summer Flower

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It was a fine morning for Peru State's Homecoming Parade.



The Game was a loss, but the Parade was a win!

Your Country Neighbor

Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

P.O. Box 126
Peru, Nebraska 68421
countryneighbor@windstream.net

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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

October Contributors

Devon Adams
Stephen Hassler
Merri Johnson
Dorothy Rieke
Janet Sobczyk

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Halloween Is A Holiday Of Mystery And Intrigue

Dorothy Rieke, Julian

Halloween is a festival that takes place on October 31. This long-time celebration began in Europe years ago where certain practices during fall months became traditions. These traditions were brought to to America by immigrants.

European celebrations were quite different because they were usually celebrating different events. In America, Halloween practices are somewhat the same. Children wear costumes and masks, trick-or-treat neighbors, and display jack-o'-lanterns. Most decorations are similar as they are what stores sell.

A rapidly growing trend is decorating homes and premises with pumpkins, scary appearing witches and ghosts, and displaying tiny jack-o'-lantern or ghost - shaped lights.

For children, Halloween is often a scary time with their imaginations “working overtime.” They imagine witches accompanied by black cats riding their broomsticks through dark cloudy skies, nearly transparent ghosts hovering over the landscape, and strange glowing lights, groans, and unearthly whispers coming from remote haunted houses.

Halloween originated from a combination of legends from European countries. An Irish legend is about Jack who could not enter heaven because he was a miser. Nor could he enter hell because he made jokes about the devil. As a result, Jack continues to walk the world with his lantern. This undoubtedly was how Jack-o'-lanterns were named.

American children wearing masks and costumes”trick or treat” neighbors. Because neighbors want to avoid tricks, they give these children pennies, candy, or fruit.

Early jack-o'-lanterns in Europe were hollowed out beets, potatoes, and turnips. Most of these were lighted with a candle. When this custom reached America, pumpkins seemed ideal for jack-o'-lanterns.

Early fortunetelling took place in Europe as part of celebrations. For example, a coin, a ring, and a thimble were baked in a cake. The person who retrieved the coin was soon to be wealthy, the one who found the ring was soon to be married, but the one who discovered the thimble was never to marry.

New ways to celebrate Halloween have developed recently in the United States. Because neighbors are often unknown in large cities, trick-or-treating has become less popular. Instead, family parties or community celebrations with costume parades, dances, skits and bonfires have become the trend.

Halloween has been celebrated for many years. It is not a holiday based on historical figures or events. However, its activities, that often intrigue and mystify, represent a fun time for youngsters. It also represents a learning experience as children learn to follow rules, observe safety regulations, exhibit politeness, share, and make decisions.

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PSC Homecoming King, Luiz Constantino



PSC Homecoming Queen, Julia Zurek



The parade began at the college and ended downtown.





The Mainstreet Bank provided refreshments and refreshing smiles.



Johnson County Central Thunderbirds

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OLD TIME AUTUMN Weekend
 See page 9 for listing of events.

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One of the "Golden Rod" Varieties; Highway 67



This is one of a very few groupings of this sunflower variety still blooming along H-67 as of the last week in September. In October, watch for Milkweed pod-bursts.

This Halloween Watch Out For Trick-or-Treaters



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THE HAUNTING

Down behind the barn, beside the chicken house, is a secluded corner. There are beings there, who are waiting to be born as faces for the spooky night they've heard about from the owls and the bats who live in the barn. It all sounds like a great big lie, but then owls are wise and they most likely wouldn't fib. So the pumpkin people get fatter and fatter as they wait for their turn to be scary. Of course, the owl knows that only a pumpkin can be spooked by another pumpkin. But it will be fun to watch the haunting of the night. On a perfect golden afternoon in the pumpkin patch, when napping was the only item on the agenda, a horrendous scream pierced the silence, as Farmer Frank stabbed the side of the biggest coward of them all, Patrick Pumpkin, with a butcher knife. It was a silent scream though, because plants speak in words only they can hear. Without a single drop of blood, the farmer carved a frightening face into the huge orange ball. He dug out the meat of the pumpkin and saved it for his wife to make a pie. Then he went on to the next victim on the vine. By evening there were ten totally hollowed out bodies, with mean and nasty faces. Mrs. Farmer Frank helped to set them out along the walk to the front door of the farm house. As total dark fell like a black curtain, she set a big candle inside each face, and when she lit them, they looked at each other and screamed and screamed, but the night was quiet as a tomb, with only the owl, Charlie, speaking in hoots and cackles, as only owls can.

