

*A publication
for and about
the town of
Naper, Nebraska*

Naper Paper

The Naper
Historical Society

Our Mission:

The mission of the Naper Historical Society is to preserve, interpret, display, communicate, promote and honor history, original structures, special places and artifacts of the people and culture of Naper, Nebraska, and the surrounding area. The Naper Historical Society intends to accomplish this mission by operating a museum, publishing a newsletter, sponsoring events, and in other appropriate ways. The Naper Historical Society will initially focus on four themes: School Days, Life in Naper Through the Years, White Horse Ranch, and Naper 28 Plane Crash.

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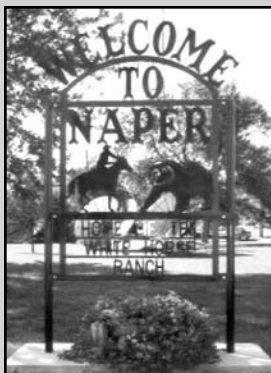
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AND WHAT IS A HAINOSAURUS NEUMILLERI?

In 2004, Paul Neumiller was enjoying two of his favorite pursuits—fishing and fossil hunting—north of Fairfax along the Missouri River. He came upon a fossil he thought might have been a type of mosasaur, a large marine reptile that resembled an alligator with paddles.

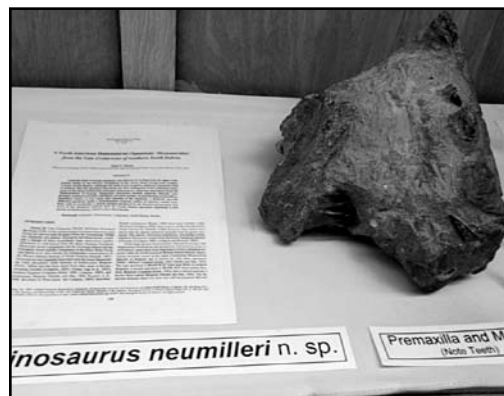
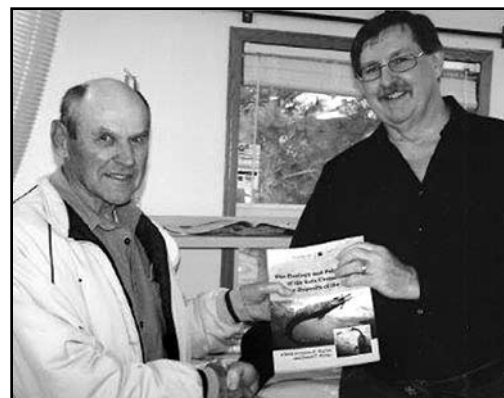
During the Cretaceous Period 70 million years ago, North America was covered by an ocean in which many air-breathing reptiles lived. It is thought that volcanic eruptions and the resulting volcanic dust brought death to them. Many of those creatures were petrified and hidden in layers of dust and rock, only to emerge after glacial and water erosion happened over millions of years.

When Lewis and Clark made their way up the Missouri River, Clark made note on September 10, 1804, that 10–11 miles upriver from Ft. Randall “below this on a hill on the L.S. we found the backbone of a fish, 45 ft. long tapering to the tale, some teeth and c. those joints were separated and all petrified.”

Paul was in this area when he found the fossil later identified as a Hainosaurus. (A Hainosaurus can be up to 40 feet long although the one discovered by Paul is about 30 feet long.) Until that time only three specimens had been found and those only in Europe. Paul contacted the Corps of Engineers and then notified the Museum of Geology at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology of his discovery. A team came to the area to excavate the specimen. Because the North American specimen represents a new species, Dr. James Martin of the Museum of Geology, SDSM&T, named the species *Hainosaurus neumilleri*.

If you want to see what Paul found, you can visit the museum in Rapid City where portions of the Hainosaurus are displayed. Directly behind the display case containing Paul’s discovery is a styxosaurus snowi, a plesiosaur about 70 feet long that was unearthed about 90 years ago near Iona, SD.

