

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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## Fiber Will Bring Ultra-Fast Internet Speeds to Town

Great Plains Communications says project will begin in late fall

By Janet Larreau

Great Plains Communications (GPC) has announced that it will begin its in-town Arnold fiber project starting by the end of fall 2023. The upgrade will be a game-changer for anyone living in Arnold who has been asking for higher internet speeds and more services. Once construction is complete, GPC will be able to offer the benefits of fiber services to customers and businesses on their fiber routes.

“The rural projects have been ongoing with some customers already turned up. Businesses in town are being turned up on fiber now. We expect to start turning up in-town residential customers by early 2024,” said Laura Kocher, Vice President of Marketing & Public Relations for Great Plains Communications. “We want to position Arnold as a fiber-forward community. Residential customers need fiber internet to more efficiently work and learn from home, game, stream, and more on multiple devices without lag or buffering. Fiber enhances success for busi-

ness by allowing them to streamline processes, operate more efficiently and extend their e-commerce reach. Fiber drives progress for communities, bringing economic development opportunities and attracting new businesses and residents.”

Fiber carries information at the speed of light over a high-capacity connection that provides the same upload and download speed. This is especially helpful for the above-mentioned uses. It also streamlines technology for healthcare institutions and enables effective distance learning items. Fiber is extremely resilient, making it very reliable even in bad weather conditions.

One interesting fact is that having a direct fiber connection can actually increase the value of your home by up to 3% according to the Fiber Broadband Association. Fiber adds value for businesses by increasing speed to market and driving operational efficiencies that ultimately help improve the bottom line.

The upgrade will provide residential services customers symmetrical fiber internet speeds up

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- Laura Kocher, Vice President of Marketing & Public Relations, Great Plains Communications

to 1Gigx1Gig, GPC Whole Home Wi-Fi, GPC iTV streaming video, and voice. Businesses services will be offered a full suite of fiber services, including internet with symmetrical speeds up to 100Gig, management Ethernet, GPC Business Managed Wi-Fi, wireless internet backup, and more.

Kocher said GPC works with regulatory and government programs to gain access to funding to deploy fiber to qualifying towns (unserved or underserved) in its footprint. In addition to this funding, GPC provides private funding to supplement these projects. In Arnold and the surrounding rural area, GPC has utilized NUSF (Nebraska Universal Service Fund), A-CAM (Alternative Con-



Working from a trailer, a Great Plains Communications technician joins two fiber optic cables together in what is called fiber splicing in this image provided by GPC. Crews will begin working in Arnold soon to bring fiber to in-town residents.

nect America Cost Model), and The Nebraska Capital Projects funding programs along with some private GPC funding. Grants were applied for according to the guidelines of each program.

Local GPC employees

will be working alongside select GPC partners to turn up customers on fiber as quickly and efficiently as possible. Arnold residents will receive construction notices ahead of the start date. Once construction is

nearing completion, GPC will inform customers by mail and digital advertising to get them signed up for fiber services. Kocher said rates for internet services will not increase with the upgrade.

## Expected Grant for Housing Turns Into a Loan

### Village board votes to terminate agreement

Any hope of receiving a promised \$222,770.00 grant through the Nebraska Rural Workforce Housing Investment Act was dashed at the Arnold Village Board's regular meeting on October 9, as members voted to terminate the agreement because of new federal guidance requirements. Funds provided for this particular program originated with the American Rescue Plan Act and each state was given dollars from the program. After the fact, the federal government changed its mind and wants paid back

from the communities that choose to receive the awards.

On September 20, Carson participated in a meeting with Nebraska Department of Economic Development and the 12 communities awarded funds in the Rural Workforce Land Development. The state made it clear during the meeting that even though the program was originally put out for application as a grant program, it is now a loan program due to new federal guidance requirements. The program will stand as it is now written, with

no exceptions.

