



BANNER

A "HOLIDAY" MOMENT

-- Crystal Werger

As I was dragging Christmas trees out of the museum's "Christmas" storage room a couple weeks ago I kept thinking to myself how it just didn't seem right to be working on Christmas before we'd even celebrated Thanksgiving. I'm a HUGE stickler about decorating for each holiday in its time and definitely NOT before another holiday. Every year Christmas promotion gets longer and longer. This year I actually saw Christmas being advertised in Walmart before Halloween! That really bothered me. Don't get me wrong, I love Christmas and all that goes with it, but I also love Halloween and Thanksgiving. I think Thanksgiving gets lost between Halloween and Christmas. Thanksgiving is a very important holiday to me and really should get its due, especially going into the Christmas season when most of us get crazy and stressed out. We need to spend special time being thankful for all God has given us and take the time to think about it. REALLY think about it.

Within the past year I've learned to take life moment by moment. I have a tendency to get anxious and overwhelmed so I make myself slow down and think about the moment I'm in. It seems easy enough but it's really not. There's so much to worry about in life . . . so much that I was missing life as it happened to me. Because I'm a historian I spend a lot of time in the past, mine included. And because I have a teenager, I spend a lot of time worrying about the future. I realized, with the help of a very good friend, that I was missing out on all that was happening in the present. Nothing felt good anymore and I endured life more than I enjoyed it. The cure? Living in each moment. Thinking about each moment. ENJOYING each moment . . . even if it's a "boring" moment.

So, as I was struggling with the Christmas tree and thinking for the 500th time that it wasn't right, I realized that I was wasting the moment. Instead of being upset I decided to enjoy even the "early" moments of preparing for Christmas at the museum, and think about all the people that I'm **thankful** for because they came to help me get all the trees out and set up (we have A LOT of Christmas trees at the museum!). By doing that I was observing Thanksgiving and enjoying the moment while decorating for Christmas!

Side note: Crystal put up her Christmas tree at home the day before Thanksgiving...



2ND ANNUAL Trivia Night

DAWSON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM



Gavin & Alec Foster



Around the Block Catering

Trivia Night was November 9th. We had eight teams of competitors. *Trivia Newton John* was the winning team. It was a great night! The food was fantastic. The competition was fierce, but fun. We raised some money for the museum. Plus, we all learned something! We will do this again next November. Be on the lookout for next year's teammates!



