

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.

- CROSS ON THE BUTTE
- WHAT AM I BID?
- LOCAL AUTHOR
- FFA BANQUET
- MEMORIAL DAY
- ALUMNI BANQUET PICTURES
- OLD HOMESTEADER
- LETTERS



# Naper Paper

Volume 22 Issue 2

www.napernebraska.org

Summer, 2024

## Who Put the Cross on the Butte?

There is a cross located on the east Twin Butte that is lighted every year during Advent, Lent and several patriotic holidays.

In 1969, the local Lions Club proposed erecting a cross on the butte which was owned by Earl Peterson. Lions Club President Leonard Schmitz contacted him and Earl gave permission for placement of the cross as well access to his electrical transformer.

Otto Ahlers donated the pipe for construction of the cross and Leonard did the welding. It is held in place by bolts at the base which, when removed, allow the cross to be laid down for maintenance.

On October 26, 1969, a special meeting was held at the Peterson farm where the Lions club members poured concrete for the base of the cross and used a subsoiler to dig and lay the electric cable to light the cross. (That same cable, not conduit, is still in place. Buzzards see the cable and think it is a snake and try to make off with it!)

The concrete was hauled by four-wheel drive pickups as far as possible and then carried in buckets to the top of the butte.

Quoting the club minutes of October 26: "It was hard but we got the job done. Because of so many rocks we were not sure how the subsoiler would work but it just pushed the rocks aside and it worked

like a charm."

A quote from December 7, 1969: "We completed our cross on the east twin butte. We did change bulbs to make it show better. We have many compliments on it. Earl Peterson said there were as many as 30 cars a nite that came out to see it. It was quite an undertaking but it will be up there for many years to come."

And indeed, 55 years later, it is still a beacon shining in the community.

Over the years hundreds of hikers have climbed the buttes, on foot or on horseback, and enjoyed the beautiful view. It's rumored a marriage proposal may have occurred atop the butte. Occasionally souvenirs have been left that makes one wonder—once a teddy bear, another time flowers and money under a rock.

U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey markers are in place on top of the butte.

The buttes are what remain of a geologic formation that has over the years sluffed off and eroded until only the two remain, although there are two similar buttes south of the town of Butte (Harvey Buttes). A cave was formed on the northern side and dozens of folks have carved their initials in the rocks.

Just a few feet southeast of the cross, there is a prehistoric turtle shell, purported

to be more than 12 million years old. The more or less oval shape is what remains of the shell.



Below: Naper Elementary students November 5, 2001, in search of the turtle shell. L-R: Junior Corkle, Jake Brauer, Jon Alford, Levi Bengtson, Thomas Hamling, Alex Bendig, Becky Alford, Allyson Hamling, Riley Bengtson, Katelyn Haney



Dave and Carmen Schmitz now own the butte and keep it lighted. You'll need permission from them if you want to hike. But if you want inspiration during Advent or Lent, just a drive by the cross on the butte might be a good choice.

### Attention, Readers:

**We need stories from our readers to put in the Naper Paper. The paper has been published quarterly since 2003 so you can see why we are running out of ideas for stories. We'd like to have your input to continue this work. Would you like to share some history, family stories, memories, pictures?**

**Thank you so much to the readers who have made contributions to the Naper Paper throughout the years. We couldn't do this without you!**

### What Am I Bid?

Marilyn Sieh’s uncle, Dorwin Smith, was an auctioneer who cried many a sale in the 1930s when times were tough and the depression was upon us. A few of the representative sales follow—note not only the type of merchandise being sold, but also the cost.

At the G. C. Boyd sale June 6, 1936, F. A. Putnam bought a coyote pen for \$11.00. Erwin Schiltz bought 84.5 pounds for chickens for \$0.155 per pound. That’s a lot of meat for \$13.10. Goodman bought the dog-house for \$3.50.

A parlor organ sold for \$3.00, a cookstove for \$9.00, a washing machine for \$5.00 and a sewing machine for \$4.50. Just for fun, you could have bought the guitar for 75 cents! There were 29 entries of “jars”, all of them for only a few cents. (Those who can food in jars in 2024 can expect to pay up to \$28.00 a dozen when buying them at the store.)

At the Truhe sale March 25, 1936, horses sold for \$39.00, \$97.50 and \$106.00, Some of the checks sent to the bank were in the amount of 47

cents, 85 cents and \$1.00.

