

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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Get To Know Your Hometown Businesses Pinnacle Bank

Fourteenth in a monthly series on what businesses and services the community of Arnold has to offer.

By Janet Larreau
The Arnold Sentinel

Pinnacle Bank in Arnold will celebrate 30 years of serving its customers and the community this December. The bank was acquired by the Dinsdale family of Palmer on December 31, 1988, becoming a branch of Farmers State Bank and Trust of Lexington. Later, all Nebraska banks owned by the Dinsdales became Pinnacle Bank.

The company has grown substantially over the years. There are now 149 Pinnacle Bank locations in eight states, including Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, Missouri, and Iowa. Although big in size, the Pinnacle Bank operation keeps grounded, offering “hometown service” in its many locations.

In Arnold, that hometown service has come from a list of presidents who were - and are - trusted in the community, including John McDonald, Rick Chohon and Ron VanSkiver. Larry Moran, who was hired as a loan officer by John McDonald, and eventually served as president, retired in December of 2015 after 30 years of service.

After serving as a loan officer starting in 2014, Todd Thompson stepped into Larry's shoes, and is the current president. He gives a lot of credit to the experienced staff that greet

and help customers as they walk in the door. All of the girls have worked there well over a decade.

Diane Conner has worked at the bank for 37 years, taking three years off in the 1980s. She was hired by Arnold State Bank President Ken Wehrman.

“Diane is our historian,” said Todd.

Barb Peterson, who was hired by John McDonald, will celebrate 30 years at the bank this December. Caro Lehmkuhler has worked at the bank for 24 years, and was hired by Ron VanSkiver.

A relative “youngster” is Patty Goodenow, who has been at the bank 16 years, and was hired by Larry Moran.

The bank’s history wouldn’t be complete without mentioning Beverly Engleman, who retired in 2013 after 23 years of service. She was hired by John McDonald.

All but one of the staff went through the big remodel in 1992, when the Arnold branch was renovated to better accommodate customers. A new bank vault and an updated teller line was installed during the remodel.

“I am very fortunate to have the great staff that I do,” said Todd. “There is not an employee here that does just ‘one’ thing. We all help each other out when needed and wear many different hats. The years of experience the staff has is



Photo/Debbie Connolly

Pinnacle Bank Branch President Todd Thompson (seated) and his experienced staff, including (from left) Diane Conner, Patty Goodenow, Caro Lehmkuhler, and Barb Peterson, all enjoy working in a smaller community where they know almost all of their customers on a personal basis.

very valuable in all aspects of the bank.”

Todd went on to say, “Pinnacle Bank operates under the community bank model. This allows us to make local decisions to best fit our community. No Pinnacle Bank is exactly like the other one. Ownership makes sure each branch is pulling their weight in the com-

munity. It is very important to them that we are supporting our community as much possible. Pinnacle Bank gives back to the community in many different ways, including monetary donations to the many great organizations we have here in town, along with the volunteer hours our employees put in during SORC, Rotary,

church organizations, Chamber and Alumni. All of the staff here are very lucky to have all the great customers that we work with. We have all discussed before how much we enjoy working in a smaller community, and knowing almost all of our customers on a personal basis.”

School Receives Very Positive Review

From March 19 to 21, 2018, AdvancED conducted its Engagement Review for Performance Accreditation at Arnold Public Schools. During this time, the three person team with AdvancED reviewed documentation, observed classrooms, and interviewed students, staff, board members, and parents to gain a better understanding of the school district and what it does on a daily basis. At the end of their three day process, the team compiled a final report and rating based on AdvancED standards.

