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May 2024

# *Country* Neighbor

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*Your Country Neighbor*

*Voices and Views from the Valleys of the Nemaha*  
Publisher & Photographer, Stephen Hassler

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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

*“People will forget what you said, people will for-  
get what you did, but people will never forget how  
you made them feel.”*

Maya Angelou

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**Marvelous May!**

A Message from the Publisher, Stephen Hassler, Peru, Nebraska

It’s the season for small town festivals; from Nebraska City’s Arbor Day  
to Brownville’s Octoberfest. Arbor Day parade photos are included in this  
issue.

My bird feeder needs refilling almost daily. TSC in Nebraska City is my  
source for black oil sunflower seed, and they make this publication available  
to their customers. Migrating songbirds and nesting locals require energy  
this time of year. Garden plants are sprouting all over. Snow shovel scraping  
has given way to lawn mower buzzing.

So pour a second cup of coffee or tea from Bookshire Coffee in Peru, or  
Diana’s Tea Shop in Papillion, Nebraska, and peruse “Your Country Neigh-  
bor” with it’s magazine articles and poetry, small town news and festivals,  
and regional photos of wildlife and landscapes.

Enjoy your May. Don’t forget Mom! Watch for butterflies!  
Clip the **Valentino’s coupon** on the back page and **carry it with you!**

# Diary of a Part-time Housewife

Merri Johnson, Auburn

A few springtime observations are in order.

Our first male house wren appeared on April 8, a full three weeks earlier than I have recorded in the five years that I have been recording such things. He is busy singing and laying claim to the wren house in the front yard.

Lilacs were in heavy bloom down the street on April 16. I am not sure, but it seems to me that Mother's Day used to be a reliable date to expect that. The fragrance was marvelous! Too bad the shrub is not in our yard. I was sorely tempted to pluck a sprig.

My rhubarb is looking good, though it is bolting. Apparently those few hot days combined with lack of rainfall were enough to prompt the plant to flower. I will get out there this afternoon and slice off the flowering stalks, which is supposed to prompt a new leaf stalk to grow. You may recall that last year I reported suffering a lack of rhubarb custard pie. I am hoping against hope that I have enough stalks for a pie before we head to Georgia to visit our daughter and son-in-law next month. She will be thrilled to have a fresh pie. The last time that happened, I transported it – already baked and stowed in single-serve containers – on a plane. One was allowed a bit more carry-on capacity in those days. This time I will take the raw stalks along in a cooler in the back of the car and bake it fresh in her kitchen. I can almost smell that nutmeg flavored custard now.

Hubby and our grandson built a wood duck house and mounted it near our pond toward the end of winter. No sign of wood ducks yet, though I have recorded spotting them circling and landing in trees briefly on or near our property each of the last five years.

Hubby also built and mounted a Mason bee house a few weeks ago. We mail-ordered 20 bee cocoons, reminiscent of the days of mail-ordering chicks. Not that we ever mail-ordered chicks. Just sayin'. The cocoons have all hatched and I think I saw the bees buzzing around the Viburnum blossoms a few days ago. I expect they are visiting the strawberry blossoms as well. We ate our first strawberries on May 28 last year. With the plants already flowering profusely, I think we may have fruit sooner than that this year. We will be monitoring the bee nesting tubes soon to see if they are laying eggs. I'm going to go out on a limb here and predict greater success with the bees than the ducks.

Hubby finally bought the expensive grass seed and planted it in multiple bare spots, where it is off to a good start. Last fall, the big box store seed variety did exactly diddly squat in those same spots, despite mulching with straw and much watering.

Lettuce is actually growing in one of our raised beds! You may recall our trials and tribulations in 2023, the inaugural growing season of said beds. Apparently the chemical and manure "toxicity" of the field soil we utilized has now been diluted to a level conducive to growing leafy vegetables. We will see in a few weeks if the other bed will grow decent green beans this year. Fingers crossed!

Our first significant spring rainfall happened overnight (April 18). Our gauge recorded nine-tenths of an inch (or ninety hundredths, for the really precise ag crowd). The last time we recorded more than three-tenths was on March 13 (seven tenths that time). I believe the average rainfall for April in Nemaha County, Nebraska, is about three inches, so we are nearly half-way there. With 13 days left in the month, there is still time to achieve average. Hubby says the seven-day forecast is promising for more precipitation, so bring on those April showers, Mother Nature. We are all eager for those May flowers.



Partial Eclipse of the Sun Viewed from Peru, Nebraska



Above and Below.

Back Road Bicyclists also visited the Steamboat Trace, see page 11.





PSC Men’s Baseball



PSC Women’s Softball



PSC Women’s Softball

# Butterflies

Stephen Hassler

I have collected, observed, or photographed butterflies since I was six years old. By age 16 I had a mounted collection of 30 different species. Then my family moved to a town with a better high school, and I became serious about studying for college; physics and math. I couldn’t imagine a career involving butterflies, a child’s hobby.

As a young adult with a (not very good) 35mm film camera, I tried to photograph butterflies, but was not very successful. It was a waste of film trying to get a good photo, and developing film was expensive. So I admired butterflies during nature walks and in flower gardens, but it wasn’t until I obtained my first digital camera that I was able to get serious about photography.

I started with a one (1), megapixel point-and-shoot camera. It came free with a computer purchase. No film and no developing required. My first ‘professional’ camera was a six megapixel Nikon. It was life-changing for me when it came to “taking pictures.” Publishing my photos became a significant part of my business. I was sharing my hobby and impressing others with the natural beauty of these lacy-winged and sometimes mysterious insects. Now and then I made an observation that was surprising, almost unbelievable. Butterflies have landed on my sleeve to taste my shirt, and on my bare arm to sip my sweat. Without knowing it, I have been attacked by butterflies! Just to see one dart back and forth in front of my face was curious, certainly not threatening, but in my reading I soon learned that some butterflies are territorial and have been known to even chase birds away from their territory.

Most people are familiar with the most well-known butterfly in the world, the endangered Monarch (see photo page 7). Monarchs migrate in the Fall to Mexico where they hibernate for several months before leaving the following March for northern destinations. It takes four generations to reach Canada, their northern most breeding area. The last generation leaves Canada and arrives back in Mexico in only two months. What’s amazing to me is that the four generations each live only 6 to 8 weeks, but the migrating generation not only flies south in just 8 weeks, but then lives another several months until its Spring arrival in Texas and other southern states, where the life renewing process, the circle of life, goes on.

Scientists have mapped the Monarch’s migration route by something even more amazing. By measuring the moisture in a butterfly’s wing, it can be determined where that insect was born, because every geographical location has a different concentration of deuterium in it’s rainwater. This method is used to study migrations of many animals as well as water flow analysis. The Global Network of Isotopes in Precipitation (GNIP) is comprised of 100’s of labratories in 90 countries.