Paul has been a fossil hunter for many years. When they lived near Naper, he would explore along the Keya Paha River with Everett Smith. After moving to Bonesteel more than 20 years ago, Paul started hunting expeditions along the Missouri River. The water level along the Missouri



Top: Dr. James Martin presents Paul Neumiller (left) with a copy of the book in which his fossil is documented. Bottom: The fossil Paul Neumiller discovered is on display at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

can vary by as much as 15 or 20 feet depending on the season, and fossil hunting is most apt to be productive when the water level is down. If specimens are found on Corps of Engineer land or land owned by the State of South Dakota or Nebraska, they may not be disturbed and proper authorities must be notified.

Paul has found many other significant fossils, including a well-preserved small mosasaur and baculites. He also found a joint from a turtle similar in size to the fossil of a 2,000-lb. turtle found along the Cheyenne River southeast of the Black Hills. In 2008, he helped salvage a plesiosaurus fossil found near Ft. Randall Dam. ■



The Circuit Rider

JOYCE BLAKKOLB: Teaching career takes root in Naper schoolhouse

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..."

As a seventeen-year-old senior graduating from Naper High School in 1945, I never once dreamed that 70 years later, I would be living in California. I received a letter from the Alumni Association stating that I wasn't receiving a list of the 1945 graduates to contact because I was the only surviving member! Talk about being the last leaf on the tree!

I had actually been aware of this because there were only four graduates to begin with! Esther Neumiller Fuhrer, Opal Goodman Chapin and I had kept in contact until their passing several years ago. Orion Fischer had passed away much earlier.

For some reason or another, I chose

teaching as a career, and I graduated from Wayne State Teachers College in 1949. After several interviews, I accepted a position at Rock County High School in Bassett, Nebraska, to teach English and speech. During the summers, I received my Masters Degree from the University of Nebraska. In 1961, after 12 years at Rock County High, I decided to join my sisters, Kathy and Jan, in Santa Ana, California. I was fortunate enough to get a job teaching eighth grade English at Lathrop Intermediate School for 32 years.

In the interim, Kathy's husband died unexpectedly and I moved in with her and her two young sons. They have grown up to be successful, respected men, one

a high school principal and the other a deputy sheriff. They are happily married and there are five grandkids, all of them living nearby. One family actually lives next door! The dads and grandkids have been actively involved in sports, both as players and coaches, so Kathy and I have been to lots of ballgames! Church activities also keep us busy. We've been fortunate to have lived in the same excellent neighborhood through the years and are now enjoying a happy retirement.

Looking back, I really appreciate the education I received in that old white schoolhouse in Naper. The teachers provided a good beginning for my long, successful teaching career. ■

ANOTHER OLD FRIEND ...

Roy Gossard has lately contacted the *Naper Paper*. His parents, Elsie and Frank Gossard, and he lived "down on the Ponca" in the early 1950s. He has since relocated in Florida where he has a business repairing trolling motors. He's 81 years old now and, after having a stroke, is using a wheelchair. He'd love to hear from you!

Contact him at (352) 214-3792; Roy Gossard, 3224 NW 30th Place, Gainesville, FL, 32605. ■

AND IN CASE YOU WONDER...

Yes, occasionally someone contacts the Historical Society, either by mail, phone, or e-mail, and wants an address or information. We always contact the person about whom the inquiry is made before we divulge any information. ■

