

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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## Peterson Honored for 35 Years of Coaching

### “Coach Pete” Receives Three Awards at NCA Awards Banquet

By Leta Connell

As a new college graduate, you begin down the normal job hunting path knowing in the back of your mind there will most likely be several bumps along the way. Bumps that take you from here to there before you find that perfect position, located in the greatest place, where you would love to raise a family and retire. Well, for one graduate the normal path was not meant to be, and 35 years later, Arnold, Nebraska is still home.

Mr. Rick Peterson, or “Coach Pete,” as he is known to many, just finished his 35th year as a teacher and coach at Arnold Public Schools. Rick did not grow up in Arnold, or even in the surrounding area. He was born in Omaha and attended Catholic school at St. Richard’s through the second grade. He then moved with his parents to an acreage in Kennard, Nebraska, where he was the only boy in a class of seven girls. At the beginning of seventh grade, the family moved again to Missouri Valley, Iowa, just across the river from Blair. After graduating from Missouri Valley High School, he attended Mid-



Rick Peterson holds his awards following the Annual NCA Awards Banquet held last Sunday at Lincoln. (Courtesy photo)

land University in Fremont from 1977 to 1982. Rick participated in cross country and track at Midland for all four years of his college eligibility. So how did Mr. Peterson find

his way to rural Arnold?

“We were looking for a place in the Sandhills. I had fallen in love with the area as a very young child when my maternal grandfather brought me from

Omaha to duck hunt near Burwell in the 1960s,” states Peterson. “We really liked the beauty of Arnold. The city park and the houses looked so well kept compared to many of the other small towns I interviewed at. We have stayed because of the people. Barb and I were treated very well by the kids and the community, which is not always the case for many. I would say Arnold is where I grew up, even though I was 22 years old when I first moved here. If I ever leave, it will be very difficult.”

Barb has been an employee of the local bank for over 30 years, and together they have raised two children. Their son, Justin, a 2000 Arnold graduate, is employed with Stantec as a geophysicist and is usually working somewhere in the Western Hemisphere. Justin, and daughter-in-law Tania, reside in Denver, Colorado. Samantha, their daughter, and a 2003 Arnold graduate, along with her husband Charles, also call Denver home but are currently traveling the world for a year. (She posts a blog on their travels at [www.parsons.world](http://www.parsons.world) if you would like to follow along on their journey). Currently, they are in Switzerland. Samantha is also a published author of two books, *Dynam* and *Luce*.

Not only has Mr. Peterson had the chance to impact the lives of his own children in the last

35 years, but his chairs are now filled with children of former students. Whether it was on the field, in the classroom, on the court or around the track, he has pretty much done it all at one point or another. He currently instructs junior high and high school students in all history classes, plus teaches elementary physical education where square dancing and gymnastics units are a few of the favorites.

As “Coach Pete,” he has been an assistant football coach two years, girls junior high basketball coach for 16 years, high school girls basketball coach for 12 years, plus track and field for 35 years, bringing home the gold this year as the 2017 Class D-1 Boys State Track Champions.

This is quite an impressive feat in anyone’s book, so it comes as no surprise that Mr. Peterson was honored for his achievements last Sunday, July 23, at the 50th Annual NCA Awards Banquet in the Great Hall of the Old Train Station in the Haymarket district of downtown Lincoln. The first award was the 35 Year Coaching Service Award.

Coach Peterson reflects, “That just can’t be. I was only a kid beginning to teach and coach a couple of years ago. This is highly related to the fact that the community has placed such an emphasis on track and our

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## Safety First!

### SL Youth Football Scores New Equipment

The South Loup Youth Football team will be wearing new certified helmets and pants this coming season, thanks to parents, community members and supportive organizations.

Head Coach Jeff Preston said 30 new Xenith Epic helmets—approved by the NFL Association—and 12 pairs of pants have been purchased for the fourth through sixth graders involved with the program, adding to the equipment of 30 new shoulder pads that were purchased last year.

SLYF is part of the Sandhills Youth Football League and has no connection to the schools.

