

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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They’ve a Story to Tell

Gail Zoerb lands in Arnold after a history of many moves.

26th in a Series on
Arnold’s “Young at Heart”
Residents

By Darlene Rimpley
Contributing Writer

It took 53 years, but Gary and Gail Zoerb moved back to Arnold. Those 53 years did not take them any farther than Mason City to live, but when the opportunity to purchase a home in Arnold came up, Gary told Gail that was what he wanted to do – and they did!

Gail was born on January 26, 1939, to Verle and Neomi Francis near Smithfield, Nebraska, and the first of her moves began. The family moved to a farm near Lexington and then into Lexington, where her dad worked recapping tires. Gail went to Kindergarten in Lexington and then her dad transferred to Broken Bow, where he worked for OK Rubber Welders.

The family was established in Broken Bow long enough for Gail to attend school there through the 11th grade, at which time her dad decided that there were good opportunities of employment in Lincoln, where Gail’s brother lived and so another move happened. Gail was working as a lifeguard at the Broken Bow swimming pool, so she remained there until it was time for school to start and then moved to Lincoln.

She attended her senior year and graduated from Lincoln High in 1957 and then another move took place.

When she had left Broken Bow for the move to Lincoln, she left behind her true love, who was two years ahead of her in school, and who she had dated for several years. She and Gary Zoerb were married on June 23, 1957, in the Broken Bow Baptist Church.

A little background on Gary shows why he wanted to move back to Arnold. Gary’s mother was connected to Arnold, as she was a Turley (Doris) who married Marvin Zoerb. Gary was born in the Arnold hospital and they lived in the Arnold-Callaway areas when he was growing up. He attended rural schools and his second grade teacher happened to be Mildred Bailey Smith.

The newlyweds lived on the Arnold River Road for the first year of their marriage, when Gary worked for Punch Pandorf. They then rented the Finch Ranch from Bud Beshaler, where they lived for five



Photo/Debbie Connelly

Gail Zoerb giggles after her canine companion “Puppy” plants a big kiss on her cheek on the front steps of her home in Arnold.

years. A special keepsake Gail has from those years is an Aladdin lamp, which was given to her by her neighbor, Freda Halouska, who lived in a sod house close to their home.

There was another move – this time to Mason City where they rented a farm, milked cows and sold the milk to be delivered to patrons in the area. Gail took on the job of delivering the bottled milk for the Meadow Gold company, which she did for 16 years.

After a time, they moved into Mason City and Gary took on the “position” of Village marshal for Ansley and Mason City. One of his famous “arrests” was when he stopped an Arnold woman, Sue Beshaler, for speeding. The arrest evolved into an hour visit. Gary had the marshal job for 40 years.

They bought the Mason City hardware store and when Gail became the village clerk, her of-

fice was in the store. Gail held this position for 35 years, and even when she took on several other jobs, she still remained village clerk.

One of the other jobs she acquired was because of Gary’s job as marshal. The maintenance of the village went along with the law office, but Gary wouldn’t mow the park and other lots. So-o-o, Gail climbed on the mower and took on that job. Along with that, she worked at the IGA store in Broken Bow for three years, until it closed.

Wanting more education, she then attended the Grand Island Business School for a semester taking a business course.

And then another job... She worked at BD in Broken Bow for 17 years. She had retired from this job and also her other jobs, when Gary’s dream of returning to Arnold to live became a reality. He heard about a small acreage that was for

sale in town, which had the one requirement needed for him to purchase: a large Quonset. The owner, Ann Seda, wanted to sell so she could move to Riverview Apartments, Gary wanted to buy, and the deal was made. In 2016 the Zoerbs moved back to Arnold.

Gail attended the First Baptist Church in Ansley, where she held offices on different boards and in the women’s work, both locally and county-wide. She transferred her membership to the Arnold First Baptist Church, where she serves on the Board of Christian Education and is active in Ruth Circle. She also provides flowers for the altar and some of the beautiful flowers are from her extensive rose garden.

Even after moving to Arnold, Gail was going to go right back to being employed and worked at the village office until her health forced her to quit.

Two sons, Dean and Dale,

were born while they lived at Finch Ranch, and one more, Dan, was born after they moved to Mason City.

Dean and Julie lived at Minden and each year he strings Christmas lights to cover five acres of land (and he does put them up and take them down each year).

Dale and Linda live between Mason City and Litchfield. They have built a huge red barn in their yard, with beautiful landscaping which includes a pond. The barn is used for weddings, family reunions, and

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Graduation Is Saturday

Twenty-one seniors will receive their diplomas at the 108th Annual A.H.S. Commencement this Saturday, May 15, at 2:00 p.m., in the school auditorium.