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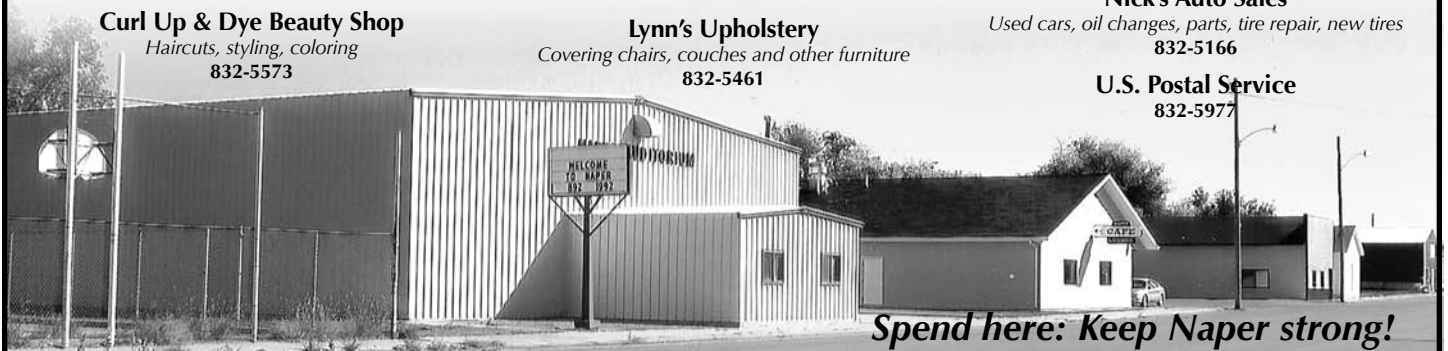
Sand and gravel hauling
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832-5166

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832-5977



Spend here: Keep Naper strong!

CLOSE THE GATE

This poem was included in the funeral notice for Merv Higgins and seems very appropriate for Merv and lots of other ranchers we all know.

For this one rancher the worries are over,
Lie down and rest your head.
Your time has been and struggles enough,
Put the tractor in the shed.

Years were not easy, many downright hard,
But your faith in God transcended,
Put away your tools and sleep in peace.
The fences have all been mended.

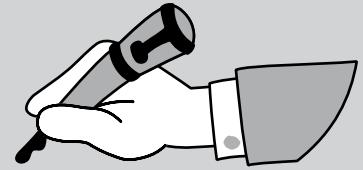
You raised a fine family, worked the land well
And always followed the Son.
Hang up your shovel inside the barn;
Your work here on earth is done.

A faith few possess led your journey through life,
Often a jagged and stony way,
The sun is setting, the cattle are all bedded,
And here now is the end of your day.

Your love of God's soil has passed on to your kin;
The stories flow like fine wine,
Wash off your work boots in the puddle
Left by blessed rain one final time.

You always believed that the good Lord would provide
And He always had somehow,
Take off your gloves and put them down,
No more sweat and worry for you now.

Your labor is done, your home now is heaven;
Nor more must you wait.
Your legacy lives on, your love of the land,
And we will close the gate.



THIS IS YOUR PAPER!

The *Naper Paper* is a reader-produced publication.

Your stories — and your donations — keep this paper going.

We thank all our readers who have helped us out in some way.

If you would like to make a gift to the paper, or would like to share your story-telling talents, please write to us at:

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

Outlaw Trail Annual Meeting Held

On April 19, the annual meeting for the Outlaw Trail Board of Directors and other interested folks was held in the Naper Lounge. Several events were discussed including the Bargain Buyway (April 24, 25, 26 all along Highway 12) and the "See the Byway the Quiltway" scheduled for October 9, 10 and 11.

Marci Broyhill, storyteller, entertainer and Prairie Poet of Dakota City, presented several of her poems including one entitled "The White Horse Troupe." Her sister, Teresa Kay Orr from Omaha, entertained the crowd with her guitar and sang several songs she had composed. If you weren't there, you missed an afternoon filled with great entertainment. ■



Marci Broyhill, Kyle Rosfeld, and Teri Orr entertained at the Outlaw Trail Meeting. Governor Pete Ricketts declared April 19-26 "Cowboy Poetry Week."

BECOMING A NAPER LOCAL (SORT OF)

By Denny Jorgensen

My first trip to Naper was about 20 years ago. I was living in Omaha, where I served on the Omaha Public Power District Board of Directors. An interstate nuclear waste dump had been proposed for Boyd County, and OPPD's support was deemed crucial. I wanted to see for myself what exactly was going on, so I scheduled a visit to the proposed site. While I had supported the dump early on, my concerns had grown, and by the time of my visit I was opposed to its construction. I became one of only two "no dump" votes on the board.

