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The Arnold Sentinel

They've a Story to Tell

By Darlene Rimpley

Did you know...
...that we used to have horse races in Arnold?

...that the Arnold race track was considered the finest in the state?

...that we had dog races?
...that we had polo games?
...that we had boxing and wrestling bouts?

...that the Arnold High football games used to be played at the state park?

...that we had a Sports, Inc. organization that was in charge of all of the above?

Bobbie Smith brought the first information to me for the series "A Story to Tell," and related how much fun those days were.

With the help of Bobbie, minutes from the Sports, Inc., organization, and file issues of *The Sentinel*, I am going to tell you about all of these happenings right here in Arnold, Nebraska.

In August of 1949, 51 persons invested in the Arnold Sports, Inc., which was still to be formally organized. Out of the 51 original investors, Bobbie is the only one still living. However, many descendants of the originals still live in Arnold: Fay Finch, Ollie Forrester, Raymond Croghan, Harold Strasburg, Bud Beshaler, Floyd Lucas, John Dennis, Chester Bean, Robert McDowell, Bob Spargo, Fred Vogel, Orville Davenport, Stuart Watson and Don Smith. Bobbie related that Stella Smith was the one who really got people interested in organizing this group.

The minutes of the first formal meeting showed November 22 as the date, with the Articles of Incorporation being approved by those present. The Articles were submitted to Attorney Roy Blixt to read over and make any changes as needed. Elected to the Board of Directors were: Stella A. Smith, Oliver Forrester, Clarence Mills, Bert Fochtman and Joe McClure. Gerald Harter, Bert Fochtman and Stuart Watson were appointed to promote baseball activity in behalf of the Corporation. The motion was made, seconded and carried that no liquor be allowed on the

Bobbie Smith Relates Fun Days of Arnold Sports, Inc.



Darlene Rimpley and Bobbie Smith were in *The Sentinel* office recently, researching old newspaper files from the days of the "Arnold Sports, Inc." Bobbie is holding a treasured baseball that he hit over the fence that was later signed by other players of the team. Also pictured is a baseball schedule from that same time period. (Janet Larreau photo)

ball diamond or on the leased area of Arnold Sports, Inc.

The November 24 edition of *The Sentinel* showed the notice of the election of the Sports group directors, with Clarence Mills elected president, Oliver Forrester vice-president and Stella Smith secretary-treasurer. McClure, Bob McDowell and Elmer Geiser were appointed as the horse race committee, and Ray Croghan and Geiser as special police on the Arnold Sports lease.

In the same issue, a caption read: "Several Hundred See Horse Races on Sunday." The story related that three races were run at the State Park when several hundred persons were on hand to see their fa-

vorite run, and to back their opinions, if they were in such a mind... A horse owned by J.C. McClure won two of the races, and McClure, promoter of the meet, expressed his satisfaction at the good spirit shown by spectators and contestants, and promised another match in the near future. A fund of \$148.65 was realized for the sport fund."

With the group officially organized, the March 9, 1950, *Arnold Sentinel* reported, "Arrangements for lease of the Village portion of the state park were completed by the Village Board on Monday evening, whereby the rodeo grounds were leased to Clarence Johnson for five years and part of

9th in a Series on Arnold's
"Young at Heart"
Residents

instated in the high school in 1947, after a long hiatus due to the death of a player during a game in 1916, and thus there was no football field at the high school.

The sports club then rented Hartman's speakers for the 1950 season for \$50.00, plus three passes for the family to baseball and races. A contract was also drawn up between Frank Steel (party of the second part) and the Sports, Inc., for concessions, and among the agreements was the "party of the second part to not charge patrons unreasonable prices for his goods and services."

In April 1950 the Arnold Bearcats baseball team joined two leagues: the Platte Loup and the Platte Valley, with the schedules showing 17 games to be played at Arnold, and included the towns of Arcadia, Amherst, Stapleton, Mason City, Miller, Eddyville, North Platte, Merna, Cozad and Dunning. In looking back to the financial records in August of 1949, Arnold Sports, Inc., had paid \$8,000.00 to have lights installed at the Sports Park, and Arnold was one of the few towns in either league that had lights to allow night games.

