

The Arnold Sentinel

"Serving the South Loup River Valley"

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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Spraying water and throwing out candy and t-shirts, members of the South Loup state championship track team served as grand marshals of the SORC parade on Friday afternoon. (Leta Connell photo)



SORC participants, volunteers and residents line up for the SORC barbecue on Saturday evening at the city park. Great Plains Communications sponsors the barbecue, with all proceeds going to Chamber. (Sentinel photo)

SORC Draws 142 Participants

The 17th Annual Sandhills Open Road Challenge is now history and will be remembered as a year where everything went smoothly. SORC board member Josh Cool said there were no accidents, and although the weather was threatening at times, the storms parted and left Arnold dry.

"We thought the weather was going to hold things up, but we got it all done without delays," said Josh. "We planned to make (Saturday night's) awards program short, but it went faster.

The weather gave us ample motivation to do that."

The main event - Saturday's Sandhills Open Road Challenge on the road to Dunning and back - started at 8:30 a.m. on the nose. At 1:57 p.m., the last of the 142 cars entered in the ten classes went through the finish line.

Josh said some 300 to 400 volunteers helped over the course of the weekend, and that is not counting Thursday's Loup to Loup race, which has its own volunteers.

"Only in a town like Arnold could we get that many people to volunteer. It's pretty amazing. At other open road races, the people are paid," he said. "Saturday's breakfast starts at 6:00 a.m., and it's a pretty long day. Who knows over the course of the 17 years how many different people have volunteered. Some have decided not to volunteer anymore, some have moved away or died. It would be interesting to know how many people have touched the race."

Senator Matt Williams, who Cool said is very supportive of community events in Dist. 36, spoke at Saturday night's program, saying, "There isn't anything like August in Nebraska - and especially August in Arnold. Who could have dreamed this could have happened in Arnold or anywhere? The difference is action, and this community took action."

AVFD Called Out Friday

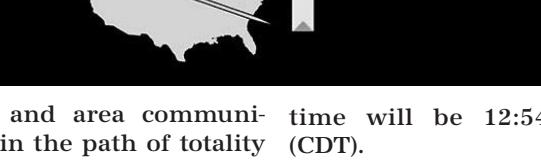
The Arnold fire department was dispatched to a hay pile fire Friday evening around 6:30. A part of a pile consisting of approximately 400 round alfalfa bales had ignited most likely from internal combustion of a wet spot in a bale. When the Arnold fire department arrived, the owners of the hay had already begun moving

hay away from the pile that had not ignited yet. The fire was contained to approximately 150 bales that were completely destroyed by the fire.

The department responded with all three grass rigs and a tanker. Stapleton fire department was dispatched for mu-

Continued on page 2.

Town Prepares for Aug. 21 Total Solar Eclipse



AUGUST 21.2017

Arnold and area communities within the path of totality of the August 21 total solar eclipse are preparing for an influx of people to view nature's most wondrous spectacle. How many will travel into this area is yet to be seen. Motels and bed and breakfasts in Arnold and surrounding communities, including North Platte, are reportedly full, and eclipse chasers will be traveling into the path of totality. Arnold - with its wide-open spaces - is considered one of the best viewing spots, with the duration of totality reported at 2 minutes, 33 seconds. According to the website Eclipse2017.org, the partial phase will start at 11:31:16 a.m. (CDT) and totality start

time will be 12:54:38 p.m. (CDT).

Derryl Barr, an astronomy enthusiast who gave a presentation in Arnold in 2016, said thousands of U.S. citizens and an estimated 30,000 people from around the world will travel to locations in the U.S. that are within the totality band. The longer the totality, the more likely those towns and cities are to see a huge influx of people. Arnold will be among those cities and towns.

Village Clerk Patty Lamberty and AEDC Director Cheryl Carson both said they have been receiving a large number of calls from people looking for a spot to view the eclipse since January. Carson said she has gotten calls from as far away as

Alaska and Canada from people that are looking for a place to get away from the crowds, pitch a tent or set up a camper. So far, she has found a spot for everyone - some are staying at private residences.

