

Your *Country* Neighbor

Free
June 2018

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

A Magazine for Small Towns and Rural America



Nemaha County “Apple Barn” on Heritage Highway 136



PSC Graduation Day, May 5, 2018

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Volume Nineteen, Number Six

Your Country Neighbor

Voices and Views From the Valleys of the Nemaha

Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler



Bald Eagle returning to its nest near Dawson, Nebraska, on May 24, 2018

June 2018

Find *Your Country Neighbor* at these high traffic businesses;

Auburn; *Cafe Metro, Dutch Pantry, Orscheln Farm & Home, Sun Mart, Cody's USave Pharmacy*

Brownville; *Whiskey Run Creek Winery, Lyceum Cafe*

Falls City; *Art Gallery, Sun Mart, Library, Norma's Antiques*

Hiawatha; *The Daily Perk*

Nebraska City; *Fareway, Walgreens, Johnny's Corner Cafe*

Peru; *Deckers, Mainstreet Bank, PSC*

Rock Port; *Food Country, Do It Best Hardware*

Sabetha; *Hearthside Country Store, Health Mart*

Syracuse; *Do It Best Hardware*

Tecumseh; *Central Market, Harvest Bowl*

They Feel Like Summer

by Janet Sobczyk, 2017

Buff leather
two-inch heels
finger loops
pointy toes
bring to mind
days of youth.

Sweet sixteen
cut-off jeans
halter tops
no sunscreen
wind in hair
horse-back rides.

Middle age
walking tall
with tan dog
slower now
wearing new
cowboy boots.

Guitar Poems

Steve Adams



I remember
when she first came to town
Said her name was
Judy Rae Brown
She was crazy
I was scared
But I followed that girl
Everywhere
I didn't want to lose
my special little friend
But I should have seen then
how it all would end
She came to my house
It was late one night
She'd been out drinking
Been in a fight
I asked her,
what you want
She said it was me
I knew right then
It was destiny
She ate all the food
And drank all the beer
And the Crazy thing is
She's still here
Don't want her to leave
No, she's staying right here
I don't care about no food
And I can get more beer

June Writers

Devon Adams
Steve Adams
Stephen Hassler
Merri Johnson
Janet Sobczyk
Marilyn Woerth
Merlin Wright

Thank You!

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New Drug for Migraine Sufferers

The FDA has approved the first in a new class of migraine drugs that aim to fight painful migraine headaches before they start.

Erenumab (Aimovig) is the first of four new migraine drugs in the pipeline that target calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP), a molecule that's produced in nerve cells of the brain and spinal cord.

"Aimovig provides patients with a novel option for reducing the number of days with migraine," said Eric Bastings, MD, deputy director of the Division of Neurology Products in the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. "We need new treatments for this painful and often debilitating condition."

Aimovig is a monoclonal antibody given as a shot for people who have four or more migraine days each month. The FDA evaluated results of three patient studies in making its approval. In those studies, patients on average had one to 2 ½ fewer monthly migraine days either over six months or three months.

In a news release, the drug's manufacturer, Amgen, said the list price will be \$575 a month or \$6,900 annually. Costs to patients may vary depending on insurance.

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Window On Fifth Street

Stephen Hassler

Gazing out my window on 5th street, I was recently contemplating differences between now and a yesterday many years ago. I live in a town with a 4-year college. About 20 years ago I witnessed a scare. There was a movement to relocate the college. I'm grateful that minds were changed.

These days, through my window on 5th Street I see an entrance to a modern, artificial-turf football field, the *Oak Bowl* transformed. Nearby, a dormitory beautified with a recent 'face lift', and during the school year, students walking to and from classes, to and from ball practice, along the streets around me.

It's often that I forget that many of today's college students were just being born 20 years ago. Twenty years' time brings changes. Across the street there was a "controlled burn" of an old house. Today it's a parking lot that holds tailgate parties on game days and athlete parking on practice days. I enjoy watching friends and relatives of the athletes having a good time on game day with music and conversation to accompany

Continued on page 6 >>>>>



Like a miniature Western Meadowlark. It's called a "Dickcissel".

