

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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Happy Valentine's Day

After One Year, Blissful Bites Just Keeps Growing

By Janet Larreau

With Valentine's Day approaching this week, Arnold resident Macy Koubek was creating some special items for delivery to her rented space inside Hotel Custer. Once she was finished, the shelves were loaded with heart-shaped treats such as cheesecakes, mini cakes, donuts, and cookies. Heart shaped containers for variety boxes were available, too, as well as valentine-themed sour-dough breads. By the big day, it will all be snatched up by her customers.

Koubek started her business, Blissful Bites, in November of 2023, after moving here in 2017.

"I've always enjoyed baking," she said. "When I was in junior high and high school, I would often bake just for fun and take my treats to school to share with my friends and teachers."

Koubek's love for baking followed into adulthood, and she once again found herself baking for the people around her. She would post what she was

baking for her family on her Facebook page and found that people were extremely interested. She decided to just go for it and made a post offering banana bread for sale.

From there, Koubek slowly started building her menu, adding one or two items a week and posting them for sale. After a couple of months, business really picked up, and before she knew it, people were asking her to bake for their work events, birthdays, holidays, and more.

Most of Blissful Bites' advertising is done on Facebook, but Koubek also gets a lot of word-of-mouth advertising from her customers. She rents a space inside Dahlia Valley Ranch, which allows customers to serve themselves, and frees her up to be with her family, including husband Dustin, and kids Will, Katie Jo, and Addy. Many people choose to have Koubek put their name on their order and pick it up in her brick and mortar space, but she also offers delivery. During the summer, you can find her

at the farmers market on Thursday mornings.

She said business is always growing.

"The community around us is so supportive, which is a major factor in how much my business has grown," said Koubek, who does her share of supporting the town through chairing Chamber's Easter Egg Hunt and donating baked items for the ACCF fundraiser. "Even when people aren't purchasing from me, they always have a kind word to say and recommend Blissful Bites to other people. I also try really hard to stay consistent and busy, which helps tremendously while I am trying to grow my business."

Koubek always keeps an eye out for people looking for bakers and offers her services whenever she can. She tries to keep things exciting for her customers by offering new items, keeping up with trends, and listening to them about their wants and needs. She also continuously seeks out education regarding baking and keeps learning, so



Macy Koubek stocks her space inside Dahlia Valley Ranch storefront with baked items for Valentine's Day. Koubek celebrated the one year anniversary of her home-based business, Blissful Bites, in November 2024. - Debbie Connelly photo

she can understand the science behind the ingredients and improve her recipes and techniques.

"It might sound a little nerdy, but it makes a difference!" she said.

Koubek bakes a bit of everything, but her most popular item by far is sour-dough bread. She offers many different flavors, both savory and sweet, so many people enjoy it as a

special treat; others use it in place of store bought bread. When it comes to holidays, she always tries to make treats involving the theme.

She said the kids are extremely good about leaving customer orders alone, but not so much when they know the treats are going to them.

"I made mini cheesecakes for them the other

day, and while they were cooling, Katie Jo kept eyeing them – they're her favorite. A little bit later, when Koubek went to put them in the fridge, she noticed a tiny fingerprint in one of them. I asked Katie Jo if she did it, and she said, 'Yes, but Mooom, I couldn't help it. I just love them so much!' It was adorable," she said.

G-A-S-K-E-T Is the Winning Word

Arnold kids qualify for county spelling bee, Arnold will host

By: Dolores Duponcheel

ARNOLD: In the 14th round, the crowd went wild cheering, and the stern PE/Business teacher, Mr. Cole, grinned as 6th grader Isaac Jarmin was declared champion in the Arnold Public Schools 2025 Spelling Bee.

Issac's winning word was "gasket" and he dabbled in excitement.

Smiling, he said, "I feel like I've finally accomplished something in life."

Every year, Arnold Public School holds a school spelling bee consisting of Grades 4-8 to determine

a local winner and determine who are fillers for the other eight spots to be on the Arnold Spelling Bee Team that will compete in the 2025 Custer county Spelling Bee, February 25, at 8:30 a.m., in Arnold.

The following made it to the County Bee: Isaac Jarmin, Sophia Cool, Scout Evans, Hudson Vickers, Ethan Jarmin, Jayda Jordan, Addison Dalrymple, Jewel Witthuhn, Parker Neth, Makenna Weinman, Dagen Fletcher, Lindsay Christensen, and Jett Morgan.

The following Kindergarten to 8th Grade stu-

dents won first place in their class spelling Bee:

- K- Brooks McMichael
- 1st - (4 tied for first place Kassidee Goodner, Rickey Viter, Kaedyn Wienman, Graysen Schacher
- 2nd - Kenley McDowell, Jae'lynn Eastman, Emilee Sexson
- 3rd- Brody Blowers (oral and written)
- 4th- Jewel Witthuhn
- 5th- Parker Neth
- 6th- Makenna Weinman
- 7th- Dagen Fletcher
- 8th- Lindsay Christensen and Jett Morgan



The top three spellers at Arnold Public Schools were feeling pretty good last week, earning a paper medal, and a chance to compete at the county level. From left are first place, Isaac Jarmin; second place, Sophia Cool; and third place, Lindsay Christensen. For the first time ever, Arnold will be hosting the County Bee, February 25. - APS Photo

The Quiltmaker Is Moving On

Margie McDowell announced last week that she will be unplugging her machines and moving on to a new chapter of life, as she closes both of her long-time Arnold businesses – Mrs. Mac's Monogramming and The Quiltmaker.

McDowell began machine quilting from her basement in 1992 and eventually added machine embroidery. She said she started with two, six needle machines and expanded with an additional ten needle machines in 2000. That's when she and late husband Kendall built a shop next to their home for her expanding business.

Over the three-plus decades, McDowell had people from all over the country mail her quilts, as well as bring them to her. The bulk of her business was from out of town customers; one stand-out customer sent her 12 quilts to create. Larger jobs also included shirt and cap orders for the Sandhills Open Road Challenge and school orders.

"I'm just getting older and want to do something different. I have lots of ideas, but no special plans," said McDowell. "I want to say thanks to all who have patronized me through the years. I really appreciated your business."



Margie McDowell, owner of The Quiltmaker and Mrs. Mac's Monogramming, works on finishing up her last quilting job on Friday of last week. McDowell has announced her retirement, after listening to her machines whir for over three decades. - Debbie Connelly photo