

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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TeamMates Program In Process of Reorganizing

Arnold Chapter Is Celebrating 10 Years of Existence

By Janet Larreau

Arnold students are lining up to find their match, as the local TeamMates mentoring program begins to reorganize under the leadership of Jason Wehnes.

The Grades 7-12 Social Studies teacher and ardent community volunteer said he accepted the role of chapter coordinator for the Arnold Chapter because he believes mentoring programs positively impact kids and mentors alike.

“I know this from personal experience, as my high school also had a mentoring program, and I saw the positive impact it had on my peers,” said Jason.

Established 10 years ago, the Arnold Chapter was impacted by COVID-19. Many chapters, including Arnold’s, heavily declined due to the availability of mentors and vast changes for schools during the pandemic.

As Arnold’s program rebounds, there is a huge interest by mentees, with as many as 20-25 kids that are interested in meeting with a mentor. Wehnes can confidently say that the chapter has about a dozen mentors – some from previous years and also some newcomers. He hopes to build on that number so that all kids can have a mentor.

Mentors meet their mentee once a week at the school, during lunch period or at breakfast, to establish a positive relationship and show support

for their mentee through thick and thin. In addition, they focus on the mentee’s strengths and help build their confidence. Pending on the interest of mentees and mentors, they can bond over playing catch, play cards, or perhaps a board game. What really matters isn’t what a mentor does, but rather that they are there to support their mentee.

“I believe TeamMates provides the opportunity for kids to have a mentor that simply is there for them. I believe few things are more powerful and selfless than an adult wanting to better our youth by way of mentoring,” said Jason, who serves on the Board with current members Rose Bierman, Leta Connell, Christie Rogers, and Chanc McIntosh.

TeamMates is a mentoring program founded by Tom and Nancy Osborne in 1991. The mission of the program is to positively impact the world by inspiring youth to reach their full potential through mentoring.

A PERFECT MATCH

Mentor Paige Schweitzer and mentee Halie Recoy have been matched in the Arnold TeamMates Chapter since Halie was in 7th Grade. Halie is now a senior.

“I’ve known Halie her whole life, due to her mom being my high school volleyball coach and former librarian. Nicole was a mentor to me growing up, so when I was matched with Halie, it really felt like a full circle moment,” said Paige. “Halie has always been a kind, intelligent person, so it’s been fun watching her mature each year. I enjoy watching her excel in her sporting events and getting to cheer her on in her activities.”

Most of the activities the pair has enjoyed include card or

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- Jason Wehnes
Arnold TeamMates
Chapter Coordinator

board games. They love to talk and catch each other up in what is going on in their lives. One of the funniest memories Paige has had meeting with Halie is when Halie was trying to teach her how to play chess. Paige loved trying something new, but her mentee destroyed her every time.

“I think the TeamMates program is important for our youth. It’s wonderful that the community can step up and show support to students and take the time to let them know that they are important and cared about. I haven’t thought much about mentoring after Halie. It makes me sad to even think about her graduating. I do think it’s important to pour into our youth, so I would like to mentor again in the future,” said Paige.

“The TeamMates program, for me, means a person I can look to and talk to about anything. I couldn’t have asked for anyone better than Paige. She has had a huge impact on how I see things in life. I love the way conversation flows with her, and I know she really cares about what I have to say,” said Halie.

Courtesy photo

Mentee Halie Recoy and mentor Paige Schweitzer have been a TeamMate match since Halie was in 7th Grade. Halie’s mom, Nicole, was Paige’s mentor, so life has come full circle for Paige.

Enrollment Slightly Up at APS

As of the first day of school, 199 students were enrolled at Arnold Public Schools. The total includes the preschool with 23 enrolled, 86 in Grades K-5 and 90 in Grades 6-12. Last year’s enrollment in Grades PK-12 was 196, so the numbers are holding steady.

