

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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Sons of The American Legion Encourages New Members to Join Squadron

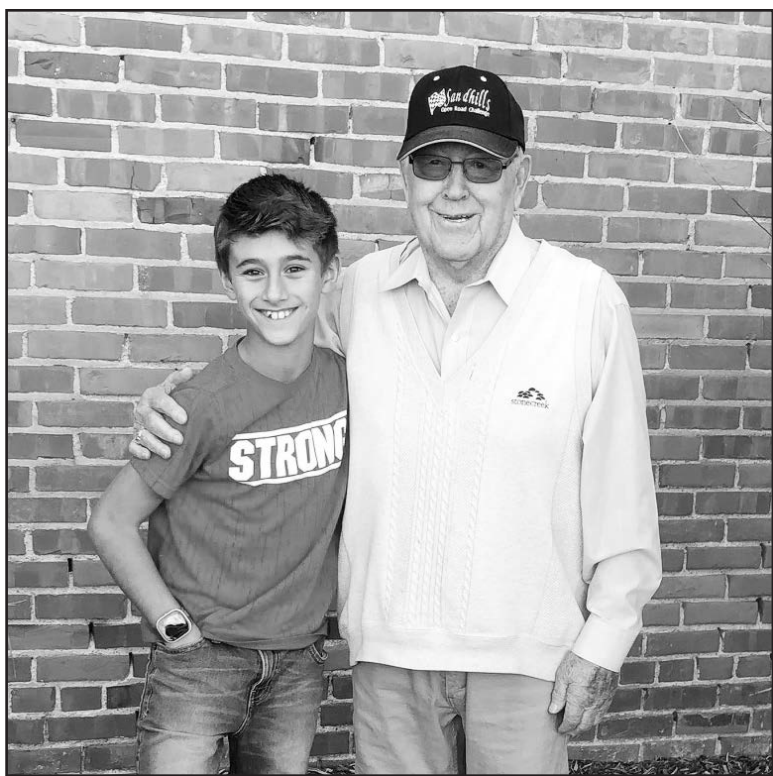
Future of Legion Post 130 Will Depend on the Young Signing Up

By Janet Larreau

Membership in veterans' service organizations is declining across the nation. The American Legion has lost more than 700,000 members over the last decade. The VFW has seen a similar decline. Between 2017 and 2021, membership dropped from 1.2 million to just over 1 million, according to VFW data. The average age of members is 67 and 400,000 members are over age 80.

With an aging and dwindling membership, American Legion Post 130 in Arnold is joining other Posts in reversing this decline through a membership drive of younger veterans and through an organization that was chartered by Post 130 on February 22, 2010, called The Sons of The American Legion (SAL). Founded in 1932, the SAL includes males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership.

Although SAL has its own membership, the organization is not a separate entity. Rather, SAL is a program of the American Legion. Many Legionnaires hold dual membership in SAL. The Arnold Sons of The American Legion's charter was formed when Marion Scott was commander and Charles Foran was adjutant. Mike Harvey was also very involved. These Le-



Courtesy photo

Dagen Fletcher, age 10, and Bobbie Smith, age 99, are the youngest and oldest members of the Sons of The American Legion (SAL) - Arnold squadron. Dagen's grandfather John Phillips and great-grandfather Marion Scott both served in the military. Bobbie's father, Mynor, served during World War I. SAL is a program of the American Legion.

gionnaires got things started, but the interest in the charter sort of fell by the wayside... until now.

Duane Bowers is the current SAL Commander and Clay Mohr is adjutant. Other members are: Aaron Coleman, Donnell DeLosh, Dan Eastburn, Gerald Eastburn, Lee Eastburn, Ethan Phillips, Stone Phillips, Ty Phillips, Bobbie Smith, Robbi Smith, Dagen Fletcher, Edward Tullis, Tim Turley, and

Tiff Varney, adding up to a current total of 16 members. Some of these members live outside of Arnold, so it is difficult for them to be actively involved at the local level.

“We're in the process of getting the structure of SAL put back in place. The organization kind of drifted, and we want to get it up and going again,” said Mohr. “Several men have been in SAL for a long time; we are just having a rekindling of in-

terest. It's kind of exciting to get involved with all that Legion does and help them. It's getting tougher for them to stand when performing Honor Guard at services and events.”

Members of SAL plan to help keep the Legion Post building maintained by helping Legionnaires with the ongoing scrap metal drive, which is huge to the solvency of the building for meetings and to have it available for community use.

Mohr, who joined SAL two years ago, said a strong membership is needed so that members' work schedules and family commitments don't overwhelm a few. The membership drive aims to bring the enthusiasm of the young and mentorship of the older members together.

“So many of us don't remember what (veterans) were put through during their service. Both my grandparents and my dad served. It just puts a whole new perspective of the importance of that. We didn't serve. It's an unselfish part that they do for the community. We want to carry over the service and honor them. It should inspire all of us to do more. Realistically, you just need to make time and do it, because it's important,” said Mohr.