A lot of canned goods was sold at Chris Fedde’s sale. A quart of asparagus sold for 12 cents, a quart of tomatoes for 14 cents, a quart of plums for 14 cents. (A pint of pickled asparagus at the grocery store last week was \$11.95.)

At the same sale, H. Luedemann bought two collars (horse collars?) for 10 cents, two hammers for 10 cents and the fly nets for 5 cents. Tienken bought a wagon and a box (the running gear and the wagon box?) for \$6.00 each. An ice saw sold for \$2.00 and the tongs used to move the ice went for 60 cents.

Ah, the good old days.

+++++



Bob Wentz enjoying a frozen treat at the Naper Café.

### OBSERVATIONS

Shout our to everyone who can remember their best friend’s childhood phone number but can’t remember the password they created yesterday.

And just once, I want the prompt for username and password to say “Close enough!”

Old age has come at a bad time. Just as I was beginning to know everything, I’m now forgetting everything I knew.

Even duct tape can’t fix stupid, but it can muffle the sound.

Be decisive. Right or wrong, make a decision. The road is paved with flat squirrels who couldn’t decide.

The ability to speak several languages is an asset, but the ability to keep your mouth shut in any language is priceless!

Advice from a marriage counselor: Do not ask your wife what she’s fixing for dinner while she’s mowing the lawn.

## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES—KEEP NAPER STRONG!

#### A & M ENTERPRISES

Trenching, pump installations, backhoe work, plumbing  
402-832-5388

#### M&L LAWN SERVICE

Mowing, trimming, fertilizing, tilling, seeding spraying  
402-832-5422

#### CURL UP & DYE BEAUTY SHOP

Haircuts, styling, coloring, coffee bar  
402-832-5573

#### ROTH SMALL ENGINE REPAIR

Small engine repair; lawn mowers and four-wheelers—buy, sell, trade  
402-925-8814  
402-832-5050

#### WHITE HORSE RANCH MUSEUM HERITAGE HALL

#### NAPER TRANSPORT

Sand and gravel hauling propane hauling  
402-832-5955

#### BOB’S AUTO BODY

Auto body repair  
402-832-5766

#### NAPER CAFÉ AND LOUNGE

Breakfast, dinner, supper, bar  
402-832-5272

#### GRAMMY AND POP’S

HOLE-IN-THE-WALL MART  
Something for everybody!  
402-340-3231

#### U \$ POSTAL SERVICE

402-832-5977

#### NICK’S AUTO SERVICE

Oil changes, new tires, tire repair  
402-832-5166

#### K&S MOBILE

Welding and equipment repair, on-site service  
402-832-5125

#### DRUEKE TRUCKING

Local and long-distance hauling  
402-832-5610

#### BENDIG CONSTRUCTION

Kelly 402-961-0445

#### AK MEATS

Full service butcher shop  
Alex 402-340-7116



## RECOGNIZING TRICIA WENTWORTH — ANOTHER LOCAL AUTHOR

LeAnne Schultz loved to read and several years ago, she donated some boxes of books which became the foundation for the Naper Library.

Recently, Bob Schultz donated another box of LeAnne's books and included in that collection were three books by Tricia Wentworth. Tricia is the granddaughter of Art and Jan Schultz Hysell. Jan is a 1959 graduate of Naper High School.

The author's biography on the book cover reads as follows:

"Tricia Wentworth is the award-winning author of The Culling series. Though she began writing at a young age, she didn't realize her love of writing would take over until after she graduated college with her teaching degree. She currently resides in Nebraska with her husband, three sons and English bulldog. She hoards notebooks, pretty pens, books and tea. When not reading, writing, or momming, she can be found squeezing in a run or feeding her sugar addiction by baking something ridiculously delicious."

And an added bonus—the books have large print! Come in to the library and check out Locked In, The Culling (Book 1) and The Fracturing (Book 2).

-----

Over the years, the library has received dozens and dozens of boxes of books. Volunteers sort through the books.

Some of the books are kept for the library, sorted, catalogued, and placed on the shelves.

Some of the books are put on bookshelves in the café where diners can choose one to read during their dinner hour or take home to read later.

Some books are donated to waiting rooms in clinics and hospitals. Others have been sent on to school libraries.