News of a board member's upcoming visit spread around the county, which resulted in my being invited to meet with residents for "a little talk." Those with whom I met were not hesitant about giving me their opinions! As I left the meeting, I remember being thankful I wasn't for the dump. I barely got out of that meeting alive, even though I opposed construction of the dump.

Before leaving town, I had coffee with Reo and Marguerite Ludemann, Margaret Ludemann's parents, and her sister, Ann Anderson. I had met Margaret through mutual friends about a year earlier in Chicago where she lived. She asked if I would have time to say hi to her family, and I was happy that there would be at least a few people who were unlikely to



Denny Jorgensen and his wife, Margaret Ludemann, bought the old drugstore on Main Street and renovated the Dalldorf home to the north.

shoot OPPD board members! We had a very nice conversation. Little did I know that Reo and Marguerite would one day be my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and Ann would become my sister-in-law. Yes, indeed, Margaret and I married a few years later. Our son, whom we named Reo in honor of her dad, was born in 2000.

So it came to be that I would visit Naper several times a year, and I enjoyed getting to know the town and especially the people. Everyone was friendly to me, though I was aware of my not-from-here status. After all, I was born in Omaha, at the time lived in Boston where we had moved, and drove a car with North Carolina license plates. How weird is

that! But my status changed one day while having coffee at the cafe. Someone asked about my parents, and I told them that my dad was from Witten and my mom was born and raised in Wagner. Hallelujah! I wasn't quite the alien from Mars that many people had thought I was.

There was still the problem of being a city guy. I've always lived in cities (Omaha, Chicago, Boston, Indianapolis, Washington, D.C.), so I knew nothing about small town and rural life. I don't hunt or fish, and I didn't know a combine from a light post. But Naperites excused my stupidity, and over time I felt like I had been accepted. Margaret and I bought

the old drugstore and adjacent houses, and we rehabbed the Dalldorf home to the north. We even tracked down pieces of "the wall" and, knowing its important part of local history, we rebuilt it. I think I got some points for that, too.

Margaret, Reo and I now live in Chicago, but we love coming "home" to Naper. We love our little house, morning coffee with friends at the cafe, and hamburgers at the VFW on Saturday nights. While I'm not technically a local, I kind of feel like one. I've had the good fortune to travel to 49 states and 38 foreign countries, but I've never been to a better place with nicer people. Long live Naper. ■

CHRIS COLOMBE

(Information from "The Fabled French-Indian Chris Colombe" by Ted Colombe in *True West*, November–December, 1968, (sent to us by Orland Cline) and *The Saga of Ponca Land* by Adeline Gnirk)

Chris Colombe, reportedly the grandson of Sacajawea (Lewis and Clark's interpreter), was born about five miles east of what is now Chadron, NE.

His connection to Naper occurred because he attended a dance on the George Pete homestead southwest of Herrick on a Saturday night in 1894. Cowboys from different parts of the Rosebud attended the party where the Drapeau boys from the Whetstone Creek area were playing for the dance. Colombe had brought his friends, George Pete's friends were in attendance, and the Drapeau boys had a large following. The men paid no attention when asked to "check their guns" and consumed plenty of alcohol. Emma Schunk came to the dance with the

Drapeaus. When Chris Colombe crossed the floor to ask her for a dance, he was hit by a river boy and the fight was on. The bloodiest fight in the history of the Rosebud followed. In the words of Ted Colombe, Chris Colombe's son, "It was too close for gun play but knives were thicker than relatives at a rich man's funeral."

A cowboy rode into Naper to summon Dr. Charles Zimmerman to attend to the victims. When he arrived at the ranch, he immediately did everything possible to patch up the cowboys. Folks who attended the dance/fight referred to Pete's Ranch as a bloody camp, and if questioned, said "I was outside and didn't see what happened."

