

A publication
for and about
the town of
Napier, Nebraska

The Napier
Historical Society

Our Mission:

The mission of the Napier Historical Society is to preserve, interpret, display, communicate, promote and honor history, original structures, special places and artifacts of the people and culture of Napier, Nebraska, and the surrounding area. The Napier Historical Society intends to accomplish this mission by operating a museum, publishing a newsletter, sponsoring events, and in other appropriate ways. The Napier Historical Society will initially focus on four themes: School Days, Life in Napier Through the Years, White Horse Ranch, and Napier 20 Place Crash.

In This Issue:

Ghosts of Napier 1
 Circuit Rider 2
 Joseph and Catherine Decker 3
 Memorial Day Services 3
 Letters 4
 Napier Paper Rolls Along ... 4
 57th Annual Alumni Banquet 5
 Where Were We? 6
 The Ol' Homesteader 7
 Cruise Night 7



Napier Paper

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News of 2nd Quarter 2010

Ghosts of Napier

By Bob Allpress

While searching the Internet for references to the hanging of Mrs. C. Holton (March 13, 1896), who was written about in a recent issue and lived in a cabin west of our alfalfa field, I came across a site that piqued my interest. It was on the site ghostsofamerica.com that I read about ghost sightings in Napier. There were three sightings listed on the site. Now, as I go to put pen to paper, comes the spooky part. Even though I saved the link and shared it with other people, the information has been spirited away and cannot be found on that link anymore!

There were three stories originally listed. The first was of a woman seen standing on the bank of Silver Gulch and looking wistfully to the west. The second sighting mentioned was of a woman seen watching TV in a house in Napier. She is reported to have strangulation marks around her neck. The third sighting is more ambiguous and is of a man seen in town, dressed in lumberjack-style clothing.

I wondered if there were ghost stories other than mine haunting our fair town. My own experience happened one summer night in the late '60s. On a breezeless night, I was walking on the road next to Bob's Body Shop. At that time, there were strings of triangular flags hanging 10 feet or so high from the trees to his shop. As I came even with these flags, they started popping and snapping like they were being buffeted by a high wind. This happened even though it was still dead calm. Coach Vaughn would have been impressed at my 200-yard time getting home!

In a conversation with former Napier resident Ed Zeitner, I was told a story relating to the ambush and killing of Elmer Herring at his home on Alkali Creek by the Keya Paha sheriff. The Herring house is located about nine miles west of Napier. After Elmer was killed, Ed was farming the property. One day, Ed worked very late, and instead of making his way home in the dark, he decided to spend the night in the Herring house. During the night, something woke Ed from a sound sleep. Opening his eyes, he could distinctly see Elmer standing there looking at him. Ed quickly vacated the house and never spent another minute in that place.

The Liewer painting crew was hired to paint our house here on the Keya Paha River. They had removed the screens to paint the windows. When one of the ladies went to replace a screen, she



Jordan Sieh and Lauren Hendry with a "friend."

could not lift it off of the ground. To her, it felt like something was holding it down. Shortly after, she tried again and the screen lifted easily. When this story was relayed to us, my brothers and I looked at each other, laughed and said in unison, "Uncle Howard." Whenever we worked on stuff while he was still alive, he always seemed to have the ability to be in the wrong place—and still was!

Another ghost story comes from Loren and Linda Sieh's home on the west side of Napier. Over the years, their daughter had seen a shapeless form in the hallway near her bedroom. Loren has seen this same form many times from his easy chair while watching TV late at night. One day while searching in the attic, their granddaughters found the bridesmaids' dresses from when Loren and Linda were married. While modeling the dresses, the girls posed for pictures. In the first picture, they were photographed in a frontal view. In the second picture, shown above, they had pivoted sideways to show the bows. Nothing else had changed, but when the second picture was viewed, the light shape behind the girls was in the picture. Research by the family has found that the shape (a blob with two stubby "legs" at the bottom) is a form typically attributed to a picture of a ghost.

The Dummer house is also reported as a local house that is/has been visited by a wispy visitor with big feet. Doris Olsen relates the story from Willard Dummer. One night after everyone else had gone to bed, Willard was up watching TV. He heard the kitchen door open and heavy footsteps

Continued on page 4



The Circuit Rider

Frieda Ahlers Voll: Small-town Nebraskan goes to Washington, D.C., and how that changed her life

At sundown a mysterious rider is seen drifting along the horizon. Old timers believe he's a Sandhills Ghost or Spirit who's trying to keep the Pioneer Spirit alive. His mission: To interview favorite long-time residents of Naper, in order to help us remember our noble past. No one can actually point to specifics, but all swear, "He's out there..."

