

# The Arnold Sentinel

"Serving the South Loup River Valley"

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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Courtesy photo

Sandhills Open Road Challenge board members (back, l-r) RT Green, Shelley Smith, Becky Dailey, Skip Hecox, Aaron Olson; and (front, l-r) Josh Cool, Jeff Preston, Brock Dailey, and Clay Mohr had the chance to meet handler Deputy Barrett Gibbons and police dog Vader, after making a large donation to purchase the dog for the Custer County Sheriff's Office. Not pictured are board members: Joe Shown and Jason Jenkins. (The donation) is going to help everyone in the county," said Becky Dailey.

## SORC Board purchases K-9 for Custer County Sheriff's Office

By Janet Larreau

The Custer County Sheriff's office has a new K-9 Unit thanks to generous donations from several businesses and organizations in the county.

"Prior to obtaining a K-9 Unit, we noticed an increase of drug related activity traveling through Custer County on the highways and county roads. The increase in activity was so much that we felt the need for a K-9 was more of a necessity than a luxury," said Deputy

Barrett Gibbons.

The county's first K-9 Unit started in 2015, when one of the deputies put the work into getting donations and started the ball rolling towards the implementation of the unit. Once it was up and going, the sheriff's office had its first K-9, Aton. In late 2016, Deputy Gibbons stumbled into a K-9, Vinnie, who was fully trained and given to the department from a neighboring county. Aton and his handler are no longer with the department and Vinnie has since retired.

Enter Vader - a 2 1/2-year-old black German Shepherd - who originally came from Europe to Kasseburg Kennels in Alabama and then to the Iowa State Patrol.

"The Iowa State Patrol has a close working relationship with the Nebraska State Patrol and the NSP knew I was looking for a new K-9. Vader was purchased as a dual purpose, but did not meet the traits needed as a dual purpose. We then purchased him as a single/narcotic detection K-9," said Deputy Gibbons.

Vader's cost as a new, but trained narcotic detection dog was \$8,000.00.

"My goal was to speak with the surrounding businesses within the county and ask for donations," said Gibbons. "It's nice to see the businesses pitching in whatever they can because it shows that our community has our back in keeping our county safe."

When the deputy reached out to Sandhills Open Road Challenge board member Becky Dailey, he asked if the organization would be willing to make a

donation of any amount they felt necessary. Becky asked how much the K-9 would cost and Gibbons told her \$8,000.00. Becky told him that she would speak with the board and get back to him. When she contacted Gibbons a few days later, she informed him that the SORC wanted to make the full purchase of Vader.

"When she told me, I was speechless at first, and if I remember right, there was a long pause on my end as I tried to process what she had just told me. After I processed it, I was excited," said Gibbons.

With donations already received from Gateway/Sandhills Motors, Bruning Bank, Thomas Livestock Company, Govier Brothers, Mills Hardware, Gibbons Trucking, Hunter's Towing, John and Deb Blakeman, and the Custer County Foundation, SORC's total purchase of the K-9 allowed all the other money to go towards further training, equipment, and vet bills. Gibbons said it is great to be able to make the purchase and have all the other expenses covered completely by donations.

SORC board members had the chance to meet the K-9 Unit at their last meeting. Gibbons introduced Vader to the other members of the board and a few spectators.

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## Easter Egg Hunt Set for Saturday

Area kids are invited to gather at the city park on March 27 for the Chamber-sponsored Easter Egg Hunt. Organized by the National Honor Society and Junior Honor Society, the hunt will start at 11:00 a.m. Please bring a basket to gather your eggs and receive a special treat from the Easter bunny.

Prizes are being donated by Mills Hardware, Nails for Starz, and Debby Moninger (with some proceeds from the book fair).

Chamber will have totes at Mills Hardware and Four County Boutique to collect any eggs that participants would like to donate back to be used for years to come.

## Residents asked to take broadband speed test

How fast is your broadband Internet speed? You can now find out through a speed test offered by Central Nebraska Economic Development District.

"Counties and communities understand that advanced broadband networks are essential for economic development and innovation - whether it is fiber-based or wireless - to retain and attract businesses and employees, provide critical infrastructure that will educate

students, increase tourism, enhance precision agriculture, and positively impact the quality of life in your community. Finding out exactly where broadband services are available in Central Nebraska and what speeds people are receiving is the goal," said Judy Peterson, executive director of the Central Nebraska Economic Development District.

CNEDD is partnering with seven other development dis-

tricts across the state and Geo Partners, LLC based in Minnesota to gather "parcel level" broadband data that identifies speeds (both up and down) and provides them with information about what is going on in each location in our region - inside and outside of communities.

"Broadband in rural Nebraska is inadequate or non-existent. Yet, broadband map data shows only the census block,

township or county level, and the data reports that there is greater broadband service than what is available. Our goal is to find out exactly where broadband services are available in Central Nebraska and what speeds people are receiving. COVID-19 has shown us how important access to broadband is for our citizens, now that we're being asked to work, learn or receive care from

home," said Peterson.

With the data gathered, CNEDD will assist counties and communities with plans to expand broadband services, including funding resources. Both businesses and residents are encouraged to participate in the speed test in order to pinpoint where funds need to be invested.

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## Duet Team Wins Gold at State Speech



Landyn Cole (center) and Reagan Cool (right) pictured with their coach, Amanda Badgley, after receiving their gold medals in Duet acting at the State Speech Meet held on Friday at Kearney High.

The Duet acting team of Arnold senior Landyn Cole and junior Reagan Cool brought home gold medals from the State Speech Meet held Friday at Kearney High School. Coach Amanda Badgley said it was an amazing finish to a wonderful and exciting season.

Qualifiers for the state meet left town on Friday morning at 5:30 a.m., with a send-off from the Arnold First Responders and a rally at the First Baptist Church.

"The students and myself felt very blessed to have the strong support of this community," said Mrs. Badgley. "Everyone on the van loved the send-off and posters stationed along the route."

Once at Kearney High, Rio Remund and his coach rushed in to get Rio to the Extemporary draw room by 7:30 to check in. Delaney Rogers performed in her first round at 8:00 a.m., and did a fantastic job, earning 4th place in each round. Rio also did a great job, earning 6th in his first round and 5th in his

second round.

Landyn Cole and Reagan Cool put all their hard work and dedication to the test, earning a perfect score in their 1st round and a 49/50 in the 2nd round, assuring their place in Duet finals. They competed against many very talented teams. From the judges' comments, what rocketed them to 1st place was their natural interactions with each other. In the finals round, they had three judges. Landyn and Reagan's scores were 50/50/49 and they earned 1st place ranking from all three.

"It was a rush to hear the announcement that our students Landyn and Reagan had earned this exceptional honor!" said Ms. Badgley. "Tears and cheers of joy rang out from our team and family. I am very proud of my team and all the hard work they have put in. Current and future speech team members are already in discussion about what they will perform and we can't wait to start next year's season!"