

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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The Spirit of Giving

Residents and students pack over 800 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child

By Melody Jennings
OCC Organizer

If you had peeked into the school gym on Wednesday evening, Nov. 14, you would have thought you were watching an anthill in action, but it was not a sporting event. It was a group of young people and older volunteers setting up for another type of event - a community service project that travels around the world.

Theresa Yentes (the Witthuhn kids' grandmother) likes to come from Arizona to help with this project and see her grandkids. She tirelessly opened all the packages of school supplies and dumped them into containers. Shortly before 11:00 p.m., we decided to call it a night and go home knowing that we could finish in the morning.

Before school began on the 15th, tables were organized, trash emptied, volunteers arrived and we were ready. We looked up to find the 7th graders patiently waiting for us to let them start, and then we were off and running! Since they have packed shoeboxes for a few years now, these kids knew just what to do and got right to work even before our

One of the leaders remarked that seeing all the stuff and the kids in motion was a "sensory overload!"

Meanwhile, in the lunch room, there was another group of faithful volunteers who

came to assemble the shoe boxes. I don't even know who was there, because I was in the gym, but I am thankful for these people who come each year specifically to do this job. Before the evening was over, they had put together and stacked 530 boxes on the east wall of the gym.

First, the older boys' youth group rolled out the mats to protect the gym floor, set up tables, and carried in a small mountain of stuff from vehicles, and piled it in the middle of the gym floor. As the boys left for supper, the Ground Zero Jr. High Youth Group arrived for the next phase. They immediately went to work distributing the goods to the appropriate tables and piling all the extra supplies on the stage.

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Photo/Debbie Connelly

Colbi Smith (right) and Jake Halstead help elementary student Brayden Brown choose from a large selection of donated toys to add to his shoebox for a child in need this Christmas during the annual packing party in the school's gymnasium



Photo/Renee Bubak

Molly (Tatum Cool) decides to trust orphan Boy (Leighton Bubak) with her important secret about what is really hidden in the Queen's trunk.

Get To Know Your Hometown Businesses Agri Affiliates

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

By Diana Coleman
The Arnold Sentinel

It is no secret that Arnold is an agricultural community; however, there is a business that has been operating in Arnold for a few years that many may not know of. It's called Agri Affiliates, an employee owned company that was established in 1985, with headquarters at North Platte. Tony Eggleston, who lives northeast of Arnold, is an appraiser with the company and serves clients from the Arnold office.

The first Arnold office location was a rental, and in 2013, Tony and his wife Krista, purchased the building that many people remember as the Model Café. A remodel project began which changed the interior of

the building completely. The east half of the building was made into modern offices where Agri Affiliates is currently located.

After the dust settled, Tony was pleased to say, "Brad Atkins decided to hang his hat with us, and we are glad to have him."

Tony began his journey with Agri Affiliates in the mid-2000's. He achieved the title of Rural Appraiser, which is an elite level. To attain this, a person must have five years of experience, 300 course hours completed, write a demonstration report, pass an oral exam, pass an interview and pass a two-day written exam. Tony is also a member of the national organization named American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. Only about



Photo/Diana Coleman

Tony Eggleston has been with Agri Affiliates since the mid-2000's, and serves clients from a remodeled office in downtown Arnold.

20 percent of appraisers reach this level.

Tony shared that Agri Affiliates is a strong reputable company that is one of the few to offer all three real estate services. Those services include: sales, management and appraisals. Because of these services, Tony travels to all the counties in western Nebraska to pull all the sales from these counties. He then enters them into a data base for the company to use for appraisal work and to supply to the salesmen

for other evaluations. This helps to inform people of a more honest and current value of their product.

A project that Tony has helped put together is a mapping program. This computer program uses symbols of different shapes and colors to record sales across the state. These symbols are put on a map, and the different symbols identify what type of property it is, such as grass, pivot etc. The map will determine if the sale is pending or final. Tony said this

mapping system is very effective in monitoring the market in certain areas.

Tony's main job is doing agricultural related appraisals. He also does some sales, and manages one agriculture property. He prefers to not appraise residential properties. He said appraisals are done for a few different reasons. Sixty percent are used for lending purposes, 20 percent are for estate work, and ten percent for litigation.

All of Agri Affiliates offices are in Nebraska, but the company does work in surrounding states. There are eight owner/employees who can offer at least one of the three services that the company provides.

In addition to his job with Agri Affiliates, Tony is the president of the Arnold School Board, and serves on the Executive Council of the ASMRA. He and wife Krista have three children: Wyatt and wife Rebecca, Morgan and Tayten. They also have a cattle operation, and have been active in 4-H.

Tony said, "The greatest thing about my job is that I get to see a lot of different operations.

The good, the bad and the ugly.

I love to see how people do things, what works and what

doesn't. The worst of what I do, I still enjoy."