

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2019

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

SINGLE COPY: 75 CENTS

VOLUME 102, NUMBER 40



Photo/Debbie Connelly

## March Brings Wild Weather

Arnold's Old Mill Park drew many observers last Wednesday afternoon, as heavy rains and large amounts of melting snow created flooding. Although heavy rains have flooded the park in past years, this was the worst that some said they had ever seen, with rapids actually developing over the road. Village Utilities Superintendent Doug De Laune said, "We came really close to losing the culvert that the river runs through. The road around the park is completely washed out, and we'll have to rebuild it." In the territory surrounding Arnold, the story was much the same. Country roads were under water and washed out, with one resident commenting that water washed over a bridge north of them - something they had never seen before. Blizzard conditions moved in that evening, resulting in power outages, cancellations, and more problems for area ranchers trying to care for their cattle and calves. Still, many area residents felt fortunate, as other parts of the state were hit exceptionally hard with historic flooding.

## County Residents Express Support for Continued Recycling Program

By Diana Coleman

Over 70 people crowded into the Custer County Supervisors Board Room on Tuesday, March 12, for a Public Hearing regarding the Custer County Recycling Center. Supervisor Chairman Barry Fox encouraged those in attendance to share their thoughts regarding keeping the recycling center open. He expressed the Board's need for direction in agreement with the public. There were individuals, business owners, and municipal employees representing over 11 different communities who were overwhelmingly supportive of keeping the center open.

The recycling center is supported by county tax dollars, based on valuation, which comes to around two percent of the county budget. This amount divided out equals approximately one dollar per per-

son per month in Custer County.

There were one million pounds of material that were recycled last year; 700,000 pounds of that was from Custer County alone. Currently, the county is leasing the recycling building for \$4,800.00 per month. It is a four-year lease and goes through February 2023. The center employs two full-time people.

Fox said, "Over the last ten years we've seen the recycling expenses nearly double from a county standpoint. Depending on what years you average, it's gone from a cost of about \$68,000 per year to the last three years averaging nearly \$112,000 to \$114,000."

In addition to the increase in expenses, the market for the recycled materials has dropped dramatically. Plastic is a challenge. It must be hand sorted, and only the #2 milk jugs have

a reasonable market value.

One patron voiced her concern by asking, "If there is no market or place to take the recycled material, will it end up in the landfill anyway?"

Many citizens expressed their concerns of what would happen if the recycling center closed. Some of the responses included more trash in the landfill, seeing more trash blowing around, increase in garbage rates, illegal burning and what some felt was most important: teaching future generations to recycle.

The County Supervisors were convinced by the large number of attendees that the recycling center should remain open. The challenge they are facing is finding outlets for the recycled products and funding. More research needs to be done in these areas.

A change in habits was also mentioned. Consumption mat-

ters. There is an increase in ordering items online, resulting in an outside box or bag, inside box or bag, bubble wrap and other papers. There is also a plethora of plastic drink bottles, fast food bags, cups and wrappers, plastic grocery and shopping bags, paper towels, Ziploc storage bags and other "throw away" products that contribute to landfill expenses and space. It takes time and effort to change a culture. We need to take a good look at how our habits are affecting the environment.

The board thanked everyone who attended, and sent letters and made phone calls, whether in favor or against. No decision was made; however, with the outpouring of support to keep the recycling center open, the supervisors will have to decide if changes in funding will need to be made.

## Two Qualify for State Speech

Tatum Cool and Layla Rivera qualified for the State Speech Meet scheduled for Friday, March 22, in Kearney. The meet will be held at UNK's Copeland Hall starting at 9:30 a.m., and then again at 12:30 p.m. Both girls will perform Humorous Prose. Coach Berni Crow's report on the District Meet can be found on page 5.

## CodeRed Alerts Residents to Potential Overflow of Wastewater Plant

By Janet Larreau

Village crews were keeping a close eye on the wastewater treatment plant last Wednesday, as it threatened to overflow due to snow melt and heavy rain.

"We were concerned that it was going to start backing up in town. The wastewater is 90 percent water, and it was unable to discharge because of the levels of the river. It could have flooded basements, beginning in the south part of town and worked its way back up the line," said Utilities Superintendent Doug De Laune, who monitored the pumps with Wastewater Treatment Operator Harvey Foran.

There wasn't much they could do but watch it rise, until AVFD Chief Eric Nelson called Custer County Emergency Management, which issued a CodeRED.

CodeRED is used for emergency communications to the public. The system provides county officials the ability to quickly deliver messages to targeted areas or the entire county.

At 4:00 p.m., the CodeRED alert was sent out to Arnold residents to conserve their water usage by text messages, phone and through Facebook. The school helped the village, sending messages via their Blackboard Connect. To be on the school notification list you must have students in the school. Residents also helped get out the word through Facebook.

"We were thankful for the notification and the cooperation of the residents. We did start to see the flow start to slow down," said De Laune.

Lighting equipment and an extra pump were brought to the site. All totaled Foran and De Laune kept an eye on the plant for about 10 hours - from



Photos/Julie Mohr

Hands shoot up, as Mad Scientist Dan Glomski asks for volunteers for some "hair-raising" and "shocking" experiences using the Van de Graaf generator, which is still covered up. The generator was created by the American physicist Robert Van de Graaf in 1932, to create static electricity and make it available for experimentation. Glomski's visit was planned for the "Read Across America" celebration at APS.

## Sparks Fly at APS

Mad Scientist Dan Glomski from the Edgerton Explore It Science Center in Aurora, Nebraska, visited Arnold in March for the "Read Across America" celebration. Dr. Suess's books often spark a curiosity in science from the balloons floating in "Oh the Places You'll Go!" to environmental concerns in "The Lorax" to the slime-like substance wreaking havoc in "Bartholomew and the Ooblek." Glomski shared a demonstration titled SPARKS! Sparks flew — and so did the fun — when students were introduced to the Van de Graaf generator during this exploration of static electricity. Participants learned the foundations of electricity while taking part in simple experiments, some of which were even a little "shocking" and "hair-raising" but always fun!



Sixth grader Taylor Hanna-Miles has a hair-raising experience, as she holds her hand on the Van de Graaf generator, which creates static electricity.

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