

A PUBLICATION  
FOR AND ABOUT  
THE TOWN OF  
NAPER,  
NEBRASKA,  
PUBLISHED BY  
THE NAPER  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY.

The mission of the Naper Historical Society is to preserve, interpret, display, communicate, promote and honor the 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.

HERITAGE HALL SIDING

WEBSITE UPDATE

CHURCH HISTORY

JOHN LUDEMANN

TWIN BUTTES

NAPER SCHOOL

OL' HOMESTEADER

LETTERS



# Naper Paper

Volume 15, Issue 4

[www.napernebraska.org](http://www.napernebraska.org)

Winter 2017



## IT'S DONE!

Yes, your donations have been put to work on the siding project. It looks amazing!

In what seemed like record time, Glenn and Bev Zink and Dave and Carmen Schmitz removed the old siding and replaced it with the new. Mabel and Jim Sattler helped with the clean-up and delivered meals.

We can't say "Thank You!" enough to the workers who donated their time and to those of you who donated funds for the project.



Glenn and Bev Zink, Carmen and Dave Schmitz

## AND IT'S ALSO DONE!

We've been promising a new and improved website for some time now and yes, it's done!

You access it as you did before and if your browser seems confused (as ours did), have patience. It soon will find the new website which contains all of the information on the original plus more pictures, all of it done in an easily accessed format. Photos of all classes that have graduated from Naper High School (1910-1988) are now included. If one of the years doesn't show up, it is because there is no photo of that year in the museum.

## A BIT OF CHURCH HISTORY

In 1907, pledges and donations by Catholics and others in the community made it possible to build the Catholic Church. A hand-written list of donors has been kept, with donations ranging from \$2 to \$150.

A woman who was a member of a protestant church in Naper was instrumental in soliciting the money. It's reported she said the protestants already had a church and the Catholics should have one also.

The lumber for the building was purchased from Krotters and cost \$550; hardware, building paper and steel an additional \$309. Labor for building the church was \$400 plus \$75.70 to construct the altar and coal house. Insurance for five years was \$52.50. Pews for the new church cost \$219.

The first baby baptized in the newly completed church was Leo Blum in 1908. Peter Kramer and Mabel Cunningham were the first couple married the new church in 1916. The first priest was Father Strutman.

Below: Interior of Sacred Heart Church in 1907



In 1909, Anton Kandyba donated the bell which was inscribed:

H Y STUCKSTEDE B F CO  
ST LOUIS MO

1908  
PRESENTED TO THE  
CONGR OF THE CATH  
CHURCH OF NAPER NEBR  
BY ANTON S KANDYBA

(The bell was photographed in 2014 while the church was being resided but it is now in hiding. You can see pictures of it in Naper Paper, Volume 12, Issue 1, Spring, 2014.)

Anton Kandyba lived east of Naper. Joe and Bertha Schmitz purchased his property and later deeded a portion of that land to Sacred Heart Cemetery.

In 1953, a new furnace and a new altar were installed. In 1974, the interior was completely remodeled and redecorated and the south wing was added to serve as a parish hall and a kitchen. New flooring, light fixtures, kneeling pads and an electric organ were installed. In the mid 1980s, the ceiling was lowered, the interior refinished and windows were replaced.

The church was closed in 2004 and subsequently sold to Naper Historical Society for \$1,000. In the years the historical society has been responsible for the church, the roof has been shingled, some doors and windows removed or replaced, and new siding was put on the church and the parish hall.

This restoration to the church has cost about \$38,500.00 plus hundreds of hours of unpaid volunteer labor. Thank you to everyone who has donated time, money, labor, food for fundraisers, moral support. We are grateful for all of it!

Incidentally, restorative work on the White Horse Ranch Museum cost over \$18,000 plus all the unpaid labor. Again, many thanks!

## ANOTHER CROW STORY

(After Dolores Benson read our pet crow story in the spring issue, she shared a story about their pet.)

We were raised in northeastern South Dakota, the Big Coulee, Buffalo Ridge area. Our dad passed away, leaving my mom with four girls and a boy (ages three months to eight years) and we grew up herding sheep and breaking horses.

We moved to Oklahoma when high school age for education reasons.

Brother Byron found a baby crow that had fallen out of his nest. The crow was named "Jack". He became a real pet and went with Byron wherever he went. Byron's palomino quarter horse got used to him and they were a threesome. Jack was part of our lives for three or four years. He got to be a problem when he would steal things—eye glasses, car keys—most things were never found. We decided he should go back to nature.

It's fun going back to those years when Jack would ride along with us.

Below: Jack with Byron on his horse



## TIDBITS FROM EARLY

### NAPER NEWS

#### GOLDEN WEDDING AT NAPER

On Wednesday, the 22nd, children and grandchildren to the number of twenty-five gathered at the pleasant country home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Gardner, two miles north of town to celebrate the anniversary of the fiftieth wedding day of Mr. and Mrs. Gardner.

Aside from bringing up a large family of children, they have acquired sufficient of this world's goods to assure them a competency during life. They can look ahead and contemplate the future with pleasure and satisfaction in the knowledge of life well spent.