With the passing of years, renewing old acquaintances is one of the Circuit Rider's favorite times. Passing stories of this nature on to other friends and members of the community is rewarding. Thus the story which follows:

On March 18, 1923, Frieda Viola Ahlers was born to Dietrich and Lydia Ahlers on a farm in Boyd County, about seven miles from Naper. I'm told it was during a blizzard. My father tried to get a doctor, but weather being what it was, that was not possible; however, he did get a midwife, Mrs. Maertin, to help my mother.

I was the youngest child in the family of eight: brothers George, Otto and Henry; sisters Emma, Helena, Clara and Anna. There were always enough children to work on the farm, as well as play games, especially in the winter evenings when I remember playing cards. This was always a favorite pastime in our family and continues to this day.

We all learned to work at an early age. My father would have me help hoe the garden. Then there was the bounty of produce to eat fresh as well as can and preserve for the months ahead. We also had fruit trees. Being the youngest certainly had advantages, as I'm sure I didn't have to work as hard as my older brothers and sisters. We also raised cattle, pigs and chickens. Several springs fed the creek, which provided water for the livestock. Living on a farm during hard times was a very good place to be—always food for the table.

And there were some hard times. I remember being at a swimming pond with my sisters and looking toward the west to see a huge black sky and rushing to the house before the dust storm struck. My father always went to our cellar and I always went with him. I can remember my father coming to pick me up with horses and a wagon—how fortunate we were to have such loving, caring parents.

All of us children attended District 60, a country school with students from first through eighth grades. It was about a mile and a half walk each way if we cut through pastures. I always admired the

country school teachers, as besides the usual hard work that a good teacher does each day, they had to be there early to start the fire to warm the schoolhouse, as well as stay late to grade papers and clean up, including using sweeping compound on the floors. No janitors those days! My sister Clara was my eighth-grade teacher, and she made learning easy. Her artistic ability on the blackboard certainly made it more interesting for the younger children.

I attended high school in Naper and stayed in town from Monday through Friday with Lester and Delilah Anderson and their son Wayne. My favorite teacher was a petite lady named Doretta Williams, who taught me to appreciate business skills, such as typing, shorthand and accounting. I was a cheerleader for our basketball team. Naper's colors those days were purple and gold, so we wore gold satin blouses and purple pleated skirts. I had the lead in both our junior and senior class plays. Our sneak day was spent in Sioux City, Iowa. I graduated in 1940 and that fall attended business college in Sioux City. After completing the course, I started looking for a job, including applying for a Civil Service position.

I remember so well Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941. I had attended a matinee movie, and when I came out of the theater, the paper boys were shouting, "EXTRA! EXTRA! War has been declared! The Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor!"

After World War II was declared, I received a telegram from the War Department to report for duty Dec. 23 in Washington, D.C. I had two days to respond and make arrangements to leave Sioux City. Another young woman and I took the bus to Washington. Since my older sister Helen was already working and living there, I didn't have to worry about a place to stay.

Washington, D.C., was certainly an exciting place to be during the war. At first, we were working in temporary buildings—three people used the same desk for three eight-hour shifts, and you often found snacks in your desk from other employees. We worked six days a week. Construction began on the Pentagon on

Sept. 11, 1941, and it was completed Jan. 15, 1943. At the time, it was the largest office building in the world, housing 32,000 employees, all working for the War Department. Each floor had a special color scheme. I worked on the fourth floor and spent five years working in the Army Signal Corps. I once heard Gen. Dwight Eisenhower speak to a huge crowd in the courtyard. I took every opportunity to see the Washington area as well as many other places, including trips to New York City, New England, Atlantic City and Miami.

After the war ended, most of the officers returned to their jobs in private industry. In the Signal Corps, most were from communication companies. I was encouraged to come to New York, but Stan Voll and I had become engaged, and we were married Nov. 10, 1946. We immediately left on our honeymoon trip across the country to California. We stopped in my hometown, where we were charivariated and gave a wedding dance in Naper. Stan met so many relatives and friends of mine. The gracious people of the area gave me a shower of gifts—it was like getting married twice!

It was very hard to find a place to live, as so many servicemen were moving to California after the war. We moved into the small apartment that Stan's brother had been living in. All of Stan's family eventually lived in the Bay area. Both of us found employment with the telephone company. I worked in the executive offices in San Francisco and Stan was a craftsman in the Redwood City area, our hometown. I was fortunate to work for several officers, including the president. The company had of 100,000 employees. Our combined service was more than 65 years.

We went back every other year to my hometown to visit family and friends and spent the alternate years visiting the world. We've visited every state and most countries of our world—so educational and pleasurable at the same time.

