

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 2018

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

SINGLE COPY: 75 CENTS

VOLUME 102, NUMBER 10

New second grade teacher looking forward to being a part of Arnold Community



APS Photo

Mr. Todd Phelps began teaching second grade at Arnold Public Schools last week.

By Diana Coleman

“Everyone can learn, everyone learns differently.”

This is the classroom motto of Arnold Public School’s newest teacher, Mr. Todd Phelps. Mr. Phelps is teaching 2nd grade, taking the place of newly retired teacher Melva Geiser. Mr. Phelps taught 5th through 8th grades in a 2-room country school outside of Hot Springs, South Dakota, before moving into Hot Springs and teaching 4th grade for one year and 5th grade for the last 11 years. He was also a coach for the middle school girls track and volleyball teams and coached high school wrestling.

Mr. Phelps was raised in Nebraska, attending elementary school in Hyannis before moving to Imperial and graduating from Chase County High School. He moved back to the Sandhills to work as a cowboy until a serious fall from an airplane hangar landed him in a coma for two weeks with major head trauma and broken bones, ending his ranching career. It was then, that he decided to go back to college. He graduated from Chadron State College with his teaching degree in May 2005. The teaching tradi-

tion runs strong in the Phelps family, as Todd’s father and two brothers are all teachers and coaches.

Mr. Phelps is divorced with three children. His son Logan is 26 and married, daughter Haylee is 24 and married, and his youngest son Alex is 18 and just graduated from high school.

He was watching for an opportunity to come back to the Sandhills of Nebraska and be closer to his family. He has always considered the Sandhills home. Mr. Phelps was pleased when he got the teaching job at Arnold.

“I had heard nothing but positive things about Arnold’s school system. Everything I heard has proven to be true,” he said. “Arnold is a very friendly town with lots of nice people. It seems like a great place.”

He is enjoying getting to know everyone and said that he got a sense of the helpfulness of the community while he was looking for a place to live. He is looking forward to meeting more of the residents. He is also planning on attending many of the school’s activities.

Mr. Phelps has hobbies and interests that include hunting, bowling and fishing, but his passions are wrestling and

history. He has coached multiple state qualifiers and state placers along with high placing and state runner-up wrestling teams. He is looking forward to coaching the South Loup Bobcat Wrestling Team.

He has demonstrated his passion for history by applying for and receiving scholarships for five summers in a row to attend History Institutes. For these Institutes, Mr. Phelps has traveled to Colonial Williamsburg, Petersburg, Boston, Vermont, New York, Washington D.C. and Gettysburg to study the Civil War and the Revolutionary War at these historical sites.

His favorite subjects to teach are history and math.

The biggest challenges he has faced in his teaching career have been Common Core Math and dealing with a society that tries to make kids grow up too fast and become adults too soon. He believes in letting kids be kids.

Mr. Phelps has always enjoyed children and working with them. He loves to see them grasp concepts and figure things out. He loves teaching elementary-age students because they possess an innocence and willingness to learn, but he prefers to coach high school age.

Through teaching, Mr. Phelps hopes to instill a love of learning in all his students. His goals are to continue to teach as long as he can and to have the South Loup wrestling team be represented in the school’s state trophy case. He is excited for the year ahead and encouraging his students to love learning.

School Receives Grant for Planning Phase of Makerspace

At last week’s school board meeting, Superintendent Dr. Dawn Lewis reported that the school has been awarded a \$2,000.00 grant that will be used for the planning phase of a proposed Makerspace. Dr. Lewis said this opens the door for larger grants.

The board has not made a decision on whether or not to move ahead with a Makerspace. With the grant, board members Joe Cool and Eric Nelson will be visiting other Makerspace sites and gathering needed information.

The proposed makerspace is a collaborative work space for making, learning, exploring and sharing that uses high tech to no tech tools. These spaces are open to kids, adults, and entrepreneurs and have a variety of maker equipment.

Park Improvements Discussed at Village Board Meeting

More improvements will be underway at both Arnold’s Old Mill Park and the recreation area south of town.

With Arnold’s baseball program growing, discussion was held at last week’s village board meeting on making improvements to the ball diamond. Josh Flint asked the board to consider some minor improvements, such as better dirt, additional sand for the mound and painting. Village Superintendent Doug De Laune will work with Josh to improve the diamond. Other improvements are being made at the park, as Bryce Nansel is repairing the fence. De Laune told the board that he discussed bathrooms at the park with Gene Tullis and decided to proceed with a septic tank vs. a leech field.

De Laune said he plans on doing trenching for additional electric and water hookups at the Arnold Recreation Area.

With concern expressed that the D looks like an O on the water tower, Village Clerk Patricia Lamberty was asked to contact Maguire Iron about the lettering of Arnold on the Water Tower at the July meeting. After looking into the matter, the clerk said McGuire Iron made no changes, and painted the letters Arnold as is.

During the AEDC Director’s update, Cheryl Carson said there is a tentative plan to attend the Nebraska State Fair on August 27 to showcase Arnold and all it has to offer. Carson said they were still looking for at least three more volunteers to help with the booth.

In other business, the board:

- Accepted Great Plains Power, Inc.’s bid of \$295,189.11 as recommended by Olsson Associates, for the Distribution Voltage Conversion & Rebuild - Phase 4 Project.

- Agreed to sign an agreement for professional services with Olsson Associates for Phase 5 (the final phase) of the Distribution Voltage Conversion & Rebuild project. The fixed fee for the services will be \$38,200.00.