Anytime you'd like to use the library, you can call 402-832-5471 or 402-832-5777. Someone will meet you there and help you find a good book.

## BOYD COUNTY FFA HONORS

On April 22, at the Boyd County FFA banquet, Paige Drueke, Brett Koenig and Lanie Lechtenberg were recognized as having received their state degree.

Brett Koenig was recognized for beef production, Lanie Lechtenberg in Diversified Agricultural Production, Lanie and Jaylee Lechtenberg in Goat Production, and Ethan Zeisler in Diversified Agricultural Production.

This year's honorary degree recipients included Beth and Tony Drueke, Paige's parents; Staci and Kevin Koenig, Brett's parents; and Beth and Shane Lechtenberg, Lanie's parents.

The Star Greenhand Award was given to Shaeden Polenske and the Star Farmer/Ag Business Award to Ethan Zeisler.

## DO YOU REMEMBER THEM?



They are Charles and Ruby Tienken in a photo taken by Elsie Wentz in front of Wentz's Bar in 1969. They were both 80 years old. Their farm was on the north side of the Niobrara River on the Naper-Stuart Road. Ruby taught the primary grades in Naper in the late 1940's.

Wouldn't you like to know what kind of car they were driving.

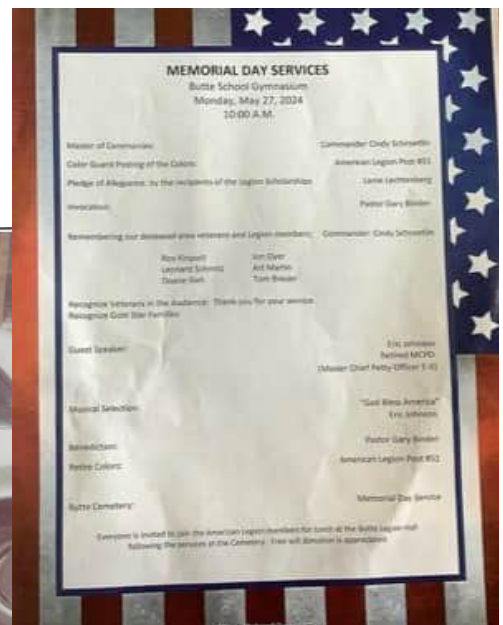
(Thanks to Bob Wentz for sharing the photo,)

## Memorial day service honors local men

The Naper VFW post has not held Memorial Day services for the past three years due to lack of veterans to participate. Since that time, the local post and the Butte American Legion have cooperated for military funerals and other activities.

This year, Jon Dyer, Leonard Schmitz, Duane Sieh, Tom Brauer and Art Martins were honored at the Butte American Legion Memorial Day service.

A brief history of their service was read while family members who were in attendance lit individual candles. This ceremony was completed by a member of the Legion lighting the remaining candles.



(Thank you, Marilyn Sieh, for the photos and the story.)  
**Below: Knoll Crest Cemetery, Naper**



## 1954-2024 ALUMNI BANQUET SEVENTY YEARS LATER

More than 60 alumni and guests gathered on May 25 for the annual alumni banquet. Classes who graduated in years ending in four were honored. Unfortunately, the class of 2024 (Heidi Vogt Melton and Jamie Zeisler Nordstrom) left before their picture could be taken.

Marilyn Smith Sieh, class of 1956, welcomed everyone and Janet Cline Eggert, also class of 1956, gave the invocation. Dale Reber, class of 1965, served as Master of Ceremonies. The meal was catered by Firehouse Café of Butte, which is operated by Loren Nicolaus, class of 1975, and Barbara Schmitz Nicolaus, class of 1974. Barb had double duty, as the caterer and as a member of an honored class.

Special photos included four members of the Ahlers family who were members of honored classes and four first cousins of the Fuhrer family who were in honored classes.



Above: Virginia Schonebaum Ahlers, class of **1954** with her granddaughter, Macy Ahlers, class of **2014**.

Below: Class of **1984**

Keith Mayer, Lisa Fuhrer Eide, Jared Blum, Cindy Bendig Klinger, Danny Ahlers, Sharon Sattler Vogt, Michelle Camin Janssen



Below: Laura Stahlecker Gorham, class of **1964**.



Above: Paige Dueke, class of **2024**, recipient of the alumni scholarship.



