

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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With their early arrival, Ella Cool kept 15 spruce trees watered while waiting for needed volunteers to help plant them at the track for her Senior Legacy Project.

Planting a Legacy

NHS seniors complete windbreak project at track

By Janet Larreau

Fifteen Black Hills spruce trees were planted at the Arnold School track on August 22 - the result of a senior legacy project chaired by National Honor Society students Ella Cool and Réalta Leach. Involvement in extra-curricular activities helped them decide on their project.

“I am a track runner, and the springtime is very windy. I have heard so many people wishing there were more trees to block the wind, so when discussing potential project ideas, planting trees around the track seemed like a great cause to move forward on,” said Cool.

In planning the project, the two seniors agreed to complete the bulk of the preparation and the

work in the summer. They met with NHS Sponsor Debby Moninger to get started, making a plan that involved contacting different people, doing research, and organizing a pitch to Superintendent Joel Morgan, who gave them the green light.

Cool’s call to Chas Berke from Sun Valley Landscaping in Ansley provided detailed information covering everything from the best type of trees to plant, to optimal timing for planting them. In a subsequent meeting with Mr. Morgan, the girls got the green light to move forward in finding and purchasing the trees. Berke came down in early August to meet with Cool at the track to take a look at where the trees would go. While there, Berke gave Cool a contact that potentially had the per-

fect trees.

“When I called Krystal Calleroz from Wildtree, she said she was getting rid of all of her trees since it was the end of the season, so they were at a very, very cheap price,” said Cool. “When I heard the price comparisons, I knew this was our best option, so I went ahead and bought them.”

Cool admitted this caused a bit of stress, since the original plan was to plant the trees in October, which was the optimal time. She was told to plant them as soon as possible when they arrived, but SORC week was coming, and volunteers would be pretty much impossible to find.

“Everything was happening so much faster than we had anticipated,” she said. “Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Moninger ultimate-

ly chose to wait to plant the trees until we could get more organized and a group of helpers were lined up.”

With the right equipment and help from Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Moninger, NHS members, and other volunteers, the planting process of the 5 ft. trees didn’t take but a couple of hours.

The trees are being paid for through the funds of the National Honor Society. The organization

works all year doing a plethora of fundraisers to be able to accomplish senior legacy projects like this one. Cool and Leach are working with Mr. Morgan on a watering plan/system to help the trees thrive. They will be on a consistent watering schedule of 3-4 times a week until the temperatures drop and the trees become more established.

“I am so excited the NHS was given the green light to do this project because

I think this will be beneficial in various ways. The trees will significantly contribute to the primary objective of this project, serving as a windbreak. Moreover, it will also enhance the overall appearance of the school property. It also serves as a positive example of the importance of investing in our community and school with the future in mind,” said Cool.



Seniors AJ Starr and Ethan Furne plant one of the 5’ trees on the east side of the track.

Fall Festival Schedule Announced

Arnold Fall Festival organizers RT Green, Della Dailey, Robin Dailey, and Ali Goodenow released their schedule last week, and it looks as though they’ve created a good recipe for a day of community fun, changing some things up and bringing back what they know to be popular.

The festival will be held on Saturday, September 14, with most all events centering around this year’s theme of “Hillbilly Bash.”

New this year is a fun run/walk sponsored by Rotary. Registration for the event will start at 7:30 a.m. at the Arnold Recreation Area.

The parade’s route has been changed a bit this year to avoid congestion. Be sure to note the changes on the schedule.

Tiff Varney also wanted to give everyone a heads-up that there will be a festival aardvark hunt, and for this hunt, no permits will be required. The clue will be hidden in the Thursday, September 12, issue of the *Sentinel*.

Turn to page 8 to view the poster with the full schedule of events. For any questions, go to Facebook @Arnold Fall Festival.

Senator Brewer’s Tax Relief Bill Approved in Special Session



Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen signs LB34 at a news conference on August 20. The bill, introduced by Dist. 43 Senator Tom Brewer (pictured with Revenue Committee Chairperson Lou Ann Linehan) will help give Nebraskans immediate property tax relief. With the close of the special session, the decorated military veteran will be one of 13 senators who are departing due to term limits. - Courtesy photo

On August 20, Nebraska lawmakers gave final approval to LB 34, a property tax reduction measure introduced by Dist. 43 Sen. Tom Brewer. The bill, which went into effect immediately with Governor Pillen’s signature, features two main components. It provides for the frontloading of refundable income tax credits to offset school property taxes. Known as the School District Property Tax Relief Credit program, it will provide a significant benefit to taxpayers who have not claimed the credit when filing their taxes.

In his August 20 news release, Governor Pillen said, “This is a big deal. We’re making sure that 45 percent of Nebraskans who have not been getting the tax credit will now receive a 20 percent property tax credit.”

The bill also limits taxing authority by cities and counties year-over-year to the greater of inflation or 0%. It includes an exemption for public safety needs, including law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, corrections, county

attorneys and public defenders.

Senator Lou Ann Linehan, chairperson of the revenue committee, was also quoted in the news release, saying, “It’s the only real answer to fixing this. The reason our property taxes are high is because we have too many taxing authorities spending too much money. Finally, anything that is over three percent in revenue growth can go to property tax relief.”

In addition to the primary property tax relief bill, the Governor also signed a corresponding appropriations bill (LB 34A) and two budget bills to help offset costs associated with LB 34. LB 2 and LB 3 were introduced on behalf of the Governor by Senator Rob Clements. All had an attached emergency clause, making them effective immediately with the Governor’s signature.

This was Brewer’s last winning passage of law, as he will be departing from the Nebraska Legislature due to term limits in January 2025.

Personnel Discussed at Special Meeting

Personnel issues were discussed at a special village board meeting held on August 19. Board member Zach Hagler said that one employee’s last day is on Friday, August 23, and unless the Board makes changes, the village could possibly lose additional employees. The Board then went into executive session to prevent needless injury to the reputation of an individual.

A little over an hour later, the Board came out of

executive session. Board member Jason Jenkins said that according to the village attorney, proper notice needs to be given with regards to personnel issues, therefore the Board will have a special meeting on Monday, August 26, and on the agenda will be personnel issues regarding the village superintendent.

The Board heard comments from some of the 20-some people in attendance.

Ribbon Cutting Planned for Dahlia Valley Ranch

The Arnold Economic Development Corporation will be hosting a ribbon cutting for Dahlia Valley Ranch at owner Lisa Nelson’s downtown storefront located in Hotel Custer. The ceremony, scheduled for Friday, September 13, will be celebrating Dahlia Valley Ranch’s expansion and growth into agri-tourism.

Business owners and/or their employees are

encouraged to be at the storefront around 11:15 a.m. for the cutting, which will begin at 11:30 a.m.

After the ceremony, participants are invited to attend a luncheon at Dahlia Valley’s main location in Mills Valley, where they will have the opportunity to see Nelson’s new studio and learn about her expansion. Casey Cozad will be catering the luncheon.