Mr. and Mrs. Gardner are held in high esteem by their hosts of friends, who all wish them yet many years of happiness and contentment.

(Norfolk Weekly News-Journal, December 31, 1909)

#### BACHELOR RANCHMAN TAKES UP CRUSADE TO STOP TOBACCO HABIT

Neal Bartelsen, formerly rancher at Naper, Neb., has forsaken his ranch to go forth and battle with the anti-tobacco forces of the country. He is in Omaha speaking to Sunday schools and preparing a lecture, which, he says, he intends to deliver at chautauquas this

season.

The ranch on which Bartelsen lived, doing his own cooking and housekeeping for ten years, has been turned over to neighbors, his horses and fine collie dogs farmed out pending the success of his anti-tobacco campaign.

(Omaha Daily Bee, Feb 21, 1914)

#### JAILBIRDS ARE CAUGHT

Naper, Nebr., April 30—The two escaped burglars who sawed their way out of the jail at Tyndall, S.D., and made their getaway by rowing across the Missouri river in a skiff were captured near here late Saturday afternoon, their capture being directly due to the Norfolk Daily News.

The News came into town Saturday morning at 10 o'clock, containing a description of the two escaped jailbirds. People here remembered then of having seen two men of that description pass through town early in the morning. The fugitives were located at 11 o'clock and were captured at 2 by a crowd of men who rode out a few miles from town. They made no fight.

The prisoners were taken to Butte for safe keeping and the sheriff of Bon Homme county, S.D., was wired.

(Norfolk Weekly News-Journal, May 4, 1906)

#### OVER NORTHWEST PRAIRIES

Old "Sport", Louis Jensen's faithful companion and watchdog, has at last passed away, being assisted into dog heaven by the merciful hand of Henry Tienken last Sunday forenoon. Sport was the constant companion of the Jensen family for many years, and in sunshine and sorrow was always at least the one friend who could be depended upon. When Mr. Jensen moved to town, Sport became one of the best known characters on the street, always minding his own business, and keeping careful track of his master. But with increasing age he acquired rheumatism and a failing memory and it was known for a long time that death would be a merciful relief. Mr. Jensen could not mourn for any friend more sincerely than he does Sport.

(Norfolk Weekly News-Journal, Dec. 13, 1907)

#### FIND A THOUSAND DOLLARS HIDDEN IN HOLLOW TREE

One thousand dollars in bills was found in a hollow tree cache near here yesterday by Clarence Kern, Naper school boy, and several companions, who chased a pet rabbit into the tree. The money was in a tin box. The boys took their find to their teacher at a school picnic.

One claimant has already appeared for the money. Mrs. Joseph Naper, who lives between Naper and Butte, declared it probably belonged to her brother, Mose Yocum, who years ago had hidden considerable money in various places. Some of this, she said, the family had never found.

(May 28, no year, no newspaper)

#### BEAUTY HINTS

One very effective cure for scrawny arms is two hours' use each day of the carpet sweeper. After this has been done every day for a month, the wrists and elbows will fill out and look nice and plump. Then some cream, made from oats, can be systematically applied and the brown skin will become white.

Then the other extreme, a fat arm. That is just as easy to make shapely as the thin one. It must be well rubbed every day with a

reduction pomade and given an iced sponging until it begins to look more shapely and better suited to the new [angel] sleeve and for the public gaze.

(Omaha Daily News, February 3, 1901)

A cut lemon should have a conspicuous place on the toilet table. Every night the lady should stick her fingers into the pulp of the lemon and rub them around and around. This will help remove stains, stop the growth of the cuticle, and make knuckles look white and soft. (Lyons Mirror, 1910)

## TWIN BUTTES STORIES

The Twin Buttes are located halfway between Naper and Butte on the south side of Highway 12. There have been many stories about the easternmost butte which is the tallest.

There was a large overhang on the east side of the round butte, creating a cave deep enough for robbers and horse thieves to hide their horses. When pursued by a posse, they'd ride to the top of the butte and see how far away the sheriff and his men were by looking for their dust cloud. Another story is about a girl in love with a young man whom she wanted to marry. Her mother, who was on her deathbed, didn't like the young man and made her daughter promise she wouldn't marry him on the face of the earth. After the mother died, the young couple still wanted to marry so because of the promise the girl had made to her mother, the couple got married inside the cave of the round butte.

In the 1950's, a group of Native Americans were seen ascending the butte carrying an elderly lady on a stretcher. Another time someone found a small pile of stacked rocks with a nickel laid on top. This was done on all four sides of the top of the round butte in the 1960's. Some think the Native Americans used the round butte as a ceremonial ground for worship.

Verlyn Peterson knew of a fossilized turtle shell on the tall butte. Ann Anderson, teacher at the Naper Attendance Center, wanted to take her students to see the 12 million year old fossil so she called Verlyn for information. He told her it was "thirty-five feet southeast of the cross." The teacher, the students, the parents who were on the trip—everyone searched thirty-five feet from the cross. They discussed exactly which direction was southeast; they measured thirty five feet, all to no avail. There was nothing even remotely resembling a fossil. Some time later, another trip with students was arranged and this time the fossil was found!! It was three to five feet southeast of the cross. Say those words quickly—you'll understand the confusion.