Above: Class of **1974**

DeAnne Fuhrer-Neilson, Betty Jo Martin, Carla Kortmeyer Allen, Lisa Schmitz Fuhrer, Barbara Schmitz Nicolaus, Lonnie Fuhrer, Dwight Fuhrer, Marian Ahlers Ortmeier, Bill Audiss



**1950-2000**



Back row: Joy Helenbolt Vogt, Rosemary Zeitner Cerny, Donna Weickum Dyer, Helen Schmitz Higgins, Donna Davis Ludemann, Kathryn Blakkolb O'Donaghue, Yvonne Reber Cahoy, Arlene Nicolaus Neumiller  
Seated: Duane Sieh, Franklin Fuhrer, Harley Nicolaus

Below: Lori Goodman Clarkson, class of 1988, Vernon Goodman, class of 1965, Vernon's granddaughter, Paige Drueke



Above: Four Fuhrer first cousins: DeAnne Fuhrer Neilson (1974), Lisa Fuhrer Eide (1984), Lonnie Fuhrer (1974) and Dwight Fuhrer (1974). DeAnne and Dwight are twins, children of Lyle "Red" Fuhrer; Lisa and Lonnie are sister and brother, children of Ray Fuhrer.

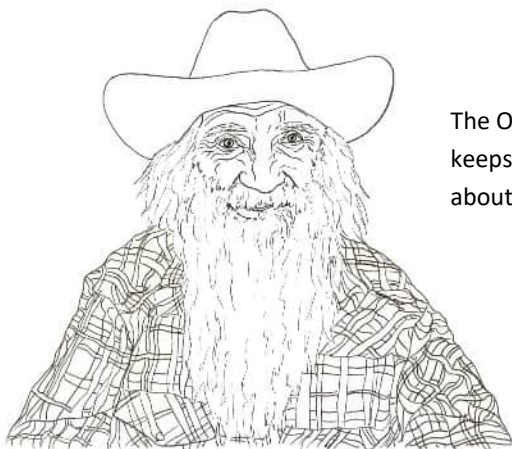


Above: three generations of Ahlers who were in honored classes: Marian Ahlers Ortmeier (1974), Danny Ahlers (1984), Virginia Schonebaum Ahlers (1954), Virginia's granddaughter and Danny's daughter, Macy Ahlers (2014)



Dennis Wentz, class of 1962, and Bob Wentz, class of 1958

The Alumni Banquet is organized and presented every year by a few volunteers who meet in February and set up the program, meet again in March to prepare the mailing and then get together the night before the banquet to arrange tables and decorate. Let's give a big thank you to everyone who helped in any way to make the 2024 banquet a success! And thank you to all who attended and those who supported the scholarship program. It takes a village.



The Ol' Homesteader  
keeps lookin' for news  
about Naper!

## GOIN'S ON AT SCHOOL-

Kinsley Cadwallader and Rylen Cadwallader (daughter and son of Lee and Stephanie Whitley Cadwallader, grandchildren of Tim and Bonnie Fuhrer Whitley), Landon Melton and Aaron Melton (sons of Shelby and Heidi Vogt Melton, grandsons of Bryon and Sharon Sattler Vogt), great-grandsons of Mabel Riesselman Sattler), Savannah Zeisler (daughter of Jesse and Kim Zeisler, granddaughter of Sheryl Zeisler), Jacob Corrado (son of Amber Hollingsworth) and Cash Nordstrom (son of Bob and Jamie Zeisler Nordstrom, grandson of Craig and Stacy Zeisler) achieved perfect attendance at Boyd County Schools.

Kyla McCarthy (daughter of Darrin and Connie McCarthy, granddaughter of LeRoy and Maxine Windmeyer McCarthy) and Liz Arellano (daughter of Jessica Vogt) qualified for state at the FCCLA STAR competition in Ainsworth.

Liam Karnes (son of Amber Hollingsworth and Randy Karnes), Juliana Cline (daughter of Hoyt Cline), Shaeden Polenske (daughter of Trudy Waterman and Guy Polenske) and Liz Arellano made some impressive showings at the Verdigre Power Lift competition February 24. On April 6, the same four power lifters placed at the AAU Power Lifting.