Chris Colombe married Emma Shrunck, became one of the richest and most influential men in the Rosebud country, influenced the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad to build tracks across his land, and sold the town site for the town of Colome. ■

NEWS & NONSENSE

In the interest of personal growth and self-awareness, the Naper Paper staff occasionally shares noteworthy medical discoveries, developments in technology and other here-tofore unknown facts.

For instance, texting seems to have taken the place of face-to-face contact and real live conversations, so we share with you a senior texting code:

ATD: At the doctors

BFF: Best friend fell

BTW: Bring the wheelchair

BYOT: Bring your own teeth

GGPBL: Gotta go; pacemaker battery low

GHA: Got heartburn again

IMHO: Is my hearing aid on?

LMDO: Laughing my dentures out

OMMR: On my massage recliner

OMSG: Oh my! Sorry, gas

ROFLACGU: Rolling on floor laughing and can't get up

SAG: Still above ground

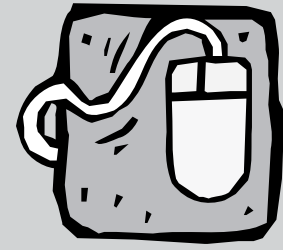
TTYL: Talk to you louder

WDYS: What did you say?

On a more serious note, a few items from one of the early papers published in Naper, the *Naper News*:

1901: The editor is requested to announce that a supposedly exemplary citizen of Naper was seen swiping kindling and testing the lock on the coal box at the school house. If the offense is repeated, disagreeable disclosures will be made.

1901: Forty voters in this precinct stayed at home and didn't vote. They ought to be ashamed of themselves. It's a safe bet that the people who stayed at home and didn't vote will do the most kicking about the results.



E-MAIL CONTACT:

If you need to contact
Naper Historical Society,
you can e-mail
papabear@threeriver.net.

Check out the website
napernebraska.org
and see what we've got!

1901: Jake Rinehart is going to quit farming and go to doctoring. He has one patient now—a cow belong to Mr. Higbie.

1901: We are informed that the report that Geo. Duvall was married which was published in this paper last week, is untrue. We beg and pardon and extend sympathy in the same breath.

No date: Dan Zeitner was triumphantly elected road overseer and announces he shall make it his chief duty to see that Doc Crosby and a lot of other lazy fellows work their poll tax next year.

You will observe, kind reader, that when the editor from any cause becomes much too excited to gather news, he is quite capable of filling these columns with just "wind."

1903: Julius Schultz met with a very painful accident last Sunday morning. While driving through the gate at home, his team became frightened and jerked the front wheels from under the buggy, thereby throwing Mr. Schultz to the ground, injuring his shoulder to such an extent that he has been unable to use his right arm. ■



Letters — We love to receive them!

Send your cards and letters to:

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

Enclosed find a donation to help with expenses, etc.

I so enjoy the *Naper Paper* and look forward to receiving it! Even though we left Naper in 1966, I still call it home. I usually get up there every Memorial Day weekend to decorate graves and see any friends and acquaintances I know at the Café.

Enclosed find my new address. I'm still in Norfolk.

Sending best wishes to all.

Vicki Carstens Wittgow

Hello, Naper

Just a note to let you know we received your ray of spring sunshine. Hope all went well in Naper the past year.

Thought you might get a kick out of a story I read in the December, 1968, *True West* magazine. I'm sure a lot of the people, places and things will be remembered by some and scoffed at by others. Anyway it makes for interesting reading.

Orland and Carolyn Cline

(Ed Note: Thanks for the article which is on display at the museum. You'll find parts of it on page 4.)

So appreciate and enjoy the Naper news—what a neat community. Keep up the good work.

Bob and Brenda Prill

Here's a donation to help with postage or whatever you need towards keeping the *Naper Paper* afloat. Love the advice from Mother Goose (page 7, volume 13).