We had our home built in 1951 and are still blessed to be living there. Stan and I have been married for 63 years. Life has been very good for a small-town farm girl. ■

Joseph and Catherine Becker's Story

By Mavis Becker Hambeck

My grandfather, Joseph Becker, was born Oct. 15, 1858, at Gimmigen, Rhineland Province, Germany. At age 11, he and his family came to the United States, settling first in Wisconsin and later at Schuyler, Neb.

In 1880, he married Catherine Aply, who had come to the United States with her family from Switzerland. They farmed north of Schuyler for a while, where he and his brother Matt had a tobacco store and made cigars. From Schuyler they moved to Clarkson, where he ran a saloon for a short time. But his heart was in the land, so when Boyd County opened up for homesteading, he took his family to the Naper area. He settled northwest of Naper in Basin Township, where he homesteaded and built a sod house. Due to a discrepancy in surveying along the state line, he gave that up and moved to a quarter in the next section directly to the south. He bought a relinquishment from Liferman and built another sod house. This was where he built up his farm.

Homesteading took stamina. Until they got settled and farming and livestock started, there were severe hardships. It was hard to keep their family warm and fed during the harsh winters. Mattresses were made from cases filled with corn husks. The children's chore was to collect cow chips for fuel. There were times when there was absolutely no money in the house. Joe chewed tobacco; in these days, we would say he was addicted to it. He often said it kept him healthy. Once he ran out of tobacco and had no money to buy more. He walked to Naper—about five miles—to buy a nickel plug of tobacco, but no one would lend him a nickel, so he had to walk home without the tobacco!

Joe knew the value of education and was instrumental in getting a school built. District 60 was known as the Becker School until it was closed due to school consolidation.

Joe and Catherine lost a daughter, Rose, and a son, Joseph, in infancy. They had three more daughters: Lena (Mrs. Gustav Weickum), Julia (Mrs. Given Reber) and Anna (Mrs. George Sieh), and a son, Rudolph. Catherine passed away in 1901 at the age of 39, leaving Joe to raise the four children with the help of his oldest daughter, Lena. Baby Anna was only two years old. A kindly neighbor lady, Mrs. George Cady, helped Lena learn to care for the house and younger children.

In 1902, Joe built a permanent home

with supplies brought by team and wagon from Stuart. The round trip took four days and included fording the Niobrara River. It took several trips to get all the supplies.

Joe farmed this land until he retired. Then he rented the farm to another German immigrant, Fred Ludemann, who raised his family there. When Joe divided up his property, the farm went to his daughter Julia. She later sold it to Hans Tietgen, who was married to Hilda Sieh, a granddaughter of Joe Becker. The farm now belongs to the Wayne Schoenefeld family.

After retiring from farming, Grandpa Joe went to live with Lena and Gust Weickum. Occasionally, he would come and stay for a week with us. My brother, sister and I liked that as he would play pitch with us. When we discovered he was playing the joker twice, he laughed uproariously. I remember proudly reading to him out of the Beacon Primer when I was five years old. My mother didn't like the tobacco

chewing, but endured it stoically during his brief stays. He had a habit of lifting the stove lid when he wanted to spit and then missing the hole! Occasionally, he would smoke a cigar—I liked that smell. On the rare times when I smell cigar smoke, it reminds me of him. Grandpa had advised my dad to find a husky German girl to marry instead of someone like my mother, who was little and slim. Once, he told us, "When your dad married your mother, I thought he made one hell of a pick. But I changed my mind!"

Joe died in 1947. He and Catherine are buried in the Oakdale cemetery near the Keya Paha River. He always had faith in the land. When people got discouraged during the 1930's, he would tell them, "You have no idea what hard times are. Keep going and things will get better." With this kind of philosophy, this country was settled. ■

(More stories about the Becker family in coming issues.)

MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES

It was a beautiful spring day for the crowd of 101 who attended the annual Memorial Day services in the auditorium. The VFW color guard advanced to a vocal rendition of "The Caissons Go Rolling Along," sung by the community choir. Post Chaplain Sterling Schultz gave both the invocation and benediction. The audience joined in the pledge of allegiance. Lisa Vogt Ketelhut addressed the group and explained the reasons Memorial Day is observed. She concluded her remarks with the moving song, "Lay Me Down in the Cold, Cold Ground." The choir, directed by Ms. Ketelhut and accompanied by Bev Zink, also sang "America for Me" and "A Hymn of Peace." The color guard provided a salute to deceased veterans at the Veterans' Memorial at Knollcrest Cemetery. VFW member Larry Allyn and Ladies' Auxiliary member Velva June Blum honored them by placing flowers at the memorial. Most of the crowd joined together at the auditorium for a potluck dinner following the services at the cemetery. ■



Veterans in front of auditorium (left to right): Jon Dyer, Tom Brauer, Bob Schultz, Carl Ludemann, Duane Sieh, Ken Katzer, Keith Mayer, Leonard Schmitz, Merle Riesselman, Dale Nicolaus, Larry Allen, Ray Fuhrer and Sterling Schultz.



