

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2022

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

SINGLE COPY: 75 CENTS

VOLUME 106, NUMBER 5

## A Massive Task

Village removes obsolete generators that once energized the town.

By Janet Larreau

Four generators that powered the town for decades were being removed last week from the Village light plant. With each one weighing several tons, the sound of the steel being dropped into dumpsters by heavy equipment sounded like a bomb going off.

The first generator was brought to Arnold in the early 30s by Barb Foran’s great-great-grandfather, J.D. Paine. He was contracted to sell the city power, but when his contract ran out in 1937, the city took over operation.

That generator provided the only power for the village. This was all before streetlights and when people only had a few light bulbs in their house. Outlets were scarce then, too, because there wasn’t much to plug in. Paine had a store and sold electrical appliances that only worked because of the generator.

In the years following, the town grew and more power was required. Two more were moved in the 1940s and the third, which came out of a submarine, was purchased in the 1960s. All of the generators provided power through power lines – just like today, but on a smaller scale. As the demand for electricity went up again, the power lines were upgraded.

In the late 1960s, the city started purchasing electricity from WAPA and retailed the contract amount to customers. The generators then sat idle into the mid-80s.

Then MEAN (Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska) – a branch of the power pool – came into play. From time to time, MEAN needed more power in hot weather and during irrigation season. MEAN helped then-utilities superintendent Mike Lucas and village employee Harvey Foran cleaned the soot off the generators and rebuilt the rings and bearings so they could be leased to MEAN on demand.

Harvey, who was hired as an employee in 1979, has a lot of stories to tell about the genera-



Photo/Debbie Connelly

Meyer Construction workers guide the operator of a skid steer as he lifts the top section of a Fairbanks generator from the Village shop last week. All four generators that are a part of the town’s history were removed.

tors and their use. In the years that followed, he was basically married to them.

“It was a lot of work getting the generators up and running, but it was very satisfying,” he said. “We ran the generators from time to time when called. We would go on-line and they would tell us how much to produce. They paid us a monthly fee to be on standby for them. We never knew when we were going to get the call to shave peak. When black-outs were happening on the east and west

coasts, MEAN sent its power to help those cities, and communities would produce their own power using only the generators.”

Harv says “we” a lot, but he really means “me.” He was the only employee who took the lead in how to run the generators, and go on-line.

“I couldn’t ever get the young guys interested in learning how to start them up and go on-line. It was a sophisticated start-up process.”

The generators were com-

pletely shut down in the late 90s when the lease with MEAN ran out. Harv said it all goes back to the EPA and emissions the generators produced. In order for the Village to continue the lease, new exhaust systems were required that would have cost about \$20,000.00 per engine. Looking ahead, the city also knew it would need to upgrade to 7,200 volts compared to the 2,400 volts the generators produced. They then became obsolete. Perry Meyer Construction

was contracted to remove the generators. The project will cost the village \$38,500.00, and the construction company will take them to salvage.

As the generators were being removed, Harv stayed clear of the area that will now be used for storage. The generators were a big part of the town’s history as it grew, and a big part of Harv’s life for 40 years.

“I won’t go in there. I’ll cry. They were my babies. It throws me into a depression to see them go,” he said.

## Devil’s Den Bike Rally Returns

Poker Run draws 141 entrants



Courtesy photo

Bikers gathered on north side of the Arnold Recreation Area to enjoy several events that were scheduled on Friday and Saturday night, including competitions, food and live bands.

Motorcycle riders from all over the state and as far away as South Dakota and Louisiana, rolled into Arnold last weekend for the annual Devil’s Den Bike Rally – an event that raises money for worthy causes and local organizations.

One-hundred-forty-one bikers signed up for the Poker Run, taking a scenic ride to several surrounding communities to draw their card. The first place

winner was Brian Moe with a Flush Ace High, 2nd place was Mike Roth with a Flush Queen High, and 3rd place went to Julie Jacobson with a Flush. She donated all of her winnings back to the Arnold After Prom.

Show N Shine winners were: Best Old School – Allan Bray; Best Custom – Brian Moe; Best Stock – Troy Larson.

This year’s Miss Devil’s Den was Teal Timperley and run-

ner-up was Nicole Powers.

The Biggest Beer Belly went to Joe Schumacher.

Organizers gave a big shout-out to the following volunteer bartenders who donated all of their tip money back to charities: Jeff and Michelle Preston, Lindy and Della Dailey, Courtney Evans, Ashley Nansel, Dawn Myer, and Carma and Tory Edwards.

## Three File for Arnold Village Board

Deadline for incumbents to file is July 15.

Custer County Clerk Conni Gracey reports that as of July 11, there have been three filings for a seat on the Arnold Village Board by non-incumbent Jason Jenkins and incumbents Zach Hagler and Donnell DeLosh.

The terms of Hagler, DeLosh, and Brent Kulp are up.

For the Arnold Township Board, the terms of Dan Blow-

ers, Roger Bierman, and Tony Eggleston are up, and none had re-filed.

The deadline for incumbents to file for the November General Election is July 15, and for non-incumbents, August 1.

Write-ins will only be counted if a Notarized Write-In Affidavit is signed in the Clerk’s office. This changed last year in Legislation.



Phil Koubek, lead singer for the Phil Koubek Project band, entertained the crowd on Saturday night. On drums in the background is Ty Phillips.