Loved the Joyce Blakkolb story "Growing Up in Naper." So many memories and great stories gathered for the *Naper Paper*. The Circuit Rider always an enjoyable read too.

Joan Bunch Grimm

Wanted to send this check before the holidays but just too many things to remember at that time. Anyway, I guess it will help at any time. Look forward to getting the papers. It's always so interesting with news of my old home town.

All is good here [Miles City, MT]. Had a pretty mild winter so far with a few days of below temps. Snow hasn't been bad either, but then winter isn't over either.

We lost another aunt on the Kortmeyer side. Her parents were Louis and Anna Kortmeyer; her name was Margaret Kortmeyer Handley. Time goes by and life goes on.

Esther Nelson

Great job with the *Naper Paper*, as always! Thanks.

Camille Bunch

Have been meaning to do this for a long time. It seems we always get busy with projects and time goes by.

As I have been gone from the Naper area for a long time, I have lost track of everyone and their families. Thanks for bringing me up to speed on who belongs to whom.

Thanks again for the paper. I admire the work you do.

Myrna Alexander Schrader

Just want to thank Nathalie Sattler Taranto for recommending the book *Nebraska* by Joel Sartore. I ordered it online and really am enjoying it. Our grandkids and son-in-law do also! My husband even enjoys it as there isn't much to read, just very interesting pictures. I very highly recommend the book.

In your article about teachers and their salaries during the '30s, I was pleasantly surprised to see that one of the teacher's contracts was signed by my grandfather, Chris Kulm. He was the father of my mother, Christina Windmeyer Parks. I only wish that I could have remembered him.

I have a suggestion for an article—maybe you could do something on the Twin Buttes. I've heard Native Americans used to frequent them. Is that true?

Keep up the good work! It is so exciting to receive the *Naper Paper* and see what articles are in it. It was interesting to read what all the *Naper Paper* goes through from the time the articles are composed until it comes into the readers' hands.

Donna Windmeyer Luehmann

WE COULD ALL USE SOME ...

Hugging is healthy. It aids the body's immune system, keeps you healthier, reduces stress, induces sleep, lessens depression, has no unpleasant side effects, and invigorates and rejuvenates us.

Hugging is all natural. It is wholesome, organic, naturally sweet, gluten-free and non-fattening, and contains no pesticides, preservatives or artificial ingredients.

Hugging is almost perfect. There are no moveable parts to wear out, no batteries to replace, no periodic checkups, no monthly payments, no insurance requirements, and there are no taxes to pay. It has low energy expenditure for high energy yield.

Best of all, hugging is fully returnable. ■





The Ol' Homesteader

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

Congratulations are in order for lots of folks around here...

Kaitlyn Higgins (daughter of Joe and Mary Higgins, granddaughter of Helen Schmitz Higgins) graduated from Chadron State College December 13. She plans to keep on goin' to school and gettin' another degree!

Jamie Mashino (daughter of Dustin and Tammy Mitchell Mashino), a student at UNL, received a Leone Spencer Harlan Freshman Agribusiness Scholarship, which is awarded to outstanding first-year students who plan to pursue a career in agribusiness.

Leonard and Thelma Higgins Schmitz celebrated 60 years together February 22. Best wishes for another 60!

Bill and Karen Peppel are grandparents of baby Lilliana Olivia Vallow, born April 15 to Brett and Kara Vallow. Bill and Karen were in Illinois with the new family for several days.

There's a new neighbor north of town! Tristan Wyatt was born January 7 to Brandon and Kindall Zeisler.

Crystal and Kyle Kruse of Hartford, SD, welcomed daughter Haley Madison December 10. Randy and Carol Keller are grandparents, Gaynell Keller is great-grandma (see photo below).

