

Happy New Year!

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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2020: The Year In Review

EDITOR'S NOTE- This week we look back at the year that was. As the clock struck midnight on January 1st, most people looked forward to another year of normalcy that we all take for granted. By mid-March, all of that changed, and the year was anything but normal. COVID-19 dominated the news. Mandates took affect, requiring face masks, social distancing, and cancellation of events. Businesses struggled to keep their doors open, schools and jobs moved on-line, and people were told to stay home. The government - both at the national and state level - provided some financial relief.

The most heartbreaking thing of all, was as many of our beloved residents passed away, we couldn't say goodbye due to mandates. Residents in nursing homes experienced extreme loneliness, as they were kept in their rooms - away from family and friends.

Thinking outside of the box became the new norm in the community of Arnold, as the school, organizations and residents tried to keep some of the annual traditions and events alive. Many succeeded, but some events - such as the A.H.S. Alumni Reunion - were completely cancelled.

In one culture, it is said that all doors and windows of the house must be open at midnight to usher out the old year, which clears the way for a promising new year to enter with a fresh, untainted beginning. So as we gladly usher out 2020, open those doors and windows in your home, take off your face mask, and breath in some fresh air as you welcome in 2021 with hope for a better year to come.

With that said, following is the year in review:

JANUARY

A major snowstorm hit the



“Oh, I see it! I see it!”

From the great vantage point of her grandparents' rural home west of Arnold, 5-year-old Harper Aguallo peers through a pair of binoculars to see what has been nicknamed the “Christmas Star” on the evening of December 21. Many residents were in their yards that evening, viewing the close encounter between the two largest planets in the solar system – Jupiter and Saturn. The rare celestial event was only visible for an hour or two after sunset in the western sky. The last time the gas planets appeared together as they did on the 21st was some 800 years ago. Harper is the daughter of A.H.S. grad Nate Aguallo and the granddaughter of Neil and Diana Coleman.

area with 13 inches of snow recorded, followed by freezing rain. NDR and CCSO declared all highways in Custer County impassable due to high winds and blowing and drifting snow.

New microscopes were purchased for the science lab at Arnold High School. The money came from an Apple-gate Fund grant that was

matched by the Arnold Booster Club.

The Arnold Chamber reorganized and elected the following new officers: April Tickle, president; Allison Goodenow, vice-president; Brandi Corbin, secretary; and Debbie Connolly, treasurer.

The Rialto Theatre Board hosted a reception at Sandhills

Motor's showroom to thank the Sandhills Open Road Challenge for their generous support of our community and to kick off the 20th Anniversary year of the Sandhills Open Road Challenge event.

The Zion Lutheran Church held its last service on Sunday, January 5. It closed due to the of lack of people attending.

Mysterious UAS drones had been spotted over the Arnold area. They were reportedly large and described as a single flash of light by some, while others observed the lights of multiple drones flying in formations. According to Sheriff Dan Osmond, the reports of sighting came from all around the county. The sightings remained a mystery.

The Arnold School Board held their annual organizational meeting. Officers that were elected were: Duane Bowers, president; Joe Cool, vice-president; Eric Nelson, treasurer; and Diana Coleman, secretary.

National Honor Society members, Kenna Rogers and Addison Starr, finished their senior project. They donated an in-class library to the new first and second grade teachers, Ms. Atkeson and Mrs. Rotherham.

Arnold EMT's placed in the top four of the CPR competition held at the NEMSA Winter Conference.

FEBRUARY

The AEDC applied for a chance to have HGTV do a renovation in the town of Arnold.

Winners of the 11th Annual School Spelling Bee were: Riata Remund, Callan Witthuhn, Josie Christensen, Elijah Cool, Will Moninger, Gracie Neth, Harmony Borah, Serenity Borah, and Ella Cool.

The Arnold Animal Clinic became Bierman Vet Services when Dr. Merle and Leron Bierman purchased the business from Dr. Matt Vickers.

Arnold High School grad Aaron Coleman became the new Market President at Pinnacle Bank.

Delaney Rogers placed third at state in the V.F.W. Patriot's Pen Essay Contest.

Grant Jones and Jessie Sallach were recognized by the Daughters of the American Revolution for their outstanding citizenship.

