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South Loup River Valley

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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The Arnold Sentinel

Strasburg Benefit is Saturday

A free will donation benefit supper and silent auction will be held for Juliet Strasburg on Saturday, February 28, at the Arnold Community Center. Serving will be from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Silent auction items are still being taken this week, and may be dropped of at Nebraska Farmhouse Antiques, or donations can be made by calling Ashley Meyer at 308-660-5936.

Juliet is the daughter of Justin and Jailyn Strasburg. She has been diagnosed with the rare Vici Syndrome, and has spent many weeks of her young life in the hospital due to complications from the syndrome.

The event is being sponsored by the AHS Class of 2000 and Thrivent Financial.

Entries Being Taken for Chili Cook-off

Arnold Chamber will host the 27th Chili Cook-off on Saturday, March 14. Entries are now being taken and can be found on the Arnold website at www.arnoldne.org or by contacting Patty Lamberty.

Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place chili. People's Choice, Mr. and Ms. Congeniality and Best Decorated Booth.

The event includes public tasting of the competition chili and public serving of potato and chicken noodle soup from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Crow's fourth grade class will be selling pie as a fundraiser.

This year's entertainment will be a performance by the "Men on the Mountain" quartet.

Cheryl Carson and Patty Lamberty are this year's chairpersons.

Deadline Approaching for Letters

The deadline of March 15 is fast approaching for letters to be submitted for *The Alumni News*.

The annual publication - mailed out in mid-April - gives alumni details on the upcoming reunion, and also takes a look back at last year's event. A big part of *The News* are letters written by alumni, filling everyone in on what has been happening in their lives since graduation. Letters from honored class alums are especially sought.

If letters have been received by classmates who are planning individual reunions, please submit to this year's *Alumni News* editor Janet Larreau.

Letters can be e-mailed to arnoldsentinel@gpcom.net with the subject line Alumni News, or mailed to: The Arnold Sentinel, PO Box 136, Arnold NE 69120.

Contract Offered to New APS Principal

On Saturday, the Arnold School Board and members of the APS staff interviewed four candidates for the position of Principal. All were in agreement that Joel Morgan, currently of Blue Hill, was the top choice. Morgan verbally agreed to accept the contract offered on February 22. His contract will be approved by the Board of Education during the regular meeting on March 10. Principal Dawn Lewis said that 20 applications were received for the position.

Inside...

Girls basketball team advances to Districts... State Wrestling results... Speech team has first competition.

They've a Story to Tell

2nd in a Series on Arnold's
"Young at Heart"
Residents



One of Arnold senior resident Jerry Ahrens's favorite pastimes is playing pool with his cronies. (Courtesy photo)

By Darlene Rimpley

What does a fellow who has lived all of his life, with the exception of two weeks and two years, have to tell the Arnold folks that we don't already know about him? Let's find out.

The Early Years

John Ahrens was born on July 4, 1930, in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. His mother, Margaret, was in Scottsbluff staying with her sister awaiting the imminent arrival of a baby. When this baby, John, was two weeks old, his father, John, took the family back to the family home in Arnold. It did not take long for the family to nickname the baby "Jerry," due to the mix-up with two Johns in the family.

The family lived on the Miner farm, 1 1/2 miles south of where Gary Mackley now lives. When Jerry was about nine years old, they moved to Lusk, Wyoming, where John had the commitment from a man to buy his farm. When they arrived, the man backed out and so to support his family, John took a job in the Kilmer creamery (yes, part of the Arnold Kilmers) and worked there for

two years. He did not care for the job of working on wet floors all of the time, so he loaded up his family and returned to Arnold, moving back on to the farm they had left. They lived there until John bought the Landry farm, 1 mile west and 1/2 mile south.

Jerry attended the Mackley School through the eighth grade, where Jack Headley was his teacher one year, and where Jerry remembers that he was kept in after school.

Cars

To his delight, Jerry got to drive to high school in Arnold. His dad supplied him with a Model A, and Jerry remembers that he had a wreck in that car with Tim Turley at an intersection in town.

As one story goes, Jerry and his wife, Darlene, were going home after an evening in town, and they got in a race with Jim and Thelma Myers. They were winning the race, when the car started veering to the left and there was no control with the brakes or the steering. Jerry and Darlene ended up in the ditch. The Myers came along and took them on home.

Jerry the Bus Driver

Jerry ran a sort of early school bus when he hauled three Mackley kids, Jeanette Landry and Robert Kasper to school. On their way one morning, Bill Philpot pulled out in front of Jerry and stopped right in the middle of the road. Jerry pulled off into the ditch and in the bouncing around, the hood on his car came off. Jerry pulled back onto the road, got out and picked up the hood and put it back on the car. Mr. Philpot said, "We were sure, lucky, weren't we?"