I don’t regret the path not taken. I haven’t failed to enjoy the variety and the amazing patterns of color in butterflies everywhere I’ve lived, except the New York Metropolitan area, and while there maybe I just didn’t look enough. I believe the mild Winter failed to kill all insects, because I am noticing more butterflies than I can remember! I hope you see them too.





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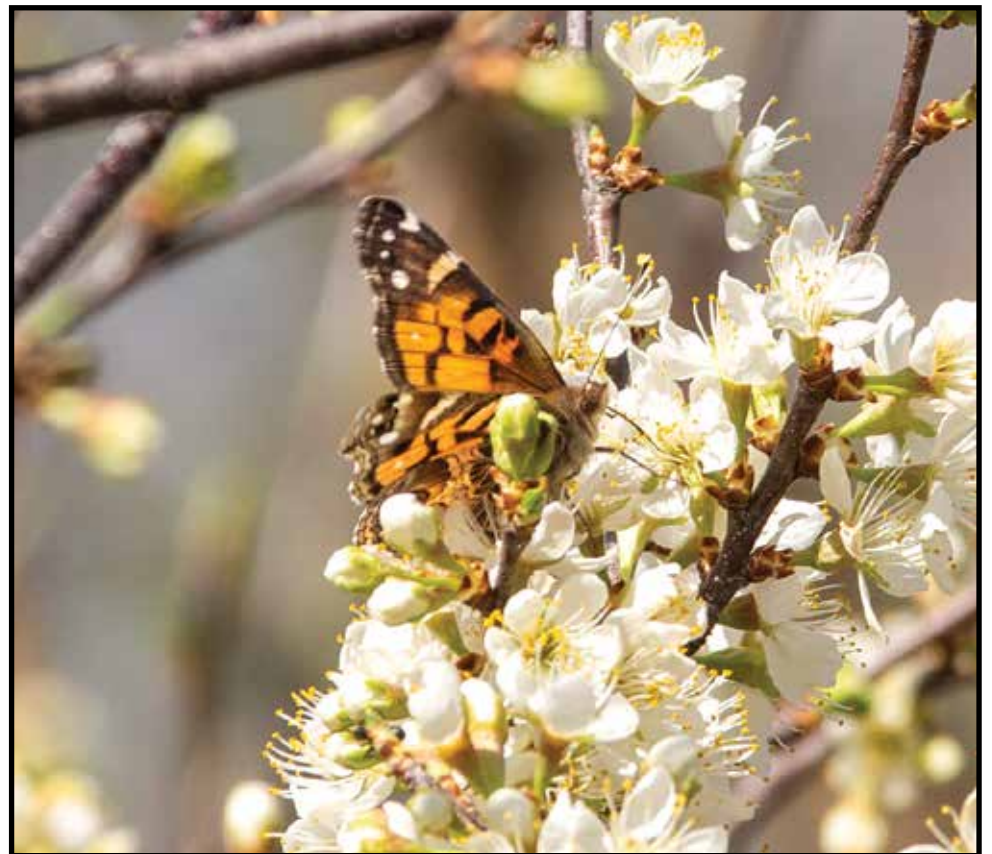
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Painted Lady butterfly on wild plum tree blossoms.



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***Butterflies of Southeast Nebraska,***

***Where and When to see them.***

Watch for the time and place of a visual presentation by  
Stephen Hassler, Wildlife Photographer;



# PERU CITY NEWS

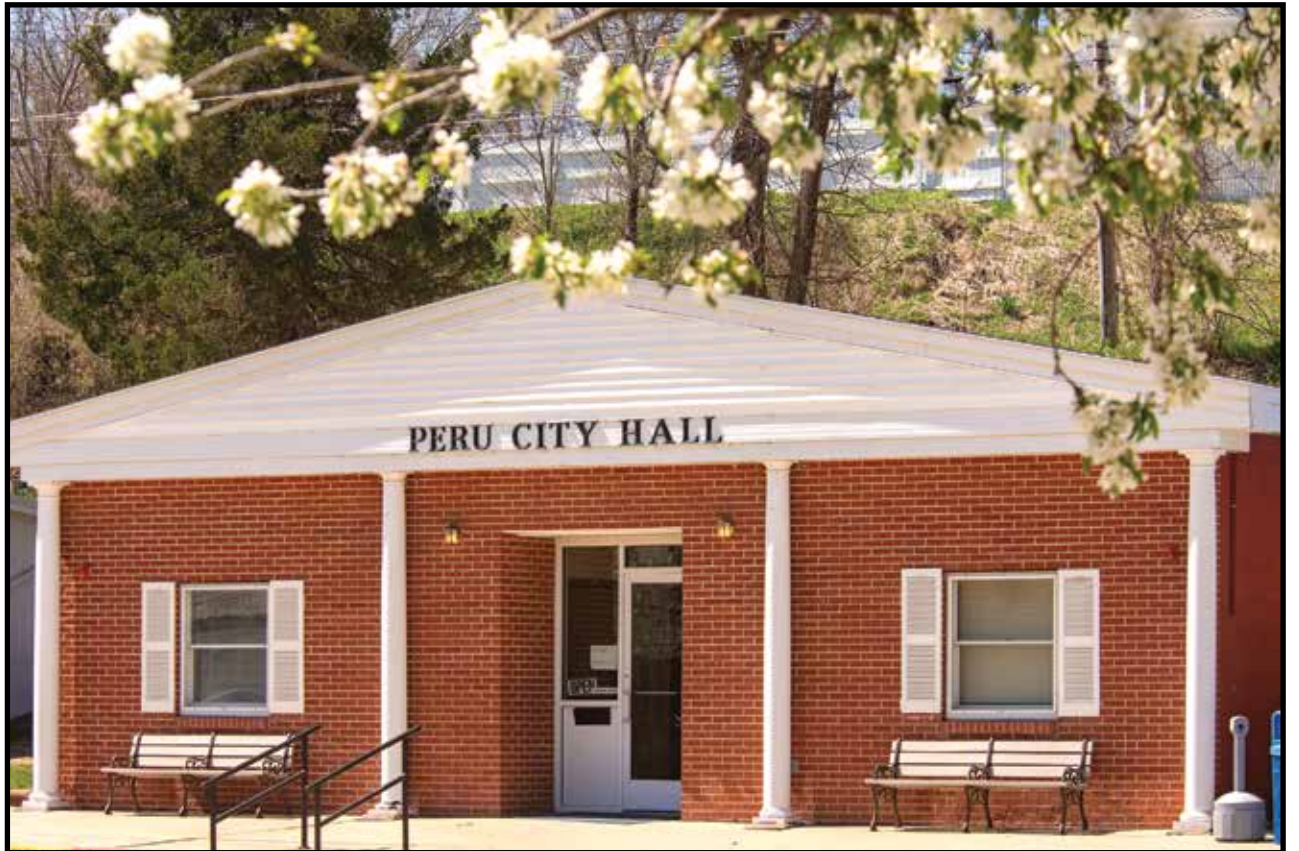
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Western National Bank & Peru's New Business