Letters, Letters, Letters

Send your cards and letters to:
The Naper Paper, c/o The Naper Historical Society,
PO Box 72, Naper, NE 68755

Thank you very much for the terrific day and tour of the museum—you folks sure have done a terrific job on everything—keep up the good work! Mom and I enjoyed the visit and meeting you—the pie was delicious. Thank you—made Mom's birthday especially memorable. Take care.

Ida Volquardsen Jones and Terri Shafer

Enclosed is a check to help with the *Naper Paper*. Our address has changed.

Garry Jeffords

(Ed Note: Thanks for both the check, which is always appreciated, and the update on your address, which saves us some headaches.)

Please accept this memorial money in honor of Robert Putnam.

Sincerely,
Charles and Ann Collins

Enclosed is a check in memory of Dad, John Schonebaum. He always wanted the best for Naper. Thank you.

Virginia Ahlers

A warm note of thanks to say people like you help make the world brighter by the nice things you do and did for Dad. Dad was so proud of Naper and loved all of you.

Sorry I'm a little late getting this your way. Friends here who had been to Naper

and met Dad wanted to do something in his memory, and I wanted it to go to the Historical Society. They enjoyed visiting with Dad and everyone they met. Talked about how friendly everyone was. They know why I'm proud of Naper. Use part of it for postage on the *Naper Paper* and the rest for restoration or wherever it's needed.

Thanks for always looking out for Dad while he was home, and all the other elderly. Y'all are the best.

Marjo Schonebaum Segers,
Dan Schonebaum, Ron Schonebaum

I enjoy the *Naper Paper*, especially this last issue spotlighting my sister, Avis. I guess you might say that she was my role model.

I'd like to recognize a little "angel" among you, Charlotte Nicolaus, who has placed flowers on my parents' graves each year and, most recently, the grave of my husband, Will, along with a flag. We had been married just short of 56 years.

When I think of Naper, I have to remember with sadness the day Will and I loaded my parents into the van and left Naper for Alliance where we gave them their new "home." It never was to be a good memory for them.

Little did I know when we came to Bullhead City, Ariz., that this would be my "final" home. Where on earth is Bullhead City, Ariz.?

Keep up the good work.

Delma Dalldorf Turgeon

Ghosts of Naper

Continued from page 1

across the kitchen and down the hall toward him in the living room. There, the footsteps ceased, and nobody and nothing was seen. To this day, Doris' daughter continues to hear strange noises emanating from a spare bedroom. No matter how hard she and Doris search, the source of these noises cannot be located.

Another story wafting up to Naper from the Keya Paha river bottom comes from the old McCluhan homestead. Owned by Frank and Ann (Allpress) McCluhan, the original house is now occupied by Doug and Noel Allpress. The house is nestled in a grove of trees that provides day-long shade and keeps the house cool. After doing some redecorating during one weekend visit, Noel and Doug left and returned at a later date.

Upon their return, they discovered a pair of wall sconce candles and a candle on an end table had melted. All that was left was wax puddles and wicks. The house never gets hot enough to melt something like candles, and other candles in the same room and the next room were unharmed. The belief is that Aunt Ann was showing her dislike for the new décor. Another time, the TV in the same room was also the center of a strange event. After watching TV one night, the family went to bed. Some time later, the TV came back on. Noel got up and shut it off. Going back to bed, the TV came back on again. After the third time, the TV remote was taken into the bedroom. Twice more the TV came back on, when it was finally unplugged, and hasn't done this since.

If you have a story of your own to share, I am sure we can scare up a second or third installment to this topic. This author can be reached at bobandnan2008@hotmail.com or at 2 Badger Road, Naper, NE 68755. ■

DID YOU KNOW...

The *Naper Paper* is a reader-produced publication? This means that we thrive only when we hear from you! Got a great story? A memory? A joke? Maybe a bit of history of the region? Or do you know someone in the area that has something interesting and exciting to say? How about an upcoming event that you want to publicize? Write and let us know!

The Naper Paper
c/o The Naper Historical Society
PO Box 72
Naper, NE 68755

KNOLLCREST CEMETERY SEEKING DONATIONS

Several graves at the Knollcrest cemetery east of Naper have no markers indicating who is interred in the plot. The cemetery board hopes to place markers on the graves and would gratefully accept any donations. You can send them in care of Naper Historical Society, Box 72, Naper, and we'll forward them.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who sent donations for the roof project at Heritage Hall. It is now completed and looks wonderful. The west side of the north building at the White Horse Ranch Museum has had the west wall rebuilt and a walk-through door installed.