With the Arnold Fire District being located along the line of the path of totality from east to west, Arnold Volunteer Fire Chief Eric Nelson said the department has called in help from departments outside of the path. Four additional grass rigs from Brady, Curtis, Gothenburg and Maywood and two ambulances from Brown County EMS and Skylar will be here with 12-18 additional personnel. The department is also coordinating with other fire districts and hospitals for the expected large amount of people traveling here.

"We are preparing for a high volume of traffic, personal injuries and grass fires. Arnold EMTs are also studying how to treat eye injuries from people viewing the eclipse wearing the wrong viewing glasses or none at all," said Nelson. "We don't know what to expect

with the large amount of activities along the eclipse path. We won't be able to call for mutual aid, because those fire departments won't be able to leave their fire districts. It's the reason we are going outside for help. Departments to the west are also preparing by calling in help from outside the area of the eclipse."

The path of totality crosses Hwy. 92 approximately ten to eleven miles west of Arnold, and crosses Hwy. 40 approximately four miles south of Arnold. Nelson said they expect high volumes of parked traffic along the highway in these areas and on the rural roads between these two locations.

"We don't expect anything out of the ordinary for the fire department, but with the possibility of increasing the population of our fire district by three to even eight times its normal population, the chance of call volume rising is highly possible," he said. "We are also expecting travelers to be pulling off in the road ditch to view the eclipse, and the possi-

bility of grass fires will be expected."

With recent rains and things greening up, the possibility of grass fires has diminished, but Nelson said the department wants to be well prepared, be able to react fast and not be congested.

Arnold Public Schools is planning a K-12 event for the eclipse, with stations set up in the morning for the elementary in the areas of math, science and history. Each station will be presented to the kids by students in grades 6-12. Principal Joel Morgan said viewing glasses have been purchased for staff and students, and permission slips have been sent out for students to view the eclipse at the football field.

"The viewing is just for students and staff and will not be open to the public that day," said Mr. Morgan. "We want to advise parents that bus routes may be delayed due to traffic, but we will get the students home in a safe and timely manner."

BrewBakers "Sneak Peek"

Main Street was lined with cars starting last Thursday, as Jodi Carlson opened the doors to the former Farmhouse Antiques building, giving everyone a sneak peek at her new business in progress, BrewBakers. Jodi estimates that 350 to 400 people came in during her three-day soft opening - timed to coincide with SORC - to enjoy a smoothie, iced coffee and baked goods, and to look over a sample of the merchandise she will have to offer, including jewelry and home decor.

"It went really well. It was a good trial run," said Jodi. "Everybody was so supportive and encouraging, both verbally and physically. They are so pleased that we are taking on the old building and restoring it."

Jodi said she couldn't have pulled off the opening without help from Eustis resident Connie Yeutter, owner of "The Coffee Tree," who set up all of her own equipment to serve the smoothies and iced coffees, and brought in a helper, Elaine Smith. Also helping throughout the three days were Jodi's daughters Jailyn Strasburg and Joelle Hargadine, Merri Jo Halstead and former Farmhouse Antiques owner Kim Beshaler.

Jodi said she also couldn't have pulled it off without help from Keith and Joanie Knight, Gregg Tickle and her husband Keith, who hooked up temporary water and electricity and finished the floor.

"I want to thank everyone for their overwhelming support and encouragement by making a point to come in," she said.

Jodi is hesitant to put a time-line on her official opening, but is hoping for the spring of 2018. All depends on how the renovation of the building progresses, but the sneak peek made her look forward to that day.

BrewBakers is slated to be on the November 5 Arnold housing tour. This will give Jodi an opportunity to give a "progress report" on the renovation.



It took a team effort for BrewBakers to host its three-day "sneak peek" during SORC. Hundreds of people were served smoothies and iced coffees and took a look around at the building which is in the process of being restored to house the new business. (Fallon Gibson photo)