

# The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2025

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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## Historical Society Accepts Generous Gift

### Berni and Dave Crow transfer ownership of Center School to AAHS

Berni Crow has gifted the legacy of her Center School Museum and all of its historical content to the Arnold Area Historical Society. The gift also includes lodging located in the building's basement. Creating a one-room school museum and lodging for the town has been a labor of love since she and husband Dave moved the bones of the building to its location on North Walnut Street in 2012. Since that time, the couple has spent long hours doing what is described as “The Four R’s: remodeling, refurbishing, recording and rearranging.”

Even before purchasing and moving the building to Arnold, Berni spent years collecting and assembling items that would one day create

an authentic one-room school house.

“I didn’t want it to die. It has been a passion for me. I thought if I give it to people who care, it will live on,” said the long-time Arnold 4th grade teacher who has been battling cancer.

“We are honored to be gifted this labor of love,” said AAHS President Renee Bubak. “From her family and early years, Berni learned a love of school, of learning, of books, of teaching, of experiences, of hard work, of do-it-yourself entrepreneurship, of valuing history, and of restoring what was and creating something from scratch. The museum brings back memories to those who attended their own country school and brings history to life for those

generations who never experienced it. The Society’s overriding goal is to continue offering future generations a way to get to know their roots. Going forward, we will be seeking some retired teachers to assist in providing ‘A Day in the Life’ of a country school classroom for Arnold students from area schools.”

After accepting the gift from the Crows, AAHS members formed a sub-committee to help with the transfer and operations of the property. Becky Dailey and Karen Horst have been involved with working with a local attorney and the Village of Arnold.

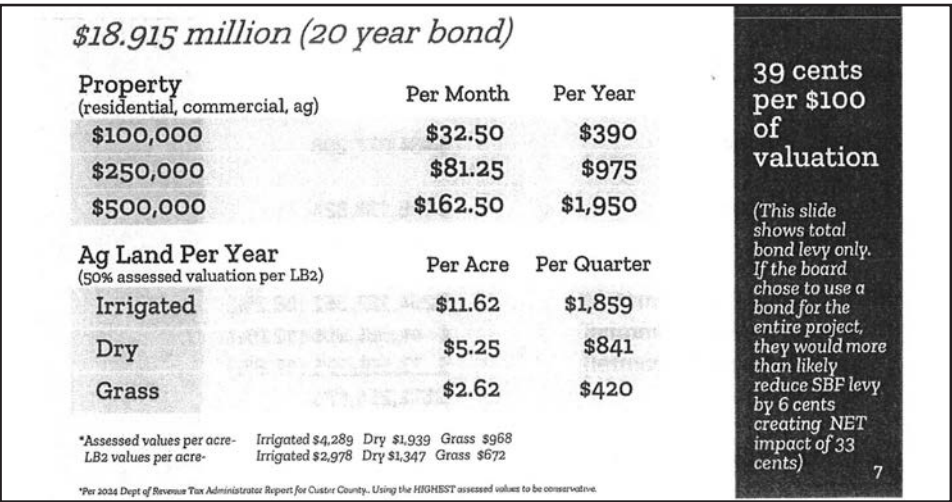
Those involved with regular operations include:

Donna Corbin will pro-  
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Berni and Dave Crow (center), with Arnold Area Historical Society members (from left) David Leach, Renee Bubak, and Donna Corbin, celebrated the transfer of ownership of Berni’s one-room school museum and bed and breakfast to the Society on May 28. - Debbie Connelly photo

## School Needs Discussed at 2nd Community Engagement Meeting



The above graphic of the all-in costs of Option E 2.0 (removal of gym) was presented at the school's second Community Engagement Meeting held on June 12. The values include interest (20 year at 4.35%).

The Arnold School Board held their second Community Engagement Meeting last Thursday, June 12. It was a full gym with approximately 70 people showing up to discuss the proposed facility project. “Option E”, drawn up by Wilkins Architecture Design Planning (ADP), and the price tag that went along with it, generated a lot of conversations after it was presented at the first Community Engagement Meeting on May 20. Superintendent Joel Morgan, moderator of the meeting, reminded those that the timeline is subject to change as well as any floor plans that have been presented so far.

Jacob Sertich, Managing

Architect of Wilkins, reiterated the facility issues and needs. It was brought to attention, again, that the proposed facility’s square footage is based on today’s standards and building codes. Elementary students require 36-37 sq. ft. per student and junior high and high school students 34 sq. ft per pupil. The classrooms are designed to accommodate 25 students. Morgan stated enrollment from 2015 on has remained steady, and there is no way of knowing what those numbers will be 10-20 years from now. Sertich also stated that a 94-foot long court is the new standard which is why the “Option E” included a larger gym

than the existing one in the 1962 building.

Mark Lewis of BD Construction informed the crowd that these values are not just being thrown out there. BD Construction has been a part of 40-some school renovations and builds. The board has also approved the Construction Manager at Risk method of construction. This method creates a scenario where if a project is committed, there would be a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) from the manager, who would also manage all estimates and subcontractors. If the price exceeds the GMP, BD would have to eat the costs. At this time, the only amount the

school district would be out is \$5,000.00.

“Option E 2.0” was briefly touched on. The new floor plan excludes the 11,095 sq. ft. gymnasium. With the removal of the gym, the “ALL IN” cost of the project was dropped to \$18.915 million. Morgan stated that they are steering away from the “hybrid” financial solution that was presented at the May 20 meeting. The new value is a straight dollar amount for a 20 year bond. Jay Spearman with Northland Security reviewed the bond issue (20 year @ 4.35%). The required annual bond levy rounded up is 39 cents per \$100 of valuation.