NAPER PAPER ROLLS ALONG

Thanks to all who support the paper financially or by sending information or pictures for it. 724 copies of the last issue were mailed in June! Isn't that incredible? This is the 23rd issue to be published. And thanks to the folks who corrected the list of guests at Shirley Neumiller Vogt's bridal shower (back page, last issue). The young man next to Marcia Neumiller is Dale Nicolaus. The lady at far right identified as Hazel Helenbolt is Margaret Alexander. ■

57th Annual Alumni Banquet

Mark Zink, a 1980 graduate of Naper High School, was the emcee at the annual alumni banquet honoring classes from 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000. The theme of the evening was "Back Again in 2010," and more than 120 graduates and guests were back again to enjoy the meal prepared by Mary Finnegan of the Nebraskinn at Gross. Blair Vogt & Kluckman provided the placemats, which gave information about each of the years honored at the 2010 banquet. Janet Eggert gave the invocation.

Frieda Ahlers Voll represented the class of 1940, and Donna Davis Ludemann, Duane Sieh, Helen Schmitz Higgins and Joy Helenbolt Vogt were present from the class of 1950. 1960 was very well represented — 16 of 19 class members

were present. Patty Petersen had passed away a few years ago, Harry "Butch" Swallow and DeLores Kreuger Stoltenberg had planned to be present but at the last minute were unable to attend. The class of 1970 had eleven of fifteen graduates in attendance. Nine of the twelve class members attended to represent 1980. There were no alumni present from either 1990 or 2000.

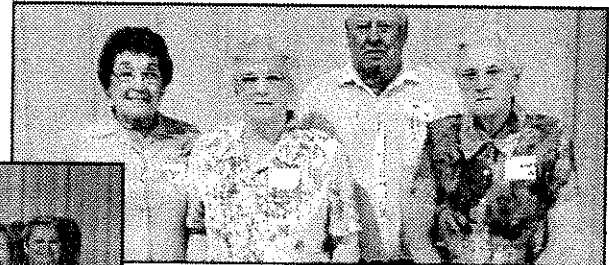
The Naper Historical Society opened both Heritage Hall and the White Horse Ranch Museum for visitors on Saturday afternoon.

Thanks to all who helped make the gathering a success. Although there were no graduates this year, thanks to everyone who sends a little extra for the scholarship fund. ■



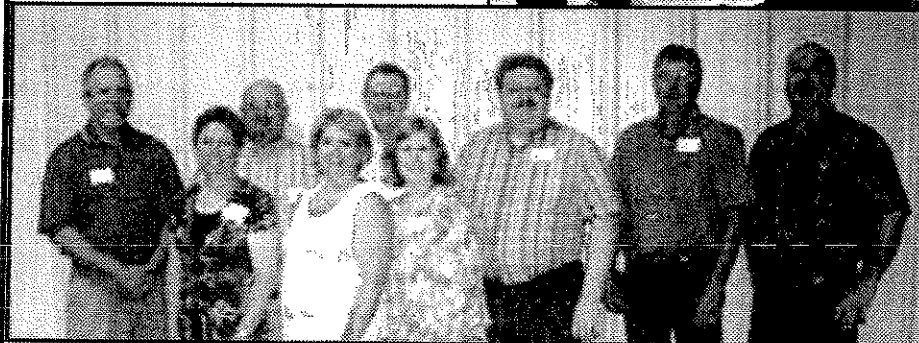
Class of 1940: Frieda Ahlers Voll

Class of 1950 (right): Helen Schmitz Higgins, Donna Davis Ludemann, Duane Sieh and Joy Helenbolt Vogt.



Class of 1960 (above): Judy Small Schmitz, Lou Ann Stahlecker Heermann, Jim Sattler, Grace Faatz Bendig, Steve Sparks, Mary Jane Riesselman Katzer, Jerry Goodman, Barb Stoltenberg Wentz, Bill Dawson, Ruth Katzer Lewis, Karen Gentele Williams, Marjorie Kortmeyer Saiser, Ralph Kulm, Karen Reber Juracek, Doris Goodman Moses and Bernice Stahlecker Spitzenberger.

Class of 1970 (below): Dale Neumiller, Dean Ahlers, Rudy Hambeck, Rita Ahlers Keller, Joe Higgins, Lynette Sieh Carmichael, Gary Engelhart, LouAnn Ahlers Prible, Patsy Moody Rust, Jim Schmitz and Mary Ludemann.



