

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2019

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

SINGLE COPY: 75 CENTS

VOLUME 103, NUMBER 12

## They’ve a Story to Tell

Arnold’s go-getter: Evelyn Gracey



Photo/Diana Coleman

**Now retired, Evelyn Gracey’s life is all about family and traveling. Keeping up with the great-grandkids’ activities is no problem for this spry 88-year-old.**

World War II.

The couple was married five years later at St. Joseph Church in Broken Bow, so began a life of ranching, horse training and raising children. The first of those two children – two boys – were born while they worked on the Bates Ranch, and following a move to Dunning to work on ranches, a daughter and son were born.

After a time, the family moved to Arnold, and when Evelyn was asked “Why

Arnold?” she replied, “I don’t know. It just seemed like a good place.”

Gene did some trucking and trained horses, and Evelyn worked as a waitress and a

nurse’s aide. The latter work made her realize that she wanted to get more education and move up in that field. She attended Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte and earned her LPN degree, and then for more advanced training (which Mid-Plains didn’t offer), she attended Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota, where she graduated as a registered nurse. She then worked at the Callaway Hospital and Melham Hospital in Broken Bow. She retired at the age of 72.

If you could run them all down, the stories of Jokerster (yes, a capital Gene Gracey would fill a book. For instance, one time he stood in the early morning shadows by Watson’s Bakery and when a young girl came to work, he jumped out and scared several years of growth off of her. He also liked to open people’s car doors and turn on the many switches on the dash so when they got in their car, all sorts of things came on.

Gene passed away in 1995. Evelyn had been at the Kearney Hospital with her mother, who was ill. Her mom passed away at 11:00 p.m. Evelyn called Gene, who advised her to stay in Kearney since it was so late. When she came home at 8:00 a.m., Evelyn found Gene lying on the couch, where he had passed away.

Evelyn has watched her grandchildren grow up, and of

**Continued on page 2.**

## S.A.S.S. returns this weekend

Automotive enthusiasts are invited to enter the Sandhills Automotive Show & Shine (S.A.S.S.) on Saturday, September 7. Registration will be from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m., and the show will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Arnold Recreation Area south of town. Divisions will include: Classic Cars, Vintage Pickups, Motorcycles and Antique Tractors. There will be Best of Show in each division. Entry fee is \$10.00 per vehicle.

Lunch will be available on site.

To enter S.A.S.S. and for more information, call Marge McDowell at 308-530-4105 or e-mail her at mrmcdowell03@gmail.com.

## Next Blood Drive Set for Sept. 23

ARNOLD, Nebraska (Aug. 28, 2019) – Heroes come in all shapes and sizes. They don’t wear capes or special suits, and their badge of honor is the bandage that shows they gave the gift of life.

The community is invited to become a hometown hero and answer the call of patients in need by donating blood on Monday, Sept. 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Arnold Community Center.

Donating blood is one of the simplest things a person can do to help save a patient’s life. For the hour it takes to give blood, there could be a whole community of people thankful for another birthday given to their loved one.

To make an appointment or to learn more, call Shirley at 848-3356 or Amanda at 660-6709.

Donors may also download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcross-blood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Completion of a RapidPass® online health history questionnaire is encouraged to help speed up the donation process. To get started, follow the instructions

**Continued on page 2.**

**Continued on page 2.**

## Village Board sets budget hearing for Sept. 19

Flood repair improvements is largest capital improvement budgeted for

The Arnold Village Board of Trustees will hold a Budget Hearing on Monday, September 19, 2019, at 7:15 p.m. The proposed budget is \$2,846,930 for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Approximately 17% of the budgeted expenditures (\$475,000) are for electricity purchases from Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska and Western Area

Power Administration. The largest capital improvement budgeted for is \$606,000 (21%) for Flood Repair Improvements. Flood Repair Improvements include Asphalt Paving on the following streets:

- 100 to 500 Block of North Cedar Street
- 100 Block and 200 Block of East 2nd Ave

- 100 Block of West Adams Ave
- 100 Block of North Haskell
- Other capital Improvements include:
  - \$75,000.00 Install 6” Water Main on Woodland Drive and West Jefferson
  - \$30,000.00 Park Improvements (Contingent upon Donations)

Capital Outlay Expenditures include:

- \$15,000 Dumpsters
- \$18,000 Loan Payment – John Deere Utility Tractor
- \$145,000 Loan Payment in Full – Western Star Trash Truck
- Some of the other expenditures include:

**Continued on page 2.**

**Continued on page 2.**

## Simpler Times

Arnold women recall “normal training” and teaching in one-room schools

By Diana Coleman  
Sentinel staff

Mackley Valley, Hall, Eureka Valley, Finchville, Loyal, Pleasant Hill, Mills Valley, Pine Canyon and Gallington are names of a handful of the country schools that dotted the countryside near Arnold in Custer County. There was one country school approximately every five miles in the early and mid-20th century. The area of Nebraska which was west of the ninety-eighth meridian was considered the “frontier” population. These people were beginning to place more importance on education, resulting in many country schools being built. The teachers who received their degrees from the colleges, at that time, tended to stay in the cities to teach, creating a critical shortage of qualified teachers to teach in the country schools.

The solution – termed normal school training movement – came into existence in 1903 – 1914. This program, taught at the local high schools, was offered to the high school graduates following graduation. During the high school years, the student would choose whether they wanted to go into normal training or college prep. The student would then take classes according to their

choice. The training began while the student was a junior and continued into the senior year of high school. This included observing every grade in the elementary and practicing teaching the other students in your class. Then the students spent two weeks practice teaching in a country school followed by a week of teaching at the country school completely independent. These normal school students were then required to take a state exam over their high school training. If they passed, they received a certificate to teach for three years in a rural school. To keep the certification, it was required that they took refresher courses usually over the summer.

Sunbeam Swanson, Darlene Rimpley, Mildred Smith and Janet Blowers are just a few of the teachers who taught in country schools in the Arnold area. They all recalled their duties included cleaning the schoolhouse, hauling water from a hand pump, making their own lesson plans for every grade they were teaching, packing their lunch and eating lunch with the students. In those days people did with what they had. It was recalled that students would bring homemade bread and bean sandwiches for lunch while an-



Photo/Diana Coleman

**Standing outside Berni Crow’s one-room school house in Arnold, Darlene Rimpley (left) and Mildred Smith (right) remember the good old days of ringing the bell to bring students into the classroom. Once there were many, but these ladies are just two of a handful of residents who remember the days of “normal training” and teaching in a one-room school house.**

other brought onion and butter sandwiches. If a student had a store bought cookie, they had real bargaining power during

lunch.

When Mildred Smith was hired for one of her teaching jobs, it was expressed to her by

the school board that it was important that she play with the kids at recess. Some of the pop-

**Continued on page 2.**