On another excursion up the butte, Ann and her husband Larry and several of their grandchildren were going to enjoy a late afternoon picnic and watch the nighthawks swoop and dive. They discovered a small pile of money held down by a flat rock with flowers laid on top. No idea whose "offering" it was but it had disappeared by the time they took another trip to the top some time later.

One more school story—Ann and several other adults took a large group of students on a field trip that included the east butte. This was "back in the day" of disposable 35 mm cameras. One student got to the end of the film, tore the paper off the camera and heaved (continued on page 3)



## A PIONEER FAMILY

On December 16, 1866, Johann Ludemann was born in Kellinghusen, Germany, to Johann and Kathryn Runge Ludemann. In the ensuing years, Carl, Wilhelm, Heinrich, Anna and Fred joined the family. When Johann (John) was 20 years old, he came to the United States by himself. He worked on farms in Iowa until 1894 when he homesteaded east of Naper. He built a sod house and planted a row of cottonwoods. One of those trees is still standing although it shows its age.



John could see for miles in several directions and he called his view the "magnificent distancy," which sounds a little like "manifest destiny," a popular theory at the time homesteaders were heading west. It is a beautiful view, especially to the north and the east toward the Ponca.  
(Photo below is looking east from the location of the sod house.)



Bertha Ritterbusch was born in Seward County on June 6, 1882, to Friedrich and Dorothea Wolfe Ritterbusch. She was confirmed in the German Lutheran Church while it was west of Naper (location of the Lutheran Cemetery). She was the youngest in the family with several brothers-Wilhelm, Fred, Henry, Ferdinand and Theodore. The story goes that when John asked for her hand in marriage, her father told him, "Yes, but you take us too," so after John and Bertha were married November 24, 1899, Fred and Dorothy were always part of the household.

In time, a small house and outbuildings were built south of the location of the sod house and later a two story "prairie four-square" was built in the same farmyard. During their marriage, John and Bertha endured many crises including the blizzard of '88, drought during the 30's, killing hogs because they couldn't be sold, selling cattle for little or nothing, bank failures in Bonesteel and Naper. Their daughter Pearl died of diphtheria when she was three years old and is buried in Knoll Crest Cemetery.

(In the photo below, John and four of their children are standing between the house in the center of the picture and the granary to the right of it.)



John and Bertha had ten children, nine of whom lived to adulthood: John Jr., Minnie (Bouslaugh), Anna (Stoltenberg), William, Clarence, George, Hilda (Heermann), Helen (Raymer) and Florence (Zeisler).

When times were good, John expanded the farm which allowed his brothers Henry and Fred to live nearby after they immigrated in 1911. When Henry and Fred moved to their own farm, Minnie and her husband Ted Bouslaugh moved onto the east farm. That farm was in a deep valley with a creek running just east of the buildings. After Minnie and Ted moved away, the house was moved with a team of 18 horses to its present location west of the former grocery store in Naper. Imagine the time and effort involved in pulling something of that size up those hills!

John and Bertha bought more land which allowed several of their children to get started in farming. During the 30s those farms were lost to the lenders and only the original homestead remained. Bertha died in 1943 and John died in 1946.

Before John's death, their daughter Hilda and husband Alnard Heermann had bought the farm and were able to buy back some of the land lost in the 30s. The farmstead was destroyed in the tornado in June, 1962. Soon a new house and outbuildings were constructed.

In 1968, Alnard and Hilda's son Jerry and his wife Dorothy moved to the farm and took over the dairy and farming operation. Jerry and Dorothy's daughter Rachel, her husband Kip Brewer and their three sons live in the same farmyard, making five generations living and working on that acreage.

NEUMILLER REUNION, AUGUST 19, 2017  
Seated on chairs (L-R): Red Fuhrer, Lester Neumiller, Louise Zink, Paul Neumiller, Betty Neumiller, Shirley Neumiller



## A REAL GIRLS' TRIP!

L-R: Patty, Paula, Janet, Lorna, JoAnn, Brenda, LeAnn, Lisa, Barb and Julie

During the summer of 2016, JoAnn (Cerny) Jons found herself unable to walk due to severe leg pain. She underwent surgery and did lots of physical therapy.

She had always wanted to see Niagara Falls and mentioned that to several of her daughters. Voila! A plan was set in motion for a special 2017 birthday surprise!

There were several obstacles to overcome, not the least of which was coordinating the schedules of ten busy women! Another major hurdle was getting a passport for JoAnn. Her birth notification had no seal although she was born in a hospital in Spencer, Nebraska, in 1930, so the application was rejected. She applied to the office in Lincoln for an authentic birth certificate. That document was also rejected by the passport office because her first name was spelled differently on the birth certificate than the way she had spelled it forever. She then had to apply for an amendment to the birth certificate.

She submitted the paperwork again and it was accepted. Hallelujah! The passport arrived just in time for JoAnn and her nine daughters to fly to Buffalo, New York, where they gathered together, rented vehicles and traveled to Canada. They enjoyed five special days together.

"I never imagined the Falls could be that spectacular to see close up. Everything just worked out wonderfully, including several surprises throughout the week."