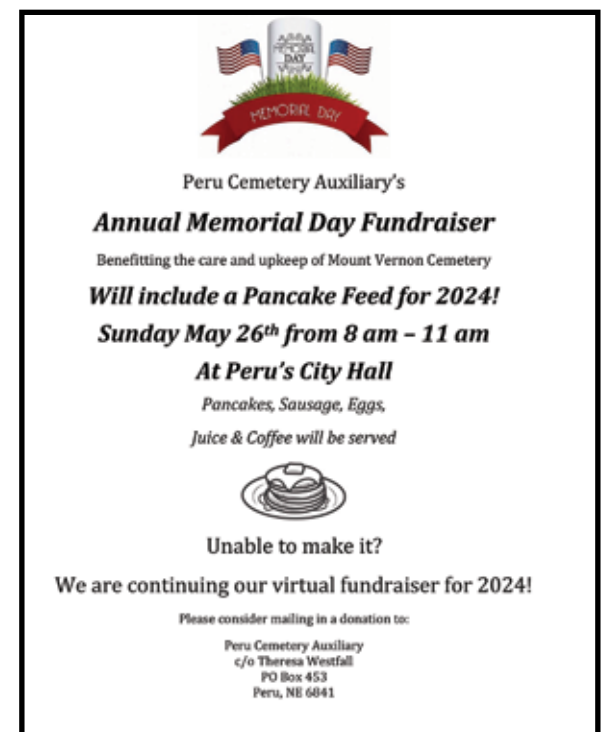
KJ's Whitehorse Bar & Grill.



Peru's "City Hall" framed by fruit tree blossoms, 5th Street, downtown Peru.  
Once the blossoms were gone, one of these glorious trees was cut down.



Detailed block of quilt to be raffled to raise funds for  
"Rob Walker Memorial Christmas Tree."  
See Christmas article page 9.





# PERU CITY NEWS

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## Planning for Peru Christmas Underway!

Marty Peregoy

If you've been monitoring Facebook and your mail, you probably know that the Peru Community Impact Group (PCIG) has segued from putting on a variety of community events to providing funding and advertising for those events. In January of this year, they reached out to the Peru community seeking groups or individuals who were interested in organizing the traditional Peru events or even creating something new.

I asked for dibs on the yearly Christmas celebration for kids. Because it will be different in many ways, I wanted to give community members a heads-up now, so that not only will they have something to look forward to that second week in December, but they will also be able to plan on participating in some of the early components of the event.

If you know Kelly Adams, you know she loves Christmas - REALLY loves Christmas! So, when I was told I was welcome to start organizing a family Christmas event, I knew I needed Kelly. Of course, then I told Cate Wyckoff what was being planned, and we told our quilting group, Sew Sisters, what was being planned, and then Cate's daughter and one of my former students from Peru State College (PSC) wanted to know what we were doing, and things sort of just - snowballed.

One of the things I have long wanted to do for the city was to provide a live Christmas tree. I've heard so many stories from veteran Peruvians about how the city tree used to be located in the middle of 5th Street, and how no December went by without someone backing into it. And of course, there are the community members that live and breathe Hallmark and Gilmore Girls. I knew that starting a tradition of gathering around a live tree that we can watch grow year after year was essential to the Christmas in Peru those Hallmark/Gilmore fans have always dreamed of.

Rob Walker was a fixture in the Main Street Bank, which later became the Western National Bank. Rob passed away unexpectedly in February. When I approached Shirley Robbins and Josie Coatney with the idea of placing a "Rob Walker Memorial Christmas Tree" on the property south of the bank, they gave the go ahead. Western National Bank will purchase a plaque identifying the tree, but Sew Sisters is in the midst of a plan for funding the tree.

And that is where Patsy Fike, long-time Peru resident and beloved retired PSC employee comes in. Last year Patsy, who no longer sews, donated her stash of fabrics to the Sew Sisters, a local group who creates comfort quilts for people experiencing loss or severe illness. In one of Patsy's boxes of fabric were forty-two carefully wrapped, pieced and embroidered quilt blocks. That's enough for a queen-sized quilt. The Sew Sisters couldn't think of a finer tribute to Patsy's skill as a seamstress and quilter than finishing the quilt and raffling it off to fund the Rob Walker Memorial Christmas Tree.

It was decided that raffle tickets would be sold at Old Man River Days in June, and again at the Homecoming Games in October, pending approval of PSC. The drawing for the raffle, which will be run according to Nebraska state regulations, will take place in October. Money raised in excess of the cost of the raffle and tree planting will be used for future PCIG events. This is one of the early components of the Christmas celebration in which I encourage all Peruvians and Peru State College alumni to participate - so watch for information on raffle ticket sales June through October.

The plan is for the tree to be selected and planted shortly after Homecoming, and then to be decorated, but not yet lit, the first week in December. You may have noticed how what used to be mostly a children's celebration is involving more and more people? Well, we're looking for a volunteer group to decorate the tree the first weekend in December. Lights and ornaments will be provided. Let me know if your group is interested.

Of course, we couldn't have the annual Christmas celebration without including the fun of chatting on Santa's knee, making ornaments while drinking hot chocolate and eating cookies, and gathering around the tree for its lighting on December 8th. That means involving even more people.

Kim Allgood wanted in on the celebration on the 8th. Kim loves a good breakfast buffet after church on Sunday, and she agreed to host one at KJ Whitehorse from 1:00-3:00 p.m., complete with holiday adult beverages, so that families could gather together for a meal before wandering over to the bank lot for family pictures with Santa.

The Peru Volunteer Fire Department has long-coordinated Santa's visit, beginning with his arrival on a fire truck toting bags of fruit and candy for the good girls and boys of Peru. As of now, we're planning for 3:00 p.m.. So now we have the entire fire department and Santa in on the fun. We're planning on finding a professional photographer who will set up the Santa visits in the gazebo in the lot south of the bank. The photos will then be posted online for purchase. What a great keepsake! If you know of a great photographer who might be interested, send me his/her contact information.

Following Santa visits, kids and their parents will move towards North Ridge Church around 4:00, where warm scarves will be given to children until we run out, I will read Christmas stories aloud, Western National Bank will provide hot cocoa and cookies, and Kelly and a couple of PSC volunteers will assist the kids in making a Christmas ornament for their home tree, and possibly a bird food ornament for the Rob Walker Memorial Christmas Tree. Around 5:00 p.m., children, their families and the entire community will gather around the tree south of the bank as it is lit for the first time following a countdown; two or three carols will be sung (we need musically talented volunteers); and sugar-filled, ornament-toting, scarf-wearing happy kids will head home for supper by 6:00 p.m.