Class of 1980 (left): Keith Cline, Lora Sieh Cline, Mark Zink, Carla Vaughn Schmitz, Lavern Higgins, Nancy Wentz Nelson, Kent Vogt, Milton Reiman and Randy Vogt.

Let's See — Where Were We?

We'll continue our trip down Main Street and travel north on the west side of the street...

The Naper Super Service building, originally built by Charley Klein, burned in 1992. It used to be a "White Eagle" station with a big concrete white eagle on the corner. Charley Klein sold to Gus Weickum; Weickum to Harry Bennett and Bob Fuhrer; they sold to Walt Ahlers and John Sieh; Walt sold his share to Jim McLaughlin; Jim sold his share to Loren Sieh. Johnny Sieh retired and Loren and Linda operated the station. After the fire in 1992, a new building was erected in the same place and operated until 2004.

The Krotter family donated the next building to the Naper Historical Society in 2007. It is used as a museum housing the White Horse Ranch memorabilia. Wm. Krotter Company had operated a lumber yard and farm supply store in the community for 100 years before closing the Naper branch in 1992. Fred Putnam, John Schonebaum, John Bentzen and Kelly Vogt had been managers of the store through the years.

ALL OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDINGS IN THIS BLOCK NORTH OF THE KROTTER BUILDING WERE DESTROYED BY FIRE IN 1942. (See story below)

The building where Linda Goodman operates Lynn's Upholstery was built by Ben Herrmann, who operated a hardware store. Harry Bennett purchased it and added the steel building. He ran a feed, seed and hardware store. It was sold to Leo Lampman

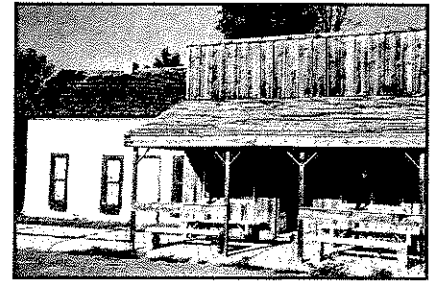
then to Vern and Linda Goodman. The original building on this site was once owned by Jake Stahlecker, who had a furniture store and mortuary.

The block wall next to Goodman's was the front of the café built by Louie and Midge Kortmeyer. Of special interest was the bowling alley in the basement! Over the years, the Kortmeyers, Steve and Lenore Sparks, Liz and Leo Blum, Gerald and Shirley Blum, and Pete and Ben Fuhrer fed hungry folks in that building. It was the local after-school hangout where you'd get a bag of peanuts to dump in a cold bottle of Coke. Ah, memories.

Before the fire, the next building housed, at various times, the Farmer's Bank, a cream station and a shoe shop. Harold Schultz and his sisters ran a bar and café there. The Wentz Brothers (Art and Ted) built the present building in 1949. Art and Elsie added the house on the north side later. The bar was later owned by Bill Moody, then by Dennis Cline.

Mike Maertin had a grocery store on the next lot. After the fire in 1942, his son, Bill Maertin built a new store and operated it for many years. Subsequent owners were George and Vivian Alexander, Wes and Terry Fuhrer, Linda Nicolaus Vomacka, and currently Kelly and Monica Bendig.

The Post Office was built in 1987 and opened Aug. 16, 1988, on the lot Blakkolb's Store occupied for many years before its destruction by fire April 1, 1974. The store had also been owned and operated by Albert and Dolly Bechtold, and later by Bill



The old drug store after a facelift.

Moody. North of the Post Office, on the empty lot, formerly stood Bailey's Hardware Store. In 1939, that building was moved to a location east of Jamison (Stack's Store). As it rounded a corner on old Highway 12 south and east of its present location, it toppled over and what had been a two-story structure became a one-story building.

The three buildings north of the empty lot were formerly Dr. Zimmerman's office, drug store, and living quarters. Fred Putnam bought them from Zimmermans and then sold in 1942 to Albert and Doris Daldorf, who operated the business until 1991. Several people owned the property until 1999, when Denny Jorgensen and Margaret Ludemann bought it and had the house remodeled.

A small building north of the house was used as an assessor's office, a cream station operated by Ed and Emma Stahlecker and later Gladys Putnam, and then was moved to Clark Fuhrer's farm for use as a cabin.

The VFW Hall was built by Ted Ullrich as a theater which operated many years. Jack and Louie Adams bought the theater and modernized the equipment. The Naper VFW Post 8265 bought it in 1965, added on and remodeled it. It is a gathering place for many community activities and rented out for various receptions, reunions and parties. The Volunteer Fire Department, organized in 1964, uses the front of the building to house the ambulance.