Early Deadline for Sept. 6 Issue

So that *Sentinel* staff can take an extra day off over the Labor Day holiday and get a little vacation time, an early deadline for the September 6 issue has been set for Wednesday, August 29, at noon. The issue will go to press Thursday, August 30, by 5:00 p.m. The office will be closed on Friday, August 31, and Monday, September 3.

The September 6 issue will be mailed out as usual the next Wednesday, September 5.

Get To Know Your Hometown Businesses Quiltmaker & Mrs. Mac’s Monogramming

Twelfth in a monthly series on what businesses and services the community of Arnold has to offer.

By Pepper Werner

Who knew that in this day of technology and outside distractions, people still sit down and sew quilts? By hand or machine, it is an incredible art. They are given away when a baby is born, for high school and college graduations, wedding gifts and handed down when someone passes away. They are a true work of love.

Margie McDowell opened Quiltmaker in 1992 while working in her basement. After nine years, she and her husband Kendall built the shop where she still operates today.

Margie needed more space, and Kendall needed a secretary for the newly formed Loup Valley Construction. The original plan was for the entire shop on West Washington to be her domain, but as you will see, she ended up with a 10’ X 30’ space instead.

Before the time of cell phones, Margie answered the telephone and met with clients while Kendall worked out in the field. In her down time, she was able to use her talents as a seamstress and complete quilts for a variety of people, some coming great distances.

Quiltmaker started with a singular

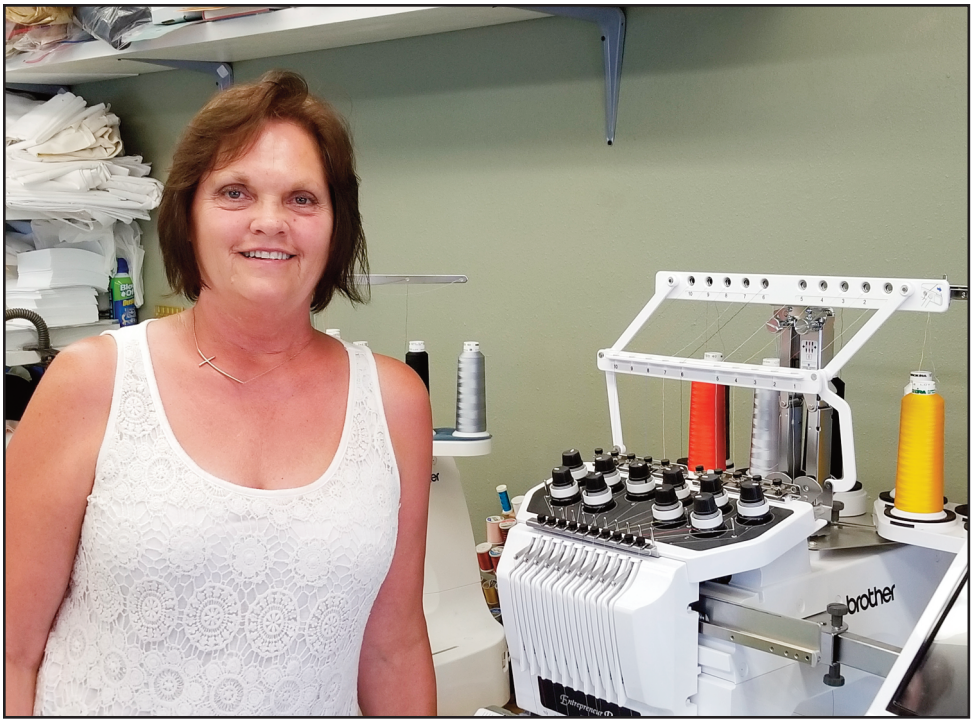
quilting machine and within a year, Margie added two six-needle embroidery machines to her shop. She admits that they have become a little antiquated.

“My first two machines run on floppy disks. Most kids today don’t even know what one looks like. It takes more time to create the embroidery design and upload it into my machine, but I found a source to do the conversion for me, and I’m able to keep my machines. They work just fine,” she said.

If it’s not broke, don’t fix it. Her machines still create the beautiful products that she is known for.

In 2015, Margie invested in a 10-needle machine. When asked what the benefits were, she answered with this, “If I wanted to use more than six colors on an embroidery design, I would have to stop and change thread colors to complete the project. Now I can use ten colors of thread and that is adequate to do any design I can come up with.”

It sounds contradictory, but Margie’s work has a ‘season.’ Spring to fall keeps her busy with quilting since many of her customers spend the majority of the winter sewing the fabric blocks together. Margie estimated that so far this



Photo/Pepper Werner

Margie McDowell stands next to a 10 needle embroidery machine that she uses in her business.

year she has completed 50 quilts - the farthest coming from Western Idaho.

There is an art and a talent that comes with quilting. Margie doesn’t just dive right in when she receives a quilt. She waits a day or two to get the idea for a design. It’s really a matter of free-hand sewing and that adds to the uniqueness of the finished product.

Margie has perfected her craft in such a way that she can embroider and quilt at the same time. By setting up her embroidery machine for a ballcap or jacket and letting it run, she can continue with a quilt. She is only interrupted when the item is finished or runs out of thread. It is an efficient use of time for a one-woman show.

Fall and Christmastime keep Margie

busy embroidering gifts. Ballcaps are a popular item for outfitters, ranchers and the school. In the early spring, Margie works on a lot of towels and duflie bags for graduation presents. With the flurry of Arnold summer activity, Margie finds herself making a multitude of caps for the road race.

Customers can purchase items that are Bobcat related, directly from her shop or custom order nearly anything. Margie has a selection of catalogs to order from or bring in an item of your own. She would hope to have her items in a downtown store again, but time will tell.

As for limitless dreams for Quiltmak-

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