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K-9 Unit in Training Aton and Deputy Kociemba Visit Arnold

Custer County Sheriff's Office Deputy Braxton Kociemba and Aton, a 2-year-old Belgian Malinois, are both young and in training together. The new K-9 team has been making appearances around the county, including Finch Memorial Library's Story Hour last week.

During the visit, 28 youngsters, ages 3 and up, and a few adults learned all about how the K-9 unit will operate in the county.

This is the first K-9 Unit that the sheriff's department has had in 17 years. The first was only here for a year or so and the handler left for a job outside of law enforcement.

Aton started his training as a pup in Germany in narcotic detection, tracking and apprehension. He was then purchased by K-9 International LLC in the United States, where he finished training for eight weeks and was prepared for a handler. In a later interview, Custer County Sheriff Dan Osmond said there are several places around the United States that train and sell dogs, but K-9 International LLC had a good price and a training period that the sheriff's office could work with.

Deputy Kociemba trained with Aton for three weeks in Kansas, and Aton came to the CC Sheriff's Office at the age of 1 1/2 years old in February. The deputy has deployed Aton on several traffic stops and a residence search, but the team is still in a transition period.

"Aton is still very young in his career, as is Deputy Kociemba," said Osmond. "Aton had to make the transition from Germany to Kansas to here, so he is still in the learning stage and getting used to everything. He is high strung and really only knows work, so that is all he wants to do. Both of them are getting used to each other and learning from each other."

Aton cost \$14,500.00, which included the training and equipment. Osmond said some dogs go for as much as \$30,000.00. He said Custer County residents are the reason



Aton, a Belgian Malinois, and Custer County Sheriff's Office Deputy Braxton Kociemba introduced themselves to the community at Story Hour last week. (Jessica Tickle photo)

why Aton is here to serve the public.

"I just want to thank all of the businesses and people who donated money so we could purchase Aton," said Osmond. "Deputy Kociemba worked very hard on this and was able to get all but \$500 to \$1,000.00 of the cost of Aton paid for. We would not have been able to do this if it wasn't for the generosity of the people of Custer County. I am very excited to have Deputy Kociemba and Aton, and feel very strongly that they will help us with the everyday battle against drugs."

Cathy Bowers will remain at

the Highway 92 location, answering account questions and taking payments. Gary said CPI will still offer all the other services they provide.

CPI is working to finish up an office at the grain bin located south of Arnold that will become its central location. All CPI employees have the opportunity to work on other CPI projects in and around Arnold or in Stapleton.

Wages will Increase for School's Non-Certified Staff

Arnold School Board members voted unanimously to increase wages for all non-certified staff members at their regular meeting held on June 9. The Nebraska minimum wage is scheduled to increase to \$9.00 on January 1, 2016, and to \$10.00 on January 1, 2017. Other area schools are advertising their starting pay at \$10.00 an hour for para-educators. After some discussion, the motion was made to increase all classified staff who are currently below \$10.00 per hour to \$10.00. All other classified staff will receive an increase in wages of 3.5 percent of their current salary. One staff member who was below the \$10.00 an hour target, but would benefit more from the 3.5 percent increase, was allowed the 3.5 percentage raise rather than move to \$10.00. Activity trip drivers will also be paid \$10.00 an hour.

Insurance Coverage Raised
Joe Bob Atkins from Arnold Insurance Agency presented the renewal information for insurance coverages for the school. The previous carrier, Columbia Insurance, is no longer covering schools, so new coverage will begin July 1 with EMC. New coverage will increase the Buildings and Personal Property from \$5 million of coverage to \$10 million, which has been a discussion point for several years now. General Liability, Business Auto, Inland Marine, Crime, Umbrella, Data Compromise, Linebacker School Leaders and Workers Compensation coverages will also be included. The total cost for all coverages will be \$58,034, an increase from last year. The majority of increased rates comes from the increase in replacement value for buildings and business personal property and workers compensation, which has increased due to claims. All board members voted in favor of the motion.

Digital Data Storage
Board members voted unanimously to join the newly-organized ESU10 Document Management System-Laserfiche group to assist in the

process of off-site digital data storage. ESU10 is offering the service to provide secure access to digitally stored files via an on-line system with a school license. The agreement will cost \$1,500.00 over a three-year period (\$500.00 annually).

Not included in the cost will be a fee with a third party vendor to convert the school's sleeves of files on microfiche to digital files, allowing instant access and the capability to print files on site. Currently, the school takes the microfiche to Kearney to print, delaying requests for records. A bid will be received from the vendor in a few weeks with a determination of how much it will cost to convert those files.

