

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2026

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

SINGLE COPY: 75 CENTS

VOLUME 110, NUMBER 11



Driving the school's newest yellow bus, south route driver Roger Bierman drops students off for their first day of school on August 13.
- Debbie Connolly photo

Students Turn the Page on New School Year

Busses were pulling up to the circle drive and parents were dropping off their kids at Arnold Schools on Thursday, August 13, as a fresh new school year began. Wearing their “first day fit”, some kids were arriving early, excited to see their friends and get back into the school routine.

There were some new faces in the hallways, as Superintendent Joel Morgan reported a first-day enrollment of 80 kids in K-5, and 110 in 6-12, for a total of 190 students. That's compared to last year's total of 80 in K-5 and 100 in 6-12 (180). This year's preschool has an enrollment of 21, compared to 25 last year.

New staff includes Rebecca Calvin, a paraeducator for the past five years, who will now serve as head cook; and paraprofessionals Madison Reed and Katie Licking-Dailey.

Several improvements were made to the school over the summer, including installation of new carpets in the elementary classrooms and new windows in the elementary building. Superintendent Joel Morgan said both projects turned out great. In addition, the roof was replaced on the gym and elementary building, and the parking lot area and circle drive were chip sealed.

Village Board Looks at Sidewalk Project Bids

Several business owners, AEDC Director Cheryl Carson, and representatives from two construction companies attended the Village Board's August 10 meeting, as bids were publicly opened for the Sidewalk Improvement Project for the 100 block of South Walnut Street. Village Engineer Tom Werblow and Professional Engineer Bernie Straetker opened base bids for 4-inch reinforced concrete sidewalks from five companies. The lowest bid was submitted by Paulsen, Inc. out of Cozad for \$195,614.00. The second lowest bid was from Greeley Concrete, Arnold, for \$207,880.00. Remaining bids were:

Myers Construction, Inc., Broken Bow, \$219,166.34; Level LLC, North Platte, \$227,316.00; and Steele Roofing and Construction, North Platte, \$282,846.20.

Bids were also submitted for Alternate 1 – 6-inch unreinforced concrete, and Alternate 2 – 6-inch reinforced concrete. Werblow said he will prepare a bid tabulation for the Base Bid, Alternate 1 and 2 and will present it at the special meeting on August 18. Board members voted to table consideration of the bids until that time.

Tree Board

Members voted to authorize the village clerk to sign the lease agreement with Greener Towns for the implementation of

the Koubek Gardens project. Mary Becker reported that she applied for a grant for three free trees through the Ten Free Trees Program. If awarded, the Village would be responsible for planting the trees and providing mulch and staking as part of the program requirements.

Becker invited the Board to attend the Nebraska Tree City USA Field Day and Celebration August 13 at Cody Park in North Platte. Several members of the Arnold Tree Board will be attending. Arnold will be specifically recognized for the work the community has been doing to promote and maintain its trees.

Arnold Tree Project 2025-2028

Becker said that several trees were taken down during December and January as part of the “Rooted in Community” Arnold Tree Project. A total of 39 new trees will be planted in September and October as the next phase of the project. She has been working with Eric Holmberg on plans for irrigating the trees at the ARA. Holmberg said there is a well at the ARA that is not suitable for human consumption, but can be used to water the trees. Discussion was held regarding extending lines from the well to install a drip irrigation system for the trees. Becker said that

Kennedy Landscaping will be planting the trees at the ARA. The claim from Kennedy Landscaping for \$1,527.00 is for the trees to be planted at the ARA.

Salaries Increased

The Board voted to increase the salaries of Tory Edwards, Eric Holmberg, and Patricia Lamberty by 4%, and to increase Harvey Foran's salary to \$25.40, and to increase Mary Becker, Tom Dennis, and Kenneth Goodenow Jr.'s to \$20.25 per hour.

Comments from the floor:

Andrew Tickle mentioned that the downtown streets were blocked until Saturday afternoon. Eric

Holmberg said that he understood that the Village employees were to set the cones out and that whoever was present at the end of the car show would be responsible for removing them.

Tickle also mentioned that they have received numerous comments regarding the condition of the lake at the ARA. Jason Jenkins said that the Board is open to hearing possible solutions from the community. DeLosh reported that herbicides have been applied and manual raking has been performed to address the issue.

In other business, the Board:

Continued on page 2.



Tearing up the old path to pave the way for a smoother, more respectful visit for everyone who comes to remember their loved ones at the Arnold cemetery.



Crews were resurfacing the old roads at the Arnold cemetery on August 7.

Investing in Our Grounds: Road Improvements Underway at Cemetery

Road improvements are underway at the Arnold Cemetery. Cemetery Board member David Leach, who is in charge of the project with John Phillips assisting, said this year's project will cover about 20% of the current paved area.

The roads were a part of the discussion at the first cemetery board meeting on February 19, 2025.

“The township board had been discussing cemetery road repair and had agreed to build a new east entrance to the cemetery to facilitate future road work,” said Leach. “This

was accomplished in the early summer of 2025 and the cemetery board approved expenditure to use millings donated by Blowers Farms to repair the original east entrance road and some of the east/west roads. Health issues prevented this from happening.”

There are now three entrances from the county road: one at the top of the hill south of the maintenance building, the second on the east side of the main cemetery, and the third is the new work entrance just before the bridge.

When the project was revisited in the spring of 2026, additional funds had been accumulated and the board received a bid from Tri-State Paving to pave the east road and the east ends of the three northernmost east/west roads. The board approved the project on July 9, 2026. When the project began, the prep work was done as a donation from Loup Valley Construction.

As far as future improvements, Leach said they are still discussing options.

“Funding always impacts available options.

Some large donations could speed up the process,” he said. “Some money is allocated from the county, but that is mainly all spent on routine grounds maintenance. We receive additional funds from plot sales and a perpetual care fee charged for each burial. The majority of our road money

is from donations. We are pleased that more people are now designating memorial money to the cemetery. We are also thankful for matching grant money from Give 4 Custer County.”

The last road improvements at the cemetery were made 20 years ago, when A.H.S. alumna Mar-

garet Steburg Powers, Class of 1937, of Washington, made a generous donation to the Arnold Township in memory of Leonard and Elizabeth Steburg. With the donation, a portion of roads were oiled two weeks before Memorial Day.



A fresh new surface on sacred grounds. - David Leach photos