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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Recruiting/ Retaining Volunteers Topic of Feb. 24 Program

Arnold Residents
Involved in Planning
Leadership Program

Organizations in the Arnold community can learn how to recruit, retain and appreciate volunteers at a program set for February 24, at Mid-Plains Community College in Broken Bow.

The program, scheduled from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., is titled "Growing Your Volunteers Into Leaders!" Arnold residents Tammy Weinman and Heather Hagler, partnered up with two Broken Bow residents, Amy Cyboron and James Callaway, to develop the program for the Leadership Custer County program which is sponsored by the Custer County Economic Development Corporation.

Heather Borck from the North Platte extension office will speak on retaining volunteers for your organization. Shane Potter from the State 4-H office will also be speaking on skills and motivating interest in volunteerism. This should be a very informative and inspirational talk for any organization that utilizes volunteers.

The program is free to the public and will include refreshments.

Weinman said that she and Hagler became involved in the Leadership Custer County program through former director of the Arnold Economic Development Corporation, Sandy Hicks. Through LCC, groups are formed and programs are planned to benefit all of Custer County.

"Any organization that supports and needs volunteers will benefit from the program," said Weinman.

For more information, go to custercountynetne.com.

Pancake Feed Set for Feb. 19

Arnold Rotary will host their annual Sausage and Pancake Feed on Thursday, February 19, at the Arnold Community Center. Serving will be from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Proceeds from the event are used to fund Rotary projects throughout the year. Some of the recent and upcoming projects that Rotary has sponsored include: purchasing a freezer for the Arnold Food Pantry, sending high school students to RYLA, awarding a high school senior scholarship and painting and repairing picnic tables at the Arnold park.

Work Progressing on Roping Arena

It was announced this week that the roping club has removed the old roping box and the old pens on the west end of the Arnold Roping Arena.

"We have been working on moving out the old dirt and now have the depth to the hard pan level," said Lisa Nelson. "This is where we are having some issues. We need someone to donate sand from a blowout, approximately 80 truck loads."

The club is also looking for someone to donate a few trucks, a pay loader and a few drivers to drive the trucks.

Nelson announced they have some quotes for a new roping box and system.

"We are also still looking for monetary donations to help cover the cost of the roping box and other improvements," she said.

The 4-H is in the process of doing more fundraisers such as a raffle for a three-horse trailer, concession stand sales, as well as some others. If anyone has questions, they can contact Mike Harvey, Holly Hornung Remund or Nelson.



(From left) Katie Weinman with daughter Makenna, Katie Blowers with daughter Bree and Katie Coleman with son Daniel, all age two, are expecting babies again in 2015. In the last go around, the three Katies delivered within days of each other. This time, they will deliver in three consecutive months. (Kendra Veirs photo)

Baby Boom

Arnold Experiencing Upsurge in Expectant Parents

Katie Blowers, Katie Weinman and Katie Coleman have a lot more in common than sharing the same first name. They are happily married to farmers and raising their kids on the farm. Two of them teach, and most notably, all three are expecting babies - again.

"The 3 Katies," as they're known in Arnold, all had babies within days of each other in 2012. Weinman delivered daughter Makenna on November 20, Blowers had daughter Bree on the 23rd, and Coleman welcomed son Daniel Dean on the 27th.

In 2015 their due dates land in three consecutive months, with Coleman due on March 1,

Blowers on April 24, and Weinman on May 28.

The 2015 Katie babies will be part of a relative "baby boom" in School District #89, with 15 babies expected to be born by year's end, and some having already arrived. Nailing down a definite number is proving to be difficult, but the "boom" has definitely begun, with upwards of 20 reported.

Contributing to the current baby boom - and the many small children now seen in the district - are a growing number of young couples like the Weinmans, Blowers and Colemans, who have stayed, located or relocated to the district in search of a good place to raise a family.

The three Katies have one other thing in common: love brought them to the place they now call home, and one proposal came on Valentine's Day.

Cam and Katie

Weinman, who lives southwest of Arnold with husband, Cam, and children Delanie (5) and Makenna (2), is originally from Hay Springs. She and Cam met online and have been married for 3 1/2 years.

"I think that being on the farm/ranch is the best place to raise kids, and I'm very glad my kids have that opportunity to be a part of it," said Weinman. "They like helping with whatever is going on, whether it's in the tractor or truck or with the cows, and it's a special time that we all get to be together. I really enjoy helping and being a part of this lifestyle. I wouldn't trade it for anything!"