Going out with a bang!



Photo/Jessica Tickle

Senior Jesse Connell holds up his drum sticks as a sign of gratitude to an applauding audience after the band performed a number during the Grades 6-12 Spring Concert held on May 30th. The program was appreciated by both students and the crowd, after the 2020 school year - and it’s many end-of-the-year events - went out not with a bang, but with a whimper. Also pictured are Brendan Streit and Gracie Neth.

Rialto Theater Board receives bid for sound upgrades

Donations sought to help with project

By Janet Larreau

Arnold Rialto Theatre Board members are setting out to substantially improve the sound quality in the theater. The project will come at a cost of over \$9,000.00, but will be well worth it. Board President Mary Becker said every moviegoer will benefit from the sound upgrade, but senior citizens who have difficulty hearing will benefit the most.

The theater has had people attend from Gothenburg, Thedford, Stapleton, Callaway, Broken Bow, North Platte, and Arnold. It shut down from March 15, 2020, to mid-January 2021, due to the pandemic, but before that - in 2019 - set a record, when 2000 moviegoers saw 30 different movies. This was a 65 percent increase in attendance from 2018. From 2017 to 2019, attendance for senior citizens dropped 50 percent and there was a reason.

“Social activities are limited in rural areas. The movie the-

ater is one way to encourage seniors to get out,” said Mary. Our board has heard ongoing complaints from our seniors that they can’t understand the dialog. Even folks who have normal hearing have complained that some movies are difficult to catch all the dialog. The board has taken these concerns seriously.”

Considerable research was done in 2019 about hearing loops, how they work, who benefits, and the cost. The idea was abandoned when the pandemic hit in early 2020 because the board did not know how the theater would weather the challenge.

When the theater reopened in January of 2021, complaints started coming in again about the sound quality and focused on not understanding the dialog.

This time, the board started research on improving the acoustics and in March of this year, Heartland Services was consulted. Their four recommendations were: (1) Replace the existing center front speaker; (2) Add a rear speaker; (3) Add acoustical tile to three walls; and (4) add floor-to-ceiling drapery panels behind the movie screen.

Mary explained that the original sound system, which was

installed in 2010 when the theater first opened, stopped working. Insurance paid to replace it about 18 months ago; however, technology changed and the old system was no longer in production. The theater was given an upgraded system with the newest technology available. The center front speaker, which is located behind the movie screen, is also original to the theater and is where most of the dialog originates. While that speaker is compatible with the upgraded sound system, there are deficiencies. This means the new sound system could provide better sound quality, but the speaker was built with 10 to 12-year-old technology. A new front speaker with current technology, coupled with the new sound system, will be a major boost to understanding dialog.

The purchase of a rear speaker will give the theater surround sound, moving it from an antiquated 5.1 sound system to the more widely used 7.1, which new movies are only formatted for. While adding this new speaker will not improve the dialog sound, it will, none-the-less add random sound – like birds singing - that will enrich the moviegoer’s experience.

The only acoustical tiles in the

theater are located on the ceiling; therefore, when the movie is playing there is an echo in the main body of the theater where the seats are located. The sound bounces off the walls, creating a dissonant sound. The 18-foot-high red brick walls are covered with dry wall. The plan is to custom build acoustical tile panels and install them on the north, south and east walls. The custom option is less expensive than premade acoustical tiles that have been priced.

The last recommendation to improve sound quality is to install drapery panels, which will basically cover the entire back of the movie screen. The theater was originally built for live performances. Behind the screen is a large room where the props and scenery would have been stored, as well as costumes. This large room would also accommodate cast members waiting for their turn to come on stage. The consultant discussed the importance of blocking off this large room from the movie screen and speakers.

Another recommendation that has nothing to do with sound quality is to keep the sound equipment safe by covering the cost of building two small boxes so the speakers will

have a solid base rather than balancing on two small chairs.

The total bid from Heartland Services is \$9,697.60.

“In summary, the hearing loop would have improved sound quality for a very limited group of individuals. Our goal is to improve the acoustics and speaker system so that all movie goers will benefit,” said Mary.

The speaker improvements will last 10-15 years, while the acoustical tiles have a much longer lifespan of 20-25 years. The date of installation will depend on funding and when the materials are available. The pandemic has created shortages in some areas. The board hopes the work can be completed by July 1.

Mary has applied for four grants to cover a partial amount of the cost, but that is not always a given. She hopes that residents will help fund this project in any amount they can by making donations in the following ways: drop them off with board treasurer Patty Lamberty at the Village office, mail to P.O. Box 222, Arnold, NE 69120, or make a direct donation to the theater’s bank account at Pinnacle Bank with the designation of “Theatre Sound Project.”