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COUNTRY WILD

She's a country girl, with long blond hair, twisted into braids, strolling barefoot through the grass beside the pond. She has bug bites on her arms and scratches on her legs, and purple lips from eating berries hiding in the weeds beside the path. Her pony follows close behind, hoping that she'll share some more with him, because he hates to fight those prickly stems and bees who like to sting. When they come back in the yard, Mom is there to pat the pony, as she smiles at all the freckles sprinkled on the nose of her wild country child.

MARES' TAILS

High above the rolling plains are wispy fragments floating freely in the silky satin of the sky. A legend says that they are the last remaining traces of a herd of spirit horses who were seen dancing with the moon, and racing with the sun. But one day they caught the sun and melted in the heat, except for their fancy feathered tails, which flew away to the clouds. Now, there they are, waving in currents of air, far above the other clouds, their long, flowing hair rippling like flags following a war. They seem to say, "Don't forget that we were beautiful and wild and free before we ran so fast that we disappeared."

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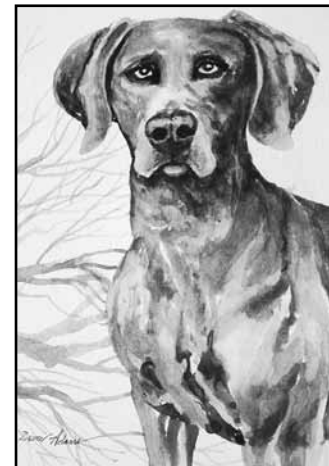
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BIG EYES

He was a very small boy, and it was a very big, dark staircase inside an old, old house. The front porch had dry, rattling vines creeping through the gingerbread trim that had long ago lost all its paint. The floorboards creaked and squeaked under the feet of the little family with the little boy. Mom and Dad knocked on the door and an old witch opened it. She was bent over, and wore a long black coat and a black hat. But she was smiling and held out a basket filled with candy for the boy. But instead of grabbing greedily, he let out a giant screech and turned to run away. As his father caught him, the witch took off her hat and turned on the hall light. Then she took apart the demons sitting on the steps. As the boy stared, he saw basketballs and volleyballs emerge from underneath the frightful masks and cloaks that they had worn. His tears turned to giggles as he grabbed a big handful of Snickers, and waved goodbye to the witch.

ALL THE GOLD

Your eyes don't know the difference between golden objects. It is the brain that sees value in a heavy coin, but it is your mind that tells you that the pile of leaves, raked from beneath a magic maple tree, make a day in autumn a treasured memory to be saved and stored like money in a bank. It is the momentary insights and pleasures that give life its highlights and rewards. To rush through all your days, without pausing now and then, is to throw away the times that will never come again. You can't paste a day back on the calendar, or jump into a photograph that was taken long ago. But you can stop to notice and to savor seconds that are gone as fast as they came.

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- (A) '16 JD 825i Gator, 816 hrs, pwr steering, dlx cab w/ glass doors.....\$15,200
- (A) '13 JD 825i Gator, 465 hrs, pwr steering, roof, turn signal kit.....\$12,900
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Old Time Autumn, Brownville

October 12th & 13th

- Black Powder Display & Demonstrations
- Buggy & Trolley Rides

Saturday, October 12th, 2019

- 9:00 • Schoolhouse Art Gallery - buzz about bees
- 10:00 • Schoolhouse Art Gallery - making husk dolls
- 11:00-12:30 • Chicken Biscuit Lunch, Town Hall
- 1:00 • 1st Nebraska Volunteers Brass Band (circa 1861-62)
- 2:00-4:00 • Museums Open

Sunday, October 13th, 2019

- 1:00-4:00 • Museums Open
- Special Village Theatre Performances, 11th, 12th, & 13th

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Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

My thoughts are a bit scattered at the moment, but my column is due, so I'll have to cobble something together here and hope you find some tidbit in it worth your while to read.

Hubby and I are feeling our age a little more these days. My hips get stiff if I sit for more than an hour, my lower back is stiff nearly every morning, and I've been experiencing an intermittent crick in my neck for a couple of months. For the most part, those are only annoyances that improve with movement. Hubby is in charge of racking up the symptoms in the mental category: lack of concentration, short attention span and memory loss. It should be noted that all three of those things can sometimes be attributed to "selective hearing" if you get my drift. But not all the time.