To join the Sons of The American Legion, contact Mohr or Donnell DeLosh. All that is required is to fill out an application form and pay the state dues of \$15.00 and local dues of \$5.00 per year. With a membership card, those who join will be eligible for a variety of programs and services that they will qualify for through the American Legion. More information can be found on-line on SAL's website.



Halsey Strong Fundraiser Begins In Arnold

Help Halsey grow strong again, because “Leaders are not born, they are grown.” A Halsey Strong campaign is underway in which a devoted group of students designed a way for anyone in the state of Nebraska could participate in the fundraiser. All of the proceeds from this t-shirt campaign will go directly to the 4H Foundation Fund to rebuild Halsey.

The National Honor Society group at Arnold High School, our local 4H clubs, the 2022 RYLA attendees, and the recently chartered Central Nebraska Interact Club members pointed out how many times they had been at the Halsey Camp for leadership activities. It isn't just the kids right here locally that went to that camp. As young kids they went for day camps and as they got older they got to stay in the cabins that were also destroyed by the fire.

“Students from all across Nebraska have gone to the Halsey 4H camp to learn to become leaders through so many differ-

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Historical Marker Tells History of Legion Post

Berni Crow, coordinator for Rotary's Historical Marker Project, with help from Legion members, has compiled the history of American Legion William A. Layton Post 130. The marker reads as follows:

American Legion William A. Layton Post 130 - 1919

The American Legion, founded in November of 1919, established four pillars of service: Strong National Security, Taking Care of Veterans, Promoting Patriotism & Honor, and Mentoring Youth. The following is a list of some of the programs that were established through the years. In 1919, the Legion passed its first resolution supporting the Boy Scouts of America. On June 15, 1923, the first “Flag Code” was drafted. The American Legion baseball program was started July 17, 1925. Harry W. Colmery (Past National Commander) wrote the first draft of what became the “GI Bill of Rights” on December 15, 1945. The first American Legion “Boys State” designed to promote understanding of the American government was started on June 23, 1935. The Legion voiced concern about POW's in Vietnam on Sept. 1, 1966. America's newest generation of wartime veterans from the Persian Gulf Task Force was formed to enhance service on Oct. 1, 1995. In November of 2002, the American Legion launched its, “I Am Not A Number Campaign”. This program is designed to identify and document delays vets face in obtaining earned medical benefits from the Department of Veteran Affairs. *Establishment of the Arnold American Legion:* One hundred twenty Arnold men registered for the draft in 1917. These Arnold boys were said to be “flying to the colors”. A “HOME GUARD” organization was also formed, and 80 men signed up as the first members of the group. The Home Guard ordered uniforms (with no obligation to



Courtesy photo

Standing by the historical marker that was placed on the American Legion building last week are: (from left) Legion Auxiliary members Wilda Foran and Darlene Rimpley, American Legion members Charles Foran, John Phillips, Ed Tullis, Jim Long, and VFW member Gene Tullis.

serve), meeting weekly to help home interests until 1919. One such “home matter” that the men solved involved the theft of 35 watermelons belonging to Mrs. Oliver Holmes. She was trying to make some money while her husband was away serving the country. The Home Guard contacted Sheriff Wilson who soon had things under control. During the war years, getting fuel for heating was critical. In 1918, an act of Congress gave Arnold and the rest of the nation a taste of daylight-saving time, a measure designed to help save fuel for war efforts.

Families were allowed to purchase one ton of coal at a time, if it was available. In November of 1919, Arnold men chopped down trees west of town to give to families in need. Relief came in December when 50 cars of coal came in. Lt. Gov. Howard came to town to address the villagers at the Rex Theater. He presented a flag from the Epworth League, made by Mrs. Sam Reed. The flag made of red, white, and blue felt had the names of the boys in the service listed on it. On the war front, Clarence Mills was the first Arnold soldier to arrive on French soil,

and Guage G. Sauter was the first Arnold soldier to die there from influenza. William Layton, who died on November 11, 1918, was the first Arnold Soldier to be killed in action. *The Arnold American Legion Post is named for him.* Charles Simms (father of Sarah Peterson) was the most seriously injured of Arnold's soldiers. He spent eleven months in Army hospitals before heading home. Other Arnold boys who lost their lives during the war include: Arthur Bergman, Roy Imboden, Ray Rinder, Sylvester Thomas, and Claris Tucker. The following is a brief account

of how the village of Arnold responded to the news that the war was over. *We awoke to the sound of ringing bells and roaring gunfire, which we realized was the keynote of peace. The “central” gals (phone operators) had gotten official word from Broken Bow that the war was over. Main Street flooded with people celebrating and the Kaiser was burnt in effigy at 8:00, while the crowd vented pent up feelings. Shortly, a local man's hat was thrown into the fire... followed by about \$800 worth of hats and caps... it was a hatless*

See Legion Marker, Page 8