Also included as part of the community-wide celebration will be a front-door decorating contest managed by local artist Cate Wyckoff and her daughter, Kira Vredenberg, between Thanksgiving and early-December. In keeping with our goal of getting as many people involved as possible, there will be two separate contest divisions: one for the best college dorm door, and one for the best house/apartment door. The community will act as judges, and a prize in each division will be given. Expect contest rules in early November so you'll have plenty of time to plan.

And Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without remembering loved ones who are no longer present at our holiday celebrations. Depending on City Hall availability, a memorial tree is once again planned for the month of December, where family members can drop off ornaments with their loved ones' names on them to be viewed, we hope, during business hours, and then picked up the first week in January. That hasn't yet been confirmed, so we'll have to let you know about that one.

Please plan on joining us for this family celebration. And if you'd like to help or have an idea for an additional activity, please let me know.

## OMRD Fishing Tournament

Notes from Kirsten Reeves

Several people are donating for the prize of a 2-man bass fishing boat. And we will have various prizes to choose from.

**Any kid 15 and under can fish.** The fish for the contest are catfish, bluegill, and crappie. The largest crappie wins the boat! So those who catch the largest fish get to choose prizes first, but no kid gets a second prize until all other kids get a chance to pick (depending on how many prizes we have vs. how many kids enter), just to keep it as fair as we can. Hopefully, one kid doesn't get the biggest fish in all categories! I haven't worked those details out yet, lol. I just want everyone to have a chance to win even if they don't catch anything.

We debated but are going to allow boats even though I worry that it will give some kids a better opportunity to catch better fish. This is meant to be a fun family experience!

There is no registration fee. Just need people to message me on Facebook their kid's name and age, or if they see me in person and let me know, that is fine too. People can even sign up the day of. It would just be easier to have some people signed up ahead of time. The date for sure is **June 9th 8:30 to 10:30 AM.**



# PERU CITY NEWS

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## Tuesday Literary Club Reads

DiAnna Loy and Alice Holtz, Tuesday Literary Club

This month the Tuesday Literary Club ventured to South Africa as Alice Holtz presented Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood*. This book is a memoir that covers Trevor Noah's experiences growing up in the apartheid era in Johannesburg, South Africa. The book tells of the dangerous situations Noah faced as a child of color (between 1984 – 2009). In the memoir his mother, Patricia, a Xhosa black, and his father, Robert, a white Swiss man, navigate the culture of a country that forbade interracial unions.

Noah's mother Patricia lived in Soweto with her family. She took a typing course and worked as a secretary but all her money went to the family which was "the curse of being black and poor" having to work endlessly to help everyone else catch up. Patricia soon tires of paying the "black tax" and runs away to live in Hillbrow, a liberal part of Johannesburg, for people of all colors and home to many whites who disapproved of the discrimination of blacks. Patricia met a German man who allowed her to rent an apartment in his name as long as she paid the rent. Noah's grandmother lives in Soweto and when Noah is there being raised by her, he must remain indoors as they fear for his safety. White policemen canvassed the Soweto area and often times biracial children were taken from their parents.

With Patricia's reliable typist income, she earned enough money to look after Noah and herself. Noah was enrolled in a mission or private school with a majority of white and black students. He struggled with friendships as he did not fit into any social group as a biracial child. Patricia bought him many books and made sure he had plenty of time to study. Today he speaks at least five languages.

Noah's life was filled with challenges. There was abuse, alcoholism, violence, and racism coupled with estrangement and poverty. Noah's parents remained a united front for him, despite never getting married. He has credited his mom for her willingness to never give up fighting despite their hardships.

Noah's storytelling is both humorous and poignant, allowing readers to explore the complexities of his childhood in a society marked by racial segregation and political turmoil. For example, Noah writes, "There was a colored woman, named Queen, who lived in our flat. When we wanted to go to the park, Queen would walk next to me and act like my mother, and my mother would walk behind and looked like the maid working for the colored woman. When we didn't have a colored woman to walk with us, mom would hold my hand or carry me. But, if the police showed up, she would have to drop me and pretend I wasn't hers, like I was a bag of weed." Humor like this in *Born a Crime* produces easier to absorb content since the memoir is full of hard-to-swallow concepts.

Patricia's faith in Jesus, her love for her country, and the way she disciplines Noah are all evident in the stories Noah shares as he flashes back and forth between his childhood and young adulthood. Patricia is a major figure in the book and in Noah's life. Most of the details Noah shares pertain to the lessons she teaches him and the ways in which those lessons shape his character:

- Staying positive in the face of systemic racism and violence
- Overcoming an identity crisis to find his true self
- Rising out of poverty to achieve goals

I found the book to be quite enlightening about situations facing the people of South Africa in the waning days of Apartheid. Happy reading!

10 May 2024 Your Country Neighbor

## Mt. Vernon Cemetery Annual Memorial Day Fundraiser

Theresa Westfall

"For it is in giving that we receive." St. Francis of Assisi

It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to keep our cemetery the scenic beauty that it is. The Mount Vernon Cemetery Association is a board of unpaid volunteers tasked with managing the perpetual care of the cemetery. This past year we lost long time board member, Anne Hendrickson, who will be deeply missed. Additionally, John Patterson retired from the board, though he is still a part of our community, the board will miss his work in the cemetery. The remaining board members: Theresa Westfall, Chair; Shirley Robbins, Secretary & Treasurer; Ronda Hamilton; David Pease & Marty Perego voted in new board members, Ray Girard and Phil Wemhoff. The seven board seats are held in perpetuity.

In typical years the largest expense is grounds keeping of the cemetery. This year, while grounds keeping will still be a large expense, the chapel project will take most of the funds. The chapel on the north side of the cemetery is in disrepair. It has suffered from years of neglect. We have spoken to many community members, placed questionnaires at fund raising events and held debates at board meetings. At this year's board meeting we held a vote, and the decision has been made to stabilize the structure. Stabilization will require fixing cracks, tuck pointing, replacing bad bricks, etc. This alone, at last year's estimate, will cost the cemetery \$30,000-\$35,000. In addition, the building will need a new roof, windows, doors and interior work. Our board is excited to begin this project, but we will need your support to preserve this piece of Peru's history.

The Peru Cemetery Auxiliary exists to help raise money for the care and upkeep of Mt. Vernon Cemetery and to help the Peru community in times of need. The volunteers spend countless hours every year making and serving funeral meals in support of community members after the loss of a loved one. These funeral meals are prepared and served at no cost to the family, but donations are welcome. Each year the auxiliary donates a portion of these funds to the Mt. Vernon Cemetery to support the cemetery's upkeep.