HISTORIC BROWNVILLE, NEBRASKA'S FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATION

Wednesday July 4th, 2018

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Where Life Is Good

Marilyn Woerth

When is the last time you spent a day or half a day in Brownville, Nebraska? The last Friday in their school year, approximately sixty fourth graders did just that. Now when your husband is on the Brownville Historical Society Board you often get pulled into service, no matter what is on your agenda, even if it's writing this article. Thus my time set aside for this article shifted to a busy day in Brownville.

Now if you have never been to Brownville you may not know that besides being the earliest incorporated village (1854) in Nebraska, it is also a Preserve America Community, and rightly so. A whole lot of firsts happened in Brownville, including the first land office where Beatrice's famous first land grant was filed. Bet you didn't know that.

At the turn of the 20th century the town became more of a village and started falling into disrepair. Various catastrophes helped this process along; a three block fire, and devastating freeze wiped out the fruit orchards. But the main reason for its fall from favor was the railroad speculation. To make a long story short, Omaha was more successful than Brownville, the village bought too many railroad certificates and had to raise taxes to cover the expenditure, and people moved away. Poof, smaller town, smaller revenue, hard times prevailed.

To make another long story short in the mid 1950's, artists found Brownville and a famous Nebraska artist from Shelby, NE came to paint "the ruins of Brownville". Terence Duren fell in love with Brownville, and helped raise Brownville up from its decline by encouraging its citizens to create the Brownville Historical Society. Fast forward to present day, the Brownville Historical Society owns eight museums and one park. Whew! BHS along with the Fine Arts Association, Merchants of Brownville, the Village itself, and a lot of hard work by a whole group of dedicated individuals throughout the decades helped preserve the early history of Nebraska for fourth graders to learn and enjoy.

Yes, I may be a bit biased, but I think this is one heck of a village, with a whole lot of historical presence. So next time you are put in charge of a group wanting something to do, just think of Brownville. Let us know early so we can have our doors open for most of Brownville runs on volunteers.

And while you're at it don't forget the Freedom Day Celebration on July 4th. The whole day is packed full of family enjoyment. Early morning starts with the Freedom Day Run, and ends with fireworks along the ole Missouri. Hope to see you all there; hubby and I are in charge of the parade. See what he gets me into? "You volunteered us to do what?" Where life can be good, but very busy, yet very satisfying, and I guess I will keep him despite his not being able to say no.



Windmill along H-67 southeast of Peru

Caffeine Musings

Merlin Wright

Facebook people often request responses to various questions. For instance, can you list something from your past that young people have little knowledge about? My answer could have been CORNCOBS. My mother assigned me the job of keeping a bucket of cobs by the wood fired cooking range. When the corn was shelled off the cobs each fall we would fill a shed near the house. That shed was known as THE COB SHED. Each year when the cob shed became empty we still needed kindling for the stove. I had to go into the pig pen and pick up cobs that the pigs had chewed on. Those cobs were hard and most were not clean.

The cobs from the sheller were soft and could also be used for other purposes instead of using Sears catalog pages. Some people joke about growing white corn to get some white cobs to use after the normal red cobs. At flea markets one can find a 3 pack of one white and two red cobs for before and after.

My mother often reminded me that I had forgotten to fill the cob bucket and I knew that was important for cooking supper. Mom did not threaten me with no supper but I knew the importance of the full basket of cobs. My present most important lady has assigned me with the task of supplying kindling for our heating stove. She does threaten me with no supper but I don't believe her.

Ever wonder what people visit about during morning coffee meetings? Some groups may be serious and discuss religion or politics but some tell funny stories.

Do you have something from your past that is no big deal but you do not plan to ever tell? After several cups of coffee with friends this writer told of an incident at the Auburn stoplight where the two highways meet. Pulled up to a red light and stopped, looked left and saw a green light so did a left turn. This comment at coffee was followed with a [I did that too] from another guy. Funny how our brains work and sometimes don't.