“Acceptance and participation would indicate Arnold agrees to pay the funds back, including the cost of the original purchase and costs of any improvements, if lots are sold,” said Carson. However, there is also the fact of federal interest in any property acquired or improved using the awarded funds effective at the time of the acquisitions of property, that does not expire. During the application process and even up to when awards were announced, it was marketed as a grant program. Unfortunately soon afterwards, the state found it necessary to update the language in the pro-

gram.”

Because of this, Carson said that the Board would need to make a decision that night to either to accept the awarded funds for the loan program or to decline the awarded funds. By a unanimous vote, they chose to decline.

### Dog Ordinances Discussed

Sean and Cheryl Carson attended the meeting to talk about dog ordinances. Discussion proceeded on the problem of loose dogs and how to enforce the ordinances. Board member Donnell DeLosh mentioned looking at other communities that do not have law enforcement and how they enforce

their ordinances. Village Clerk Patricia Lamberty will check with some of those communities. Sean mentioned the Village of Stapleton's ordinance relating to dogs and penalties. The 1st offense for a dog at large is \$50.00 and the 2nd offense is \$100.00. The clerk will get a copy of Stapleton's ordinance and discuss enforcing ordinances with the Village attorney.

### Comments from the Superintendent

Village Superintendent Doug DeLaune reported that one of the Otterbine fountains at the ARA lake is not working. He will contact Living Water Aeration to get help figuring out the problem.

The Kasco fountain is out of the lake due to a beaver chewing holes in the float. A new one has been ordered. He also ordered a drinking fountain with a bottle filler for the community center. The owners at 105 N Hillcrest have taken care of all the items listed in the official notice of nuisance.

In other business, the Board:

- Accepted bids from Brown Underground for underground irrigation systems at the right-of-way by Mills Hardware (\$5,950.00) and at the wastewater plant (\$10,300.00), and to issue checks for the deposit of 50%.



### All About Fire Prevention

Arnold Fire Chief Andrew Tickle opens up the fire truck's side sliders to show kindergartners all of the amazing equipment during Fire Prevention Day at the school on October 12th. A full report on the day's activities can be found on page 2. - Courtesy photo

## Fundraiser Begins for Museum Project

Nansel's Best Service has stepped up to help raise money for the Arnold Historical Museum's Cornerstone Project by donating a one-quarter beef bundle. Raffle tickets are now on sale, giving everyone a chance to win a valuable commodity.

Museum committee member Renee Bubak said she considered it her lucky day when she stopped at Nansel's Best Service to fill up her vehicle with gas and Brad Nansel approached her with the idea of donating a quarter beef, already processed by Aurora Meat Block, for a fundraising raffle for the museum project.

“Nansel's had purchased Kirby Viter's 2023 4-H Market Steer at the 4-H auction and thought it might make a good raffle fundraiser to be announced at Christmas Around Town,” said Renee. “Of

course, we accepted this generous proposal! Our town is special. So many people have long-time family ties to the community and many others have developed a special connection through the events and people in town. Our community is full of locals supporting locals – whether helping a neighbor in need, volunteering for one of our many organizations, assisting in projects, or buying local. This generous spirit is what keeps our town both welcoming and thriving. Specifically, the renovation of the old Archie's building, the cornerstone of our downtown, is certainly going to take the time and efforts of the whole village to turn this dream into a reality. We greatly appreciate Brad and Bryce offering up this fantastic fundraiser. We have purchased 300 tickets and we

hope to sell them all. Ten bucks for a chance of winning Arnold home-raised beef and the good feeling of building our Cornerstone Campaign fund, is a chance we hope many people will take.”

Tickets are \$10.00 for one or 6 for \$50.00 and are available at First State Insurance or from any of the following committee members: Nicole Badgley, Kim Beshaler, Roger Best, Renee Bubak, Donna Corbin, Berni Crow, Becky Dailey, Karen Horst, Karen Hough, Jason Jenkins, Carlene Lanham, David Leach, Barb Peterson, Rick Peterson, Holly Hornung Retown, Mo Sanford, Justin Strasburg, Holly Tullis, Carolyn Watkins, Jason Wehnes.

The drawing will be held November 29 during Christmas Around Town. No need to be present to win.