“This is a privately funded team that relies on donations and fundraising to allow these kids to learn and understand the fundamentals and to help them become better football players and productive members of a team,” said Preston. “The players pay no membership to join. The club covers all equipment costs associated with playing. Starting kids in fourth

grade in full tackle football is why we strive to get quality safety equipment at a reasonable price. Helmets only have a shelf life of 10 years with annual recertification. This is the reason for updating the equipment.”

SLYF was started in 2009 by Andy Schwarz. At that time they were called the A/C Chargers and played Mullen and Burwell/Sargent. The league now includes South Loup, S a n d h i l l s / T h e d f o r d , Anselmo/Merna, Mullen, Stapleton and Brady. Practice starts a week before school and ends mid-October, with an average of 25 South Loup kids participating. Games are held on Sundays with B games at 3:00 p.m., and A games follow. All games and practices are split between Arnold and Callaway. Preston is assisted by Lindy Dailey, Justin Conner and Doug Brestel.

Preston said each year, parents helped by putting on a concession stand fundraiser, and the Arnold A-Club donated concession items. Last year, the Arnold Booster Club

helped by cooking the hamburgers, and Becky Dailey donated the hot-dogs. They also had a concession stand in Callaway in which parents donated, and the Callaway Market helped by giving a price break on items that were purchased. T-shirts and long sleeve shirts were also sold last year. Gracious donations came from SORC and the Callaway Fire Department.

The biggest sponsorship came from Dick’s Sporting Goods when Jeff found a program through the company and applied. SLYF was selected, and the sponsorship came close to \$5,000.00.

The organization is currently selling t-shirts, long sleeve shirts and hoodies. Orders will be taken starting August 14 and will be accepted through August 24. Order forms will be sent home with each kid at the two schools. Forms will also be available in Arnold at Arnold Insurance Agency and in Callaway, contact Della at Country Partners Agronomy.



Incoming sixth grader Trey Connell models new equipment for youth football, including a NFL approved helmet, shoulder pads and pants. (Courtesy photo)

## River Battle Sees Biggest Year Yet

There was a record breaking

number of racers this year for the 7th Annual Arnold River Battle, with 41 contestants battling it out on the South Loup in kayaks, canoes and tubes.

“We had the Best family reunion join us, and they had seven compete in the race,” said co-organizer Della Dailey.

“These competitors were the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Dwight and Eva Best, and we want to thank them again for taking part in the battle. We enjoyed their company.”

Although the river battle is a



Competitors get set for a kayak race down the South Loup, July 15, at Hidden Valley Campgrounds. (Courtesy photo)

how fast or slow they wanted to go.

Divison winners were Youth Kayak: 1st - Kaden Scott, Denver, Colorado; 2nd - Kooper Barnum, Stapleton; and 3rd - Eli Taylor, Arnold.

Adult Kayak: 1st - Dana Dewight Best Baker, Des

Moines, Iowa; 2nd - Duane Bowers, Arnold; 3rd - Malinda Baker, Des Moines, Iowa.

Adult Canoe: 1st - Leif Chesley, Arnold, and Jessica Cuny, Buffalo Gap, South Dakota; 2nd - Brock and Robin Dailey, Arnold; 3rd - Travis and Kathy Madron, Lincoln.

Dailey said all of the organizers want to give a big thanks to Hidden Valley Campground for the location and for the lunch they made. Also helping with the event were Natasha Sage and Kelly Morgan, who helped set up before the race, timed and took pictures.

## Custer County 4-H and FFA Livestock Auction Is August 3

4-H and FFA members of Custer County invite you to attend the 4-H/FFA Livestock Auction at the Fairgrounds on Thursday, August 3rd under the covered show arena at the Custer County Fairgrounds, beginning promptly at 7:00 p.m.

This auction has been generously supported by area businesses, organizations, and individuals for many years. The support is appreciated by 4-H and FFA members and their families and helps maintain a strong 4-H and FFA livestock youth program in Custer County.

The auction provides a way for the 4-H or FFA members to market their project animal at a reasonable premium. This premium helps cover the additional costs of caring, training, and exhibiting the animal at county fair.

“The auction is conducted entirely by volunteers who help make the event the success it is,” stated Nebraska Extension

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