Then someone at coffee told of a friend who arrived at church with shoes on his feet but the shoes did not match. It was not just that the colors were different, one was a slip-on and the other had a shoestring. There could have been a [me too] statement if a certain guy had been at coffee but his name was not mentioned. Another brilliant friend arrived at work with a white sneaker on one foot and a black one on the other. Since he had an important meeting later in the day some of his friends used a marker to blacken the white shoe. All these men had another pair at home just like the ones they were wearing. At a high school long ago there was a Home Economics teacher who only had two hose and only one was seamless. Bets were made daily on which leg would have the seamless hose. Luckily for her nobody at coffee could recall her name or what school was the location of this delightful story. It was also said that teacher had her class just simulate washing the dishes. Dear reader, perhaps this explains some of the odd behavior in your kitchen.

Then there was the story of a man named Aud Whatshisname. He was a single man and requested his name not be put on his tombstone. Years later when people looked at the stone with no name, they would say, "well that's odd".



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

their tailgate barbecue, hearing the occasional burst of cheering from the stadium, and the ebb and flow of traffic after a game. I do sympathize with those who might be negatively affected by ‘noise’; crowds do make noise, especially enthusiastic crowds. But I’m the oldest person in this neighborhood, and most of my neighbors are students. I’m cool with having a 4-year college next door. This is good, and not just for my neighborhood.

I know other Peru residents in addition to myself who enjoy attending sports events, homecoming parades, campus festivals, holiday concerts. A newly remodeled building will soon have theater productions and choral events. And still, with all the aforementioned hustle, Peru remains a quiet little town in the hills between the river and the plain.

There will be more changes coming to the campus and the town. There are probably things in the works right now. What changes will we see over the next 20 years? I can’t imagine, but I plan on watching it evolve one day at a time, here in my front row seat through my window on 5th Street.

Wind on the Wire

By Janet Sobczyk, ©2018

Three brown birds
perch on an electric wire

two snuggle close
one stays inches away

all cling fast, feet clasp
holding on

facing the wind
wings firmly folded

gray tail feathers dip
enduring the gusts

weathering the storm
riding like bronco busters.

I wonder, Why stay?
Why don’t they find shelter?

Maybe they enjoy the thrill-ride
of wind on the wire.



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Poetry

by Devon Adams

PASTURES OF HEAVEN

Towns and cities can be fine places to live, especially the neighborhoods with wide streets and sidewalks and huge trees sheltering the old houses set next to each other, like family members seated at a big dinner table. Big back yards are closed in with tall wood panel fences that almost make private spaces. But the distance is the difference. From my porch to your porch is in so many feet. In the country our porches are acres apart, and there are fields of grass for grazing by cows and horses and sheep and goats. And in those pastures are sacred spaces separate from the noisy lives that people tend to live. They think so hard and worry so much, and it all makes them run faster to try to leave behind the scary things. But peace is waiting out there in the soft grass and clear light and fresh air. It can be found next to the quiet cattle who aren't thinking about tomorrow, or with the horses who come over to nuzzle your hair and greet you with a gentle whinny. The farm dog and cats will hang out with you until you leave. They are content to just be there.

VELVET ON VELVET

How can they exist in the maelstrom of a storm, these minor miracles of design with no more than velvet and paper to sustain their beauty? With a single breath of wind, a butterfly is twisted in his flight between the blooms of his existence. He perseveres in spite of opposition though, and succeeds in finding sweet pollen inside the flower dancing in the summer breeze. On a lovely, easy day, their survival is at stake, but in the black heart of a hard rain with hail and wind the miracle is that the structures remain intact, flower petals and wings remaining safe and beautiful and magic.

IRIS CATHEDRALS

Shrink your brain and the rest of yourself until you are small enough to walk across the velvet petal of an iris flower and step into the delicate inside chamber that is decorated with pollen dusted on soft brushes. Diffused light glows with the transparent colors from different varieties that range from deep purple-black, to white, to salmon, pink, yellow, beige, and orchid, to two-tones, or those with striped, rippled, fluted parts, or giant hybrids, and smaller old-fashioned styles, all the way to wild iris growing in forgotten and neglected places on the edges of our usual spaces. All of them must be related to the haunted wings of angels.



