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South Loup River Valley

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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AEDC Director Cheryl Carson (left) presents Finch Library Director Marcy Lucas, and board members (from left) Sharon Forrester, Betty Larson, Cyd Miller, Bev Engleman, Patty Parks-Nelson and Carlene Lanham, a plaque last Wednesday, designating the library as a Historical landmark. The plaque is now on display at the library. (Jessica Tickle photo)

Historic Registry Listing is Official

Official word was received on July 1, 2015, but it wasn't until last Wednesday that Arnold Economic Development Director Cheryl Carson presented the library's director and board members a plaque, designating Finch Memorial Library as a National Historic Landmark.

The long process of the library

being accepted to the National Register of Historic Places began in the spring of 2014 as a project of the Arnold Economic Development Corporation (AEDC). AEDC intern Dayna Larreau, and then-AEDC Director Sandy Hicks, started paperwork on several sites in Arnold that they felt might be eligible.

Only the library met the strict criteria set by the registry.

Representatives of the Nebraska State Historical Society made a visit to Arnold that summer to view the library and downtown Arnold. At that time, the representatives said the downtown district could also be considered.

The 37-page submission to the Nebraska State Historical Society was completed by Larreau before she left for college. Hicks continued to move forward with the project until resigning as AEDC director, when Cheryl Carson took over that position.

On April 30 of this year, Carson made the final presenta-

tion to the State Historical Preservation Board. Its acceptance to the registry will now make federal funds available to the library.

Early settler Sarah Finch, in memory of her husband Ephraim S. Finch, willed \$17,000 to the village for a library to be built in Arnold. The cornerstone of the library was laid in 1924, with the Masonic Lodge in charge.

The library now joins the following Custer County sites listed on the Nebraska National Register: Sargent Bridge (near Sargent), William R. Dowse House (near Comstock), St. Anselm's Catholic Church Rectory and Parish Hall (Anselmo), Arrow Hotel (Broken Bow), Brenizer Library (Merna), Broken Bow Carnegie Library, Broken Bow Commercial Square Historic District, Custer County Courthouse and Jail (Broken Bow), First Custer County Courthouse (southwest part of Custer County), First National Bank - Steinmeier Building (Ansley), Groat, Stillman P. House (Broken Bow), Benjamin and Mary Kellenbarger House (Merna), Mason City School, and Security State Bank Building (Broken Bow).

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's inventory of properties deemed worthy of preservation. It is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect our historic and archeological resources. The register is maintained by the National Park Service. In Nebraska the National Register is administered by the Nebraska State Historical Society and is part of the efforts of the State Historical Society State Historic Preservation Office to promote preservation.

Arnold One of Three Best Locations for Viewing 2017 Total Solar Eclipse

AEDC Director will Attend Area Planning Meeting

(North Platte, Nebraska, August 12, 2015) - Where are you going to be on August 21, 2017? What is happening on August 21, 2017? The first total solar eclipse to touch North America since 1979!

According to GreatAmericanEclipse.com, Nebraska is one of the top choices for experienced eclipse chasers and the reason is clear: great weather prospects, longer duration than points west, better visibility than points east, and wide-open and uncrowded highways.

National and international eclipse chasers will be invited to consider a visit to the Nebraska Sandhills to experience the total solar eclipse! The Central Nebraska Sandhill commu-

nities of Tryon, Stapleton and Arnold, as well as the Platte River Valley community of North Platte are teaming up to create a once-in-a-lifetime experience for eclipse chasers.

The festival viewing sites in the Nebraska Sandhills provide two minutes and 34 seconds of totality, and that long duration takes place in some of the biggest, darkest and clearest skies in all America, creating a 74 percent probability of favorable viewing conditions on eclipse day.

The community of North Platte, while experiencing only one minute and 52 seconds of totality will be host to several "edger" viewing opportunities, at many diverse sites. In the

days leading up to August 21, 2017, there will be a number of educational and cultural enrichment activities, geared for all ages. Programs under consideration are historical presentations of Native American and early settlers' reaction to past eclipses; make and take art workshops; astronomy education for all ages; area historical and cultural presentations; and some good old-fashioned entertainment!

The ranching communities in the Nebraska Sandhills will be top destinations to immerse visitors in life on what is still largely a frontier! Ranchers are being encouraged to open their homes to offer unique lodging opportunities; cattle drives,

brandings and trail rides are in the works; ranch rodeo demonstrations; pit barbecues; dances; cowboy poetry; Birdwatching and nature viewing; geography and archeology presentations; driving tours; aerial tours; photography tours... The possibilities are endless.

Nightly star parties in the dark Sandhills hosted by local astronomers should also be considered.

All of this leads up to the main event - the August 21, 2017 Total Solar Eclipse! The communities of Tryon and Stapleton will be hosting festival viewing sites, complete with plenty of parking; dedicated viewing space; educational presentations; the comfort of tents,

food, beverages, entertainment, souvenir vendors, and, of course, porta-potties. The sites will range in size from accommodating a few hundred to several hundred. Mass transit from North Platte's hotels will be available.

This truly international event will take intensive planning and marketing. On August 21, 2015, exactly two years out from the 2017 event, a planning meeting will be held at the North Platte /Lincoln County Visitors Bureau, 101 Halligan Drive. Anyone interested in joining in on the celebration is encouraged to attend. For more information contact Muriel Clark at 308-532-4729 or mclark@visitnorthplatte.com.

Editor's Note: Arnold Economic Development Director Cheryl Carson plans to attend the planning meeting to gain more information on what all will be involved in being a host festival site.

"Back to School Bash" Exceeds Expectations

Students and teachers were back in the classroom on Monday for their first full day of school, but not before having one last blast of summer last Thursday night.

Dubbed as a "Back to School Bash," by the PTA, the free event was held on a closed off street near the swimming pool to welcome new administrators, teachers and their families and new families to the community. Some 75 kids and their parents signed in to enjoy the pool before it closed for the season, and miniature golf was a big hit with the crowd. An estimated 250 people were served at the barbecue sponsored by the Arnold Booster Club, with firemen stepping in to help grill the large amount of hamburgers and hotdogs. Food was served in a bay in the fire department's building, and the line stretched clear out to the street.

Each student received a goodie bag and door prizes, including pizza certificates, movie rentals, Rialto Theatre

bucks, Farmhouse coffee cards, water bottles, shirts, books and lots of other fun gifts, were given away. The meal was served and cleaned up just in time for everyone to take cover from an approaching storm. The only thing planned that didn't happen, was playing games with the new faculty. One participant said, "Everyone was relaxed and having a great time!"

The PTA has already started planning next year's bash, and will be expecting a larger crowd as word gets out to kids and parents who weren't there of what they missed.

New Administrator, Teachers Welcomed

The PTA, students and their families welcomed one new administrator and two new teachers to the school, including new principal Joel Morgan, kindergarten teacher, Ms. Batenhorst and, and Elementary Resource teacher Mrs. Soucie.

Originally from Campbell, Nebraska, Principal Morgan grad-

Continued on page 2.



Miniature golf and swimming were part of the Arnold PTA's first ever "Back to School Bash" held last Thursday evening. Some 250 people turned out for the event. (Tammy Weinman photo)