"Sorry to leave my five sons behind, but as one of the girls put it, 'this was just a girls' trip!'" said JoAnn.

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(continuation of Twin Buttes Story)  
it over the side of the butte. When asked why in the world he threw his camera away, he explained, "Well, it's a disposable camera, isn't it?" There's such a thing as being too literal.

The Lions Club erected a cross on the east butte more than 40 years ago which Dave and Carmen Schmitz keep lighted during the Advent season, the Lenten season, and other holidays.

The flat butte is a mystery. However, on holidays you'll see the United States flag flying proudly, thanks to Richard and Sheryl Zeisler.

Are there other stories to be shared about the buttes?

(Thanks to Joan Zeisler and Marilyn Sieh for information for this story.)

## A HISTORY LESSON ON ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

In the line at a store, the cashier told an older woman that she should bring her own grocery bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment. The woman apologized to the clerk and said, "We didn't have the green thing back in my day."

The clerk responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation didn't care enough to save the environment."

Well, it may be true our generation didn't have the "green thing" but we had some other things that worked to the same end.

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles. The retailer sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled so they could use the same bottles over and over. They were REALLY recycled. We walked up the stairs because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300 horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks.

We washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the disposable kind. We dried clothes on the line, not in a machine burning up 220 volts. Wind and solar power dried the clothes. Kids wore hand-me-down clothes from brothers or sisters or cousins or neighbors. We had one TV or radio in the house, not one in every room. And the screen was the size of a handkerchief, not a screen the size of Boyd County. And do you remember— we used handkerchiefs, not disposable tissues for every teardrop or nose wipe.

We blended and stirred our food by hand in the kitchen because we didn't have an electric appliance for every chore.

We packaged a fragile item to be mailed (yes, at the post office) with wadded-up newspapers, not bubble wrap or Styrofoam wiggles.

We didn't use a gasoline-powered engine to mow the lawn— or heaven forbid, cut a 60" swath with a zero-turn mower. We pushed a reel mower that ran on human power and because of that, we didn't need to go to the health club to exercise on machines that operate on electricity. Yeah, darn—didn't have the green thing back then.

We drank from a fountain instead of using a disposable cup or buying a plastic bottle filled with water. If we were working in the farmyard, we probably drank from a tin can or cup than was hanging by a wire on a post by the pump. If we were in the field, we probably drank from a glass jug wrapped in a burlap bag secured with baling wire. And yes, we all drank from the same jug.

We refilled our writing pens with ink instead of buying a new one and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing the whole thing away just because the blade was dull.

Kids walked or rode their bikes to school instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service. We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire wall of sockets to power every appliance known to mankind.

We didn't need a computerized gadget receiving a signal beamed from satellites 2,000 miles out in space to find the nearest pizza joint. People could read maps and find their way from town to town.

But darn—we didn't have the green thing back then. Ain't it a shame?

## BACK TO THE 50'S FOOD

Pasta hadn't been invented—you either ate macaroni or spaghetti.

Curry was a surname.

Taco? Never saw one until the 70's.

Pizza? A leaning tower somewhere?

Bananas and oranges appeared only at Christmas time.

All chips were plain. Never heard of dips.

Oil was for lubricating—lard was for cooking.

Tea was made in a teapot with loose tea leaves and they were never green.

Most meals were meat and potatoes.

Cubed sugar was too too fancy for us.

Chickens didn't have fingers back then.

And I don't think Buffalo had wings.

None of us had heard of yogurt.

Healthy food was anything edible.

If you cooked outside, you were camping.

Seaweed was not an edible food for humans.

Prunes were medicinal and stewed.

Sugar enjoyed good press back in those days as did white flour.

"Kebob" wasn't even a word, never mind a food.

Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than gasoline for it, they would have become a laughing stock.

Believe it or not, Muesli was readily available. It was called cattle feed.

Pineapples came in a tin can in chunks or were round with a hole in the middle. We had seen only a picture of a real one.

There were three things we never ever had on at our table in the 50's—elbows, caps and cell phones!

There were always two choices for each meal: "Take it" or "Leave it."

# SUPPORT OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

### A&M ENTERPRISES

Trenching, pump installations,  
backhoe work, plumbing  
832-5388

### M&L LAWN SERVICE

Mowing, trimming, fertilizing,  
tilling, seeding, spraying  
832-5422

### CURL UP & DYE BEAUTY SHOP

Haircuts, styling, coloring  
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### GRAMMY AND POP'S

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Something for everybody  
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### NAPER TRANSPORT

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### NAPER CAFÉ AND LOUNGE

Breakfast, dinner, supper, bar  
832-5272

### US POSTAL SERVICE

832-5977

### NICK'S AUTO SERVICE

Oil changes, new tires, tire  
repairs, parts  
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### K&S MOBILE

Welding and equipment repair,  
on-site service  
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### DRUEKE TRUCKING

Local and long-distance  
grain hauling  
832-5610

**KEEP NAPER STRONG  
BUY LOCAL WHEN YOU CAN**

## SOME NAPER SCHOOL MEMORIES

District 21 was organized in 1892 before Naper had a post office. The address then was Grand Rapids, which was located south of Naper eight miles on the Niobrara River. Mrs. M. Dudley, the first teacher, who was paid \$25 a month for a five-month term, had four boys and three girls as students. The first building, later used as a blacksmith shop, was built of logs. The district spent \$48 for books and equipment that year, but ended the year owing \$50.30.

