

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Arnold Cemetery Launches Digital Mapping System



Arnold Cemetery Board members Kristi Dvorak and David Leach stand beside a new QR code sign at the Arnold Cemetery that directs visitors to the Arnold Cemetery landing page, where you can locate a grave. Kristi and David, along with Dennis and Susan McGuire, were the team members who launched the new digital mapping project in record time. - Debbie Connelly photo

ARNOLD, NE - The Arnold Cemetery has taken a significant step into the digital age with the launch of its new cemetery mapping project, now live for public use. This innovative system uses GIS technology and satellite imagery to allow visitors and families to search for graves, access biographical information, and explore the cemetery—all from their smartphones or computers.

Visitors to the cemetery will notice new signs featuring a QR code. By scanning this code on their smartphone and selecting “Locate a Grave,”

users are directed to an interactive mapping system. From there, they can easily search for a specific grave by using the search tool, selecting a name from a dropdown menu, and clicking the “Directions” button, which will guide them to within a few feet of the grave’s location.

For those who prefer desktop browsing, the map is also accessible at www.arnoldcemetery.com, then clicking “Locate a Grave” in the top right corner.

Kristi Dvorak, who headed up the project, said, “The digital map pro-

vides a detailed view of the cemetery, including color-coded plots—green for plots available for purchase, red for occupied ones. Users also have the ability to zoom in and pan around and see who is buried in each plot. It’s fun just to pan around and look at the names.”

As the project continues to evolve, plans are in place to further refine the data and color-coded map, such as marking graves belonging to veterans. “This will involve additional research and manual entry so it will take some time to complete. To be able to print out a map

showing all the graves of veterans would be a great help for Memorial Day when volunteers are placing flags or markers,” said Kristi.

When dealing with old information, missing or inaccurate data may be identified. “We’ve already found some discrepancies that we’ve researched and corrected, and in some cases, we simply did the best we could with the information available.” Kristi stated that if you see an error, to let her or David Leach know, or email info@arnoldcemetery.com.

When a user searches for a person on the digital map, the left-hand column displays basic information, including a web address in the “Other Information” section. Currently, this link is not clickable in the digital mapping program, but the software developer is working to accomplish that in a future update. For now, you can copy and paste the link into a web browser, which will access a dedicated memorial page on the Arnold Cemetery website for that person, which may include photos, obituaries, stories, and links to family members. These memorial pages have been created by Kristi and can be personalized by sending her your loved one’s information. “Those memorial pages are what I’ve been working on the past several years; it is separate from the digital mapping project, but they tie together to memorialize a

loved one.” The memorial pages can also be easily accessed from the Directory tab on the Arnold Cemetery website.

Beyond the public portal, the backend of the system enables the cemetery board to manage digital records of burials, plot sales, deeds, maintenance notes, and other information for ongoing cemetery management.

“To ensure that our records remain accurate, it is essential that we are notified of every burial taking place at the Arnold Cemetery, including the burial of cremated remains. Please inform any board member, Tiff Varney, or email info@arnoldcemetery.com. We’ve put all this work into our records management; we appreciate the public’s support going forward in keeping it complete,” Kristi stated.

After signing the contract on March 10, the project was completed in under three months and went live at the end of May. “The digital mapping company was impressed with how fast we were able to respond to their questions, review the maps, identify and fix inaccuracies, and provide additional information. It was a lot of work. What took us less than three months to create, some cemeteries have taken four to five years. They were very complimentary of our team, which consisted of David Leach, Dennis and Susan McGuire, and myself,” said Kristi.

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- Kristi Dvorak, Arnold Cemetery digital mapping team member

The total cost of the digital mapping project was \$6,950, funded by generous community donations:

- Dennis & Susan McGuire: \$1,000 + \$759 annual subscription fee
- Joan Schuster: \$1,250
- Allan and Jan Eastwood: \$1,000
- Cool Farms (Shane and Lana Cool): \$1,000
- Bobbie, Robbi, and Shelley Smith: \$1,000
- Anonymous: \$500
- Pinnacle Bank: \$500
- Duane and Carolyn Bowers: \$500
- Tim Turley and Sheri Lamb: \$200

The QR code signs that hang at the cemetery were designed by Kristi Dvorak, printed and installed by School House Graphics, and funded by Ron and Nancy Cool.