The Nebraska State College System presented their multi-activity student award to Preston Brewer (son of Kip and Rachel Heermann Brewer, grandson of Jerry and Dorothy Dummer Heermann), Kaci Koenig (daughter of Kevin and Staci Zink Koenig, granddaughter of Jeff and Rindy Zink, great-granddaughter of Louise Neumiller Zink), Paige Drueke (daughter of Tony and Beth Goodman Drueke, granddaughter of Vernon and Linda Goodman), Kyla McCarthy and Jaylee Lechtenberg and Lanie Lechtenberg (daughters of

Shane and Beth Nelson Lechtenberg, granddaughters of Ivan and Nancy Wentz Nelson, great-granddaughters of Bob Wentz).

Jacob Corrado and Lanie Lechtenberg each received a first place award for their exhibits at the Niobrara Valley Conference Art Show.

Kaci Koenig, Kyla McCarthy, Shaeden Polenske, Preston Brewer and Ethan Zeisler (son of Jesse and Kim Zeisler, grandson of Sheryl Zeisler) participated in track and field for Boyd County.

Kaci Koenig and Ethan Zeisler were members of the Boyd County cross country teams which were awarded the Nebraska Coaches Association Team Academic Excellence Award.

Lanie Lechtenberg and Paige Drueke made the NVC All-Conference basketball teams.

Lanie Lechtenberg was inducted into the National Honor Society.

## WELCOME!

Luke and Chaney Zeisler added Letty Lynn to their family. She was born April 5, joining her brother Tate. Sheryl Zeisler is grandma.

## SAYIN' GOODBYE TO OLD FRIENDS

Nina Bentzen Bahm, a 1956 graduate of Naper High School, died February 29. She and her husband Jerome owned an accounting firm in Norfolk.

Brent Neumiller (Naper High School class of 1974) died March 21. After working in Hastings for many years, he retired in 2015 and moved back to Naper.

Leslie Cline, a 1987 graduate of Naper High School, died at his home in Ogallala on April 2. A memorial service is planned June 29 in Naper.

The Naper Paper is your paper. We rely on you, our readers, for support, both financial and "a pat on the back". We count on you for stories and ideas about what we need to write, print, explore, photograph. We appreciate you and want to say "Thanks!"

Leonard Schmitz, a 1947 graduate of Naper High School, died April 4. He and his wife Thelma lived east of Naper where they raised their sons, Doug and Dave, both of whom graduated from NHS. Leonard was one of the founders of the Naper Historical Society.

LeAnne Schultz died April 9. She and husband Bob Schultz lived west of Naper for many years. LeAnne's gift of books were part of the foundation for the Naper Library.

Travis Heermann (Naper High School class of 1987) died April 26 in Denver. He was in a tragic motorcycle accident December 21. Travis was featured in the Naper Paper in Volume 11, Issue 1 (Spring, 2013) and Volume 14, Issue 1 (Spring, 2016). Some of his books are in the Naper Library.

Have you looked at the Naper Historical Society website? ([napernebraska.org](http://napernebraska.org)) You'll find every issue of the Naper Paper (photos in color on the website!), photos of all the classes from Naper High School, stories of Naper history, the White Horse Ranch, businesses, cemeteries, and historical photos.

If you need to contact the historical society, you may:

**call** 402-832-5471,

**mail** to Naper Historical Society  
Box 72  
Naper, NE 68755

**e-mail** at [papabear@threeriver.net](mailto:papabear@threeriver.net)

## LETTERS and MORE!

Thank you for my first edition of the Naper Paper. I find your articles very interesting and educational for someone old like me! Thanks.

**Maxine Brink**

Hello, all

Just a note to let you know how much we enjoy the paper. Hope everyone around Naper is getting along OK,

The years keep passing by and we all get a bit slower and my generation is thinning out, but that's the way it is.

Take care and enjoy.

**Orland and Carolyn Cline**

For the "Great" Naper Paper.  
Good Job.

**LeRoy Ahlers**

Dear Historical Society:

Received the spring issue of the Naper Paper, first one that I have seen. Kudos to the society and the individuals that are making this publication a reality.

Your mission statement shows that you are doing a lot of community service beyond your publication.

What a great endeavor and commitment by your group to Naper and the surrounding area.

Thank you!