Logan Peterson and Carson Mason qualified for the Nebraska State Wrestling Meet.

Harvey Foran was in the news, moving his large collection of Legos to his newly constructed “Legoland” building.

MARCH

The Arnold Fire Department held its annual awards night. Tammy Weinman was honored

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Governor Announces New Directed Health Measures

LINCOLN - On December 23, Governor Pete Ricketts announced that the State is moving from the “yellow” to “blue” phase of its coronavirus pandemic response plan. As a result, the State of Nebraska is issuing new Directed Health Measures (DHMs) effective 12:01 a.m., on Thursday, December 24, 2020. The new DHMs change some of the restrictions put in place to help manage the coronavirus pandemic.

Nebraska's pandemic response plan links DHM restrictions to the percentage of staffed hospital beds in Nebraska filled by coronavirus patients. The percentage is below 15% (7-day rolling average), which is the threshold for the State moving to the “blue” phase of its pandemic plan.

Moving from the “yellow” to “blue” phase involves the following DHM changes:

- Seating persons in groups of 8 or less returns to guidance for restaurants, bars, wedding/funeral receptions, and other venues.

- The requirement for individuals at bars and restaurants to be seated unless ordering food, using the restroom, or playing games returns to guidance.

- The maximum capacity for indoor gatherings goes from 50% to 75%.

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Phased Public Health Restrictions Tied to Coronavirus Hospitalization Rate					
Hospital Bed Thresholds- Percent COVID-19 Inpatients of 14 day rolling average of staffed beds	2% GREEN	10% BLUE	15% YELLOW	20% ORANGE	25% RED
Level					
Extracurricular Activities	No restrictions	75% of indoor capacity applies; guidance remains and is recommended	50% of indoor capacity applies; guidance remains and is recommended.	Fan attendance limited to household members & 6 ft Separation	Youth extracurricular activities prohibited below high school level. Fan attendance rules remain same as orange for High School. Fan attendance for College, staff and only immediate family members.
Bars	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	Patrons required to be seated, Parties of 8	Patrons required to be seated, Parties of 8, 6 ft Separation	Bars go to carry-out, delivery, and drive through only.
Restaurants	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	Patrons required to be seated, Parties of 8	Patrons required to be seated, Parties of 8, 6 ft Separation	Only licensed restaurants can do dine-in. Mask required for public facing restaurant staff. Patrons required to be seated, parties of 8, 6 ft separation, no games, no seating at counter/bars, Patrons can have alcoholic beverage as long as with a meal, Dine-in permitted from 5a-9p.
Churches	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	6 ft Separation between Household Units	6 ft Separation between, no passing of items between Household Units
Wedding & Funeral Receptions	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	Parties of 8, Limited Dancing Outside of Tables	Parties of 8, 6 ft Separation, Dancing at Tables Only	10 person rule applies for receptions; Services must have 6 ft of separation between households
Indoor Gatherings	No restrictions	75%; guidance remains and is recommended	50%, Parties of 8	25%, Parties of 8, 6 ft Separation	10 Person Rule
Outdoor Gatherings	No restrictions	100%; guidance remains and is recommended	100%, Parties of 8	100%, Parties of 8, 6 ft Separation	25 Person Rule
Gyms, Fitness Centers/ Clubs, Health Clubs, Spas	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	6 ft Separation between Customers	6 ft Separation between Customers
Salons, Barber Shops, Massage, Body Art	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	6 ft Separation between Customers, Masks Required	6 ft Separation between Customers, Masks Required
Schools	No restrictions	Remain Open	Remain Open	Remain Open	Remain Open
Elective Surgeries	No restrictions	No restrictions	10% Reserve Capacity	All Inpatient Class D & E Surgeries Postponed	All Inpatient Class C, D & E Surgeries Postponed
Child Care Services	No restrictions	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	No restrictions; guidance remains and is recommended	Such child care services shall require all staff, volunteers or practitioners to use masks, or other item sufficient to cover an individual's mouth and nose, when within six (6) feet of children for fifteen (15) consecutive minutes or more.	Such child care services shall require all staff, volunteers or practitioners to use masks, or other item sufficient to cover an individual's mouth and nose, when within six (6) feet of children for fifteen (15) consecutive minutes or more.