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JANET LARREAU PHOTO

Celebrating the Fourth of July

Dressed to celebrate the Fourth of July holiday, Rae Hagler, daughter of Zach and Heather Hagler, is interviewed in a little red wagon by Kiddie Parade emcee Carol Watson on Friday afternoon in downtown Arnold. The Kiddie Parade, and free kids' movie that followed, kicked off a full weekend of activities sponsored by the Arnold Chamber. Watch for next week's issue, when more Fourth of July Blow-Out event photos will be featured.

Deb Fischer Announces Candidacy for U.S. Senate

State Sen. Deb Fischer of Nebraska, announced on June 28 her candidacy for the United States Senate.

"I'm running for the United States Senate to help America regain its economic strength and rebuild its cultural foundations," Sen. Fischer stated. "America must meet a new generation of challenges by strengthening our economy, balancing our books, and in Nebraska, revitalizing our communities."

Sen. Fischer is a lifelong Nebraskan with a family ranch business near Valentine. For the last seven years, Fischer has served the 43rd district in the Nebraska Legislature. Known as an experienced and effective legislator, she currently serves as Chair of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee and is a member of the Revenue Committee and the Executive Board.

"In the legislature, I have a proven conservative voting record of keeping taxes low, reducing wasteful spending and protecting families," Sen. Fischer said. "I stood with Governor Heineman by voting for the largest tax cut in the history of our state and supporting limited government by cutting government's growth during my tenure in the Legislature."

For several weeks, there has been widespread speculation about Fischer's bid for U.S.



Senate. She's been encouraged to run by people across the state because they believe her skills as a legislator will serve Nebraskans well and that she is the strongest candidate to defeat incumbent Democrat Senator Ben Nelson.

"Senator Ben Nelson has been a rubber stamp for the failed economic policies of the Obama Administration," Sen. Fischer said. "Ben Nelson cast key, deciding votes for Obamacare and the failed stimulus package. I'm not a career politician; I'm a wife, mother, rancher, small businesswoman and citizen legislator. In the U.S. Senate, I will use my life experience to bring a fresh, conservative voice for Nebraska."

Sen. Fischer announced her candidacy at campaign events all across Nebraska throughout the week.

Arnold Residents Attend State Fire School

About 1,625 people from Nebraska and several other states attended the 74th Annual Nebraska State Fire School, May 20-22, in Grand Island. Attending from Arnold were: Joe Bob Atkins, Dell Cerny, Tom Dennis, Duane Gibson, David Smith, Robbi Smith, Austin Snyder and Gregory Tickle.

The event was offered by the Nebraska State Volunteer

Firefighters Association in cooperation with the State Fire Marshals Training Division, Heartland Events Center/Fonner Park and Central Community College-Grand Island.

Participants were able to take classes on agricultural emergency and extrication principles, basic pump operations, emergency vehicle operations, fire investigation, foam opera-

tions, forcible entry techniques, initial company operations, introduction to firefighting, rope rescue techniques, rural water supply and practical hydraulics, railroad hazardous materials, terrorism awareness, thermal imaging cameras, vehicle extrication, wildland fires, 21st century leadership and other topics. Mobile live burn simulators also were held.

SORC Featured in Nebraska Life

The Sandhills Open Road Challenge (SORC) has brought more notoriety to Arnold in the July/August 2011, issue of *Nebraska Life* magazine. The seven-page, full color lay-out is titled "Sandhills Speed Racers," with story and photographs by Mike Whye.

The article hails the SORC as "the nation's toughest open

road race," and features beautiful photography of last year's race.

Organizers and racers are interviewed, and two locals, competitor Darren Weinman and timer Melanie Chesley, are pictured.

For more information, go to www.nebraskalife.com, or call: 800-777-6159.

Get Set for The Blues

Festival Returns to Old Mill Park for 18th Year

A Blues Music Award winning American blues musician, artist and guitar maker based in Clarksdale, Mississippi, will headline the 18th Annual South Loup River Blues Festival, Saturday, July 9, at Old Mill Park.

Born in 1951, James Louis Johnson spent his childhood moving from town to town in the Mississippi Delta and working on his family's farm. He earned his adult nickname, "Super Chikan," from those early days on the farm. According to his bio, he was very fond of the chickens on the farm, and before he was old enough to work in the field, he would walk around talking to them. This led his friends to call him "Chikan Boy."

In 1964, at the age of 13, he bought his first guitar, an acoustic model that had only two strings, from a Salvation Army store.

As an adult, he began driving a truck for a living. During the long stretches on the road he began composing his own songs. When he showed some of the songs to his friend, they convinced him to go to a studio and record them. He did, and in 1997 "Super Chikan" released his debut album. He went on to produce two more albums, and in 2009 his third album, "Chikadelic," won the award for Traditional Blues Album.

"Super Chikan" has toured and performed in Japan, UK, Denmark, Canada, Mexico,



COURTESY PHOTO

Award winning Blues artist James "Super Chikan" Johnson will headline Saturday's 18th Annual South Loup River Blues Festival.

Finland, France, Italy, The Netherlands and Norway, and has performed for the President of the United States. He was recently nominated for the BB King Entertainer of the Year and Traditional Male Blues artist. Last year, he was

honored with four awards nominations.

South Loup River Blues Festival organizers have lined up a great show leading up to the headliner's performance, including The Melvin Running Bear Band, The Matt

Cox Band, The Lil' Slim Blues Band, The Kris Lager Band and the early evening headliner, Earl and Them. This band, based in Arkansas, will be sure to be a crowd pleaser, featuring the widely acclaimed guitar mastery of Earl Cate, and



Earl and Them will perform as the festival's early evening headliner.

Jason Davis on guitar and vocals.

The festival starts at 11:00 a.m., on Saturday and plays until the Blues are gone.

Friday night is Preview Night. Early arrivals who have already set up tents and campers, and Arnold residents who want to come down to the park, will be entertained by Mike Adams and Off The Grid, starting at 8:00 p.m. The free show is sponsored by KBBN 95.3 FM "The Thunderbird."

Vendors will be selling food, drinks and merchandise at Old Mill Park on Friday night and Saturday.

Advanced tickets are available locally at Jim's Bar and Mighty Mart, and at several out of town locations. Children age 12 and younger are admitted free, but must be accompanied by a parent. Tickets will also be sold at the gate.

Call: 800-584-9336 for ticket information or visit www.southloupbluesfest.com.