In 1903, a two-story four-room structure was built with a value of \$3,900. The ninth grade was added in 1908, the tenth and eleventh grades added as there were students available, and in 1928, the first four-year high school class graduated. In 1929, the two-story addition was built on the south side of the school house.

Alma and Glenn Brown were custodians from 1932 until the 60's. The countless trips they made carrying coal up the stairs and ashes down, the buckets of water to fill the crockery water dispensers, the individual glasses Alma decorated with nail polish, the costumes she designed and made. oh, my, what memories. Other janitors over the years were Richard and Marie Stanek, Herman and Grace Bendig, Deb Vogt—and surely we forgot some.

In 1955, districts 2, 4, 18, 22, 44, 53, 60, 70 and 71 combined with the Naper school to form a consolidated District 21. In November of that year, the district voted to issue bonds for \$115,000 to finance a new school building, 115 x 132 feet. The actual cost of the building and the "extras" was \$100,521. Cost per square foot was calculated at \$6.94.

There were five classrooms on the west side of the building for the high school students with a large assembly in the center. The superintendent's office and bathrooms were just south of the assembly. A large room for kindergarten was located between the two entrances and faced south. On the east side of the building, there were four classrooms for the grade school—grades 1 and 2, grades 3 and 4, grades 5 and 6, grades 7 and 8. The northeast room was the kitchen and the cooks were soon at work feeding the students and staff who moved into the new building in January, 1957.

Since the district now extended to the Keya Paha County line, buses were purchased to transport students. However, the pep club had previously contributed to the purchase of a second-hand bus in 1955. Mr. Frederick drove the gas-guzzling oil-burning beast that took basketball boys and pep club girls (yes, children, those were the only activities available to NHS students at that time) to games. Sometimes it was questionable as to whether or not the bus and its riders would make it home. Of even greater concern was the fact the bus had a heater that produced a lot of noise but no heat and vacuum powered windshield wipers which meant that when you really needed the windshield cleaned of rain or snow, they wouldn't work.

Some of the bus drivers over the years (in no particular order) were Albert Dalldorf (who ma-

neuvered the bus over the nearly non-existent road to the Muller farm); Ben Fuhrer (whose bus couldn't make it up the gumbo hill northeast of Naper); Art Martin; Vernon Goodman; Grace Bendig; Ted Wentz (who was behind the wheel during the raging blizzard when he and all of his riders decided they needed shelter and stayed overnight with Don and Gloria Vogt); Bob Wentz (whose bus slid into a ditch and almost decided to lie down and rest on its side, thanks to students who knew a little about balance, physics, and being ornery); Darrell Audiss; Merle Nicolaus; Jim Alford; Don Schmitz; Greg Honke; Jerry Schmitz; Brad Ludemann; Linda Goodman; and probably many more whose names are lost to us.

Several cooks and their helpers fed the dozens of hungry children and staff members. Among others, Marie Schock, Vivian Alexander, Annie Ulrich, Bertha Fuhrer, Judy Cline, Leola Riesselman, Sylvia Gentele and Velva June Blum all took their turn in the kitchen.

There was a request not long ago for Velva June's bun recipe. She stirred up a batch of bread every morning and had buns ready for hungry folks at noon. One of the most popular meals was spaghetti with warm garlic buns! She didn't have a recipe for the buns but says she used water with a little sugar in it to dissolve the yeast and used lard for the shortening. Then she stirred in the flour and kneaded it. After it raised, she punched it down again. After the second rising, she made buns. That isn't the way you usually see a recipe, is it? It was probably her love and concern that made them taste so good. The last couple of years when students attended the Naper Attendance Center, the children and staff would walk to the Naper Café where a special menu was prepared for them which they ate in the Lounge area.

Due to decreasing enrollment, the Naper District combined with the Spencer district in 1987. Beginning August, 1988, students in grades 7-12 were bussed to Spencer and grades K-6 remained in Naper. In April, 2003, District 21 voters chose to close the Naper Attendance Center. In the fall of 2003, for the first time in 111 years, Naper was without a school.

Naper High School produced 630 graduates in the years from 1908 to 1988. Three of those classes had 19 members—1957, 1960 and 1975. The smallest class of three members was 1986. Whatever the size of the class, the graduates have been well prepared to go into the world.

(Following paragraph from the Norfolk Weekly News Journal, April 7, 1905, page 6)

"D. F. Small, principal of the schools at Naper, Neb., who is in the city with a number of teachers from there, says that Naper is booming and that two people are moving in for every two out and that the schools there are among the best in the state."

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## POOR UNCLE LARS

Ole and Helmer had promised their old Uncle Lars to bury him at sea since he had been a fisherman in the North Atlantic before coming to Boyd County. But since there was no

sea around they decided the Niobrara River would have to do.

They set out with Uncle Lars all stitched up and weighted down in a canvas burial bag.

After a while, Ole asked, "Do you tink ve are far enough out yet, Helmer?"

