

THE MORNING SUN

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022 | 75¢

MORNINGSUN.NET

Arma approves tobacco-free parks

By **Dustin R. Strong**
Morning Sun Staff

ARMA, Kan. — On Monday, the Arma City Council unanimously approved a policy to ban all tobacco from city parks. The policy was introduced by a partnership of Live Well Crawford County, the Crawford County Health Department (CCHD), and RESIST, a county-wide youth organization made up of middle and high school students that promotes a tobacco-free environment for teens.

Recently, RESIST members cleaned up parks in Arma, finding over 90 cigarette butts centered around park benches where smokers sit. The youngsters then worked with CCHD to draft a policy banning smoking in city parks.

CCHD is a recipient of the Chronic Disease Risk Reduction grant from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment



Local teenagers and county health department employees, from left, Tammy Alcantar (CCHD), Paige Morey (RESIST), Sarah Alcantar (RESIST), and Hope Harmon (CCHD), drafted a policy banning smoking in city parks, which the Arma City Council approved this week. COURTESY PHOTO

See **PARKS**, Page 2A

PARKS

Continued from Page 1A

(KDHE). The grant is administered in conjunction with Live Well and focuses on eliminating exposure to second-hand smoke by restricting the use of tobacco in public places, and increasing the number of youth educating community members about the dangers of tobacco use and e-cigarettes.

According to Brad Stroud, executive director of Live Well, the city is already using a Pathways Grant to build sidewalks around McDonald Park to connect restroom facilities, picnic areas, and the community garden, creating a walking trail around and through the park. The grant stipulated the walking trail is to be smoke-free, but not the park itself. RESIST took the opportunity to dovetail their non-smoking

policy into the grant.

"RESIST is doing some awesome work," said Stroud. "To go before a city council is intimidating, even for adults. They are doing adult work, as kids."

As a result, the City of Arma will be provided with signs saying "young lungs at play" to be posted around their parks. The signs will also include contact information about KanQuit, the Kansas Tobacco Quitline, which provides smokers with free, one-on-one coaching to help them quit smoking.

"We believed children should be able to play without being exposed to second-hand smoke or toxic litter," said Matt O'Malley, Live Well's director of outreach and development, in a recent press release.

Stroud said he is very proud of the people of Arma.

"They are really investing in their community," he said.