Coming back to what the school’s needs are, Morgan asked those in attendance to share their main priorities. The overall consensus was the facility needs to fit our educational needs. The board members’ main priorities included replacing the classrooms in the 1925 building, cohesiveness,

high efficiency, planning with the future in mind and educational needs.

Other comments, questions or concerns were:

A resident asked how much it would cost to just renovate the 1925 building to bring it up to code. Spearman stated to just renovate the 1925 building would be \$7.2 million. However, the 1962 building also requires improvements which would bring the estimated total cost to \$14 million. A follow-up question was then asked if the 1925 building was on the verge of being condemned. The simple answer was no.

The consideration of a consolidation with Callaway was then addressed. Board member Justin Strasburg said it has not been a consideration that has been brought up to the board. When speaking with Callaway members in the past, they were not interested. Summerland, a consolidation of three school districts including the towns of Clearwater,

Ewing, and Orchard, was an example given. The cost of that project was roughly \$60 million for the C-2 school of about 450 students. Others expressed their concerns of each town needing their own school; The way the school goes, so goes the town.

Other take-aways from the meeting were:

- Someone asked everyone to look into our hearts and to not just focus on our pocketbooks.
- There have been two Arnold Foundation Vision meetings held in conjunction with the school where students have expressed wanting more programs.
- The concerns for young farmers and/or small farms being able to afford such a bond.

“The meeting was an opportunity for the public to come in and ask questions and express opinions. They asked great questions. The board is now going to regroup then will continue,” said Morgan.

## Be A Game Changer and Help Your Community

By Gracie Neth  
ACFF Intern

Arnold residents will double down their donations at the upcoming ‘Be A Game Changer’ fundraiser. Put on your game face and enjoy a night of food, fun, and games at the Community Center on June 22 from 5-9:30 for the purpose of improving our hometown. The Arnold Community Foundation Fund (ACFF) has agreed to match all local donated funds dollar for dollar. Following a free will donation meal, teams can compete in three game changing events, including a combination of all three for the ultra-competitive - the triathlon. There will be three 50 minute rounds for each event, starting at 6:00, 7:15, and 8:30.

“What a great opportunity to have some competitive fun while raising money for our community. Of course, Mills Hardware and the Weinmans are looking forward to both,” said Dena Mills.

In the tabletop escape

room challenge, teams will race to decipher clues and unlock the box before everyone else. This event (and fundraiser) was inspired by the Arnold’s Hometown Interns’ trip to Norfolk, and the activity will be provided by a former Hometown Intern from Norfolk, Encrypt Escape Rooms.

The jigsaw puzzle race will have teams vying to complete as much of a 3000-piece puzzle as they can and solve more pieces than their competitors. Five of the custom puzzles designed with historical Arnold photographs will be put up for silent auction during the event.

Groups will battle for the most points in the team trivia contests based on pop culture, sports, history, Nebraska, and miscellaneous categories.

Each team is composed of six people and teams will contend for \$1,000 in prize money. The prize for individual events is \$200 and the prize for the triathlon is \$400. The price to enter is \$100 per team

per event (or about \$17 per person per event). Extreme teams participating in the Triathlon can enter all three events for \$275. (That would be about \$15 per person per event). To enter, teams can contact Bryn Schwarz at 308-636-6440 or sign up at Mills Hardware. Be sure to check social media on the ACFF for entry options and updates. For competing teams only, childcare will be provided.

This fundraiser is important for Arnold because it takes place during the Custer County Foundation’s ‘Give 4 Custer County’ event, which lasts from June 16 - June 30th. During this time, every dollar donated to the Arnold Area Historical Society, Arnold Cemetery, Finch Memorial Library, and the Riverview Garage Project makes them eligible for a bigger share of matching funds. The Custer County Foundation provides a proportionally based \$50,000

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## Village Board Meets

Arnold Village Board members went through a number of agenda items at their regular meeting held on June 9.

### Retail Liquor License Approved

During an advertised public hearing, discussion was held on the application of Reed’s Food Center for a Class D Retail Liquor License. Owner John Reed was in attendance and was asked by a resident if the store’s hours would change. Reed said hours would remain the same, except for possibly Sunday, which might be changed to 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Reed said there would always be someone old enough to sell alcohol at the store, and all IDs would be scanned before alcohol is purchased. With no objections from the floor, board members

voted to recommend the issuance of a license.

### Old Mill Park Signs

Community Foundation intern Bryn Schwarz presented two designs for the sign at the entrance to Old Mill Park and one for an “In Memory of Raymond Croghan” sign on the scoreboard. Board members chose Option #2 for the park sign, and authorized Schwarz to proceed with the project.

### Slow Signs Approved

At the request of Ali Goodenow, the Board voted to install “Slow – Children at Play” signs with a flashing light at the northeast corner of 100 Block of East 2nd and the north side of the 200 Block of East 2nd.

### Fire Ban/ARA Fire Pits

Arnold Fire Chief Andrew Tickle was at the

meeting regarding fire pits at the Arnold Recreation Area. He said there were questions from campers about fire pit usage during the statewide fire ban. Board members voted to follow the statewide fire ban at the ARA and post a sign.

### Carroll Street Courts Project

Mary Becker gave an update on the grants that have been awarded for the Carroll Street Courts project. For concrete, the following grants have been awarded: Arnold Community Foundation - \$12,000.00 Custer County Foundation - \$5,000.00; SORC - \$2,000.00. For painting the courts and lines, \$3,500.00 has been awarded from the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation.

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