Without a word, Helmer slipped over the side only to find himself standing in water up to his knees. "Dis vill never do, Ole. Let's row some more." After a bit more rowing, Helmer slipped over the side again but the water came only to his chest so they rowed on. They decided they'd have to row considerably farther to find deep water, and after another hour, Helmer again slipped over the side, this time disappearing completely!

After a minute or two, Ole was becoming very alarmed when Helmer finally broke the surface gasping for air. He grabbed onto the side of the boat while catching his breath, and was finally able to say, "Vell, I tink dis is finally deep enough, Ole. Now hand me da shovel."

## HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

Radio operator and photographer, L. J. Naper, son of Mrs. J. M. Naper of Naper, will be going to Antarctica with the Byrd Expedition. He's been a member of the Coast Guard since May, 1938, and is assigned to the Flagship Alexander Hamilton.

When the Hamilton was sent to Alaska a year ago, Naper got within 35 miles of the North Pole.

During the year or more he will be on the expedition, he will be taking motion pictures of penguins and other sea life using equipment from one of the major motion picture studios.

(Information from the Nebraska State Journal, Lincoln, NE, 8/20/39, page 29.)

Former Omahan Neil Tabor, a graduate of Central High and University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is undertaking a project funded by the National Science Foundation. He'll spend about 2 1/2 months in a tent camp on the frozen east side of Antarctica studying rocks so old they predate dinosaurs and even the existence of the seven continents as we know them.

Antarctica is larger than the continental United States and is covered with ice at least a mile deep. Tabor's goal is to study "the rock record" which are clues to climate change and the mass extinction of most marine and animal life 250 million years ago.

(Information from the Omaha World Herald, 11/14/17, page 1)

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## A NOTE FROM THE LIBRARY

The book club volunteers will have the library open only on the last Thursday of each month from 1-3 pm through March. Because space is limited in the library, surplus books are displayed in the café with the sign "FREE BOOKS". It's surprising how many books have found new homes. Stop by and take a look!





### THE OL' HOMESTEADER IS A-GETTIN' OLDER EVER' DAY BUT HE STILL HUNTS UP SOME NEWS . . . SAYIN' HELLO —

Ramona Bentzen has another great-granddaughter—Justin Knight and Sheila Bentzen's daughter Hannah Bentzen Knight was born April 21. The baby's grandpa is Ray Bentzen. She shares her great-great-grandmother's name, Hannah Bentzen.

Willie and Holly Vogt Dueke welcomed Hadi Blake September 8. Her grandparents are Bryon and Sharon Sattler Vogt; great-grandparents are Jim and Mabel Riesselman Sattler.

### THE KIDS ARE KEEPIN' BUSY —

Austin Koenig (son of Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig, grandson of Jeff and Rindy Zink) was inadvertently left off the list of football players in the last issue.

The cross country team of Blake Ahlers (son of Dan and Tara, grandson of Wayne and Virginia Schonebaum Ahlers), Cory Lechtenberg (son of Frank and Lisa, grandson of Darlene Lechtenberg), Evan Reiman (son of Casey and Lisa Ahlers Reiman, grandson of Wayne and Virginia Ahlers), Isaac Koenig (son of Kevin and Staci, grandson of Jeff and Rindy Zink), Chase Harmon and Kody Roth place second in the district meet and went to state! Blake placed 12th at state—congratulations! The Spartans team placed 11th which is an outstanding achievement. Their coaches are Liz Johnson and Lisa Ahlers Reiman.

Blake Ahlers was named homecoming king. Justin Dueke (son of Tony and Beth Goodman Dueke, grandson of Vern and Linda Goodman) was also a candidate. Kaci Mashino (daughter of Dustin and Tammy Mitchell Mashino) was a freshman coronation attendant.

Jessa and Gena McCarthy (daughters of Darrin and Connie, granddaughters of LeRoy and Maxine Windmeyer McCarthy) and Austin, Isaac, Brett and Kaci Koenig (children of Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig, grandchildren of Jeff and Rindy Zink) had several entries at the county fair that went to the state fair.



**SOMETHING NEW IN NAPER**—Kyle Moos had a new shop and dwelling built last summer just east of the Hole in the Wall Mart (school block).



Postmaster Beverly Zink presents Rural Carrier Keith Cline with a certificate and pin for his 30 years of service to the United States Postal Service.

**Congratulations, Keith!**

The Naper Paper is your paper—we rely on you for ideas, stories, contributions, comments. If you want to contact the Naper Paper or the Naper Historical Society, you can mail us at Box 72, Naper, NE 68755; you can e-mail [papabear@threeriver.net](mailto:papabear@threeriver.net); you can call 402-832-5471. You can access our website at [napernebraska.org](http://napernebraska.org) where you'll see lots of photos, history of the area, and all past issues of the Naper Paper. Enjoy!