**Larry Seger**

Thanks for sending the Naper Paper. Bill and I sure enjoy reading it regularly. Please continue sending it to us and Mom (Virginia Walton). Enclosed is some money to help with the cost of the paper.

Believe it or not, we are still in Indiana.

**Laurel Walton**

In honor of Dennis Gentele's 75th birthday. He graduated in 1967.

**Dennis Gentele's family**

Happy Memorial Day weekend! Enclosed is a few \$s to help keep the newsletter hoppin' and some witty stories you might want to use as filler.

The donation is in memory of my dad, Fred C. "Kleechee" Rockholm, Jr.

**Cathy Crawforth**

The following advertisements were found in **A Brief Appreciation of Boyd County, Nebraska, and Its People and Institutions**, by John H. Sexton, published by Hensel & Brown, Publishers. Bookmakers, Naper, Boyd County, Nebraska.

(Noted in pencil on the flyleaf, "Jesse Fast, Naper Nebr., April 21, 1921. This book was printed in the year of 1903"

Also in pencil on the back of the book "March the 23, 1949 still snow on the ground and pritty coold no Crops out yet

J Fast

Naper Nebr

Stores in Naper at this Date Blakolbs general store and Maertens general stoe Bill Maertiens")

[Ed Note: Spelling and punctuation as found in the book. Marilyn Smith Sieh, Jesse Fast's great-granddaughter, loaned the book to us.)

**Clarence Walden, D.D.S.**

The Whistling Dentist. . .

Does no Cheap Work,

Claim to do no Magic,

Do not Attempt Any Medical Impossibilities.

Crown and Bridge Work.

Fillings of all Sorts.

Lynch, Nebraska

**B. L. Chambers,**

Manufacturer of Brick for all purposes. A Boyd County Industry That Turns out a First Class Article at a Low Price.

Lynch, Nebraska

**The Pioneer Store**

J. A. MARCELLUS, Prop.

First Store in Town,

First Store in the County,

Dealer in Everything. .

Monowi, Nebraska

**Palmeter & Hagenstein**

General Real Estate Agents-Estates Handled for non-residents-Steamship tickets to all Principal Countries

Spencer, Nebraska

**O. V. Kenaston**

ATTORNEY at LAW

Pastor Fairfax Congregational Church  
Butte, Nebraska

==+==+==+==

More advertisements—these found in the the 1966 Boyd County (No. 63) Auto License Directory

**SUPER SERVICE STATION**

Tank Wagon Delivery

Car Greasing

Naper, Nebraska

**DALLDORF'S STORE**

School Supplies-Package Medicines

Wallpaper and Paints

Naper, Nebraska

**BLUM'S CAFÉ**

Meals-Lunches

Ice Cream

Home Made Pies

**LEO BLUM**

Dealer for Grain

Buying and Selling

Naper, Nebraska

**WM. KROTTER COMPANY**

Pontiac-Buick-GMC

Sales and Service

Complete Building Materials

Lumber-Hardware-Appliances

Implements-Plumbing & Heating

Spencer-O'Neil-Atkinson-Stuart-Naper

Serving North Central Nebr. since 189

**ELSIE'S PLACE**

Ice Cream-Pop-Cigarettes

Gas and Oil

Monowi, Nebraska

**DIAMOND SHOE STORE**

We Doctor Shoes

Heel Them—Mend Their Soles

And

Attend Their Dyeing

Shoes and Boots for the Entire Family

Spencer, Nebraska

(Open 6 days a week)



# NAPER PAPER

Naper Historical Society

PO Box 72

Naper, NE 68755

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT

US POSTAGE

PAID

NAPER, NE

PERMIT #1



## IN THIS ISSUE

- CROSS ON THE BUTTE
- WHAT AM I BID?
- LOCAL AUTHOR
- FFA BANQUET
- MEMORIAL DAY
- ALUMNI BANQUET PICTURES
- OLD HOMESTEADER
- LETTERS

## NAPER BAND—1936-1937

Caption on photo says "High School Orchestra, Naper, Nebr"

Standing: Lenora Serr, Joan Cunningham, Albert Berg, Rudy Becker, Darlene Arp

Seated: Junior Swick, Phillip Holmgren, Martha Nicolaus, \_\_\_\_\_ Pavolacki, Kenneth Stahlecker (drums), Edeen Peppel, Helen Newhart, Blanche Stahlecker, Russel Reber