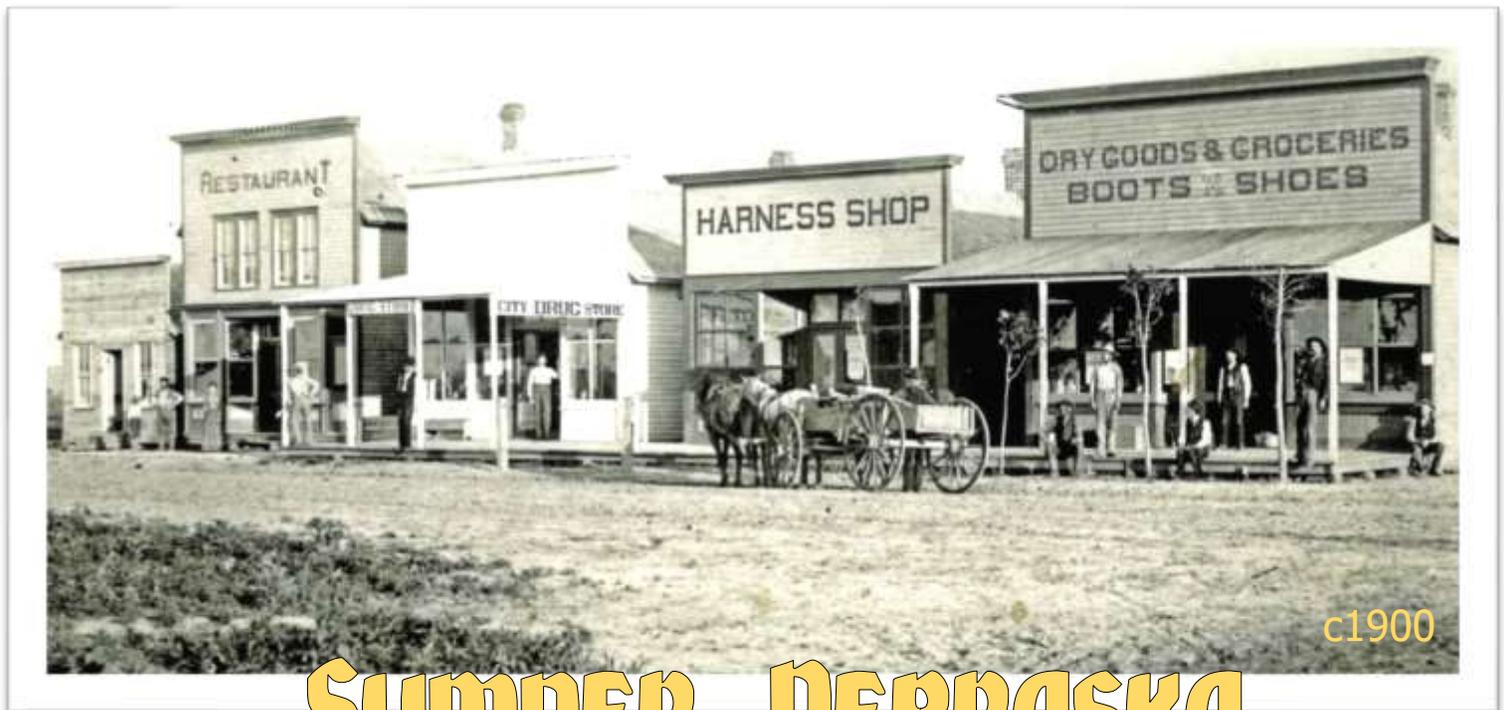
Team Minco



**Dawson County History Nerd
Tee Shirts**

Available at our Gift Shop!





SUMNER, NEBRASKA

– Crystal Werger

Sumner, named for the Massachusetts Senator, Charles Sumner, started out like any other town in Dawson County. It was perfectly located in the Wood River valley surrounded by agricultural and stock country. A branch of the Union Pacific Railroad came through in 1890, and over the next several years the town grew and prospered. By 1892 the town had been incorporated and had a population of 200 with plans to reach one thousand in a few years. In 1898 there were on record five dry goods and grocery stores, two hardware stores, two restaurants, one hotel, one butcher shop, one furniture store, three flour & feed stores, two racket stores*, two implement houses, two grain elevators, one drug store, one lumber company, one millinery shop, one blacksmith shop, one harness shop, one tailor shop, one wood shop, one saloon, two livery barns, one real estate & post office, four churches, and a fine two-story school house. The town also had its own physician and banker. It's hard for me to imagine all those shops and buildings in the small town of Sumner but as with all communities in Dawson County it had its time of prosperity.

By 1916 several brick buildings occupied the town, two of which were banks. The population hadn't yet reached 1,000 but 500 isn't something to be frowned upon. The farmers in the area were "prosperous and happy" living in fine homes with stock of all kinds as well as automobiles. Not too bad for a town that was only 26 years old!

But also like any other town in Dawson County, Sumner had its fair share of adversity. In 1916 the Post Office was robbed. Burglars blew open the safe around 1:00 AM on a Sunday morning and took everything of value (somewhere between \$80 and \$100). Although several citizens heard the explosion the burglars made a clean getaway.

In 1917 fifty-five men from Sumner went to fight in the Great War.

In 1934 fire destroyed two businesses, the Security Bank building, which was one of the first buildings erected in Sumner, and the Palace Meat Market, owned and operated by Frank Severin. The buildings were unable to be saved. The town still relied on a bucket brigade and the fire burned so rapidly that they spent most of their time keeping the fire from spreading to other buildings nearby.

In 1947 Earl McFarland barely escaped being crushed when the I.G.A. Store collapsed shortly after he locked the front doors. The cause of the collapse was never definitely established, though it was attributed at least in part to a bolt of lightning and water damage from the terrible flood that had occurred that year.

*Racket Store: Early name for a variety store that always boasted the lowest prices. Name derived from the days of the peddler pushing his cart down the street with the pots and pans making a racket.

