

The Arnold Sentinel

"Serving the South Loup River Valley"

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A Day to Celebrate

Brady Weinman congratulates his sister, Ashton, in the reception line outside of the school, Saturday afternoon after A.H.S. commencement. Six seniors, wearing their class colors of petal pink, white and black, received their diplomas from Dr. Dawn Lewis and school board president Tony Eggleston. Receptions followed, with relatives and friends wishing the new graduates all the best in their future endeavors.

Group Encourages School Board, Adm. to Add Ag in the Classroom

The May 9 Arnold school board meeting was filled with some familiar faces and many new ones in support of adding ag education classes and possibly FFA to next year's curriculum. It was brought up that Arnold high hasn't offered such classes since the 1980s and is the only school in the area currently not offering anything ag related. There has also been a lot of interest for these kinds of classes by some students and parents.

School board president Tony Eggleston said that this was brought up about three to five years ago, and a poll was conducted among the students asking if they'd be interested in FFA. A board member said that he thought the kids might not have been familiar with what FFA actually was, so that might have been the reason why the poll was split pretty evenly between yes, they're interested, or no, they're not. It was also asked if possibly district patrons could be polled so that parents and taxpayers could weigh in on their opinions on the issue.

Dr. Lewis and Mr. Morgan

mentioned that any student that is interested in classes such as animal science should discuss this with them, as they have helped a student in the past take dual credit classes via distance learning. But at this time neither one of them have been approached by any students expressing interest.

The fact was also brought up that to have FFA, Callaway schools removed the industrial arts program and replaced it with FFA. There is also already some worry about losing more kids from the graphics program.

UNL student Desarae Catlett was at the meeting, and said that when she was going to school in Broken Bow they combined graphics with FFA, which helped defer the cost of creating awards. She also talked about all the things that she learned in FFA, such as personal development, entrepreneurship and how to be a good speaker and citizen, which actually helped lead her into going to college for agronomy.

Dr. Lewis said that she felt that the students involved in Schoolhouse Graphics are get-

ting all of that and more because they are doing "real world" jobs and learning how to deal with clients, deadlines, etc. A parent asked if there was any way to try and work some of these classes into the curriculum because of the interest; however, they would hate to have to see a choice made on one program or the other.

Mr. Brandon Grosserode, ag teacher in Ansley, was present at the meeting and presented a lot of useful information and ideas for the board to consider. He said that it is a really exciting time for agriculture in Custer County, as we are number one in ag, the Cattlemen's Ball will be here in June, and there are already nine schools in the area that are offering FFA and/or ag related classes. He feels like the students get a better education with an on-site teacher rather than distance learning because many ag classes are so hands-on. He's also helped many other schools take their two smaller chapters and contract a teacher to do two to three periods at each school to help keep costs down on hiring a new teacher. He

also said that he's heard many great things over the years about Schoolhouse Graphics and if it's the business side of things that the school is wanting to keep, why not offer ag business, ag economics or marketing to offer the business side of agriculture.

Dr. Lewis said that the current teacher at Callaway wouldn't have time, as she is new and is already teaching six classes there. Others in attendance stated that we wouldn't have to necessarily share with Callaway, as there are many other schools around Arnold that offer the program such as Stapleton or Anselmo-Merna or even bigger schools such as Broken Bow or Gothenburg.

Dr. Lewis brought up the fact that to be able to have FFA, the school would have to hire a dedicated ag teacher and that the prospect of hiring one doesn't look good. Carrie Summerford, Broken Bow's new FFA advisor, said that she had just graduated from UNL the previous weekend as a certified ag teacher and that there will be almost 30 more like her that will be ready to teach the '18-'19 school year, so the chances of hiring a teacher would be in the school's favor.

Also present to support ag in the classroom were Tammy Fiechtner, North Central Nebraska R.D.M., with Farm Bureau; Margie McDowell, a Custer County Farm Bureau member; and other supporters. Board members seemed interested in further discussion of adding agriculture courses at a future meeting.

Principal's Report

Mr. Joel Morgan wanted to thank the PTA for recognizing the staff with goodies for Teacher's Appreciation Week this past week. He also congratulated the new junior honor society members that were recently inducted.

Prom was a success even though the impending weather forced them to make the decision to move everything up an hour. Mr. Morgan thanked everyone for their flexibility. Arnold hosted two additional track meets that were somewhat last minute decisions - the Brady meet and the Dave Blevins Memorial meet. The school charges a \$250.00 rental cost for the use of the track, the booster club has the gate, and the visiting town has the concession stand if they want it. The booster club donated some of the gate money back to the Dave Blevins meet. Mr. Morgan

Sentinel Converts to 22-Inch Web

The size of the Sentinel changes this week, as we convert from a 24-inch web to a 22-inch web. The paper is now one inch less in width, but remains about the same length. The Kearney Hub, which prints The Sentinel, said this is a cost saving measure, as newsprint prices have risen steeply over the past year and additional increases are forecast for 2017.

Due to the decrease in width, the masthead has been changed. Thanks to Andrew Tickle for providing the aerial photo of Arnold that was part of the masthead since November 1.

Rotarian Presents Project to Village Board

A new Rotary project was on the agenda at the May 8 village board meeting. Berni Crow gave the presentation, informing members that the project consists of placing 40 historical signs on Arnold buildings. Crow already has written permission from 20 Arnold businesses to place the signs directly on their buildings, if there is a good place. She asked the board's permission to place signs on poles near the site if needed.

Crow said the idea came from seeing historical markers on buildings in Bennington, Nebraska. The signs will have the oldest possible photograph of the building and a historical description. The signs will cost about \$100.00 each. She has already secured a grant for \$2,000.00 from the Custer Tourism Council, and will apply for more grants for the additional \$2,000.00 needed.

School House Graphic Products has already made the first sign for Crow's one-room schoolhouse, and production of the 40 signs will take about two years. She said Bennington's signs have already lasted 13 years.

Crow said that she, Marci Lucas and Cheryl Carson did a lot of research last summer, and have a good start on photos and information for the signs. Cheryl Carson said the signs will be a great asset for a future walking historical tour of the town.

Board members thought the project is a great idea, and gave their approval to place the signs on poles on a case-by-case basis.

Request for Picnic Tables

Becky Dailey approached the board to see if there was room in the budget to purchase 10 picnic tables for the city park at a cost of \$550.00 each. She said more tables are needed for bigger events, and the recreation area south of town also needs more. This would dispense with the need to move tables around. The table design Dailey showed as an example will be easier for older people to sit at, and each seats eight. Superintendent Bill Moser said for commercial tables, the price is good.

Board chairman Glen Bowers said the village doesn't have purchasing tables in the budget. Dailey said in that case, SORC and the Arnold Community Foundation have agreed to purchase five tables each.

Dailey also asked if new benches could be purchased and placed next to the city park playground equipment so that parents and grandparents can sit while the kids play. It was suggested that benches could be purchased in memory of an individual. Board members agreed that benches are needed, and Bowers said the board will try to put the purchase in the next budget.

Dailey also mentioned that her in-laws have been mowing the overlook at Judkin's Hill for maybe 13 years and are no longer able to mow it. She



State-Bound

The 4x800 relay team of (from left) Kalen Dockweiler, Jace Connell, Isaac Stallbaumer and Cooper Taylor were district champs, and will now move on to compete at the state meet this weekend in Omaha. The South Loup boys, who swept the relays and were district champs, qualified an amazing 11 for state, and the girls, who came in 2nd, qualified eight for the state competition. For more results, please turn to page 8. (Leta Connell photo)

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