Jerry Meets Darb

In the fall of 1947, Jerry and his good friends, Bob Lucas and Francis Mackley, went to Broken Bow to a party that Bob's girlfriend, Viola Spencer, had invited them to. Jerry was with a date that night, and they were dancing when he looked up and saw the most beautiful girl he had ever seen come in the door. He was "dipping" his date at the moment, and he was so struck by Darlene Spencer that he dropped his dance partner on the furnace grate. Needless to say, she was not happy, and before the evening was over, Jerry had forgotten the first girl and took Darlene home.

Jerry said that the Model A would go 60 miles per hour, and he tested that out every once in a while. He bought his first car, a 1938 Chevy for \$750.00 from the Harry Dutrow Garage, and over his ownership of it, he put in three rebuilt motors. He once got it to go over 90 miles per hour.

Darlene Spencer

Jerry's courtship of Darlene Spencer, who he met at a dance, led to wedding bells on New Year's Eve, 1948, at the home of Darlene's parents. The two-week honeymoon - due to a blizzard - was spent at the Spencer home.

The Spencer girls - Viola, Vivian and Darlene - were from Westerville, but were working and living in Broken Bow when Jerry met Darlene. Incidentally, Bob Lucas married Viola, and another good friend, Franklin Scott, married Frances.

A Love for Farming

Jerry and "Darb" started farm life at - get this - the Miner farm, where they lived until after their three children were born. Jerry's parents bought the farm where Gary Mackley now lives, and Jerry and Darb moved over to the Landry farm. They lived there until they moved into town in 1984.

Jerry loved all aspects of farming. After Jerry graduated from Arnold High School in 1947, he and his dad went in on shares on some of the farming. He went south with a combine crew in 1948. Over the years he did custom work for at least 45 farmers from Brady to Anselmo.

Besides doing the usual field work, he had a small herd of cattle, usually some hogs and each year they got 400 baby chickens, keeping the pullets for layers and butchering the roosters. They took 30 dozen eggs to town every week, sold them for twenty cents a dozen, and sold cream for whatever it would bring. This was "grocery

money."

Jerry said he especially enjoyed the "threshing days" when friends and neighbors united and moved from farm to farm to take care of threshing.

The Kids

Jerry and Darb's three children all graduated from Arnold High and moved on in their lives.

The oldest daughter, Cindy, has moved back to Arnold and lives out on the Landry farm. She helps her dad out as he needs it. She has three daughters.

Son John lives in California with his family. He is "some kind" of a computer software specialist. John's wife, Anne, is an MD. They have three children.

Karla is in India at this time, on one of her several-a-year mission trips. They also have three children.

Jerry has nine grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren with two more on the way, and one great-great-grandchild.

John is definitely a family name: Jerry's father, John; Jerry, whose given name is John; son John, who also has a son named John Spencer; Karla's husband, John, and their son, John Mark.

Jerry's Activities

Jerry's faith is very important to him and a big part of his life. He and Darb were led to the Lord when Rev. Frank Teal was holding evangelistic services in Arnold at the First Baptist Church. Rev. Teal and the Baptist pastor, Rev. Don Griffiths, went out to call on the Ahrensens.

Jerry misses church only when his health deems it necessary. He is a Deacon Emeritus at FBC.

Jerry has been involved in many community activities. He served on the District 133 school board; is active in the Arnold Alumni Association,

Continued on page 2.

Flipping Flapjacks



Rotarians Al Bishop (forward) and Dell Cerny man the griddles at the annual Rotary Pancake and Sausage Feed held last Thursday at the community center. (Berni Crow photo)

Despite scheduling problems with Girls' Sub-district Basketball, Arnold Rotarians were quite pleased with the community response to their annual Pancake Supper. Rotary president Berni Crow said that by the time the dust settles and bills are paid, the organization

will have a whopping \$1,200.00 to use for its community projects.

"The 200 patrons that were able to show up - some even came before heading to the basketball game - were responsible for the success!" said Crow.

The funds raised will be used

toward Rotary's goal of improving the playground equipment at the park south of town, painting and repairing the picnic tables, assisting the arena project fund, sponsoring youth soccer, sending students to RYLA and providing scholarships, among other Rotary projects.

Students Compete at Inter-High Day

Tristan Johnson, a junior at Arnold High School, placed second in Word Processing at the annual Mid-Plains Community College Inter-High Day.

Johnson and other Arnold High students competed against 500 students from 28 schools across Nebraska that took academic tests on NPCC's south campus. On the north campus, about 100 students from 16 schools took tests in seven technical trade areas. More than 750 tests were given out altogether. Both groups vied for an estimated \$26,000.00 worth of scholarships.

Other students from Arnold who competed at Inter-High Day were:

Claire Beshaler - Grammar Comp and Literary Analysis.

Brooke Blowers - Intro to Business.

Merrit Eastman - Intro to Business.

Morgan Eggleston - Athletic Training and Grammar Comp. Trevor Halstead - Chemistry and Math.

Sully Lewis - Fire Science.

Grace Magill - Literary Analysis.

Jasmine Nelson - Drama.

Qin Wei - Grammar Comp.

Racheal Smith - Math.