Boyd County School Honor Roll named Adrianne Bengtson (daughter of Matt and Ellen, granddaughter of Janet Cline Eggert), Blake Ahlers, Jesse Cline (son of Hoyt and Julie, grandson of Marvin and Judy Hoyt Cline), Austin Koenig, Kaci Mashino, Natasha Zeisler (daughter of Jesse and Kimberly, granddaughter of Richard and Sheryl), Zander Kluckman (son of Jim and Blair Vogt Kluckman, grandson of Kelly and Lois Nicolaus Vogt, great-grandson of Charlotte Nicolaus), Evan Reiman, and Daydra Zeisler (daughter of Mark and Tiffany, granddaughter of Richard and Sheryl). Congratulations to all!

### AND OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY . . .

The Historical Society and other willing helpers picked up roadside trash October 5.

The annual craft fair was held November 11 with lots of vendors and good food available.

The 50th (Yes, that's right!) annual mountain oyster feed was served by the VFW on November 11. Lots of labor goes into that event and those who come to eat are never disappointed.

The volunteer firemen are again serving steaks and burgers on the third Sunday night of each month through March. You can find this fine cuisine at the VFW beginning at 5 pm.

Also at the VFW on Saturday nights, the burgers and fries are hard to beat!

While we're on the topic of food—don't forget the Naper Café, serving good eats every day except Christmas.

You can bet Santa will be making his way to Naper—you might catch sight of him at the Naper Hall on December 23.

### GOODBYE TO OLD FRIENDS —

Vernelle Peppel Kibby died August 30. She was a 1943 graduate of Naper High School and had lived in Butte for many years.

Rudy Becker who lived west of Naper almost all of his life died October 14. All three of his daughters, Glenna, Janet and Betsy, graduated from Naper High School.

Bernard Ludemann, a 1957 graduate of Naper High School, died October 29. He and his wife Carol (Bechtold, class of 1956) had lived in North Platte for over 50 years where Bernie had owned Rodeo Road Equipment.

Carl Ludemann died November 13 at the age of 86. He received a purple heart in the Korean War and worked for the Department of Roads for many years. He and his wife Donna (Davis, class of 1950) had lived in Naper for over 40 years.

Rodney Neumiller, a 1979 graduate of Naper High, died November 22. He and his wife Joan had lived in Dallas for many years.

## LETTERS, LETTERS, LETTERS—

### JUST KEEP 'EM COMIN!

[If you want to contact the Naper Historical Society, you can mail us a letter at Box 72, Naper, NE 68755; you can call 402-832-5471; you can look at our website [napernebraska.org](http://napernebraska.org); or you can e-mail us at [papabear@threeriver.net](mailto:papabear@threeriver.net).]

Please send us copies of your Naper Paper. Enclosed is a check and if that's not enough, let us know.

Gerald Blum

**Ed. Note:** There is no subscription fee. We're happy to have donations and gratefully accept any amount. Thank you!

My husband, Gerald Ludemann, has been receiving the Naper Paper for some years now. He and a few relatives have enjoyed it, but he passed away in August so it is time to remove him from your mailing list. He had been saying we should send you some money so here is a check to help with your expenses. Thank you for the years of papers we've received.

Cathy Ludemann

**Ed. Note:** Thank you for your donation. We extend our sympathy for your loss.

I hope all is well with you and Naper. I hope you remember me and my sister who drove through Naper a couple of years ago. My mother was named after Luree Snider Barnes in 1914.

As I recall, my mother told the story of the beautiful bank teller. As Mom walked by the bank, she would stand on her tiptoes and pull herself up on the window sill just enough to peek over to see the beautiful lady. She said her father (Park Edwin Billeter) and the community respected and thought so highly of this woman, that he named his daughter (my mother) after her.

But Luree Snider Barnes was only four years old when my mother was born "Alta Luree Billeter." This didn't make sense to me. I researched who owned the bank. In the 1920 census, Jacob Snider was a banker and his wife was a bank clerk. Amazing find for me. My mother must have admired and looked into the bank window at Lida Snider (Luree's mother). Also, was Luree's first name Lida after her mother? Lida L. Snider was on the census and I bet the "L" stood for Luree. My mother was only five or six years old at the time she was looking in the window. She must have gotten the story a little mixed up because of her young years, but it seems likely it is true. Maybe you have something more to add.

Anyway, my mother was Alta Luree Billeter Tonniges and my daughter was named after her and a beautiful little girl Luree Snider of Naper, Nebraska.

We really enjoyed going through the museum and seeing the White Horse Ranch collectibles. We are planning to visit Naper again. We will be there Saturday August 26. We hope we can see you again or maybe someone else could let us see the museum. I am bringing my Luree Scott to see the town of Naper where her

grandma lived as a little girl. I want her to see Nebraska and the Dakotas where there is so much family history.

We enjoy your newsletter. My mother (Alta Luree) loved seeing the names of families and businesses she remembered—Arhus, Seasongood, and so many others. I love to hear the stories and am amazed how much she remembered about Naper. Here is a small donation to help keep it going.

Jean Tonniges Scott

**Ed. Note:** That's some fine detective work. Thanks for sharing with us. (Jean's original letter was in Volume 14, Issue 1, Spring 2016. She and her sister had visited Naper in August, 2015.)

Our whole family enjoys the Naper Paper, read it clear through and love the local color you put in it. Please put half of this check toward the siding.