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STANDING TALL

Remember when you were one of the little people who looked up to everyone around them, especially your father? You didn't know or understand that one day you would grow up to be a big person too. The only thing you noticed was that you didn't get to decide anything, and that there were rules that you didn't make, but you had to follow them. Your parents told you that they insisted you do what they said for a reason, and that was because they wanted to keep you safe. Maybe sometimes your father would be gruff and your mother softer when they gave you a penalty, but you had to suffer consequences in either case. And maybe it was after you'd grown up when you realized that your father's anger was a way to sear his love in your heart forever, so he would never lose you and you would always remember why there were rules to be followed.

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Not often seen, but these birds are common this time of year in Southeast Nebraska;
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Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson

Dear Readers: I hope you don't mind re-reading this column from ten years ago. My life is repeating itself in several respects. I'm sure you can relate.

June 2008

These days my life is moving in about eighteen directions at once. The laid-back, unstructured days of this formerly unemployed housewife are over for the foreseeable future.

The first weekend of April, my husband and I finally moved into our new home. Actually, he did most of the moving while I was partying out of town at my youngest sister's 50th birthday celebration. (My sisters and I recently celebrated that sister's 60th birthday.) The timing was definitely not great, but it's not like Rhonda "planned" to be born on April 8 so she could mess up our moving plans fifty years later. I was not about to miss that party. Luckily, I have an understanding husband. Besides, he owed me one. Twelve years ago I gave up attending my 25th high school class reunion so he could keep a promise to visit his mother. That's right: I sacrificed for my mother-in-law. Yep, automatic sainthood for me.

But, back to my hectic present.

On April 9, I rather unceremoniously ended my brief career as a commercial sewing machine operator in Nebraska City. I had planned to stay on through the month, but an impending shortage of supplies necessitated cutting hours for some of the employees. My hand shot up. Pick me! Pick me! The price of gas was really cutting into my paycheck, I despaired of ever reaching the desired daily production quota, and the job was never intended to be more than a temporary opportunity to earn some fun money for new home furnishings. So, bye-bye sewing machine.

Hello, new job. On April 15, I began a part-time, home office job. For the first time in my life, I work in the town where I live. No commuting! Heck, I don't even have to leave my house for most of my duties. I'm now one of those women you hear about in the work-from-home job ads who work in their pajamas. This is great. The flexibility is ideal and the job is rewarding. Plus, my husband is grateful for the contribution my salary makes toward the mortgage that came with our new house. He may be able to retire at 62 after all. (Hubby and I are both retired now.)

Now that we're moved in, I'm starting to work on landscaping. There's not much I enjoy more than puttering around outside. Tomorrow it's off to Lincoln to pick up bricks for a decorative pillar at the front entry and shrubs to plant this weekend. (Now it's time to renovate the landscape we planted back then.) Then we'll be scrambling to quick get the basement guest bathroom ready for my husband's two older sisters, who are due for an overnight visit June 5.

Next week it will be time to help with Vacation Bible School decorating, followed by monthly job reports the week after.

To top it all off, we're expecting our first grandchild June 27! My daughter-in-law, bless her heart, has asked me to come for a few days after the delivery. I just may have enough energy left by then to rock my new granddaughter. (We've had grandson also since then, and we're taking that new granddaughter on an RV road trip next month to celebrate her 10th birthday.)

My life is (still) busy and full and wonderful. It doesn't get much better than that.

Wishing you a summer that's busy in the best possible way.



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Weekends in May

Stephen Hassler

First Weekend

It's about 4:30 P.M., mostly sunny and 78 degrees with baby blanket blue skies and puffy white clouds. Clouds that I'm certain God intended to float over a dandelion meadow in a forest clearing or on a hillside pasture. But this sky is floating above my little town, above my porch, where my \$5.00 easy-chair has more than returned its value since I purchased it at an auction 20 years ago.