In January of 1963 another fire ravaged Sumner's Business district, this time destroying a whole block. Sam O'Neill's grocery, locker plant and sundries store, Ron Neben's barber shop and Vernon Dyer's recreation parlor were all destroyed in that fire. The origin of the fire was at 2:15 PM in a chimney flue in a storage room in Sam's Market. Very cold temperatures and strong winds did not help the firemen's cause. At that time Sumner did not have a village water system and was forced to rely on water tanks. Because of the below zero temperatures, valves were said to have frozen on some of the trucks' water tanks allowing the flames to spread. Firemen were called from Kearney, Lexington, Overton, Eddyville, Elm Creek, and Miller to help fight the flames. By 5:00 PM the buildings were destroyed, and the fire smoldered through the night into early morning.

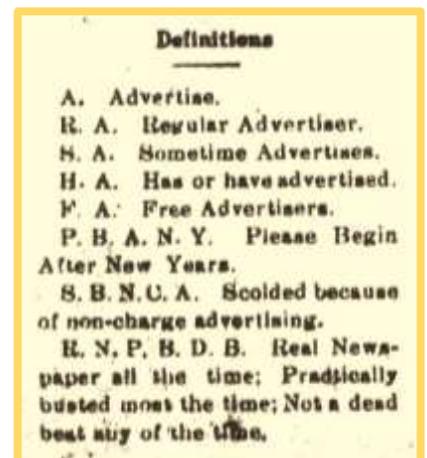
Sumner's first newspaper, *The Sumner Dispatch*, was established in 1890 by E.E. Shackelford. It didn't last long. In 1906 J.B. Hemphill founded *The Sumner News*. One of its editors, F.F. Lyon, had a column in the paper known as "Gas and Gossip". He was described as a "salty character who feared no man". He referred to himself as "Ragged Redtop, Pencil Pusher, and General Jollier". I bet his articles were quite interesting. An example of a front page is printed to the right. We've enlarged the key to his description of each business from the perspective of the paper's ad salesman. *The Sumner News* ceased publication in August 1939. A few years later, Mr. Dickerson put together what was called *The Sumner Bulletin*, which was mainly advertising for local businesses and distributed free of charge. That was discontinued around 1970. Since then Sumner has not supported its own paper, relying on *The Beacon Observer* to cover community news.

Even though Sumner has always been a small town, never reaching its goal of 1,000 residents, it has been a prosperous town. In 1930 Sumner had over 30 businesses including a movie theater! In 1955 the first ambulance was donated to the village by Pfeifer-Newman Funeral Home of Lexington. The ambulance was painted white with a large red cross and a siren and flashing red light. In 1961 land in the center of town was purchased from Zane Roper for a park. During September, fifty-seven men with equipment volunteered to clear the area. Underground water systems were installed, and many groups and organizations contributed to its growth. A sod house was erected in the park in 1962. Three years later a windmill was restored and placed next to the soddy in tribute to pioneer life. Then, in 1965, Highway 40 was blacktopped from Kearney to Eddyville making travel much more comfortable.

In 1937 Carl & Virginia Snurr and Joe & Dollie Snurr bought the beer joint and pool hall. When Carl went to war, he left Joe & Dollie as owners, and it became known as the Bullpen. Thirteen years later it was sold to Vernon & Wayne Dyer and renamed Dyer Recreation. They had 8-ball snooker, shuffleboard and spittoons. That building burned in the aforementioned Fire of 1963. Vernon rebuilt a 30x40 foot building and reopened in May 1963. After 22 years they sold the business to Louis & Marge Siebenaler who added on a small kitchen and storeroom and renamed it Marge's Tavern. Doug & Carol Hoos bought the tavern in 1974. After returning from their honeymoon they opened the business as a steakhouse & lounge. That is when it became "Tub's Pub" the most well-known business in Sumner today.

Yost Furniture & Undertaking was a long-time business in Sumner. I first found Yost Furniture in a *Clipper-Citizen* article in 1898. You can see it mentioned here in *The Sumner News* 1918 business list: D.J. Yost had Hardware, Furniture, Implements, Coal, Salt and Musical Instruments. J.H. Yost is listed as a Funeral Director. At that time, it was common for furniture/undertaking businesses to be combined. Yost's is listed again in a Sumner business directory in 1930. Our Museum recently acquired a beautiful bedroom set that was purchased at Yost's in 1926. This green-gray set is on exhibit now in our Main Gallery in a Sumner Collection. We are looking for proof that one of the Yosts built furniture – if you can help with that, please let us know!

