

OUR WORK AND IMPACT

Growing knowledge



Ideas from a March 17, 2022 Student Community Vision meeting at Arnold Public Schools and a March 16, 2022 Community Vision Meeting at the Arnold Community Center transformed into many community projects. Both meetings were facilitated by staff from Nebraska Community Foundation. One of those ideas is about to bear fruit, quite

literally. The Arnold Community Foundation Fund gave \$7,500 and Nebraska Community Foundation's Youth Engagement Grant matched another \$7,500 to help build a greenhouse. The 30-by-60-foot greenhouse, known as Schoolhouse Gardens & Greenhouse, will provide students many hands-on opportunities to learn through elective science classes.

Superintendent Joel Morgan said, "The greenhouse will give students the opportunity to experience real life application when it comes to understanding plant science and its agricultural connection on a daily basis. From a community standpoint, we are excited to gain knowledge from local experts as well as partnering with individuals and businesses to grow and provide product year-round."

The greenhouse project is nearing completion. Having a combined student and community-promoted idea come to fruition was precisely the goal of our vision process. 🌱

Recognizing hard work

Each year the Arnold Community Foundation Fund presents an award to an individual and an organization, group, or business that epitomizes the philanthropic spirit of our community. Mike Harvey and Mary Becker were the co-recipients recognized at the annual banquet on November 18, 2023. Mike was recognized for his service in the Army, as a principal at Arnold Public Schools, on the Arnold Planning and Zoning Commission, on the Custer County Planning and Zoning Commission, and especially for his dedication and innovative leadership to promote and sustain the invaluable functions of our American Legion. Mary Becker was recognized for her service to the community through Rotary, her leadership on the Rialto Theatre Board, and specifically for being the catalyst in fundraising and construction of the Arnold Community Center.



The American Legion Post 130, William A. Layton was recognized for their service to our country and community. Their continuing selfless service inspires as they post the colors for sporting and community events. Their contributions to the Veterans Day program at school honors and pays respect to all past military sacrifices. The Patriot Pen essay serves to mentor our youth, teaching them American values and patriotism. The Memorial Day program reminds us that some gave their lives to secure our freedom. The Honor Guard reminds us that the veterans' service is not forgotten. They also keep a stock of wheelchairs, shower chairs, walkers, and other mobility devices as a service to our community. The American Legion Post 130 is named after William A. Layton who gave his life for our country during World War I, on October 5, 1918. 🌱



2023 NEWSLETTER

Bringing a community vision to life 🌱

When the Arnold Community Foundation Fund hosted the community vision meetings in March of 2022, participants were encouraged to "Dream Big." Well, dream big they did! Attendees promoted the idea of preserving Arnold's history with a museum. Currently there are twenty committee members including current teachers, retired teachers, farmers, ranchers, business owners, and community members who are invested in making this dream of both a virtual and physical museum a reality. Since the summer of 2022, this committee has established a mission statement, achieved their 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, researched other museums, collaborated to decide what the museum might entail, written grants, hosted fundraiser events, and more. A major step was to find a building location and on August 1, 2023, a purchase was made—Archie's Café—an

Arnold landmark. For years, Arnold natives have dreamed of what the building could become with the right amount of vision and funding. The newly formed Arnold Area Historical Society utilized grant funds and donations, including \$5,000 from the Arnold Community Foundation Fund to complete the purchase. Renovating this local 1914 treasure to house the future Arnold Area Historical Museum is a massive project expected to cost in excess of \$450,000. ACFF has granted another \$45,000 to begin the restoration of this cornerstone of our historic Walnut Street. Fundraising is ongoing and the historical committee is working hard to bring their vision to reality in order to preserve not only a building, but also the heritage of the hardworking people of Arnold. 🌱



Investing in young leaders

The Arnold Community Foundation Fund provided a \$6,000 grant for a youth-directed project at the Arnold Recreation Area Lake. For years the lake had been overgrown with moss and algae, limiting recreational opportunities, negatively impacting fish, and making for an unpleasant camping season. Ethan Furne, an Arnold High School junior, applied for grant funds in connection with his Rotary Interact project "Arnold Revitalizing Fountains." This project involved purchasing three fountains and algaecide for the lake. Over a ten-month period, Ethan consulted experts, worked with the Arnold Village Board, researched the products and steps necessary, acquired funding through grant writing, and physically helped assemble and install the new fountains. We are proud to support Ethan's project to improve a recreational area for both residents and future visitors to our town. (completed September 2023) 🌱

