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“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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Great crowd turns out for Sandhills Motors' showroom grand opening



Owners and employees of Sandhills Motors gather around the reception area Saturday morning just before the grand opening of the new showroom. Pictured from left are: Michael McCaslin, Chad Garcia, Thomas McCaslin, Chris Hough, Angie Hopper, Carolyn Bowers, Wayne Bierman, Randy Ross and Drew Bowers. (Pepper Werner photo)

Customers get the chance to roll the dice for 2019 RAM pickup

By Pepper Werner and Janet Larreau

Sandhills Motors' new showroom was unveiled at their grand opening on Saturday, April 28. The event was a success, with a large crowd turning out to view the remodeled building, congratulate the new owners and enjoy lunch.

A big drawing card was rolling the dice for a chance to win a 2019 RAM Laramie Crew

Cab 4x4 pickup that was on display in the showroom. With odds of 1-46,000 of rolling the letters "NEW RAM," none of the 143 finalists drawn were winners, but everyone had a good time trying.

Remodeling the main street building, known to old-timers as "the Spargo's building," to include office spaces, a reception area, waiting area and showroom proved to be the

biggest challenge so far since the dealership was purchased in the fall of 2017.

"There was a lot more work than we anticipated. The heating, electrical, flooring - all of it

- was definitely a test of patience," said Sandhills Motors General Manager Chad Garcia.

With all of the bumps in the road, Chad is very pleased with the support of the community.

He hires locally, supports the local businesses and is proud of the students in Arnold. In fact, Schoolhouse Graphics crafted the sign for Sandhills Motors that everyone admired during the grand opening.

Chad said, "I took some photos of what I had in mind -

windmills, yucca plants and the Sandhills, gave some ideas, and the students took it from there. They asked a few questions, and then designed it. I'm really happy with how it turned out."

From the beginning of the dealership changing hands, Garcia stressed the importance of keeping the existing employees, not making huge changes, and as time passed, consider any suggestions that were made.

Wearing matching polo shirts, the owners, staff and employees mingled with guests, including Garcia, Thomas McCaslin and (silent partner) Michael McCaslin; Chris

Hough, sales and financing; Wayne Bierman, a 16-year Certified Chrysler Technician and Drew Bowers, who both keep the vehicles running smoothly; Randy Ross, parts manager; Angie Hopper in detailing; and the first smiling face you see when you enter the building - office manager Carolyn Bowers.

Garcia said the two-year plan includes remodeling the service area located in the building across the street to open up the parts department and make it a little more user-friendly for those customers that are walking in.

"Randy needs an office, bigger desk and a computer to service the customers that need to place an order or make a purchase. Right now, it's in the service area and not really easily accessible or organized the way it should be. It needs to be more efficient," said Garcia.

Sandhills Motors offers new Chrysler, Dodge and RAM vehicle, including 1/2 ton, 3/4 ton and 1 ton RAM pickups, Dodge cars, SUVs and vans, as well as Chrysler cars and mini vans. They are also able to locate any pre-owned vehicle that customers are searching for. With information on budget, mileage requirements and make/model, Chris Hough can help.

"We really aren't limited to a particular brand. We can find the vehicle you are looking for and keep it within your budget. We added a business software program that makes a vehicle search a breeze," said Garcia. In addition, Sandhills Motors offers trade-in options, leases and in-house financing.

As for service, the mechanics can do anything from a simple oil change, tire rotation or full engine repair on all major brands. There are many parts in stock or overnight delivery is available.

Plans for next year include adding a Jeep franchise and the heavy-duty RAM line.

The staff at the dealership is happy to help the residents of Custer County and beyond. It's a small town business with big plans.

City park improvement fundraiser kicks off

A cool, breezy evening may have played a part in a lower than expected turnout for the city park playground improvement fundraiser held on Saturday evening at the park, but for those who did turn out, there was plenty of food and entertainment.

The Arnold Economic Development Corporation, with help from a collective few local parents, hosted the evening fundraiser, planning a potluck meal, fun games, marshmallow roast and even a movie.

Plans for park improvements were displayed on a board for public viewing. The hope is to enlarge the play area with rubber mulch, add a new merry-go-round, a play structure that is age appropriate for 2-5 year olds and a couple of playhouse structures for the kids. The plan also calls for an additional bay of toddler swings in order to use the bucket swings that were won in July of 2017.

"Arnold parents have voiced concerns about the safety of the merry-go-round and that the play structure was not age appropriate for the younger children in the community. A plan was put into place to address concerns," said AEDC Director Cheryl Carson.

Cones were set up to show the new boundaries of the play area and add to the currently existing rubber mulch, making the area larger and safer for the children utilizing the park and its equipment. Carson said centralizing the equipment into

one location will make it easier to interact with children of different ages as they play.

There were many people involved with pulling off the event. Zach Hagler donated the firepits for the meal, manned by the Arnold Fire Department. AEDC board members helped with the food line, and Heather Hagler purchased the family yard games. Village employees made sure the park was mowed. Jason Jenkins donated

wood, and the Arnold Village donated bottles of water.

The movie "Ferdinand," sponsored by Homegrown Kids Daycare and Tallin Church, was shown at dusk under the direction of Corbin Bigbee and his projection equipment.

Donations for the improvements would be appreciated. Please contact Cheryl Carson at the AEDC office for more information.



Children had a good time playing a variety of games during the city park fundraiser on Saturday evening, including miniature golf. (Debbie Connely photo)



High Odds

With some of the large crowd standing in the background, Cal Joy rolls the dice for a chance at winning a brand new Dodge pickup at Sandhills Motor's grand opening on Saturday. Joy was one of the first finalists to be drawn out of 143, with no one beating the odds of 1-46,000 that the dice would land with the letters New Ram. (Diana Coleman photo)