

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Purchase a Gift Certificate, CEDC Will Match Half Starting April 21

Program rolls out to help Custer County businesses

Custer Economic Development Corporation is putting together a match program to support local business in Custer County. The program rolled out on Tuesday, April 21. For every gift certificate purchased at a Custer County business through a newly launched website, CEDC will match 50 percent of the purchase. Program details will also be shared on CEDC's Facebook page, Sandhills Express and K-Bear Radio stations.

Complete details on the program were not available by press time for this issue, but will be published in The Sentinel's April 30 issue. Residents may start accessing the program immediately to help out our local businesses by going to <http://www.strong.myshopify.com/>. Residents will be able to call in to purchase gift certificates if they do not have access to Internet.

Village Board Approves LB 840 Loan Deferments Due to COVID

Arnold business owners that have an LB 840 loan now have the option of a payment deferral due to COVID-19. The decision to authorize the Arnold Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) to defer the loans was made at last Monday's village board meeting. Businesses will be offered a one, two or three month deferral for only the months of May, June and July of 2020 and the loan term will be extended for the number of months the business chooses to defer. The AEDC is authorized to approve or deny the requests for payment deferral.

CDBG Grant

A communication from Steve Charleston, CDBG program manager, was received regarding Arnold's pre-application for 2019 CDBG Emergent Threat (EM) funds due to last spring's flooding. Charleston said that Arnold is unable to make a full application for funding under the EM category, but the project appears to be more applicable under the CDBG category of Public Works, where street improvement activities are eligible. The board will discuss the public works grant application at a later date.

Seasonal Employees

Village Superintendent Doug De Laune told board members that Kenneth Goodenow Jr. has been hired as a seasonal employee.

It was reported that the following pool personnel will be hired contingent that qualifications are met:

Pool Manager/Water Safety Instructor: Shavonne Schacher.

Assistant Manager (1): Haley Reed.

Assistant Manager (2): Tamie Gates.

Lifeguards: Hannah Burnside, Reagan Cool, Kacee Dvorak, Maxon Frey, Dylan Nelson, Kenna Rogers and Cecilia Wonch.

Substitutes: Halie Recoy and Drew Vickers.

In other business, board members decided to sell the 1988 Dodge Dakota on Big Iron.

Courthouse Closed

The Custer County Courthouse and all offices will be closed on April 24 for Arbor Day.

Restaurants, Coffee House See Drop In Business Due to COVID-19

Governor encourages citizens to support local businesses



Photo/Debbie Connelly

With business falling dramatically due to the pandemic, Jake's Horses & Harleys owners Jerry and Julie Jacobson got a shot in the arm last Friday, as they received a special delivery order for 22 pizzas as an act of kindness by an area employer.

By Janet Larreau

Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts urged Nebraskans last week to support their dining establishments by ordering takeout and delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the community of Arnold, dining establishments appreciate that support - and the support of locals who continue to do business with them. They are struggling, with some seeing as much as a 75% drop in business.

"Honestly, at first it wasn't as pronounced until we got some infectious cases noted in our area," said Annie Vettel, who co-owns Grazers Bar & Grill

with Jesse Halstead. "We were doing pretty good until we finally got a case in Callaway. People recognized the emanate threat."

Grazers closed down their dining area to customers and moved only to take-out orders prior to the Governor's mandate.

"We shut down (the dining area) because we had seen a lot of out of town customers come in that had been from other communities that had been shut down who were looking for a place to eat in. We wanted to protect our community and ourselves," said Annie. Fortunately, when Grazers remodeled the building, they had installed a pass through window

to the beer garden for special events and summertime activities that lends itself perfectly to carry out orders.

"When I serve out of the window, I usually wear a mask and gloves to protect myself and the customer. The kitchen staff is also wearing gloves for food preparation," she said.

Jake's Horses & Harleys shut down their dining area on the day the Governor asked them to. At that time, business was down 50%. Owner Julie Jacobson said that business is down 75% now.

"Customers are welcome to come inside and pick up or we will do curbside or delivery," she said. "I've been in the food business over 35 years and cus-

tomer health and cleanliness has been our #1 concern since the very beginning. We've always complied with health department rules and the CDC, but we are even more stringent now. We've stepped up our game."

The Exchange owners Kris and Blaine Hagler also closed down the dining room before it was mandated after receiving a call from Patty at the village after a meeting was held with the county. Kris said they weren't surprised at all.

The Exchange encourages their customers to call ahead and meals can be delivered outside, which Kris feels is much

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Social Distancing - Rural Nebraska Style

Arnold Junior Kacee Dvorak (pictured left) takes a leisurely ride around town on her horse, Dancer, who just turned 22 years old. At 15.1 hands high, Dancer is the perfect way to enjoy a beautiful day and practice social distancing.

"I have always been obsessed with horses, but quarantine has shown me how important Dancer is to me," said Kacee. "The connection I have with her is so special. When quarantine started, I wasn't sure what I would do with my time. I realized that instead of sitting at home, I could go spend time building onto my connection with Dancer. Soon, I started looking forward to the times I went down to work with her. Riding her gets both of us out and doing something productive! Spending time with Dancer is a social distancing activity that helps me get out of the house and into the nice weather we've had recently. I love to see the happy faces when I ride her around town!"

School Board Decides May 1 Is Last Day of School for Students

It became official at last Tuesday night's school board meeting. The last day of school for students at Arnold Public Schools is May 1st and the last day for staff is May 20.

Interim-superintendent Mark Sievering said the teachers and students have done a great job since the school shut down, but the question has become, "How sustainable is this?" He said it was driven home to him with a couple of Zoom interviews.

"Students need a good, solid Internet connection because that is what they are trying to learn at home with. The board felt like for those households that have two or three students

at home trying to share Internet time, it is a struggle."

Instruction will stop on May 1 and teachers can spend the rest of their time working on curriculum and school improvement.

In a normal school year, it is tough to find time to get that all in.

As far as grading, administrators and board members have talked about a couple of different options. Some schools in the state are doing pass/fail. Mr. Sievering said the school certainly doesn't want this pandemic to hurt the students' grades and they want them to have the option to improve a grade.

"We want them to do the work and turn in assignments, but we recognize that it is a challenge. It is still up in the air," he said. "We are leaning towards pass/no harm. They can improve, but a grade is not going to go backwards. The grading focus is mainly on the high school. Elementary students have done some new content, not just enrichment, but the teachers are extremely reasonable people and realize the situation the students are in. It's a different environment."

Board members also approved a summer food program that is a continuation of what the school is doing right

now. Other school districts have done a food program in the summertime. How it works will be dependent on where things are with the COVID-19 situation. If things are back to normal the lunch room would be open. If not, the program would be pick up only with no delivery.

In non-action items, graduation was discussed. The school has received some guidance from the commissioner and the governor, but what will happen and when it will happen is still up in the air.

"We'll see if anything changes and try in the next few weeks to see what the seniors or parents would prefer," said Mr. Sievering.

In other business, the board:

• Hired Kallie Bush as the

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