Recently, we needed to make a list of both of our siblings' full legal names. We each have five siblings. Interestingly, we each have one brother and two older sisters and two younger sisters.

Anyway, I could list my siblings' full names with no trouble. Hubby remembered his brother's middle name because it is his father's first name. And he recalled his two younger sisters' middle names because he used to call them by both names whenever they annoyed him, which apparently was pretty often. But those two older sisters' middle names didn't come to mind automatically. He was pretty sure of his oldest sister's middle name – Clara – because it was his maternal grandmother's name. But the remaining sister's middle name remained elusive. Was it Dora – his mother's middle name? That sounded right, but we had to be sure, so Hubby called his brother.

Hubby explained his dilemma. How bad is it that you don't remember two of your siblings' full names? I could hear Bert's chuckle all the way from Texas, even though it wasn't actually audible. He confirmed that Brad was right about Clara. And he thought Dora sounded right, too. But Hubby wasn't entirely convinced of it.

And again, we had to be sure. Do we have a document somewhere that would have my sister's middle name on it? Hubby wanted to know. He definitely did not want to have to admit to her that he didn't remember it. I responded that it would be a lot faster just to call and ask her than to try to find it on some document in our possession. I couldn't even imagine what document we would have with her full name on it. None of us are "full name" people when it comes to signing Christmas cards, which was the closest thing to a "document" that I could think of.

So, he had to man up and call her. Guess what? Her middle name is Susan – an aunt's name on their mother's side. Hubby's middle name is that of an uncle on his father's side. I don't know what happened with his two younger sisters. To my knowledge their middle names are not family names. It's not like there weren't more aunts and uncles or grandparents to pick from. Maybe by then Hubby's parents decided they had done their duty to family and just chose names that sounded nice together. That's pretty much how Hubby and I named our kids.

I've occasionally wondered if there really is anything to the theory that naming a child for a beloved family member or for someone who is publicly revered can inspire that child to live a worthy life. On the other hand, what if Charles Manson was named for his grandfather? I guess his grandfather has been rolling over in his grave for a long time.

Small Town Mansions

Janet Sobczyk, Omaha

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*A weekend anniversary trip inspired this poem.
The time away was lovely, and museums entertained,
but the historic mansions captured my imagination.*

I'm not a good traveler
bulging bags are a drag
long drives don't appeal
crammed itineraries exhaust.

I prefer quick, nearby trips
a small town stay
two hours away...
perfect!

Quaint museums, small cafes,
renovated B&Bs with shady porches,
photo opps, historic stops
and quiet time to read are what I need.

A stroll down this town's Mansion Mile
reveals treasures bold
where stories and glories unfold
and time travel seems possible.

Imagine living here in the 1800s
as rich folk with servants and gardeners
long dresses, hats, starched shirts, spats
horses and carriages on cobblestone streets.

Imagine living here now
as middle class folk with money woes
trying to maintain a money pit
in a town with a hard-hit economy.

The glorious chateau
sits next to a burned-out bungalow
that may get revived
or remain a dive.

Time ravages all
some mansions crumble and fall
others get rebuilt next to weeds and silt
a mismatched neighborhood.



“A stroll down this town's Mansion Mile reveals treasures bold...”



“...middle class folk with money woes...”



“...some mansions crumble and fall...”

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Window On Fifth Street

Stephen Hassler, Peru

There have been times when I read one or two books each week, and there have been times when I journaled almost daily. Other times, like lately, my life has been full and I do neither of the above very often. “There is a time to every purpose under heaven.” It follows that there is a time for reading and a time for putting down books. A time for writing and a time for laying down the pen.

“To every season there is a reason.” But I believe Autumn’s reason might be overshadowed by “back to school” and football. I think there is something more to Autumn. Today, through my window on Fifth Street, I’m viewing inward. I’m looking at my ‘present’, rather than reflecting on my past and wondering if there is something more I should be doing, a task in the shadows, waiting to pounce from the bushes as I journey by on life’s path.

Lately my life has been good; photographing wildlife, football, and volleyball, running 5K races, having coffee and conversation with friends, streaming with Hulu and Netflix, so I’m wondering; am I playing hooky with life? Or is this what life is supposed to be? I do consider that I’ve extended a helping hand now and then, and I recall people telling me I’ve made a difference in their lives, so perhaps I am to just continue on, meet what comes, and offer assistance when I can.