Following is a break-down of girls and boys in each class:

Pre-School: (2 Year Out)	
Girls.....	3
Boys.....	5
Total.....	8

(1 Year Out)	
Girls.....	6
Boys.....	9
Total.....	15

Kindergarten:	
Boys.....	7
Girls.....	11
Total.....	18

First Grade:	
Boys.....	6
Girls.....	6
Total.....	12

Second Grade:	
Boys.....	6
Girls.....	8
Total.....	14

Third Grade:	
Boys.....	5
Girls.....	7
Total.....	12

Fourth Grade:	
Boys.....	6
Girls.....	9
Total.....	15

Fifth Grade:	
Boys.....	7
Girls.....	8
Total.....	15

PK-5 Totals:	
Boys.....	37
Girls.....	49
Total.....	86

Sixth Grade:	
Boys.....	12
Girls.....	5
Total.....	17

Seventh Grade:	
Boys.....	6
Girls.....	6
Total.....	12

Eighth Grade:	
Boys.....	5
Girls.....	8
Total.....	13

Freshmen:	
Boys.....	8
Girls.....	4
Total.....	12

Sophomores:	
Boys.....	4
Girls.....	8
Total.....	12

Juniors:	
Boys.....	7
Girls.....	9
Total.....	16

Seniors:	
Boys.....	4
Girls.....	4
Total.....	8

6-12 Totals:	
Boys.....	46
Girls.....	44
Total.....	90

Garrisons Step Up to Care for Judkin’s Hill Scenic Lookout

By Janet Larreau

“Judkin’s Hill,” “The Point,” or the “Lookout” – whatever you prefer to call it – is being taken care of by two very willing volunteers.

Earlier this year, Arnold’s Chamber of Commerce President April Tickle asked relative-newcomer Laura Garrison if she and husband Brent would be interested in cleaning it up. It was believed that it had been approximately five years since the scenic lookout had received much attention. Previously, Don and Beverly Dailey had kept the area spruced up. Both, unfortunately, have passed away.

“We have both enjoyed the overlook views of Mills Valley, sunrises and sunsets and views of Arnold from Judkin’s Hill. We decided what could be done,” said Brent.

At least a couple times a month, the Garrisons check the spot out, dump the trash can, mow the edges of the driveway and a section of grass near the crest of the hill so that visitors don’t have to walk through the grass.

Brent commented that someone went to a lot of trouble

building a nice sign to mark the location, but years of weathering had taken its toll. A little remodeling and painting was done to restore its appearance. Trees were trimmed to make it visible for traffic in both locations.

With two volunteers now going up regularly, the Village of Arnold generously provided a replacement trash can and cleaned up the badly rutted driveway. One of the committees from the recent community improvement meeting is looking into additional improvements, which could make it a more notable attraction for Arnold, visitors, and tourists.

Laura and Brent both grew up in Western Nebraska - Laura in Hay Springs and Brent in Gering. They met and married while employed by the Alliance Police Department. Later employment by BNSF Railway put the couple in the Ft. Worth, Texas, area for an adventure lasting approximately 30 years. Upon retirement, they looked for a new home in multiple states. On one trip four years ago, after tiring of looking in Western Nebraska, and a prayer for direction, produced the Terry and Dena Mills’ listing the very next morning. Not questioning an answered



Photo/Debbie Connelly

Laura and Brent Garrison are the new caretakers of Judkin’s Hill, where residents, visitors to Arnold, and travelers just passing through enjoy a scenic view of this beautiful part of Nebraska.

prayer and immediately liking the property, the Garrisons began the moving process.

“Neither of us had ever heard of Arnold, but the community, including the people and busi-

nesses, have proven to be the friendliest and most inviting we’ve ever experienced,” said Brent. “The desire of Arnold to continue to improve is impressive. We are very happy living

and helping in Arnold. If you want to get involved in the community, there are all kinds of ways through Rotary, Chamber, the AEDC, the community foundation, and the churches.”