Goldfinches, their bright yellow plumage peaking, fight for bird-feeder position as the blurring orange of a Baltimore Oriole glides by. It climbs in altitude toward the tall tree in my neighbor's yard. It's late afternoon and shadows are spreading their long branches over the street below. A pickup with a camper in tow drives up 5th Street, leaving town for a weekend at Indian Cave State Park or maybe an overnight stay at Verdon Lake. No wind today. I don't remember the air being this still. Not desirable at 90 degrees, but just fine for 78. My iced tea (recently brewed) is just an arm's length away, my phone is silent on the table, ready, but not in use.

Saturday was graduation day at Peru State College. Undergrads have left for home, some going to a Summer job; maybe serving ice cream at a Dairy Queen, or cashiering in a souvenir shop at Rocky Mountain National Park. They won't be climbing the hill on 5th Street to a 7:45 A.M. class or lounging with roommates on the front porch of the big house across the street as in evenings during the semester. The neighborhood cat will probably revert to begging at my house now that its young and generous foster humans are on Summer break. Already its dried paw-prints are on the hood of my garaged car after each thunderstorm.

Second Weekend

Some rain Friday morning, and now there are paw-prints on my chair cushion. Saturday was a normal "enjoy-the-sunrise-have-breakfast-write-read-at-computer-go-jogging-prepare-lunch-make-spaghetti-meat-sauce-for-coming-week," day. Sunday morning; chilly, rainy, cloudy, and warmer inside this morning. Sunday evening; beautiful, quiet, birds chirping, iced tea and video time. I extended my weekend through Monday; mostly sunny, air clean from a night-time thunderstorm, breakfast on my porch with the internet's news, PSC gym before lunch. Looking forward to finishing the June issue of *Your Country Neighbor* this week.

Third Weekend

Friday evening began pleasantly with the exception of sounds of multiple lawn mowers as some residents got the jump on the weekend by wrapping up yard work prior to Saturday morning breakfast. A warm 82 degrees, no breeze, and a welcome end to the work-week. After supper there were some clouds, an easterly wind, but not strong, and raindrops briefly splotched the dry surface of the street. Then quiet again, but ominously gray skies remained, threatening to confirm the weather forecast of a better than 50/50 chance of a thunderstorm. The afternoon was mostly sunny after a gray, overcast morning. Sunday; cool, cloudy, rainy.

Fourth Weekend

Time to publish!

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Feeling Old

Sheri Mayhew Dowding

There's a fine line between feeling old and being old. And at the same time there's a fine line between memories and what you remember. Case in point, the prom. I did not attend my junior or senior prom. The honest truth is, I was not asked and so I did not go. That's just the way I felt about it then, if you didn't have a date I thought it would be a huge embarrassment to go alone, so I didn't. I watched some of the local kids walk in the parking lot of the high school with their prom attire on Saturday night. High heeled shoes, that had to kill their feet, hair done up just so, sparkly dresses that revealed too much, (feeling old). A few of the boys removed their jackets and let the girls wear them, still a few gentlemen out there. But this will be their memories.

I decided when I was a kid that I would never tell my kids the story about walking to school, in waist deep snow, 2 miles, everyday, barefooted, uphill both there and back, maybe because I never had to do this. Or maybe it was because one day my younger brother said to my dad, "Dad, didn't the sun ever shine when you were a kid?" Somehow that statement had an effect on the way I think, especially about my childhood. I try not to think or tell about the bad times, or what I remember as a bad time. And the older I get those bad times really weren't that bad (feeling old).

I remember a lot about my grandparents. I had all four of them until I was in my 20's. I was very lucky on that count. I even had one great grandmother until I was 17. I did not know her very well at all. I wish I had. I am sure she would have had some great stories to tell (feel-

ing old). I loved all my grandparents. Some I knew more about than others but that's because I lived closer to them. I want my great grandchildren to remember me. They are little now, and I hope I am around long enough that they will get to know me and to know how much they mean to me (feeling old).