“...there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his works.” Isn’t Autumn a time of rejoicing in the harvest? A time to reap, having sown and labored? So in the Autumn of one’s life, it’s a good time to rejoice in the fruits of a life led with good intentions. House and home, gardens and grandchildren, friends and family.

I am particularly reflective after my high school reunions. My last was this September. I like the opportunity to re-connect and share remembrances with old friends and other classmates, to be reminded of my roots. I enjoy meeting old friends, but I am pleasantly surprised that I am making new friends with classmates whom I never knew very well while I was in high school. “There is a time for every purpose under heaven.”

I suppose football has its place as well, and I won’t argue with school not having its “time,” nor would I argue against there being “a time for every purpose under heaven.” There is a time for leafing out and a time for leaves to fall. And who doesn’t like Autumn leaves? It’s that time. So live, love life, and have a wonderful Autumn experience!

<<< *Merri, continued from page 10.*

I’m not named for anyone. My middle name is the same as one of my older cousins. But it’s spelled differently, so I’m not sure that counts. I can ask my 93-year-old mom about that. She herself was named for an aunt who died young while serving as a missionary in China. Maybe mom got some “extra” years to make up for her aunt’s short life. With the same name, maybe someone made an error in the book of life in mom’s favor. OK, probably not.

This pondering of names could go off in lots of directions.....the meaning of names, why names become popular, made-up names.....you name it. But I think I’ve written enough about names to use up my space in the paper this month, so I’ll sign off.

Happy October to you all. By the way, do you know how October got its name? You’ll have to Google that on your own.

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1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: 2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; 3 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5 a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6 a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; 7 a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

I found this biblical quote with Google,
(from the book of Ecclesiastes 3).
Your bible version may vary somewhat from the above.
There are more verses in the chapter.



Peru State College Homecoming Football -- September 28, 2019



Bobcat Cheering Squad in Homecoming Parade



Balloon release was to honor Riley Holstine who died of leukemia at 20 yr



Lightening delayed the second half of play almost two hours; Peru's 14 - 41 loss ended under the lights.



A blocked fieldgoal resulted in the first Bobcat touchdown.



Second touchdown, but not enough to beat Baker University.



Peru State College Volleyball Tournament September 6 & 7



Besides Peru State, the other five teams participating in the tournament were;

Mount Marty (S.D.),
Mayville State (N.D.),
Sterling (Kan.),
Briar Cliff (Iowa), and
Bethel (Kan.).

PERU STATE COLLEGE NEWS

Swenson Winners Recognized at Recent Bobcat Football Game Halftime

While the result of the home opener for the Bobcat football team did not come out as hoped, it was still a day of honors and recognition at Peru State. As has been the tradition for many years, the annual Swenson Award presentation took place at halftime of the football game with Missouri Valley.

About the Swenson Award

Each year since 1925, outstanding student-athletes have been presented with the Bert Swenson award in recognition of their participation in athletics, outstanding character, personality, service, and loyalty to Peru State. The award was created in memory of Bert and Stella Swenson's 13-month old son, Bert, Jr., who passed away. Bert Swenson, Sr., was a football great who graduated from Peru State College in 1909. The Shickley, Nebraska, native served as the football team captain and class president during his senior year at PSC. In 2009, Mr. Swenson was honored posthumously with his induction into the PSC athletic hall of fame.

The individuals selected as the 2018-19 recipients were Nadja Janjevic (Podgorica, Montenegro), Emily Whipple (Lincoln), and Chaz Dunn (Falls City). As there was a tie in the voting for the female honoree, both were honored.

Nadja Janjevic was a four-year member of the Bobcat volleyball team. She was twice named as a Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete and a Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) Scholar-Athlete. Janjevic was a two-time President's List honoree and six times was recognized on the College's Dean's List. On the court, Janjevic was a four-year starter and letter winner. She served as a captain her senior season. Janjevic earned Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) honors each of her four seasons. After her freshman year, she earned honorable mention recognition. As a sophomore, she was named to the first team. As a junior and senior, Janjevic was named to the second team. She was also recognized four years by the Omaha World-Herald on the All-Nebraska NAIA Teams as honorable mention. On campus, she was a member of the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) and a two-year member of Phi Beta Lambda (PBL). In PBL, Janjevic placed numerous times at the state level and following her junior year, placed in the top ten at the national level. Following her junior year, she was named as a National Strength and Conditioning Association All-American. Janjevic is currently in Montenegro preparing to play for an international volleyball team while seeking employment related to her business major.