Now that the digital map is complete, the Arnold Cemetery board can use the system to generate a printer-friendly map to replace the old map that is currently displayed on

See **Digital Mapping**, page 2.

Village Board Meets

At their regular meeting held on July 14, Arnold Village Board members voted to increase the full-time and part-time employees’ salaries by 8% for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. A vote was also taken to contribute \$3,500.00 to each full-time employee’s Health Savings Account, to be paid in January 2026.

Regarding the Arnold lake, Village employee Eric Holmberg informed the board that he met with Kristopher Stahr, Aquatics Invasive Species Program Manager with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. Stahr is going to put a spray program together that will state what chemicals to use and when to apply the chemicals.

In other business, Board members learned that no bids were submitted for the Carroll Street Courts project. Patricia Lambert was directed to contact various contractors. Approval was given to Chairman Zach Hagler to sign the agreement with Arnold Public Schools for the use of the community center for 2025-2026 for \$7,500.00. Board members accepted a quote from \$1,250.00 from Atlas Automation to install backup power source at the water tower and the master controller. Approval was given to Patricia Lambert to apply for a Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment grant for a scrap tire cleanup event.

The Village Clerk gave some interesting updates at the regular meeting. Some of those included:

- Sixty appliances were hauled to the Custer County Transfer Station for disposal at a cost of \$1,500.00.
- Employee Ethan Furne ordered and installed the fire danger sign at the ARA.
- Slow – Children at Play signs were installed on the corner of 100 block of East 2nd and 211 E 2nd Avenue.
- The bathroom floors were painted at the city park.
- Tory Edwards, Ethan Furne, Eric Holmberg, Kenneth Goodenow, and Mary Becker attended a Tree Inventory Class sponsored by the Nebraska Forest Service on June 18th. The class was held at the city park.
- Rusty Wyckoff sprayed for mosquitoes on July 1 and 9.
- Camping fees from the weekend of July 10-13 totaled \$2,040.00.

Residents are reminded that Edward Dunn, Executive Director, West Central Nebraska Development District, will attend the special meeting on July 28 at 7:00 p.m. for a Nuisance Abatement Presentation. The meeting is open to the public.

Driver Leaves Generous Gift

Before his death in September of 2024, Ward Heinrich of San Antonio, Texas, expressed his wishes to bequeath \$10,000.00 to the Sandhills Open Road Challenge (SORC). Ward participated in the open road challenge several times in Arnold, winning the 95 mph class in 2013.

His significant other, Richelle Hodza, said, “Ward loved participating in car races that allowed him to drive as fast as he wanted. He even installed roll bars and harnesses for us in order to go faster than he ever had before. Ward loved winning that race and talked about it very often with a big smile on his face and his eyes flickering brighter



than you could ever otherwise see them. I know that Ward bequeathed the \$10,000.00 to SORC because he wanted others to have the same kind of joy that he was able to have. It is very hard to find amateur races that fulfill the need to drive (fast)! That’s what he loved about SORC. They let an old man feel like a kid again!”

It’s Fair Time In Custer County

(Pictured, right) Arnold 4-Hers Bree Blowers, Patyn Dailey, and Addison Dalrymple, spend their summer break focusing in on growing their market beef for the Custer County Fair. All three girls are members of the South Loup 4-H Club, and are set to weigh in this coming Sunday.

Several members of the local club will be competing and exhibiting in a variety of classes at the fair, which kicks off on Friday, July 25, in Broken Bow. Highlights of the fair include: Saturday’s parade at 6:00 p.m.; a ranch rodeo in the outdoor arena on Sunday; the opening of commercial booths, a free pit barbecue, and bull riding on Monday night; a watermelon feed and ultimate bull fighting on Tuesday; awards presentations and a teen dance on Wednesday night; and the 4-H and FFA livestock sale on Thursday night.

A complete schedule of events can be found on Page 5 of this issue.

