

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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## A Family Affair

Pumpkins are ready after a successful growing season at Bierman Acres Pumpkin Patch



Photo/Debbie Connely

Seated in the middle of this season's fully stocked harvest of pumpkins is the Bierman family: (back, l-r) Paxton, Lyla; (front, l-r) Maverick, Leron, Waylon, Merle, and Jack.

The Bierman Acres Pumpkin Patch in Arnold officially opens this weekend after a busy growing season. Growing the large patch is a family affair for the seven members of the family, including parents Merle and Leron Bierman and kids Paxton, 10; Lyla, 7; Maverick, 5; Jack, 3; and Waylon, 1 1/2.

The Biermans started their patch back in 2013, when the family who used to grow a local pumpkin patch moved away.

“We figured we would just take over for them to provide the locals with pumpkins,” said Leron. “We have taken our kids to other pumpkin patches, and we know it can be pricey, especially for larger families. Our goal is to not charge too much.”

All of the seeds are planted in the be-

ginning of June and harvest begins mid-September.

“We all plant. The kids help their dad, Merle, harvest, so we all get to work together. Sometimes, extended family will also come out to help,” said Leron.

The Bierman family knew very little when starting up their patch. Inspiration comes from family friends in Michigan who have a big pumpkin patch. Merle and Leron reach out to them for input and how they do things.

“We have had a couple of rough years. This year we planted more just in case, and it is also our first year planting out at Merle’s parents’ farm. Our outcome has been great!” said Leron.

The Biermans have a huge variety of pumpkins and gourds. As for activities, they have a corn sandbox, they get the

tricycles out, and a big chalk board.

They also have quite a few animals, including a potbelly pig, a llama, sheep, goats, horses, bunnies, kittens, and a calf for everyone to enjoy. The daycare, preschool and story hour kids all schedule appointments to visit during October.

“It’s a good chance for them to get out of the classroom to learn about pumpkins and animals. A favorite activity for them has been rolling barrels in the mud,” said Leron.

For the oldest kids, Paxton and Lyla, having the pumpkin patch at their house and having all the kids come out has been their favorite part. Maverick, who was just a baby when they first started, says going to Grandma’s house to pick pumpkins and load them to

bring to the pumpkin patch is what he enjoys most.

“It’s a great learning experience for the kids. They learn a good work ethic and how to talk to people that they don’t know, so it’s fun to watch them come out of their shells,” said Leron.

All year long, the family thinks about what they can add to the pumpkin patch. They look forward to it every year.

The pumpkin patch is located right in town, making it very convenient for locals, and easy to find for those coming to visit from outside of town. The patch is open Friday through Sunday in October from 3:00 p.m. to dark, or by appointment throughout the week.

## Third Season Boutique comes to Arnold

### Brandi Hild will open flower shop in October



Photo/Diana Coleman

Brandi Hild, owner of Third Season Boutique, stands next to her new storefront.

By Diana Coleman  
Sentinel Staff

There are exciting changes happening in downtown Arnold. The newest business to open its doors goes by the name of Third Season Boutique.

Brandi and Keith Hild, owners of Third Season Boutique in Callaway, were looking to expand their business. Through visiting with Shavonne Schacher, owner of Flowers by Shavonne, an agreement was made to rent the building, and the name was changed.

The name comes from autumn being considered the third season, and it happens to be Brandi’s favorite.

This has been an evolving venture for Brandi. In 2014 she and her family lived in Brady, Nebraska. She suffered the

loss of her sister-in-law, who had a deep faith in God. Brandi wanted to honor her in some way, so she decided to open a boutique. To honor her sister-in-law, and her faith, she gives 10 percent of all profits to youth ministry.

She closed the store in Brady when her family moved to Callaway. Brandi brought her knowledge and experience with her, continuing to do work from online and phone orders. She soon realized that she needed a storefront in Callaway. There were many empty buildings, but they were being used for storage. In May of 2017 Brandi found a building to buy. It is an older, historic building that sits south of the grocery store. Brandi did some remodeling and cleaning and got her new business up and running. She had her soft opening for Valentine’s Day.

She began looking at the need for floral services in the sandhills region of Nebraska.

“I recognized that the floral services at bigger events such as funerals and weddings were being met; however, the day-to-day needs were not. I felt that Arnold was a perfect location,” she said.

Brandi plans to open her doors in Arnold in October. Non-traditional and eclectic gifts are what Brandi is hoping to bring to the community.

“I try to pursue the talents of local artists, such as metal workers, people who work with wood, photographers and others. It is important to highlight local talent while trying to fulfill gift

giving needs with unique items. I want to promote items that are not found in other places,” she said.

Brandi is also hoping to provide highly customized products. Her future plans include offering different classes, such as floral design, woodworking for women, using reclaimed wood and wreath making just to name a few of her ideas. These classes would be held once a month either in Callaway or Arnold.

Flowers will always be available. She is excited to source some of her own flowers. She has space at both store loca-

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Photo/Janet Larreau

## Hazardous Waste Collection

As vehicles line up at a drop-off point at Arnold’s street shop, a volunteer dumps used paint into a collection bin at Saturday’s Household Hazardous Waste Collection. The free collection was brought to area towns by Lexington Area Solid Waste Agency, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality’s Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grants Program and many volunteers to protect the environment.