This year donations are more critical than ever. The Peru Cemetery Auxiliary is excited to announce that our Annual Memorial Day fund-raiser will again include a Pancake Feed on Sunday, May 26th from 8 am – 11am at Peru's City Hall. All are welcome and donations will be accepted at the event. Pancakes, sausage, eggs, juice & coffee will be served. Please, please consider donating to help stabilize and restore the chapel at the cemetery and help preserve the beauty of our cemetery for generations to come! Memorials and donations are always accepted at any time throughout the year and may be mailed to;

Peru Cemetery Auxiliary, c/o Theresa Westfall  
PO Box 453  
Peru, NE 68421

Thank you,  
Theresa Westfall



# PERU CITY NEWS

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## To The “Peru Depot Trailhead” Supporters

Matt Hopken

I wanted to extend a big thank you for joining us last Saturday morning.

Honestly, I really had not expected the warm reception from the local community on our trail ride. It was truly awesome to see the support from the Peru community for the show-and-go event. I wasn't aware the Peru community had made arrangements for us to use the Depot. Please convey my sincere gratitude to the local folks and leaders in Peru for their efforts—it meant a lot to us. If there are folks in the community that I should reach out to and thank, please let me know.

“Let's Go Ride the Steamboat” was initially planned to coincide with the dedication of the bicycle repair stand and pump that Melissa and I donated to the Steamboat Trace Trails Association through the Nemaha NRD in 2023. Unfortunately, heavy rain that week forced us to cancel the cycling part of the event. As we discussed, I had the chance to ride the trail back in the fall of 2022 after it reopened from the Missouri River flooding. Riding the trail left an impression on me, I thought about it for weeks after my ride. I saw a need for a repair stand and pump at the Peru Depot, so I reached out to Kyle Hauschild at the NRD in Tecumseh, and together, we arranged for the stand's purchase and donation, with the agreement that Nemaha NRD would handle the concrete, dirt work, and installation. As an alum of Peru, I wanted to contribute to the community in my own way.

During the winter, a couple of friends approached me about establishing a date to do our own dedication for the repair stand and a ride, so we settled on Saturday, April 20th. Our aim was to create a cycling event suitable for riders of all levels. I envisioned it as a way to introduce more people to the trail's beauty and to showcase the hospitality of Brownville and Peru. We sincerely hope this is a snowball effect, and they tell their friends about the trail! We had two routes planned; one covering all 20 miles of the Steamboat Trace from Brownville to the Arbor Trailhead (totaling 40 miles), and another, a 53-mile gravel and minimum maintenance route encompassing the entire trail, along with scenic spots on gravel like Camp Creek, Julian, Duck Creek NRD area, Walnut Grove Cemetery, and Brownville. Our group enjoys events where we can give back to the areas we ride through and support local businesses. I'm a big advocate of the laid-back ride experience, as gravel cycling, and events have seen significant growth in recent years. We love back roads!

We had a total of 24 riders on Saturday, coming from Fairbury, Beatrice, Papillion, Omaha, and Lincoln, as well as Sabetha, KS, and myself and a friend from Kansas City, MO.

After chatting with friends, it's clear we're eager to try and make this an annual event, maintaining its relaxed and casual vibe, and continuing to celebrate and contribute to the success of the Steamboat Trace.



## Clean-up Day

Stephen Hassler

It was a rainy, storm-threatening morning on Friday, April 26th when about 100 college athletes reported to City Hall with their trucks for the annual Peru State - Peru City Clean-up Day. But stiff winds and a misty rain were no threat to the young men and women who listened to President Evans' welcome address, and then they were gone... gone through the streets of the city picking up everything imaginable that residents had put out on the curb the night before, and filling to over-flowing, four giant dumpsters with stuff Peruvians no longer needed nor wanted. Special thanks to Peggy Groff who organized a successful day, and **Thank You!** to all the volunteers!

## Residents' Concerns?

Stephen Hassler

Some of us are thinking about an “over-12-inch-brigade” of volunteer “Lawn Angels” to assist residents who have difficulty with mowing and weed whacking, especially in a troubled area, like a steep bank.

Others are concerned with the restrooms being closed at the Peru Depot Trailhead at the beginning of a hiking-biking season.

Things to think about. Let's see what the month of May brings.



St. Clara's Catholic Church  
604 6th Street

Pastor Fr. Timothy Danek  
Mass - Sunday 8:30 am

Confessions - Sunday 8:00-8:20 am



Northridge Church  
808 5th Street

Pastor Daniel Hutchison  
Services - Sunday 10:00 am



Peru Community Church  
520 Nebraska Street

Pastors Raymond & Rebecca Girard  
Services - Sunday 10:45 am

May 2024

Your Country Neighbor 11



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# ARBOR CITY NEWS

## *News from Nebraska City*

### Heritage Needlework Guild

Submitted by Nancy Feeney

If you think of sewing as a solitary hobby, you haven't met the members of the Heritage Needlework Guild. These women have turned their passion for all things involving thread and yarn into a fun group pastime where they get together with friends to share projects, ideas, tips and laughs.

Over the past 40 years, the Heritage Needlework Guild, located in Nebraska City, has attracted sewing enthusiasts from the surrounding area to explore ideas on anything having to do with thread or yarn.

Guild members gather at 7 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the community room of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nebraska City. At these meetings, members socialize with each other and listen to speakers discuss quilting or wool and yarn projects. A few times a year, workshops are held during the day that delve deeper into specific sewing techniques.

Guild members also take pride in sponsoring several community service projects. A Veterans' Day project has members making 3' by 3' Valor Quilts for retired service members living in nursing homes in Nebraska City, Syracuse and other surrounding communities. These quilts are delivered by Guild members to these homes on Veterans' Day and distributed to the veterans living there during a celebratory ceremony. Another service project has members sewing place mats and coasters to be put on the residents' food trays at assisted living and nursing home facilities in the surrounding area. Guild members also collect money to regularly donate to local food pantries.

A highlight at these monthly get-togethers is the opportunity for members to display their finished projects during 'sew and tell.' Funny stories are often shared about unintended failures and their consequences followed by the ultimate successes.

Guild member Jeanene French, Cook, NE, said 'sew and tell' is her favorite Guild activity. "Seeing what other members have made is fun and exciting."

Margaret Om, Auburn, the current Guild Chair, said, "Everyone seems happy to help, from teaching techniques to sharing tips on how to clean your sewing machine."

"I like that if I have a problem, someone is there to help me," said Marilyn Masker-Allen, Syracuse, NE. "We really do care about each other." To create even more sewing and sharing time together, members hold 'sew days' several times a month. On these days, usually Wednesdays or Saturdays, members bring their sewing machine and projects to the Gathering Place on Central Ave. in Nebraska City to join in on a 'sit and sew'.

During the course of the day, members exchange creative ideas, patterns, sewing tips and crazy stories. If anyone has a problem with a pattern or a sewing machine, solutions are offered. Inspiration abounds!

"With all these members getting together, you get exposed to different techniques as well as different crafts," said member Shelly Clark from Murray. Shelly co-chairs the Guild's annual Quilt and Needlework Show, which always coincides with the first weekend of the Applejack Festival in Nebraska City. Well over one hundred quilts and needlework projects are on display at this show, which is held in the community room of the Bethel Church.