Write-ups of the baseball games during the year of 1950 were many, but one interested me: Arnold B team won 12-4 over Stapleton, and for the last three innings the pitcher was Bob Watson and the catcher was Stuart Watson.

Several more horse races were scheduled throughout the summer, and at the Fall Festival, races were set for Friday afternoon, which included one-quarter mile saddle horse race, 220 yard pony race for 14 years and under, barrel races, a stake race, one-quarter mile free-for-all, and a 300 yard free-for-all. The admission charge for spectators was 60 cents for adults and 30 cents for children.

It is interesting to note that that year the A.H.S. football team won nine games, making

Continued on page 2.

"Bobbie Hits a Home-Run"

In 1953 the Arnold Sports, Inc. continued to make improvements at the Sports park. The backfield on the baseball diamond was filled in, and a six foot high fence was erected around the outfield at a cost of \$1,807.00 for lumber, paint and labor. John Kirby worked hard and "sold" advertising to the businesses to put on the fence, which came to \$1,716.64. Bobbie hit a ball over the fence in the August 13 game, and one of the kids who was in the field to shag balls brought the ball back to Bobbie, who had each of the players sign it, and he still treasures that ball. Unfortunately, he found that kids had taken the ball to play with and many of the names are worn away.

State Fair Picks Up Zero Waste Award

The Nebraska State Fair was the recipient of the Zero Waste Award from WasteCap Nebraska at a ceremony held in Lincoln this week.

According to State Fair Facilities Director, Jaime Parr, "The award recognizes an entity that has made significant strides to reduce inputs, reduce waste, recycle and/or reuse byproducts. "Zero Waste" is having a landfill diversion rate of at least 90%. That means keeping waste product out of the landfill to reduce our footprint."

To further aid in the fair's recycling efforts, in July, the State Fair earned a Recycling Equipment Grant from the Nebraska State Recycling Association through funds provided by the Nebraska Environmental Trust. The grant for \$8,528 and additional funds supplied by Casey's General Stores and the Nebraska State Fair 1868 Foundation allowed the State Fair to purchase 12 four-yard recycling containers. These containers are used inside the food pods to help Concessionaires sort waste between the landfill and recyclable waste containers.

Earlier this year, the State Fair received a grant from Keep America Beautiful which included 100 wire frame recycling bins for plastic bottles and

aluminum cans. This effort allowed the fair to recycle a ton more plastic bottles over 2014.

Parr said, "We strive to see increases in all our recycling from year to year. Of course we couldn't do it without the help of fairgoers, vendors and others who believe in the cause."

Recycling includes:

- 7.87 tons of cardboard
- 3.03 tons of plastic
- 1,428 pounds of aluminum cans
- 900 gallons of used fryer oil
- 517 tons of livestock bedding

Parr said, "Fair guests can look for more sustainability projects at future fairs and also an increased focus on how we might educate fairgoers on reusing or repurposing items; how to use solar and wind power; how agriculture can increase participation and other sustainability programs."

Local and regional partners in the fair's annual sustainability effort include, epochLAB, the Grand Island Area Clean Community System, Kramer's, Mid-Nebraska Disposal, Nebraska Renewable Energy, O'Neill Wood Resources, Second Nature and WasteCap Nebraska.

The 2016 Nebraska State Fair will be August 26 through September 5.



Good Year at the Pumpkin Patch

Six-month-old Jack Bierman sits atop a gigantic pumpkin grown by his parents, Merle and Leron Bierman, at the Bierman Pumpkin Patch located in the south part of Arnold. "Our largest pumpkin weighed 106 pounds," said Leron, who noted that the 2015 growing season produced 15 giants - the largest pumpkins they have ever grown. "We planted this year's patch on a hill, and with good rains and good run-off, we had excellent results." The pumpkin patch has been open since the beginning of October, and within the first two weeks, three-quarters of the over 200 pumpkins were sold to customers from the towns of Arnold, Stapleton, Gandy, Gothenburg, Grand Island and McCook. All the kids groups in town have also enjoyed learning about pumpkins and playing games at the patch. This marks the third year the Biermans have been open for business. The first year, some 600 pumpkins were grown, and the second not-so-successful season produced only about 100. The same "Prize Winning" variety of seed that produced these whoppers was planted last year, with not near the results. On a side note, fortunately, the photo-bombing cat crossing Jack's path is grey, not black.