Other paper files that the school owns will be scanned and stored in the new system. Over the past few years, the school has been scanning as many as it can.

"This new system will allow us to better organize them, provide off-site storage and recovery if we should experience a catastrophic event and allow instant access to all of our records, including bookkeeping data, student records and all required file contents; and other papers necessary for a school to keep," said Principal Dawn Lewis.

Principal's Report

Mrs. Lewis reported that Mr. Morgan, the newly-hired principal, will be attending a three-day school leadership workshop in Kearney this week. The workshop is focusing on topics pertinent to Principal Leadership. He is also finishing up the courses he needs to complete the Elementary endorsement on his Principal Certificate.

She also reported on state golf and track, summer basketball camps and league play, and said that Sully Lewis attended Nebraska Boys' State that week. Auxiliary did not send a girl this year, as none were interested.

Superintendent's Report

School facility projects were reported on for the summer. Four classrooms and an office

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CPI Announces Closure of Mr. Tire

At the end of the day of June 30, the Mr. Tire store in Arnold will close. Owned by Cooperative Producers, Inc. (CPI), the store opened on July 1, 2012, in a building that was all ready to go, but in the end was not generating enough business to stay open.

"CPI really wanted to make sure the citizens and farmers of Arnold had an Ag focused facility to get tires and service work done," said Gary Brandt, VP En-

ergy for CPI. "Arnold has other businesses that do car and truck repair or sell tires, and our goal was never to put anyone out of business. Instead, we wanted to be good neighbors and offer an ag point of view for our customers that do so much other business with us. Sales would ebb and flow with the seasons, but they just never reached the point of self-sufficiency."

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LB840 Loans Continue to Help With Business Start-Ups Date Announced for Economic Development Plan Special Election at Village Board Meeting

Another new business is benefitting from the LB840 Economic Development Fund. The Village Board of Trustees approved a \$3,900.00 loan and a \$1,960.00 grant from the Fund at their regular meeting held last week for Quad Cloud Photography, owned by Andrew Tickle. AEDC director Cheryl Carson told board members that another business application for LB840 funds is out and one has been returned for consideration.

Carson told board members that the revised LB840 plan is being reviewed, and a date of June 30 has been set for a town hall meeting. A special election will be held on September 15 where residents will vote on whether or not to extend the LB840 Economic Development plan for Arnold and the 1% local sales & use tax.

Carson also reported that a lot

of rentals have been taken off the Arnold website, and housing is at a premium.

"People are wanting to live here. I have done nothing but show houses the last three days and more calls are coming in. Brokers with residential listings are also reporting the same," said Carson.

In another update, she reported that Lt. Gov. Mike Foley enjoyed his time in Arnold for five ribbon cuttings for new businesses, and wants to return for the next two ribbon cuttings. Media covering the event were KNOP TV, the Custer County Chief, Arnold Sentinel, KBBN and KRVN.

Current Business

A resident attended the meeting to request that the village board enforce the ordinance regarding keeping lots free of any growth of 12 inches or more in height of weeds, grasses or

worthless vegetation. The resident mentioned that since being listed on the agenda, many of the lots that were in need of mowing have been taken care of.

Chairman Glen Bowers said that the village does enforce the ordinance, but it can be a lengthy process that begins with talking to the owner. He said it is hard for village employees to go through the process because of all of the projects going on. Discussion was held, and the board assured the resident that every effort is made to enforce the ordinance.

Board members approved contracting with the village of Callaway to spray for mosquitoes. It was mentioned that spraying will begin soon before the mosquitoes get out of hand. The public will be notified be-

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County Boasts Triple Crown Winner



Wearing a Kentucky Derby t-shirt, Laney Badgley holds her three state triple crown awards in 4-H archery. The young expert marksman won her third triple crown award in four years the same weekend as American Pharoah. (Courtesy photo)

Laney Badgley didn't have millions of people cheering her on the weekend of June 7, but she, along with now-horse racing legend American Pharoah, was also a triple crown winner.

Laney received the State Triple Crown in 4-H Archery, winning first place in her division for indoor 300 round target in January at the state competition, the outdoor 3D target competition with a score of 220 and the outdoor 600 round field target competition with a score of 538, both held in Grand Island.

Three must be Laney's lucky

number. Not only did she win the three different events to become the 2015 winner, this is also the third time she has won the triple crown in the last four years she has been eligible to shoot in 4-H archery. In 2013, she missed the triple crown by only three points.

Laney, of Oconto, is the third child in the family to shoot archery behind siblings Carson and Emma. Her family, including parents Cliff and Nicole Badgley, who is Technology Coordinator for Arnold Public Schools, cheered her on to the win.