A Guild Member of the Year is selected and there is a special section at the show spotlighting her work. This year's focus will be on Cheryl Harms, Nebraska City. A member for nearly two decades, Cheryl's work features lots of wool applique quilts and wall hangings as well as traditional cotton bed quilts. Her work will be featured on stage during the three-day show.

There is also a fun basket raffle to participate in as well as a member-made pot holder sale. This year's show dates are Sept. 20 – 22. Friday, 4 pm to 7 pm, Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm, and Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm.

"As with everything, the more you put into it, the more you'll get from it," said Pat James, Auburn. "I look forward to every meeting where we share our projects and learn new techniques from speakers. The camaraderie is amazing!"



Shelly Clark from Murray, co-chairs the Guild's annual Quilt and Needlework Show, which always coincides with the first weekend of the Applejack Festival in Nebraska City.



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

## *Morton-James Public Library Calendar of Events May 2024*

### **Community Hamster Hunt**

Local businesses will display pirate hamsters in their windows from May 1st -31st.

Check your **Many Books, One Community** reading guide for a list of participating businesses or pick up a list at the Library.

Return at least 5 names to the Youth Services desk for a prize!

**May 1-31**



### **Yarn Crafters Club**

Free to attend. Bring your own project to work on.

Beginning crochet help available. Everyone welcome 15 and older!

**Wednesday, May 1 1:30-3:00 PM**

### **Chess Club**

Must be 8 years and older to join

**Every Thursday 4:30-6:00 PM**

### **Humanities Nebraska-David Marsh**

Music of the Civil War

**Thursday, May 2 7:00 PM**

### **Many Books One Community**

**American Sign Language Kickoff event**

**Saturday, May 4 10:00 AM**

### **“Bring Your Own Book” Club - NEW!**

Join us for a silent reading book club.

Bring your own e-reader, book, or grab one from our shelves and enjoy an hour of quiet reading time. Read what you want, no discussion required. Optional social time at end. Free and open to the public all ages 15+. You are welcome to bring your own non-alcoholic beverage.

**Sunday, May 5 2:00-3:30 PM**

### **Lego Club**

Must be 8 years and older to join

**Monday, May 6 3:30-5:00 PM**

### **Library Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 8 4:00 PM**

### **Card Club**

Come to meet new people and to play any card game you'd like...ages 19 +

**Thursday, May 9 1:00-3:00 PM**

### **Library Closed for Training**

**Friday, May 10**

**Bruce Arant**

### **Author/Illustrator Program**

This workshop will be free and open to all youth ages from Kindergarten - 6th grade.

**Saturday, May 11 10:00-12:30 PM**

### **Birdhouse Painting Class**

Free and open to all ages

8 and older Must register

**Monday, May 13 3:30-5:00 PM**

### **Evening Book Club**

**Silver Ladies of Penny Lane**

by Dee MacDonald

**Wednesday, May 15 5:30 PM**

### **Funeral Preplanning with Gude Mortuary**

Free and open to all

**Thursday, May 16 2:00 PM**

### **Writers' Workshop**

Free to attend. Everyone welcome

15 years and older!

**Saturday, May 18 10:00-11:00 AM**

### **Alex Kava --Author Visit**

Reservations for seating start May 1

**Sunday, May 19 2:00 PM**

### **Lego Club**

Must be 8 years and older to join

**Monday, May 20 3:30-5:00 PM**

### **Book Club-Lessons in Chemistry**

by Bonnie Garmus

**Tuesday, May 21 2:00 PM**

### **Farmers Market Storytime**

Nebraska City Farmers Market

Corner of 8th & 1st Corso

**Thursday, May 23 4:30 PM**

### **Library Closed for Memorial Day**

**Monday, May 27**

### **Adult Succulent Craft**

Free and open to all ages 19 and older

**Must register**

**Wednesday, May 29 7:00 PM**

## **Shimmer and Shake paper works by Hannah Demma**

*May Gallery Art Exhibit*

*May 1 - May 29*



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

## Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce

# PLAN A SUMMER STAYCATION IN NEBRASKA CITY

From award-winning lodging to melt-in-your-mouth restaurants...and everything in between...Nebraska City has plenty to offer those searching for a quick getaway not too far from home this summer.

### FAMILY FUN ITINERARY

Start your morning with a quick breakfast at The Downtowner (the French toast is highly recommended) and then head to the Arbor Day Farm Tree Adventure. You can spend most of the day here, exploring nearly a dozen treehouses connected by bridges and walkways, learning about trees. Grab a late lunch at Porter's in the Apple House and head to the Steinhart Aquatic Center to cool down. You can enjoy the lazy river while the kiddos check out the slides. After drying off, order a pizza from City Tap House and zip downtown for the FREE Downtown Summer Movie series available every Saturday in June and July at dusk; just be sure to pack camping chairs in your vehicle.

### LOVE TO LEARN ITINERARY

If you're looking for something a little slower paced, start the day at the Lewis & Clark Visitors Center. Located on the bluffs overlooking the Missouri River, this interactive museum includes hands-on exhibits and live re-enactments centered around the famed Lewis & Clark Expedition of 1804. After a couple of hours exploring the multi-level space, head to downtown Nebraska City and check off two more must-see museums: the Kregel Windmill Factory Museum and the Nebraska City Museum of Firefighting. Both are filled with incredibly unique displays highlighting Nebraska City's past. Grab a bite to eat at Little Ted's Pub & Grill or The Keeping Room and strolling Central Avenue to find your new favorite boutique. End the day with a stop at the Civil War Veterans Museum.

### staycation

/ˌstā'kāSH(ə)n/

INFORMAL NOUN

a vacation spent in one's home country rather than abroad, or one spent at home and involving day trips to local attractions.

### ACTIVE ADD-ONS

\*Bring your clubs and hit the links at our city course in Wildwood Park or just west of town at the Golf Club at Table Creek.

\*Enjoy our new pickleball courts in Steinhart Park.

\*Try for a turkey at Arbor Lanes Bowling Alley.

\*Stroll through Arbor Lodge State Park or along the Conservation Trail at Arbor Day Farm.

For more details (or to turn your daytrip into an overnighter), visit [NebraskaCity.com](http://NebraskaCity.com).



Top: The Treetop Village at Arbor Day Farm is a popular place for all ages.

Middle: New pickleball courts in Steinhart Park are open to the public.

Bottom: The Wildwood Historic House is one of Nebraska City's many museums.



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce

## SUMMERTIME FUN IN NEBRASKA CITY

Whether is our weekly Farmers Market (*Thursday afternoons starting May 23*), our amazing Steinhart Aquatic Center (*open daily 1-8 p.m.*), our historic museums (*times vary - call for details*), or our Downtown Summer Movie Series (*see right*), Nebraska City is a great place to spend your summer days!