Dan and Katie

Blowers, who teaches first grade at Arnold Public Schools, and who lives south of Arnold with husband Dan, and children Cole (14), Carly (11), Cache (8) and Bree (2), is originally

from the heart of the Sandhills in Cody. She grew up enjoying the best of both worlds: small town life, as well as being a part of a family ranch that was established in 1888 and is currently operated by her brother and parents. She and Dan have been married since December 3, 2011. She said the benefits of raising children in a farming/ranching environment are endless.

"Country Kids' are exposed to so many different things: everything from feeding cows, riding in a combine or sprayer, checking cows and tagging calves, and simply enjoying the peace and quiet and wide open spaces," she said. "The opportunities are countless: riding horses, 4-wheelers and dirt bikes, hunting and exploring! All of these agricultural related experiences help instill the importance and value of a hard day's work. We spend more time as a family doing things that we love than we did while living in town. If you ask the kids what they enjoy the most, the answer is always 'the animals' - bucket calves, kittens, horses and cows! We all tag along with Dan throughout the year, and the kids learn such valuable lessons about farming and ranching simply through observing and participating. We all love being a part of farming and ranching and living in the country. Cache has been inspired to be a 'francher,' which is what he has named Dan, who farms and ranches, when he grows up."

Matt and Katie

Coleman, who teaches preschool in Arnold, and lives southwest of Arnold with husband Matt and kids Josiah Matthew (7), Anna Kate (5 1/2), Chloe Nadiene (5 3/4) and Daniel Dean (2), spent most of her childhood years in Cottonwood, California, a small town of 3,000. Cottonwood is known as the "gateway to the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland, where directions are found by locating mountains, north to Mt. Shasta, east to Mt. Lassen and west to the Costal Range, with the south looking upon the rolling range land of the Upper Sacramento Valley.

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Arnold Girl's Views on Veterans Earns Her First Place Award at State Level

Tatum Cool received the first place award in the State of Nebraska in the Annual VFW Patriot's Pen Competition last weekend in Lincoln. The announcement came at an event hosted by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, where the top three finalists and their families waited in great anticipation to hear which essay would win and be sent on to compete at the National level.

Tatum and her family, along with the other two Patriot's Pen finalists and 10 Voice of Democracy finalists and their families from across the state, enjoyed a full day of impressive events in Lincoln on Friday, February 6, including a tour of the State Capitol, a tour and lunch at the Governor's Mansion, a "Parade of Winners" and announcement of the state winners, followed by the evening Mid Winter Conference Banquet with key note speaker, National VFW Commander in Chief Brian Duffy.

When she was announced as the winner at the evening banquet, Tatum was asked to read her essay and received a standing ovation from the 300-plus VFW and Ladies Auxiliary members in attendance.

Tatum wrote the 400-words-or-less essay, "Why I Appreciate America's Veterans," for the VFW Patriot's Pen Competition as a requirement for Mrs. Badgley's Eighth Grade English class. She won at the local level and her essay advanced to the district level, where she won first place. She received written notification in January that her essay had placed in the top three in the



Tatum Cool (third from left) receives the State award for the Patriot's Pen Competition from Nebraska VFW and Auxiliary dignitaries last weekend in Lincoln. Tatum's essay will now move on to be judged at the National level. (Courtesy photo)

state out of the 3,128 entries across Nebraska.

The Patriot's Pen (grades 6-8) and Voice of Democracy (grades 9-12) competitions are programs to recognize and help students with college tuition and give them the opportunity to express their views on democracy and patriotism. This year, the Department of Nebraska Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary awarded students \$32,960.00 for their essays. Over \$2.2 million will be awarded this year at

the National level.

As the state level first place winner, Tatum was awarded \$1,000.00. Her essay will be sent on to compete at the National level, where the winner will receive \$5,000.00 and an all-expense paid trip to Washington, DC.

Tatum's essay was a very personal and touching tribute to her late great-grandfather, John Nelson. Tatum's great-grandmother and John's widow, Patty Parks-Nelson, joined Tatum and her family in Lincoln for

the event.

In her essay Tatum wrote, "I knew (my great-grandfather), late in life when years had stolen his youth. One might have been surprised that this man who struggled with his memory and walked with a shuffle was once a great war hero. But it is our duty to dig deeper, to uncover lost stories and forgotten heroes so that we can fully appreciate the sacrifices our veterans made for our

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