

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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The late Kent DeLosh Honored Through Til Valhalla Project

By Amanda Wehnes

Labor Day weekend has always been a special time for the DeLosh families - the long holiday meant camping at Merritt Reservoir in Cherry County, cookouts, card games, fishing, and lots of great memories.

So when the family patriarch, Kent DeLosh, passed away the week before Labor Day 2021 after a decades-long battle with cancer, the family knew their get-togethers were going to be changed going forward. But in 2023, the celebration was bitter-sweet as Kent was honored through the Til Valhalla Project for his service in the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Reserves.

Kent was a hometown boy, through and through. He was born in Arnold in 1948 and loved the small-town lifestyle. He enjoyed ranching, farming, and being outdoors. He was proud of his roots and took pride in helping his neighbors, so it was of little surprise when he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1967, a year after graduating from Arnold High

School.

He served as a combat medic in Vietnam, serving with the 6th battalion, 29th field artillery regiment and was honorably discharged in 1970. But his service to his country wasn't over - he signed up to serve in the U.S. Army Reserves, retiring for good in 1989.

After returning from Vietnam, helping other veterans in the area was incredibly important to Kent. He was an active member of the VFW and the American Legion in Custer County and Arnold. He truly did not know a stranger and made friends easily wherever he went. He would strike up conversations with a true stranger, but leave with a new friend.

Kent married Sue Lamberty in 1976 and they had two children, Marie and Donnell. Marie and her husband Artie live in Hershey with their two sons, Jaydon and Jaxon. Donnell and his wife Cassy live in Arnold with their two children, Bexley and Dekker.

Sue still lives in Arnold and runs Sue's Beauty Shop. She recently cele-



Sue DeLosh (center), wife of the late Kent DeLosh, holds a plaque presented to the family by the Til Valhalla Project for his service in the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Reserves. Family surrounding her includes Donnell and Cassy DeLosh, with kids Bexley and Dekker, Marie and Artie Parker with kids Jaydon and Jaxon. - Amanda Wehnes photo

brated 50 years of being a licensed beautician.

When Cassy was approached by the organization a few months ago, wondering if the family wanted to honor Kent through the Til Valhalla Project, it seemed like a no-brainer. She wanted it to be a surprise, so she enlisted the help of her brother-in-law, Artie, to help get the family together on Labor Day.

The original plan was to have a small gathering at Donnell and Cassy's home in Arnold, but when the weather forecast called for 105 degree weather that day, Donnell and Ma-

rie decided to cancel and just get together another day. But Cassy and Artie got creative and rented the Legion Hall - a place very special to Kent - to hold the gathering.

"It means a lot," said Sue of the plaque and honor. "It's been two years since Kent passed away and so many people still say 'I miss him' or 'I miss his smile' or 'I miss his laugh'. A week doesn't go by that someone doesn't say that."

Even though Kent is gone, knowing that his memory lives on, not only with friends, family, and neighbors, but also

through an organization like the Til Valhalla Project makes the loss sting a little bit less.

The Til Valhalla Project (TVP) honors veterans who have passed away with a custom-made plaque, engraved bracelets, and a spot on their virtual Wall of Heroes on the organization's website. The idea of honoring veterans started with one man and his need to process the grief of losing a buddy from the Marines to suicide.

All plaques are given to the families at no cost, so to fund this endeavor, the creators of TVP - Ko-

rey and Tiffany Shaffer - started selling t-shirts to raise funds. What started as one shirt design has now launched into a large catalog of items from shirts to mugs to flags. All proceeds from these products fund recognition items like Kent's plaque and bracelets, as well as counseling for veterans. They also employ mainly veterans in their warehouses and workshops.

To see Kent's memorial tribute or to learn more about TVP, visit their website at www.tilvalhalla.com

Fire Department Sees Growth In New Members

Considers needed updates as space becomes issue

By Janet Larreau

There is no official Firefighter Recognition Day in the USA, but there should be. In the Arnold Fire District alone, 21 firefighters voluntarily sign up to serve about a 600 square mile area around Arnold. It's one of the largest districts in and around the county. From October 1, 2022, to October 1, 2023, the department responded to 96 fire & rescue calls and 14 calls that were just for fire. The most difficult fire fought in that time period was what was termed the Arnold Fire and mutual aid for Anselmo's at the same time, then the Bovee Fire

at and by the Halsey National Forest.

Each and every time there is a call, volunteers are asked to drop everything at a moment's notice. Fire Captain Andrew Tickle said that when you look at the fire calls, it is skewed a bit. Because Arnold is one department and has firemen/firewomen and EMTs, within that, some but not all cross over at a scene, whether it is a fire call, vehicle accidents, or medical/unit calls. Many volunteers are needed to show up in any given situation. Tickle said it really works best when a department works as a team and each person does their role to help sup-

port each other.

The good news is that Arnold had about five new members sign up just in the last year.

"We are always in need of help," said Tickle. "We need active fire/EMS department members who are willing to show up and put in the time day or night. I think some people may be shocked to know just how much time it takes up of a person's time in a given month for calls, meetings, training, and public events when they are available. I have always had the view of a volunteer department is that you volunteer to get on and then you show up if at all possible. That

means sometimes our family and co-workers have to fill in and pick up the slack. I would like to thank them for that."

There is a long list of equipment in what is becoming a maxed out fire hall, including one command vehicle, three grass rigs, one ATV for grass fires and rescues, one tanker/tender, one pump, one crash/rescue rig, a light tower, a rope/grain rescue trailer, and two ambulances. Funding for equipment comes from taxes and grants that the department goes out and finds. Tickle said Arnold has been blessed with a

See Fire Department, page 2



Clay Mohr and the APS shop students finished framing the school's new greenhouse for the Science department. - Courtesy photo

Greenhouse Is Taking Shape

The Arnold School greenhouse frame is up on the northeast corner of what used to be an area of the playground. Mr. Mohr and his construction class and Mr. Morgan have been working hard for the last few weeks to get it up. The city has run water lines to the area and soon the walls and internal structures will be in place.

The junior high shop students have been helping design and build the planting stations and aquaponics system for the inside. Science teacher Melissa Sandager explained that aquaponics is a cooperation between plants and fish and the term originates from the two words aquaculture (the growing of fish in a closed environment) and

hydroponics (the growing of plants usually in a soil-less environment). Raised garden beds will also be built.

The school has received two more grants for the project. The first is a Betterment grant from the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation for \$4,000.00 and the second is a Farm Credit Services of America grant for \$8,000.00.

"The Applied Science class is getting excited to use the new greenhouse. One of the first projects that they will be doing is setting up the indoor garden beds and the aquaponics system. They have already been asked if they would be able to start seedlings for Rose Bierman's produce business," said Mrs. Sandager.



The Arnold Volunteer Fire Department Hall has received updates to the building over the past several years. As new equipment is needed, space is becoming an issue to meet today's demands. - Debbie Connelly photo