**LEARN MORE AT [NEBRASKACITY.COM](http://NEBRASKACITY.COM)!**



Taylor - Shewell - Gilligan Home Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce

**Do You Love Thread? So Do We!**  
**The Heritage Needlework Guild**  
**Invites You**  
**To Join!**



**We'd Love to Get to Know You!**

Visit us at one of our meetings held on the Fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Nebraska City .

Our **2024 Quilt & Needlework Show** is held during the Applejack Festival on Sept. 20 – 22 at Bethel Church, 2400 Central Ave., in Nebraska City.



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

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For more information, call Todd at Larson Motors | 402-873-5507

18 May 2024 Your Country Neighbor This new addition to Saint Benedict's Catholic Church is a Parish Hall and Community Center.



# ARBOR CITY NEWS

*News from Nebraska City*

## The Funeral

by Bruce Madsen

*Written for and read at Lynn Wilhelms' funeral. November 20, 2001*

This is not the way I thought that it would be  
I was planning to grow old and gray  
And was planning to do it gracefully  
But this was not to happen, 'twas done by Gods own hand  
He wanted me in heaven, and beside him I shall stand

So I had to say good-bye to my wife and family  
I'm going on ahead because God is calling me  
They carried away my body and laid me down to rest  
Cause God said "Come home Son  
you've more than passed the test"

I'm thankful for the life I led and who I shared it with  
I got to see my kids grow up, they're such a precious gift  
Grandkids are the ones I'll miss, to see what they become  
But I'll watch them all from heaven  
And I'll pray for them, each one

Now the preacher said some real nice things  
Telling what I was about  
I think that I was real impressed with what he pointed out  
I tried to do the best I could while I was on this earth  
Never tried to act like I was more than I was worth

A fair and honest person is what I tried to be  
Treated all my neighbors with respect and dignity  
And if your presence here is a sign of my success  
I think I was a wealthy man, to this I will attest

I can't say that I was ready to make this final journey  
I had a lot more I wanted to do before my grand finale  
Why I had to leave so soon, I'm not sure I understand  
I can only say that I believe it's part of Gods' own plan

It was quite a trip to get from here to there  
I settled in this big old chair that was filled with softest air  
Closed my eyes and just relaxed and felt a gentle breeze  
And rode a cloud to heaven and found eternal peace

And it may not be so bad here once I get adjusted  
Find out what my duties are and with what I am entrusted  
What ever I am called to do, I will give it my best shot  
It's the way I am you know, the way that I was taught

In time we'll all adjust to the way that things are now  
Don't dwell on my omission, can't change it anyhow  
The day will come, later on, when we will meet again  
And we'll talk about the old times, when we were best of friends

So do not mourn the event or the cause of my demise  
The world keeps on going and so do your lives  
But if I can have a small place in your memory  
Remember that I am better still, cause now I'm cancer free



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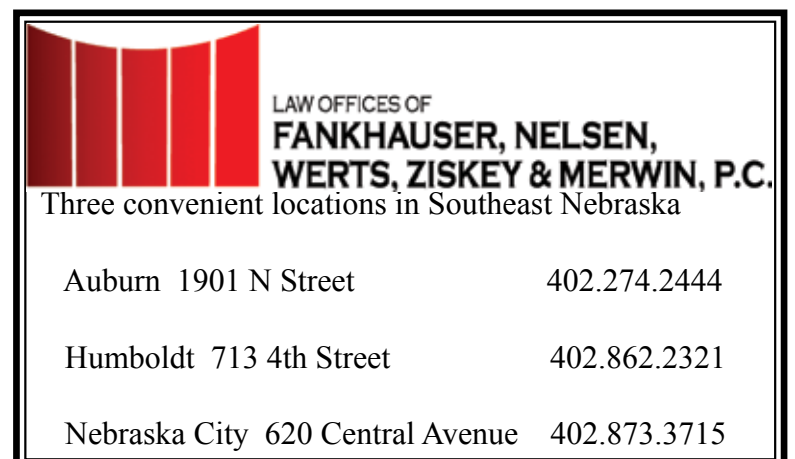


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## Window From The Past, Updated

Stephen Hassler, Peru

My father-in-law Leo, had a window on Fifth Street too, but now the drapes are drawn. Many of our elderly have a view of something they can't have; freedom to come and go as they please. Or maybe they don't drive anymore, or walking outdoors is difficult or tiring. Living alone by choice can be peaceful and rewarding, but by necessity it is often lonely. A view of the outside world might be depressing to some.

After Leo moved to this little village in the hills, I would occasionally take him with me to Auburn or Omaha. After bringing him home, he would frequently ask if there was anything he could do for me. I would say, "No, that's okay." Then I began to take him with me when I went on road trips for "Your Country Neighbor." His stories of times long ago shortened the journeys for me.

Leo enjoyed the road trips, the cafés, and restaurants. He often asked, "What town is this?" He would offer to deliver papers to houses while I visited businesses, but I didn't want him to get tired. Finally, I thought of an appropriate task. I gave him a spiral notebook and asked him to keep notes of towns visited, locations of photographic sites, and odometer readings for mileage records. Now and then Leo would have a suggestion. One suggestion was to feature a bridge in each issue. He took an interest in the Wabonsie State Park east of Nebraska City, on the Iowa side of the Missouri river. I took some pictures of Leo on the foot bridge there and related the experience in an article called "Travels with Leo," and so began a regular feature of "Your Country Neighbor." "Travels with Leo" became a favorite of many readers including some whose view of the world was through Leo's experiences rather than their own.

I have not become wealthy with this publication, but I have received many riches. Feedback from people 'on the street' is always a pleasant occurrence, but recently a woman thanked me because her 99-year-old mother liked it so very much, she said. Well, hearing that is as good as gold.

Leo has been gone for many years now, and I still have not been able to find a feature that could replace "Travels With Leo." If I ever do, you'll love it!

***Your Country Neighbor***  
**Your "2-cups-of-coffee" companion**  
**including Nebraska photos & articles**  
**with the flavor of rural America.**

## Jump Quickly At Opportunities

Dorothy Rieke, Julian

Benjamin Franklin once observed, "To succeed, jump as quickly at opportunities as you do at conclusions." Opportunities represent ways to improve, ways to build confidence, and ways to change. They focus on what is and what can be. They are gates to a better way of doing things and a better existence. They are the forerunners of successful ventures.

Opportunities, representing positive influences, are always present in our lives. Past opportunities may have been ignored; who knows what future opportunities will appear? It is the present that matters and how we react to those windows of opportunities which abound in our daily lives. Taking advantage of present day opportunities enlivens our lives offering chances for growth of self-confidence and self-esteem.

It is true that the present demands our attention without the past and future intruding. The present is what is vital, essential, and necessary. The "now" of life must be dealt with to the exception of all else.