Swede Lund and Ern Nicolaus built a shop on the now-empty lots north of the VFW. Gladys Putnam had a cream and egg buying station there in the late '40s. Martin Shope was the last person to have a repair shop. The building was torn down, and a sand volleyball lot was used for a few years. It is now the site of the Welcome to Naper sign. Across the street north is the Three River Telco building and north of that is the former Nebraska Department of Roads building, now owned by the Rural Fire District, where the fire trucks are parked. This was a vacant lot until the early 1940's, when Philip Holmgren purchased it as a pasture for horses. It was used as a pasture until the early 1950s, when NDOR bought it and built the shop in 1953 or 1954. ■

FIRE DESTROYED NAPER BUSINESS SECTION

(From *Bonesteel Enterprise*, July 1942)

Saturday morning about 2 a.m., a fire of undetermined origin destroyed six business buildings at Naper, Neb., a small inland town 16 miles southwest of Bonesteel, S.D. Fire departments from Bonesteel, Fairfax and Butte were called for assistance. The Bonesteel department took their chemical outfit.

The fire was first discovered by Fred Putnam and Ivan Hansen in the rear of the Jake Stahlecker Furniture and Undertaking store. This was the third time within a short period that a fire was discovered in the rear of the store, the last time only four months ago.

Although there was practically no wind, the flames spread to other buildings, and soon the entire section was a blazing mass. The buildings included the Buck Davis Cream Station, Jake Stahlecker furniture store, Harold Schultz café and beer parlor, Ed Stahlecker cream station, the empty building formerly occupied by the bank and the Maertin General Store. The buildings were on the west side of Main Street.

Much of the stock of the Maertin Store was removed into trucks before the building caught fire. The blaze was easily seen from neighboring towns. The town has no water system, and only chemicals and buckets were used in saving the buildings on the east side from catching fire.

Some insurance was carried on of the buildings and stocks, but not sufficient to cover the losses in any case. The loss was estimated at more than \$20,000. ■



The Ol' Homesteader

Ol' Homesteader returns with another heap of news and happenings from in and around our fair town...

There's always something goin' on!

Vern and Deb Vogt are grandpa and grandma again—Josh and Ashley Brabec welcomed Memphis Jon April 23. Jim and Mabel Sattler are grandparents again—Charlès and Michele Sattler are parents of Thomas Edward, born May 3.

Holly Vogt (daughter of Bryon and Sharon, granddaughter of Jim and Mabel Sattler and Joy Vogt) and Willie Druke were married May 21 in Spencer. Skye Higgins and Allison Engelhaupt were married July 17. Skye is the son of Lavern and Brenda Higgins, grandson of Lelia Higgins and Margaret Schmitz.

Luke Zeisler, son of Richard and Sheryl, was the Spencer American Legion Boys State nominee. Kaitlyn Higgins was chosen as an alternate for the Three River Telco

scholarship. She's the daughter of Joe and Mary Higgins, granddaughter of Merv and Helen Higgins. Tiffany Zeisler and Kelsey Zink received their nursing degrees from Northeast Community College.

Teresa Goodman (daughter of Vern and Linda) and Jamie Warnke (daughter of Jolene Bechtold Warnke) qualified to compete in the National Special Olympic Games in Lincoln. Mandy Keller (daughter of Carol and Randy, granddaughter of Gaynell Keller) was an alternate.

Jon Alford (son of Jim and Becky, grandson of Edward and Lois) and Alex Bendig (son of Kelly and Monica, grandson of Herman and Grace Faatz Bendig) were inducted into the National Honor Society at West Boyd Public School.

Logan Titus-Ahlers (daughter of Tara and Dan) and Samantha McCarthy (daughter of Darrin and Connie, granddaughter of LeRoy and Maxine Windmeyer McCarthy)

did us proud in the spring track season.

Amber Bendig (daughter of Kelly and Monica, granddaughter of Herman and Grace Faatz Bendig), Macy (daughter of Dan and Tara, granddaughter of Wayne and Virginia Schonebaum Ahlers), Logan, and Katelyn Haney (daughter of Mike and Tammy, granddaughter of Bob and Barb Stoltenberg Wentz) all received honors at the Niobrara Valley Conference Art Show.

Amber Bendig, Jon Alford, Alex Bendig, Macy Ahlers, and Henry Ahlers (son of Dean and Roxie) were all named to the Honor Roll at West Boyd.

Austin and Isaac Koenig were chosen to be "Zero Heroes" at West Boyd Elementary—a zero hero is a student who has had good behavior all year long. Parents Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig and grandparents Jeff and Rindy Zink are happy!

Kendell McCarthy, Casey Heermann, Tony Druke, Kevin McCarthy—all of them are doing that 'round and 'round thing again at the race track and doing very well! Mike Bartunek won the people's choice award at Spencer's Cruise Night.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church once again had a bumper crop of students at their Vacation Bible School—a good time was had by all.