Emily Whipple was a four-year member of the Bobcat golf team. She served one year as the team captain.

At the end of her career, Whipple was twice named to the 2018-19 Google Cloud Academic All-America® NAIA Women's At-Large Second Team. Whipple was also a two-year Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete and a two-time Heart Scholar-Athlete. She was a Board of Trustees recipient. Whipple was a two-year Admissions Ambassador, was a Resident Assistant, and was elected by her peers to be the 2018 Homecoming Queen. Whipple was also a member of the Alpha Chi academic honorary and was a Kappa Delta Pi member. Just a few weeks ago, Whipple began her teaching career with the Lincoln Public Schools as an eighth grade mathematics teacher.

Chaz Dunn was a five-year member of the Bobcat baseball team having red-shirted his freshman season.

He was a three-year starter with the first two years in the infield and in the outfield as a senior. Dunn completed his senior season with a perfect fielding percentage. After his senior year, Dunn was named to the Google Cloud Academic All-District First Team. Following his junior season, he was named as the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) A.O. Duer Award winner – one of the top honors for student-athletes in the conference. Dunn was a three-time Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete and a three-time Heart Scholar-Athlete. He was on the President's List one time and was named to the Dean's List eight times. One of the most notable aspects about Dunn was his service to his fellow student-athletes on the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC). He was a five-year member and served as the president for three consecutive years – the only multiple-year lead in SAAC's history. Dunn was a member of Phi Beta Lambda for two years and earned state awards qualifying him for national competition. In addition, he was a marketing department intern during his senior year. Finally, Dunn was the voice of the Bobcat Buzz for four years while providing interviews of College personnel and Bobcat seniors which aired weekly on the Nebraska City radio station. Presently, Dunn is residing in Hastings with his new wife Elizabeth and is seeking employment in the area.

PSC Freshman Class Largest In 30 Years!



The entering class of freshmen at Peru State College is the largest in at least thirty years. The class size reached 290 on the first day of classes, Monday, August 19.

“Over the past year, the College has purposefully planned for a larger freshmen class,” said Dr. Jesse Dorman, vice president of enrollment management and student affairs. This growth is important in our mission to engage students with educational opportunities.”

With the increase in freshmen, Peru State is also seeing more students in its residence halls. This fall Residence Hall occupancy is 16% higher than fall 2018 occupancy.

Enrollment was driven in part by the addition of junior varsity sports this fall. Peru State added junior varsity baseball, softball, men's basketball and women's basketball. The College also made cheer a competitive team sport.

Wayne Albury, athletic director, writes, “The Athletic Department is proud and excited to see enrollment increases through new opportunities for student-athletes. We'll continue to partner closely with Admissions to highlight Peru State's great programs, faculty and facilities.”

The larger freshmen class have also responded to improved dining facilities, a new scholarship structure and other campus upgrades planned to benefit the student experience.

Students interested in attending Peru State – now or in the future – are invited to visit www.peru.edu/admissions or to call the Office of Admission at (402) 872-2221

The passing of former Peru State President Jerry Gallentine

The Peru State College community was saddened to learn of the passing of past president Jerry Gallentine. Gallentine passed in Norton, Kansas at the age of 78. Gallentine served as president of Peru State College from 1982 to 1990.

According to the College's sesquicentennial history book, Nebraska's First College: Shaping the Future Since 1867, “Enrollment doubled on [Gallentine's] watch, and he was responsible for helping revive the Peru master of education program, which had been dead for more than 20 years. Under his direction, Peru State took a greater leadership role in promotion growth in rural areas. He worked to form a cooperative program between the College and Nebraska Public Power District, resulting in a bachelor of science degree with a major in nuclear technology.”



2019 BOBCAT FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

SEPT 28
BAKER UNIV.
PERU, NE - OAKBOWL
HOMECOMING

OCT 5
CENTRAL
METHODIST UNIV.
@Fayette, MO

OCT 19
CLARKE UNIV.
@Dubuque, IA

OCT 26
CULVER-STOCKTON
COLLEGE
PERU, NE - OAKBOWL

NOV 2
WILLIAM PENN
UNIV.
@Oskaloosa, IA

NOV 9
GRAND VIEW UNIV.
@Des Moines, IA

NOV 16
GRACELAND UNIV.
PERU, NE - OAKBOWL
SENIOR DAY



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