I truly miss the things I took for granted growing up, things today's kids will never know. I miss going into the drug store and having a 5 cent coke, in a glass, with ice and a straw. It was probably 6 ounces but it was enough, not the 32-ounce big gulp super size plastic cup you get for a couple bucks. Or the 5 cent ice cream cone that was hand dipped and the ice cream was made on the premises. Lord knows how many of them I dipped in my four years of working, doing just that during high school. It's not the 5 cent cone I miss, it's the flavor of the ice cream (feeling old). I also learned the importance of counting back change. That's seldom done these days.

I also miss going into a clothing store and having a person wait on you, help you find what you're looking for in your size, and if this one didn't fit right she would get you one a size smaller or larger. And I was taught if you tried something on, you put it back on the hanger like you found it and you put it back on the rack where you got it from. How many people do that now-a-days (feeling old)?

I guess what makes me feel old is all the things that aren't there any more, things like dime stores, being able to touch things, now everything is encased in plastic. Even things like dressing up

for Easter or Christmas, wearing white gloves and shiny white shoes, little hats that matched your coat (feeling old, but I have photos).

Men used to wear suits to almost everything. These days if you see a man in a suit he is a banker or an undertaker or a customer of the undertaker. And women used to wear dresses to everything and wear heels. Okay, I totally understand the not wearing heels, but on the other hand, dresses are just plain hard to purchase, if you want one that covers your backside anyway. Face it, when your skin gets wrinkly, slacks and long sleeve blouses are all right, (really feeling old).

There are so many things that just have gone by the wayside in my lifetime. Maybe that is what my Dad was trying to tell us kids. The things and times of our childhood would not be around when we grew up. Things that are not there for our kids, like sitting on the front porch visiting with the neighbors on a hot summer evening, playing all over the neighborhood until the street lights come on, walking alone downtown to spend your allowance, trick or treating all over town, watching an outdoor movie in the park or going to a drive-in movie theater, writing letters or getting letters, like from a penpal a few miles away or a few states away.

I guess getting old just depends on what a person remembers, or maybe, just maybe, how badly a person wants some of this stuff to come back so our grand and greatgrand's can have some of the same memories we have.

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PSC Graduation, May 5, 2018





PSC Graduation, May 5, 2018



Dr. Dennis Welsh 2018 Teaching Excellence Award Winner



Peru State College Professor of Chemistry, Dr. Dennis Welsh, was named the College's 2018 Teaching Excellence Award winner. Welsh was honored during the College's commencement on May 5. Dan Hanson, president of Peru State College, presented the award to Welsh, saying, "Dr. Welsh has a passion for students and for his discipline. He invests time with each student to learn their talents and help them realize their potential."

Welsh joined the Peru State College faculty in 2001. He teaches courses in chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry and molecular biology.

Welsh was the lead in developing the biochemistry option under the Natural Science Major in 2005. Welsh was also instrumental in bringing the Rural Health Opportunities Program to Peru State. He continues to oversee the cooperative program giving students the opportunity for pre-admissions into health care programs.

Welsh's other community activities include serving as Head Judge at the Greater Nebraska Science Fair for the past decade, instructing a high ability learners' class for Auburn Public Schools, and serving as the Radiation Safety Officer for the Nemaha County Emergency Management Team. He has also been a guest speaker for various schools and community organizations.

Welsh's publications include articles in the reviewed journals of Journal of Biochemistry, Methods of Molecular Biology and the Journal of Parasitology. He reviews articles in the Journal of Lipid Chemistry. He has also written multiple manuals, procedural papers, analysis papers, etc. for the laboratories and courses he oversees.

Welsh earned a Bachelor of Arts at Benedictine College before completing his Ph.D. at the University of Notre Dame.

Senator Floyd Vrtiska receives award for Distinguished Service to Peru State



During Peru State College's May commencement, former State Senator Floyd Vrtiska received the Distinguished Service Award. The Distinguished Service Award was established by the Nebraska State College System Board of Trustees. It authorizes each college to nominate a graduate or someone who has made significant contribution to the College or to an alumnus who has achieved distinction and recognition in his or her field. Recipients are nominated by the college president and approved by the NSCS Board of Trustees.

