

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Local Vets Tell Their Story Through Exhibit

Many people in the Arnold community remember the tragic day, May 20, 1972, that Warrant Officer Dean K. Leach's family received word that he had been killed in action in Vietnam. At a first-ever local veterans' memorabilia exhibit held last week, the yellow telegram and letter from Washington D.C., informing the family were on display.

Viewers were taken back in time, as 29 local veterans and their families had the chance to tell their

story as part of Veterans Day activities. With each vet/family in charge of their own area, exhibits of memorabilia from World War I to the present were set up in the school's gym.

Included in the exhibit were war-time photos, medals, uniforms, certificates, weapons, Swastikas, newspaper clippings, and letters and telegrams.

For those attending, it brought those stories to life.

“There were a lot of

tears at Dean's exhibit. (The entire exhibit) really impacted the kids,” said Melva Phillips, who undertook the project with Jeanne Staroski, and worked with everyone involved.

The exhibit included: American War Mothers - 1917 - 1925.

Lee Bailey - WWI

Harry J. Peters - WWI - 1915-1916

Lawrence Lynch - WWII - 1942-1945

See Vets' Exhibit, page 8.



Brock Dailey harvests corn for Cool Farms just west of the Arnold Cemetery last Wednesday, November 12. This corn will make its way to Gothenburg and on to the Frito-Lay processing plant. - Debbie Connelly photo

Do You Like Fritos?

If you have purchased any Frito-Lay chips you most likely have tried a local farm's corn.

Frito-Lay's Gothenburg, Nebraska, facility is a major hub for corn west of the Mississippi River. It receives corn from approximately 125 local farmers, within a 60-mile radius for its products, one of which is Cool Farms of Arnold.

The Sentinel visited with Brock Dailey of Cool Farms on November 12 in hopes of getting a harvest

picture. The crew was picking corn just south of town across from the Arnold Cemetery. After taking a couple pictures, Brock asked, “Do you like Fritos? This corn is food-grade and is being hauled to the collection point in Gothenburg.”

Brock shared that he was one of 25 Frito-Lay growers in the area that was invited to tour PepsiCo's Frito-Lay facility in Topeka, Kansas, in February 2024. At the factory the corn is cleaned,

sized, cooked, washed and ground before it's used. Finally, the chips are seasoned and packaged.

As for Cool Farm's 2025 corn harvest Brock reported that they are a bit behind this year due to the moisture content being high and the corn needing more time to dry out.

“Last year we finished up the first week of November. We should be finishing up the middle of next week,” said Brock.

Your Story Matters

Not Too Far Distant play draws great crowd

By Janet Larreau

Your story matters. This was the message given to the Arnold community and its young people at a special event held on Monday evening, November 10, when the play *Not Too Far Distant* was presented to an appreciative crowd in the school's auditorium. Brought to Arnold by the Blixt Arts Lab, playwright Becky Boesen and a small group of actors presented the live play, and held interactive workshops and learning sessions designed to inform students about World War II, the Holocaust, and veterans appreciation. A \$2,000.00 Nebraska Humanities Foundation grant, written by ACFE intern Eli Rogers and received by the Arnold Area Historical Society, made it all possible.

After Monday evening's

presentation of the play, Boesen spoke at Tuesday's Veterans Day program about the main character in the play, Staff Sergeant and Medic Clarence Williams.

“...He wasn't drafted to fight in World War II. He enlisted. A mechanic from near Denton, Nebraska, he quietly believed in a constitutional republic and felt a deep responsibility, as an American, to help defend it. Slightly older than many of those called to service and already married to his wife Gretchen, Clarence wrote her a letter every single day. He also took a camera to war, which at the time, was nearly unheard of,” she said.

Seventy-five years after Clarence wrote those letters and took those photos, Boesen agreed to write a play, and within a week, had access to nearly



After the performance of *Not Too Far Distant*, held at the Arnold school auditorium, on November 10, cast members and Director Becky Boesen (on mic) held a Q&A and heard stories from the audience. - Debbie Connelly photos

400 letters and photos that Clarence had sent home to Gretchen. Most of the letters were boring, and then as Boesen got deeper into them, Clarence, in his own words, finally shared with Gretchen what had been almost unspeakable. April 29, 1945, the day the 42nd and 45th Infantries stumbled upon and liberated the Nazi regime's

first death camp, Dachau. “Clarence saw this with his own eyes. And without his letters, without his stories, and the stories of all those who served alongside Clarence and the stories of survivors, we'd have no way of truly knowing what happened at Dachau or any of the other death camps,” Boesen told the crowd. Sto-

ries matter. Clarence's story matters. Your story matters. Some stories are difficult to tell, and even harder to hear, but they demand our attention, our reflection, and our remembrance. We must honor the sacrifices of Clarence, the Rainbow Division, and all those who, across generations, have stood in defense of our

country and the fragile beauty of democracy.”

Boesen said it was truly an honor to spend time with the remarkable community of Arnold.

“I was deeply moved by the level of participation from people of all ages and generations, and es-

See STORY MATTERS, page 8.

ACFF Fundraiser Is Nov. 22

The Arnold Community Foundation Fund will hold its annual fundraiser, Saturday, Nov. 22, at the community center.

The social hour begins at 5:00 p.m., with dinner served at 6:30 p.m., and the live auction kicking off at 7:30 p.m. A silent auction will also be held.

Tickets are \$30.00 if paid by 12:00 noon on Nov. 21 or \$35.00 the day of the event, and are available at Pinnacle Bank, Oakbrook Physical Therapy or from any ACFE member.



Arnold's kindergarten class led the Pledge of Allegiance for a large crowd at Tuesday's Veterans Day Program.