

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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By Janet Larreau

## Family’s Need for a New Home Met by Volunteers of All Ages

On November 1, 2021, Ed Johnson was diagnosed with Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia (CML). The 55-year-old self-employed business owner, his wife Alasha, and their kids, started a long medical journey that eventually forced them out of their rural home west of Arnold.

“When Ed was diagnosed, he was told to go home and take a little pill for the rest of his life, and he would be fine. After 10 days on that pill, we spent the week of Thanksgiving in the hospital. He tried two more times to go back on it and each time he got very sick. We looked into several options and many doors closed, but God led us to Riordan Clinic in Hays, Kansas, for more testing,” said Alasha.

While the couple was waiting for tests to come back, they ended up in the Kearney ER with Ed in severe pain. A CT scan showed black spots in his lungs, and the doctors had no idea what it was. Meanwhile, the Kansas clinic’s tests came back revealing that the spots were mold. The Johnsons were told the normal “high level” in mold the clinic had treated was around 37; Ed was at over 2,200 – something they had never seen before. And that was just one of the mold strains that he had. Tests also showed multiple toxins that needed to be treated, including heavy metals. The clinic doctor said that he was sure that mold was what was causing the cancer.

“We immediately moved out of our house and into our garden shed that we had fixed up for produce, canning and our company. We were blessed to have it. We knew that we had a mold problem in our house, but we didn’t realize how deadly it could be,” said Alasha.

On April 29, 2021, the Johnsons burned their old house down, along with most of their furniture, shoes and anything that was not easy to clean.

What they did keep was ozoned and put out in the sun for several days to clean it.

And then people from near and far started helping in any



Courtesy photo

Volunteers set forms at the Ed and Alasha Johnson home west of Arnold. The Johnsons, who were forced to burn their home down west of Arnold due to mold infestation and Ed’s resulting cancer, have been blown away by all of the support shown from the moment of Ed’s diagnosis.

way they could. Several families went together to pay rent on a storage container that was delivered to the site to use as long as needed. It was a huge blessing, as the Johnsons didn’t have to go very far with the things they did keep.

Pastor Lee Wonch approached the couple about having a benefit for the family.

“We thought about it for a while, but Pastor Lee came back and encouraged us to let them do something, so we said yes,” said Alasha.

The idea took off and people

started helping plan the benefit, which turned into a huge event. Food, silent auction items, live music and so much more were donated. Around 600 people were served at the benefit. The support from the community completely blew Ed and Alasha away.

**“We never knew when we got up in the morning who was going to show up that day, but someone always did.”**

*Alasha Johnson, wife of Ed Johnson*

Then, Cole and Jenny Leach approached the Johnsons about helping with floor plans for a new house, and Cole also offered to help build it for one month. Rich Hornung jumped in and said he wanted to pour the basement. With the money from the benefit and the volunteer labor, the Johnsons took this as a sign from God and began making plans to build a house just to the south of where their old house had been.

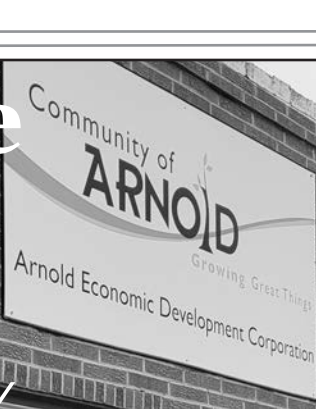
On May 28, Scotty McDowell cleared trees and dug the basement. He also came back many times to dig footings. From there, with Rich’s help, work started on the basement, plumbing and other steps in the construction process.

“People just started showing up and helping from the get-go,” said Alasha. “We had so many people that helped pour cement – not once, but four different times. We never knew when we got up in the morning who was going to show up that day, but someone always did. David Leach, my dad (Irv Jennings), and Brent Garrison have been here so faithfully through the whole process, and Rich showed up and kept everything going, even with his own health being not great at the time.”

The 2,000 square foot house, with a walk-out basement, has beautiful porches with breathtaking views. A cellar has been constructed in the event of storms and for Alasha’s canning and garden produce. As of now, the house is being enclosed and the roof is ready for

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## Revenue Is Up From Local 1% Sales & Use Tax



Revenue was significantly up for economic development in the Village of Arnold for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The 1% local sales & use tax generated \$112,000.00.

It was reported last week that revenue from Arnold’s 1% LB840 city sales tax was up by about \$15,000.00 from the previous fiscal year.

The Village’s fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30. In 2020-2021, revenue collected from the city sales tax totaled \$87,000.00, not including the 1% motor vehicle sales tax. Revenues collected in 2021-2022 totaled \$112,000.00.

LB840 city sales tax funds may be used for economic development, including business loans and grants, and other

programs that are vital to the town. The Arnold Economic Development Board oversees the funds, with final approval from the Village Board.

The Village receives 1% from sales tax of motor vehicles. For 2021-2022, 70% or \$11,507.00 was put in the street fund and 30% was put in the Motor Vehicles Sales Tax Account totaling \$4,952.00.

Village Clerk Patricia Lamberty said she was surprised by the increase. The 1% tax is collected by local businesses. Revenue also comes from products

delivered within the Village limits and from on-line shopping. Water and electric supplies purchased by the Village are also subject to the tax. The emergence of new businesses in the past year, like Four County Boutique and A Few Things, help tax revenues grow.

Voters within the Village of Arnold took advantage of the LB840 legislation first in 2006 and again in 2015. The local tax will expire in 2027 and will be voted on again.



Photo/Jessica Tickle

## A Night of Comedy

Billie J performs a comedy routine on the Rialto Theatre stage for close-to-a-packed house on October 6. Also performing were Tyler Walsh of Omaha and Nancy Rose of Rapid City, South Dakota. The Arnold venue was chosen by Billie J to open a series of theater comedy shows that will be scheduled all over Western Nebraska. A retro spotlight, donated by Westbrook Audio, was used to follow the performers.

“It was a nice night of comedy. It was very cool to gather that many people on a week night in a nice, small community,” said Walsh, who was one of the favorites. Walsh has quickly emerged as a unique, singular comedic voice in the Midwest and beyond, taking stages with the likes of Noel Miller and Larry the Cable Guy.

The show benefitted the Rialto, with \$115.00 worth of concessions sold and money coming in for rental of the venue.