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Beautifying our community

Many initiatives came out of the March 16, 2022 Community Vision Meeting facilitated by Nebraska Community Foundation staff. One you probably noticed but may not be aware of is ACFF's involvement in the work done by the Downtown Revitalization Committee. Volunteers planted nine large planters along Highway 92 with flowers and plants and added seasonal decorations from time to time. A second project involved painting all 31 downtown light poles black to help spruce up the downtown area. These projects were granted \$6,160 to aid in improving Arnold's downtown aesthetics and to encourage travelers to stop and shop. Look for the Downtown Revitalization Committee to continue their good work in the future! 🌱

Preserving our history

The Finch Memorial Library is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The one-hundred-year-old clay tile roof needed rehabilitation and the cost to do so was formidable. Over \$14,000 needed to be raised to cover the costs not covered by the insurance company. Over 800 memorial tiles were purchased, but assistance was needed to meet their total roof goal. The Arnold Community Foundation Fund provided that assistance with a \$5,000 grant to the Finch Memorial Library in 2022. The repair project involved the removal of one-hundred-year-old clay tiles, the placement of a temporary roof, and the final installation of a mix of new and old clay tiles to complete the project in May 2023. Interior ceiling repairs were also performed. Library Director Marci Lucas told the Arnold Sentinel, "I just want to save that precious old building."



The ACFF was pleased to be part of this historic undertaking. (May 2022 to 2023) 🌱

Making improvements



The Arnold Community Gun Club (ACGC) was in desperate need of a facelift for its building including windows, doors, and siding. This community group has seen a resurgence of interest in shooting in recent years. ACGC was dedicated to improving the property and preserving its historic building (the Hazel Dell Country School that was originally located about three miles south of the new Tallin Church). The Arnold Community Foundation Fund provided a grant of \$3,000 to the gun club to help with the renovations of the building being completed during the summer of 2023. 🌱

Protecting a local treasure

How many towns with population of under 600 have a movie theater? Arnold does, how cool is that? During the summer of 2022, the Rialto Theatre requested a grant for a heat pump. The summer heat made it difficult to keep chocolate solid and patrons comfortable in the lobby. A \$3,240 grant from the Arnold Community Foundation Fund made the HVAC upgrade possible. 🌱



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Boosting community health

Sometimes progress takes one person passing the baton to another. Such is the case with the weight room improvements at Arnold Public Schools. Arnold High School Senior Rio Remund got this project across the finish line with the initial idea coming from APS Alum Lance Jones. Starting in December of 2022, Rio wrote several grants, presented ideas and funding sources to the Arnold School Board, and was involved in the planning process from start to finish. Much of the high school participated in this project—it was truly students implementing change for both their benefit and for the benefit of youth in the years to come. By mid-April, the walls were finished and painted, five new squat racks were added, as well as the bars and other equipment including a new set of dumbbell weights. The Arnold Community Foundation Fund assisted with a \$12,500 grant to the project. 🌱



Saving lives

Having quality tools is essential for emergency medical services in rural areas to provide top quality care. A Stryker Power-LOAD Cot eliminates the need to steer a cot into and out of the ambulance and makes the loading and unloading process safer for all involved. The Arnold Volunteer Fire Department was able to upgrade this key piece of equipment in January 2023 with the aid of a \$7,500 grant from the Arnold Community Foundation Fund. Chief Andrew Tickle said, "The Power-LOAD Cot has been a blessing to our department and has been very well used! We are very thankful for it and thank everyone that helped make it happen!" 🌱

Keeping it local

The Arnold Public School Beef Booster Fund is another example of the Arnold Community Foundation Fund being a conduit for local charitable giving. Donations cover the processing cost of locally raised beef. In some cases, local ranchers donate beef. When a 4-H beef is utilized, it is a bit more involved. Local businesses pay the premium at the Custer County 4-H Auction, Arnold Public School pays market price for the beef, and the Beef Booster Fund helps pay for the cost of processing at a local butcher. Agriculture is our number one industry, and this is a great way to support and encourage 4-H activity and bring awareness of where our food comes from. 🌱



Inspiring a love of reading

Having a community fund often facilitates other philanthropic endeavors. Arnold Public School sophomore Eli Rogers discovered Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and became determined to bring it to Custer County. This literacy foundation pays half of the cost to give a book each month to children (infants through age five) and the other half is covered by a local sponsoring group. Eli needed a 501(c)(3) to partner with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to receive donations. The Arnold Community Foundation Fund was there to facilitate and be a conduit to charitable contributions for this literacy project. It is amazing to see the impact of our local youth through the Central Nebraska Interact Rotary program and we are proud to partner with them to make a difference in our community and the greater Custer County area. (March 2023)! 🌱