Dan Hanson, president of Peru State College, said, "It is especially fitting that we recognize Senator Floyd Vrtiska in our 150th year because of the pivotal role he played in creating a vibrant future for Peru State College, a future we enjoy today. He was a tireless champion for Peru State College, rallying tremendous support from alumni and southeast Nebraskans to partner with Governor Johanns to reinvest in this College. This reinvestment was the start of a much needed almost 75 million dollar infrastructure upgrade for the College, beginning with the Vrtiska Addition to the Hoyt Science Building in 2005 and continuing yet today." Hanson concludes, "One of the College's founders and one of Nebraska's original state senators, Colonel T.J. Majors, is often recognized as the most influential individual of the first century for Peru State College. Senator Floyd Vrtiska is this century's T.J. Majors, the most influential individual in creating a vibrant future for Peru State in its second century."

Trophies received from national criminal justice conference.



Four Peru State students participated in the 2018 National American Criminal Justice Association/Lambda Alpha Epsilon Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. The theme for this year's conference was Modern Technology, Police Training & Equipment and Police Accountability & Community Involvement.

Conference attendees, Samantha Carlson (Cozad, Nebraska); Hailey Bouwens (Lincoln, Nebraska); Samantha Daake (Beatrice, Nebraska); Keri Anderson (Adams, Nebraska). The students were accompanied by Danny Hayes, instructor of criminal justice, and Dr. Amber Mahan, assistant professor of criminal justice. Both serve as advisors for Peru State's chapter of ACJA/LAE, Kappa Omicron Rho. LAE is a national criminal justice honor's society.

Mahan said, "Being involved with this organization allows the students a realistic view as to what is to come when choosing a career in the criminal justice field." Those who participated at the ACJA/LAE Conference worked with experts from the Independence Ohio Police Department and a series of other law enforcement professionals from the Cleveland area. There were approximately 317 students and professional members from across the country in attendance. Samantha Carlson, president of Kappa Omicron Rho, said, "The conference and being a part of LAE allows me to make connections within the organization that will assist me in the future."

Attendees also had a chance to participate in a crime scene investigation, firearms and physical agility competition. Those who placed within the top three in their category were recognized and received a trophy.

Peru State College participants earned five national trophies this year including two first place trophies in the professional division. Samantha Carlson was awarded the Richard McGrath Memorial Fund Scholarship. The scholarship covers the registration fee for the national conference and is only available to ACJA/LAE members that are majoring in criminal justice and are active in their local club and regional conference.

Joni Monroe (Van Buren, Arkansas) also received a Gold Key Award earlier in the academic year. Gold Keys are awarded to LAE members who hold a Bachelors Degree and an average GPA of 3.5 or above. Mahan, Hayes and Carlson earned an Honorable Mention in Crime Scene Investigations. Dr. Amber Mahan won third place in the Physical Agility competition for women between the ages of 26 and 35.

For the second year in a row, Danny Hayes took first place in both the Physical Agility competition for men over age 36 and in the examination for Lambda Alpha Epsilon Knowledge. He also reached third place in the examination on Juvenile Delinquency and second in the examination about Corrections.

For more information about ACJA/LAE at Peru State, contact Danny Hayes at dhayes@peru.edu or Dr. Amber Mahan at amahan@peru.edu.

Peru State Alum, Kesha Beethe speaks to Scholarship Recipients at Annual Luncheon

Kesha Beethe was the alumni speaker at the annual Board of Trustees Scholarship luncheon held by the Nebraska State College System. BOT Scholarship recipients (and their families) planning to attend Peru State College, Chadron State College or Wayne State College are honored at the event.

"This scholarship is an honor," Beethe told the group of students and parents, "One I wish I hadn't turned down." Beethe continues, "I started at [another college] and I transferred to Peru. I wish I had been as wise as you are and started there sooner."

Beethe highlighted her work with AmeriCorps under the CHANCE Initiative and as a Phi Beta Lambda national champion. Beethe also ran cross-country where she was a Capital One District Six All-American and a Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete.

Originally from Tecumseh, she currently lives in Washington where she is a global learning coordinator for Amazon.



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