AND THOSE SCHOOL KIDS... ALWAYS DOIN' SOMETHIN'

Austin Koenig (son of Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig, grandson of Jeff and Rindy Zink), Evan Reiman (son of Casey and Lisa Ahlers Reiman, grandson of Jack and Jean Reiman and Wayne and Virginia Schonebaum Ahlers), Kelli Mashino (daughter of Dustin and Tamera Mitchell Mashino), Ridge Higgins (son of LaVern and Brenda Klien Higgins, grandson of Lelia Boucher Higgins and Margaret Vogt Schmitz), Amber Bendig (daughter of Kelly and Monica Bendig, granddaughter of Grace Faatz Bendig), Jesse Cline (son of Hoyt and Julie Cline, grandson of Marvin and Judy Hoyt Cline) and Kelly McCarthy (daughter of Kevin and Angie McCarthy, granddaughter of LeRoy and Maxine Windmeyer McCarthy) were on the first semester honor roll at West Boyd.

Zander Kluckman (son of Jim and Blair Vogt Kluckman, grandson of Kelly and Lois Nicolaus Vogt, great-grandson of Don and Gloria Beem Vogt and Charlotte Karnes Nicolaus) won the 9-year-old boys' division in the Knights of Columbus free-throw competition. Tasha Zeisler (daughter of Jesse and Kimberly, granddaughter of Richard and Sheryl) won the 9-year-old-girls' division in Spencer in January, won districts in Stuart in February, won regionals

in West Point in March and participated in the state free-throw competition in Hastings in April. Looks as if we have some serious basketball talent coming up!

Kelli Mashino, Janet Ahlers (daughter of Dean and Roxie Ahlers) and Adrianne Bengtson (daughter of Matt and Ellen Bengtson, granddaughter of Janet Cline Eggert) won in various events in the FCCLA STAR competition at West Boyd. Kelli went on to earn State Champion trophy in Junior Public Speaking. Janet Ahlers received third place in Healthcare Administration at the FBLA conference in Omaha.

Blake Ahlers (son of Dan and Tara, grandson of Wayne and Virginia Schonebaum Ahlers), Kelli McCarthy, Amber Bendig and Jesse Cline are workin' hard on the Boyd County track team. In fact, Blake and Amber worked so hard they went to the State Track Meet in Omaha May 22 and 23. Congratulations!"

The Junior High track team includes Gina McCarthy (daughter of Darrin and Connie, granddaughter of LeRoy and Maxine), Hanna Drueke (daughter of Tony and Beth Goodman Drueke, granddaughter of Vern and Linda Goodman), Austin Koenig, Evan Reiman and Jory Zeisler (son of Mark and Tiffany, grandson of Richard and Sheryl).

Highway 12 was resurfaced from Butte to the Keya Paha County line and we are all enjoyin' that! What an improvement! And speakin' of improvements, a lot of trees growin' where they weren't supposed to were cut and a new barbed wire fence was put along the north side of the Knoll Crest Cemetery, thanks to a generous donor.

AND WE SAY GOODBYE TO...

Ray Schmitz died March 29. He and Irma lived west of Naper for many years and all four of their children graduated from Naper High School.

Elva Gosch Nicolaus died February 6. She was born in 1923 and grew up west of Naper.

Orlon "Ort" Higgins died April 5. His barbering career covered more than 50 years and countless heads of hair.

Ruth Kibby Horn, who graduated from Naper High School in 1939, died April 13 in Oregon.

Linda Sieh passed away May 20. She and her husband, Loren, operated Super Service for 35 years. She was a tireless worker for the Naper community. ■



Four-generation photo: Crystal Kruse holds daughter Haley Madison, born December 10. Pictured with Crystal and Haley are Haley's grandfather, Randy Keller, and great-grandma Gaynell Keller.



Naper Paper

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... AND MUCH MORE!



Naper High School Football Players – 1968
Pictured left to right: Jim Schmitz, Wesley Fuhrer, Joe Higgins and Bob Traphaghen.



Naper High School Football Players
These boys graduated in 1971, year unknown when picture was taken. Left to right: Joel Sieh, Dennis Katzer, Garlyn Sieh, Bob Allpress and Keith Fuhrer.