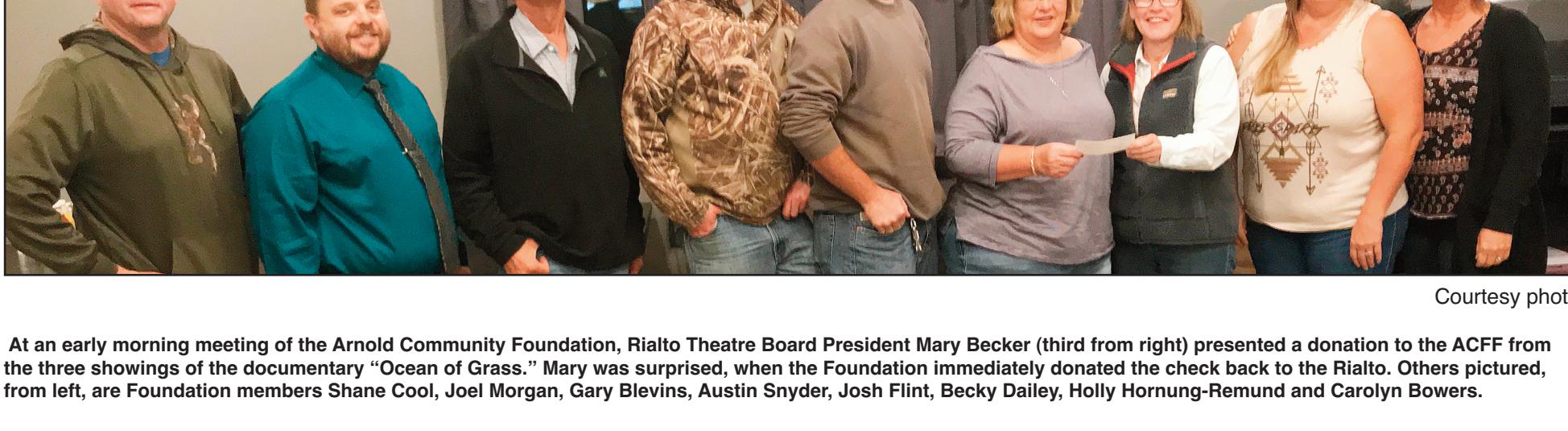
Some areas recognized for ex-

ceeding expectations include supporting students in their futures and career planning while making community connections, establishing defined roles and responsibilities, and adjusting operations and procedures to improve performance of the school. Other strengths included longevity of staff, use of technology, and allocating resources with identified needs and priorities for the district in a responsible manner.

“Targeted areas of improvement identified by the review team included areas that we recognize and are currently ad-

dressing as standards and expectations change at the state level,” said Principal Joel Morgan. “Those areas of improvement include curriculum alignment to new standards and continuing to collect and analyze feedback data to make informed decisions. Overall, the review was a very positive experience that allowed us to showcase the great things that are happening here at APS. This experience also generated many conversations as to how we can continue to move forward and grow as a district.”

Foundation Shows Support



Courtesy photo

At an early morning meeting of the Arnold Community Foundation, Rialto Theatre Board President Mary Becker (third from right) presented a donation to the ACFF from the three showings of the documentary “Ocean of Grass.” Mary was surprised, when the Foundation immediately donated the check back to the Rialto. Others pictured, from left, are Foundation members Shane Cool, Joel Morgan, Gary Blevins, Austin Snyder, Josh Flint, Becky Dailey, Holly Hornung-Remund and Carolyn Bowers.

“Ocean of Grass” film check donated, then given back

By Janet Larreau
The Arnold Sentinel

Close to 300 people paid admission to view three Sunday showings of the 86-minute long documentary “Ocean of Grass” at the Rialto Theatre during the month of September.

The streets were packed with cars, as 93 people were admitted for the first showing, 97 for the 2nd, and 101 for the 3rd.

“I don’t know where they all came from. I didn’t know 75 to 80 percent of them,” said Rialto Theatre President Mary Becker.

The theater regularly has seating for 82 people, but more seating had to be brought in. People were turned away at each showing to keep the aisles clear.

“People missed the first showing, the 2nd, and by the 3rd, they were sitting in their cars at 1:30 for a movie that started at 3:00,” said Mary.

When film director George Jouras initially called Mary about showing the movie in Arnold, he wondered if the theater could donate the proceeds to the Custer County Foundation because that is what the Tiffany Theatre did in Broken Bow. Mary told him that Arnold had its own community foundation, and they would be happy to donate to the local non-profit.

“The Arnold Community Foundation Fund (ACFF) has helped the theater in the past. They are very supportive,” said Mary. “There was a suggestion that the theater raise the ticket price to \$10.00 as a fundraiser for the ACFF, but the theater board made the decision to keep ticket prices the same.

“The majority who came were senior citizens,” she said. “On Sundays, the ticket price for seniors is \$6.00. We could have made substantially more, but

the community has supported the theater, and we wanted to make this an affordable movie.”

At the first Sunday showing, Jouras was there. After the movie, at the newly-opened BrewBakers, he spoke about the film and answered questions.

“The first week, an anonymous person bought all the coffee, smoothies and cookies for everyone who went to BrewBakers. The 2nd and 3rd week, the theater had complimentary cookies there, and everyone bought their own drinks,” said Mary.

After it was all said and done, at 6:30 a.m. on a Wednesday morning, Mary attended an ACFF meeting to present members a check for \$1,784.98 from the ticket sales.

“What did they do when I gave them the check? They gave it back to us, and we are so ap-

preciative,” said Mary.

Separate concession sales from showings of the film totaled \$617.00.

Ticket sales, along with memorial money donated to the theater in memory of Mary’s mom, Elizabeth Elliott, and a recent \$1,000.00 donation from SORC, can now be used to update the theater’s speaker system.

“We’ve had a few people mention to us that they cannot hear very well in the theater. We’ve noticed a decrease in our senior attendance, so this spring we realized that we could enhance the sound by adding two more front speakers. We have a bid, so we will go ahead and make that purchase in hopes that it will make a difference for people who are a little more hard of hearing,” said Mary, who also mentioned that they will be looking into some closed caption devices for the

theater.

Jouras told Mary that the Arnold theater could show the movie as many times as they wanted, and left it with her. Due to his generosity, the film will have three more showings: Wednesday, October 24, at 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, October 28 at 3:00 p.m.; and Sunday, November 4 at 3:00 p.m.

“I know it’s harvest time, but we’re going to give people another opportunity to see the movie,” she said.

The theater is also seriously considering showing the movie at a Saturday matinee during Alumni weekend in May.

Filmed over a 22-month span on the McGinn ranch in Blaine County, “Ocean of Grass” provides a compelling and honest window into the ranching lifestyle, and a view back to many Americans’ historic vision of what makes this country great.