Governor of South Dakota Mike Rounds declared April 26 as Janet Sattler Day in honor of her 100th birthday. She was born east of Naper (now Leonard and Thelma Schmitz's home) and was a teacher in Naper, in fact Duke Stahlecker's first-grade teacher. Orlon Clausen, who spent most of his life next to the Niobrara River southeast of Naper, celebrated 100 years with a party and a card shower.

Norman Graves passed away April 21 in O'Neill. His great-grandfather's history (Julius "Duke" Graves) was recorded in the *Naper Paper* recently. ■

CRUISE NIGHT

Saturday, June 26, was a step back in time as restored and classic vehicles cruised Main Street in Naper. The vehicles, including a restored Model A, classic Chevrolets, Fords, Dodges, motorcycles and 4-wheelers, were first parked for viewing on 2nd Street between the Naper Grocery and the Post Office. Later, as the cars cruised, people sat in folding chairs to watch the show.

The street was lined with cars—just like the late '40s and early '50s when Wednesday and Saturday nights were "town nights" and businesses were open until midnight or later. People used to sit on benches in front of the stores, talking about crops, weather and families.

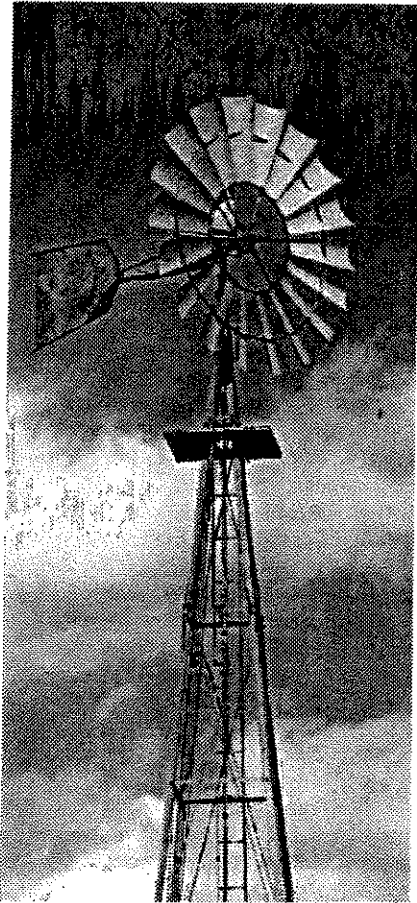
After the cruise, there was a street dance south of the Naper Café. Lots of people consumed hamburgers that were grilled outdoors. Many thanks to Terry Sachtjen, Vern and Linda Goodman, Tim and Bonnie Whitley, Stephanie and Lee Cadwallader, Loren and Rick Sieh, Tony and Beth Druke, and everyone else who had a hand in making this a memorable night! ■



One of the two Edsels that cruised.

IF THE WALL COULD TALK

Everyone remembers the wall—the famous (infamous?) wall next to the drug store that deteriorated and was rebuilt and rededicated in 2002. What stories can YOU tell about the wall next to the Drug Store? We'd like to hear them. Send them to Box 72, Naper, NE 68755. And just in case you missed them the first time around, T-shirts commemorating the wall are for sale, all sizes available, for \$10 each. ■



Naper Paper

Naper Historical Society
PO Box 72
Naper NE 68755

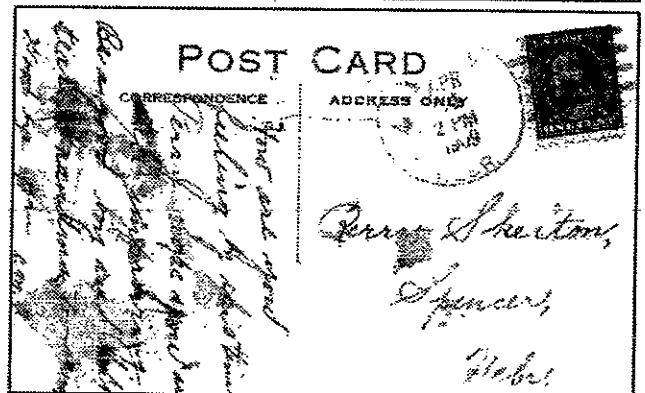
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- Ghosts of Naper
- Joseph and Catherine Becker
- Memorial Day Services
- 57th Annual Alumni Banquet
- Where Were We?
- Plus: Circuit Rider, Ol' Homesteader

... AND MUCH MORE!



This 1909 penny postcard, submitted by Ramona Bentzen, was purchased by Raymond Bentzen at a flea market.