

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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## Couple Solves Mystery from Over 1,000 Miles Away

McGuires use research, data skills to help with Arnold Cemetery Website



Courtesy photo

Dennis and Susan McGuire hold a framed copy of the Arnold Cemetery website page that gives burial information about Arnold founder R.E. Allen, Dennis’ great-grandfather. Using their skills, the couple helps website creator Kristi Dvorak problem solve when anyone has a question that requires research.

As the volunteer creator of the Arnold Cemetery website, Kristi Dvorak fields many inquiries from people who visit the site. Some questions are easy to answer, but some are very difficult and require much research. Kristi then turns to Dennis and Susan McGuire of Oregon. Dennis is the great-grandson of Arnold founder R.E. Allen, and Susan, is a on-line “DNA Angel.” The Angels help adoptees find bio-family for no charge. So far, Susan has solved over 100 cases. Some take years, some take less than a week. She has a vast knowledge on DNA and research, beginning with her own search for own siblings after she was

adopted. “They always go above and beyond every single time I send anything,” said Kristi. On October 1st of this year, Kristi received an email from a California man who was trying to locate where his uncle was buried in the 1940s. His uncle’s name was Virgil Freeland Chapin. Chapin’s brother, aunt and another uncle all showed up on the list in his search, but not his uncle, Virgil. The request came from Virgil Lee Chapin, who was named after his deceased uncle. Kristi turned to Dennis and Susan. The Chapin inquiry was one of the more interesting challenges they have taken on

for the cemetery website. In their research, the couple found articles about Virgil’s high school days at Arnold through newspapers.com. In the Thursday, December 17, 1942, issue of the *Sentinel*, it was reported that the name of one more Arnold young man, Virgil Freeland Chapin, was added to the list of those who were missing in action against the enemy, in the line of duty for their country. On December 11, Virgil’s mother, Mrs. Lula Chapin, had received a telegram from the Navy department, informing her that her son was missing. In August, 1945, he was officially reported as “killed in action” early in

1943 by the Navy department. Chapin, who enlisted in the Navy in 1936, was drowned when Japanese torpedoes sank the ship on which he was serving - the USS Northhampton - during the Battle of Tassafaronga in the Pacific. On the link Global, Find a Grave Index for Burials at Sea and other Select Burial Locations, 1300s-Current - Ancestry.com., the McGuires found the answer. Virgil, who was born in 1916, and was aged 25-26, died at sea on December 1, 1943. His name is on a large monument located in Manila. A memorial headstone is located at Mount Hope Cemetery in San Diego, California, in memory of Virgil and his step-father, Amos Ray Ervin. Mrs. Lula Chapin received the Purple Heart from President Roosevelt on June 15, 1944, for military merit and for wounds received in action resulting in the death of her son. In the end, Virgil’s name-sake found the answer to his question and more because of the McGuire’s willingness to help. “We enjoy working on the site because it’s a real treasure for the families of those buried there. We are retired, so putting Susan’s vast research skills to work, along with my data entry backup allows us to give back to a place our ancestors are from. It is very interesting work for both of us,” said Dennis. “Kristi is so busy with her business, and we wanted to help her. With almost 2,800 graves entered and verified, we also respond to questions like Virgil’s. It’s a perfect fit for us and very rewarding. We are hoping to make a spring trip to Arnold to take pictures for many graves that do not have them.” Dennis and Susan donate to and help Arnold in anyway they can. Recently, they found a valuable copy of One Hundred Years on the South Loup by Norene Hall Mills in an Oregon store on ebay. They donated the book to the Arnold Community Foundation Fund Auction, contributing to the town’s progress into the future.

## Lower Loup NRD Taking Tree and Shrub Orders for 2023 Planting

The Lower Loup Natural Resources District is now accepting orders for conservation tree and shrub seedlings for planting in spring, 2023. The trees are sold to landowners in the District seeking to implement windbreaks, wildlife habitat, buffer strips, or other conservation practices. Each tree or shrub is a two-year-old bare root seedling approximately 12 to 18 inches tall, unless otherwise noted in the Lower Loup NRD tree inventory. The price on trees and shrubs is \$1.10 per seedling plus sales tax. Each species must be ordered in lots of 25. Small container trees are also \$1.10 each. Large container trees are \$2.75 each, and all container trees are sold in lots of 20. Property owners can hand plant the trees and shrubs or request the LLNRD machine plant them. The Lower Loup’s machine planting charge is 75 cents per tree plus tax and the minimum charge is \$200. The District also provides a weed spraying service. The cost includes a \$45 site charge plus \$3.00 per hundred feet of row. Trees and shrubs can also be ordered at [www.llnrd.org](http://www.llnrd.org). Cost-share assistance may be available. More information is available from your nearest Natural Resources Conservation Service office or from the Lower Loup Natural Resources District. North Central District Forester Richard Woollen said seedlings are sold on a first come, first served basis and supplies are limited. The forester suggested landowners contact the NRCS to get the planning process underway, and that getting an early start will ensure a good species selection. For more information about the Lower Loup NRD’s Conservation Tree Program, cost-share, weed control, drip irrigation, and tree care, visit the Lower Loup NRD Headquarters at 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska, or call (308) 728-3221.

## Music Program Looking Different This Year

Arnold superintendent steps in as lead director while school waits for a teacher.

By Talli Martin  
Sentinel intern

The music program is looking quite different this year at Arnold Public Schools, as Superintendent Joel Morgan has had to step up to the plate and take on the responsibilities of not only superintendent, but lead music teacher. He is adapting well to his new responsibilities. “I’m really enjoying my time in the music room. “It’s a chance to step away from the superintendent responsibilities and get back in the classroom,” he said. Morgan is also enjoying teaching all the different grade levels, as well. This opportunity is allowing him to really connect with his students and learn more about some of the students in his school. Mr. Morgan is no stranger to music, as he participated in band and choir during his high school years. He knows just how important the music pro-

gram is to some students. “I don’t want students to lose out on the experience, as they may not return to it if not offered. The situation isn’t ideal, but with the help of the students and faculty, the ship is sailing smoothly,” he said. The elementary teachers are chipping in and helping get the kids ready for the upcoming Christmas concerts this month, which is a great relief to Morgan. Mr. Morgan says, “As a district, we do whatever it takes for our students. We have a number of staff members that step up every day to help. When it comes to teaching music, it was my turn to step up. I, for one, am grateful that our faculty at Arnold is willing to do whatever it takes for their students. They make sure a wide variety of opportunities are available to their students. This circumstance may be unfortunate, but it has showed our community just how great of a staff we have at APS.”



Courtesy photo

## Christmas Programs Scheduled

Arnold Schools will present its annual Christmas programs on the following dates:  
P-K through 5th grade - Thursday, December 1, 7:00 p.m.  
Sixth through 12th grade: Monday, December 12, 7:00 p.m.

## Bobcats Will Open Winter Seasons

The winter sports season will open for the Bobcats this Friday, with the boys and girls playing Twin Loup at Callaway, and varsity wrestlers competing at the Hi-Line Invite. Amanda Wehnes provides pre-season articles on page 4 and 5.

Art and Industrial Tech students get in on the fun in the APS music room, joining in singing with the fourth grade class. Students are preparing for the annual Christmas programs, with direction from Superintendent Joel Morgan.