Wayne and Betty Cline

Got busy in this hot dry weather—must keep my tomatoes and cukes alive. Keep hoping we'll get some rain. Stuff looks good yet, but it'll change soon in this heat. Daughter north of Sioux Falls got rain Monday night. This big hail scares me as there is so much of it. Watertown has had three storms this year.

Hope to get down soon and catch up on the latest.

Dolores Benson

+++++

These comments came anonymously to the editor but you might enjoy digging through your memory to see how many you remember.

Some older folks can remember lots of things about cars the younger generation can't. Remember when fender skirts were the finest accessory you could add to your car. If you wanted to protect your white sidewalls (what are white sidewalls, you ask. . .), you attached curb feelers to the front wheel well so you never bumped up against the edge of the concrete. There were "running boards" which might have been the easiest place to hitch a short ride. Now we oldsters need them to help us get in the car!

Then there were the steering knobs, necessary because we didn't have power steering. They were also called "suicide knobs", "Hollywood spinners" and "neckers' knobs."

What about that big handle below the dash on the left side? Wasn't it a lot more interesting to call it an "emergency" brake than a parking brake? Then on the floor board one would find the "foot feed", not accelerator, the clutch (and what was that all about?), the dimmer switch (not on the steering post) and oh, my—the starter!

One of the Excedrin-producing headaches during Drivers Ed was to come to a stop while going up a hill, then use the clutch, brake and foot feed (or accelerator if you choose) simultaneously to proceed to the top of the hill. Almost as stressful as the hill climb was learning to parallel park.

A few more words come to mind that have nothing to do with cars. How many of you had a store-bought dress? Hey, that was a big deal back in the day when Mom made everything out of feed sacks. And now you wonder

what feed sacks are.

How about that wall-to-wall carpet that everyone bought to put down over their hardwood floors. Does this have a deja-vu ring to it? Now we tear out the wall-to-wall carpet and put down hardwood floors. Go figure.

We went to a picture show, not a movie, and there would be only one—not a dozen in different areas of the theater. When Louie and Midge Kortmeyer had the theater in Naper, a quarter would get you into the movie AND get a sack of popcorn! Only the very brave would go upstairs to the balcony where all sorts of interesting things happened. Believe it or not, folks could smoke in the theater! But only in the balcony.

+++++

### LETTERS FROM THE DOG

Dear God:

Is it on purpose that our names are spelled the same, only in reverse?

Dear God:

Why do humans smell the flowers, but seldom if ever smell each other?

Dear God:

When we get to heaven, can we sit on your couch? Or will it be the same old story?

Dear God:

Why are there cars named after the jaguar, the cougar, the mustang, the colt, the stingray, and the rabbit, but not one named for a dog? How often do you see a cougar riding around? You know we love a nice car ride! Couldn't they rename the Chrysler Eagle the Chrysler Beagle?

Dear God:

If a dog barks his head off in the forest and no human hears him, is he still a bad dog?

Dear God:

More meatballs, less spaghetti, please.

Dear God:

Are there mailmen and UPS delivery folks in heaven? If there are, do I have to apologize?

+++++

A local rancher went to a bull sale in western Nebraska and paid top dollar for a fine Angus bull. When he turned the bull in with his herd, the bull looked for the nearest shade tree and lay down. No amount of prodding or enticement by the lovely young heifers would shame the bull into doing his job.

The rancher consulted the local veterinarian who gave him a handful of pills. It's no small job to get a bull to take a pill but the rancher succeeded and sure enough, the bull did his work, jumped the fence, helped himself to the neighbor's herd and looked as if he could go on forever.

The neighbor wondered exactly what it was that had caused the turn around in the bull's attitude so he asked the rancher what had happened.

The rancher replied, "Well, I got some pills from the vet and they really work! Don't know what they are but they taste a little like charcoal."

# NAPER PAPER

Naper Historical Society

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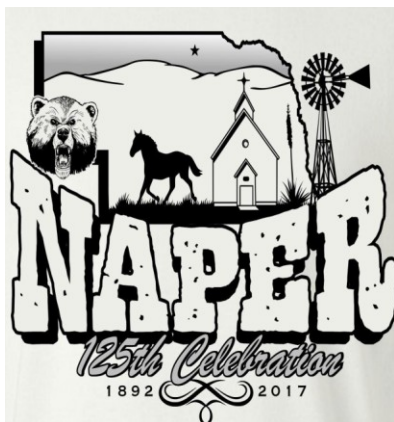
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LETTERS

AND EVEN MORE!



Grades 5-6-7-8, 1942-1943

Back row: Leonard Schmitz, Melvin Blum, Wayne Andersen, LaVere Herman, Carl "Pat" Vance, Bob Putnam, Jake Boucher, Franklin Fuhrer, Frank Kramer

Middle row: Mildred Determan Tiefenthaler (teacher), Chuck Putnam, Barney Smith, Paul Cunningham, Lester Martin, Alan Fuhrer, Doris Stahlecker, Doloris Wentz, LaDale Herman

Front row: Deloris Siewert, Martina Stahlecker, JoAnn Cerny, June Martin, Gaynell Rockholm, Adeline Martin, Janice Davis, Wilma Kortmeyer, Cathryn Blakkolb, Helen Schmitz