Present day opportunities deepen our positive attitudes and develop our talents and gifts which give a sense of accomplishment. Opportunities are like the gold rings on carrousel. Opportunities are grasped as children grab those shiny gold rings for security, for reaching out, and for building self-confidence. They excite and intrigue those who are ready to change or grow.

Opportunities are, at times, elusive and may not present themselves readily. It takes recognition, determination to act, and farsightedness to take advantage of certain offerings. Keep in mind that, "Opportunities multiply as they are seized." Opportunities may mean focusing on creative growth, enlisting talents, and building skills. New abilities as well as those toned with use will be elemental in future progress.

Taking advantage of present day opportunities bring satisfying moments, new beginnings and more self-confidence. The following give behavior guidelines while pursuing opportunities:

- 1 Don't criticize others. Criticism hurts and often destroys relationships.
- 2 Don't judge others, but it is helpful to judge our own progress.
- 3 Project cheerful and positive attitudes. Cooperate with others.
- 4 Share with someone without thought of repayment.
- 5 Don't complain. Complainers have few lasting friendships.
- 6 Always do your best work.
- 7 Appreciate all blessings.
- 8 Utilize your skills and talents.
- 9 Don't hesitate to act if all seems right.
- 10 Look for joy in your current situation but be ready for new ventures.

Opportunities focus on what is and what can be. They offer glimpses of a better way of doing things and an improved existence. They are the forerunners of a better way of life, a life which pleases, inspires others, and brings the happiness of achieving.



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Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

Don't be like me  
Realize that you are not good at everything  
You go to a surgeon to fix your heart  
You go to a furnace guy to fix your furnace  
Save your money  
And Listen to those who manage money for a living  
Thank you Larry Sock UBS  
Thank you Deb Zimmer Edward Jones  
You both are awesome.  
Thank you Dr. Budler for fixing my veins  
And Dr. Puente for fixing my head  
Thank you Peter for listening to me  
And Priscilla for being kind  
This May thank you God for warmer weather and Cher the musical and  
friends and most of all my husband who loves his ditsy wife, me  
Thank you for life itself  
Thank you!

Sheila Tinkham, Lincoln

My Mom was lovely and smart  
 She had a great voice and could Irish dance the night away  
 My Mom was cool and kind  
 I was not  
 But she tried to fix my feet with ballet  
 It worked  
 I stopped tripping myself and getting stitches  
 My Irish Uncle Francis said running  
 Running would strengthen her lungs  
 Cuz I missed two months of 2nd grade with bronchitis  
 And I ran and ran and ran  
 In the hot, muggy Savannah air  
 And my cool sister with real friends not cats she had tamed was forced to run with me  
 My Mom was Irish. Carol was good at ballet, but Mom wanted one class with all the  
 buses to catch, so Carol my sister was stuck in ballet purgatory for four years, in  
 class level one  
 My Mom learned how to sew, made lovely dresses for Carol and me  
 She learned how to decorate cakes  
 She made crackers and cheese for me each day after my boring school.  
 My mom made tea and whiskey, hot toddies to soothe coughs  
 And butter and sugar and whiskey to soothe throats  
 One time I ran off in a big Savannah St. Patrick's day parade  
 I was 6 and she hurt her tail bone  
 It was my fault  
 But she never blamed me  
 My Mom was cool.  
 She had all types of friends like the cook on container ships, Jack Osborne, who gave  
 us carved elephants from Africa, like the Irish family the Sheahans who invited us over  
 for tea and cookies and she once invited a smart Filipino lady, very well put together,  
 my name is Corazon and I realized later we had dinner with the future president of the  
 Philippines  
 My mom made friends with everyone  
 With her flashing blue eyes and her warm personality  
 My mom was cool  
 In a way that I was not  
 And the love she had for Dad shined through  
 The love of God and the Catholic church  
 And the masses she had said for everyone's soul  
 She loved her two daughters Carol Ann and Sheila like a fierce tiger  
 And her three grandchildren Anne Marie like a third child and Kathleen and Thomas  
 When the chips were down  
 She always had time for a cup of tea and loads of advice  
 After 6 vein operations I could finally mow the lawn  
 I looked around the garage for the almost new mower  
 What happened?  
 Oh Gary's mower quit, so I said he could borrow ours.  
 You don't mind, do you?  
 She made meals for our neighbor Lorraine  
 And gave rides to the lady from Mass Charlotte  
 My mom was cool  
 In a way I am not  
 And three years after her death, I realize I lost my best friend  
 We were so alike, with red hair and Irish tempers  
 But she pushed me to live like the ill whales who are supported so they can breathe  
 And I beg you please call your mom and tell her you love her  
 Before she is gone  
 Happy Mother's day Mom  
 You are still the coolest in my book

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# P o e t r y

## O e t r y

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by Devon Adams, Peru

### HER GARDEN

The spirea bushes are blooming like pillows of petals. And along the old sidewalk, irises are spiking up like knives, their tough leaves shielding delicate flowers like armor.

The old lilac bushes are throwing scent in the air, like a wood sprite spraying magic perfume.

There is a row of peonies along the driveway, that come again every spring to meet my grandmother's spirit. They were her most cherished, even above the precious lilacs. Perhaps a heavenly scent pervades the halls of heaven, because she's planted them up there.

### PATRIOTS FOREVER

They are still our soldiers, the ones who didn't come home.

We love them and miss their loving arms, but it is a waiting game. We will meet again, in a time and place that is forever. But until then, they fight on, waiting for whatever war to be over.

Wearing their blood like cloaks of honor, they are the constant soldiers from yesterday.

### FANTASY GARDENS

Look out your window and see the colors bloom in the garden spot you plan to dig when the time and temperature and sunshine are just right. Today won't do, because the air has a chill and a cloud or two. Maybe not tomorrow though, with that appointment you have to keep. Don't weep over the deep weeds that crept up. If you sharpen your shovel first, digging will be so easy. When you can get to it. Oh, here are seed packets from last year! I wonder if they're still good?

## By Artist, Devon Adams PENCIL PORTRAITS OF PEOPLE, ANIMALS, & BUILDINGS

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### HOW TO KNOW?

Once there was a plan to be happy. Two young people got together forever, and believed in their dreams.

Then time ticked away and ran out the clock. Two together became two apart. Is there a way to stay in love? Or was it real? How does it feel to know?

Do we grow roots for a family tree, or stray away to another part of the garden? Planning a wedding isn't the same as living a life.

### SOLAR ECLIPSE

The dimming during a solar eclipse, a sudden change of sunshine, feels like a shift in time.

We go from bright to a gray lens in the eye of the sky.

Our brain is screaming evening, and birds are singing sleepy songs. Like the edge of a thunder wall moving overhead, the moon blocks our day. Then the shadow creeps away, leaving no tracks. But memories will be bright for years, until the next time.





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