I am always fascinated by the growth of our communities and love to share the stories. For more of this story, check out "the purple book" called *Sumner Nebraska 1890-1990*. I recognize many names because once people settled the area they seemed to stay. Generations later many are still there. It's that connection that we all love to make when studying history. And that connection can definitely be found in the small town of Sumner, Nebraska.



The Sumner News

Vol. XI

SUMNER, DAWSON COUNTY, NEBRASKA, THURSDAY DECEMBER 27, 1917

No. 35

Happy New Year and Successful 1918

Public Schools

Prof. R. L. Steuens
Miss Cora Felker
Miss Lucile Felker
Miss Verna Yost
Miss Tillie Falk

P. W. Felker, janitor



Swedish Free Mission Church

Rev. A. Klint, Pastor

Baptist Church

Rev. H. E. Wolcott, Pastor

M. E. Church



TOWN BOARD: T. H. Cheney,* chrm.
H. S. Clouse, W. R. Stewart, A. L. Becker, F. F. Lyon; John Edd Orme, clerk; H. B. Roper, treasurer; M. H. Watson, marshal; C. W. Martens, street commissioner.

F. A. Millhouse, Postmaster, Capt. Home Guards, General Merchandise—R. A. Stewart Bros., General Merchants.—R. A. M. L. Stewart, Electrician for Clouse & Stewart electric lights. L. Johnson Hdwe Co., Furniture, Hdwe, Implements, autos & repairs.—R. A. J. A. Hadeen, Garage H. S. Clouse, General Merchant, here and Georgetown.—R. A. Jessie Smith, Dressmaking—S. A. D. J. Yost, Hardware, Furniture, Implements, Coal, Salt and Musical Instruments.—R. A. (Pathephone) John Edd Orme, Notions and General Merchandise.—A. C. L. Moore, 1st Lieut. Home Guards, General Merchandise—A. K. W. Putbrese, Wells, Windmills, Pumps—R. A. V. S. Goodwin, Garage—P. B. A. N. Y. B. F. Barnebey, Hotel—H. A. Guy R. Sigman, 2nd Lieut. Home Guards, Drugs and Notions—A. J. K. Burge, Cigars and Candy—H. A. Security Bank.—R. A. Jerry Watson, Restaurant—R. A. F. J. Severin, Meat Market—P. B. A. N. Y. Gilcrest Lumber Company, Lumber, Lime, Lath, Coal, Salt and Implements, Robt. Linville Manager—R. A. Farmers & Merchants Bank, —R. A., Frank Kalous, Cream Separators, Poultry and Stock Tonics—R. A. Dr. F. S. Falk, Veterinary—R. A. Auct. Park Crusinberry.—A. Harley Johnson, Barber—R. A. John Wilson, Barber—R. A. Dr. Bush, M. D., Chem. local war savings committee; guard and confidential lookout committee for Mac Downey. Dr. C. E. Mears, Dentist—R. A. Geo. C. Gillan, Atty, Lexington—R. A. C. W. Martens, Dray—R. A. E. G. Mattson, Carpenter and Contractor—A. Lexington Cream Flour—R. A. H. M. Wheeler, Dray—R. A. Gayety, Omaha—A. Trans-Mississippi Grain Co., E. A. Erickson, Mgr.—R. A. Webster's Dictionary.—A. R. B. Richards, Blacksmith shop. S. A. W. F. Richards, Shoe Repairing, S. A. Ralph Hancock, Feed Barn P. B. A. N. Y. Johnson & Watson, Horse Buyers. A. Radcliff Bros., Carpenters and Contractors P. B. A. N. Y. Red Cross. S. B. N. C. A. Government, Extension College, etc. F. A. Union Pacific, E. H. Pritchard, Agt. A. J. H. Yost, Funeral Director. R. A. A. L. Becker & J. H. Yost, Autos; A. Johnson & Son, Funeral Directors, R. A. Dennis Pritchard, Local Mgr, Kearney Telephone Co P. B. A. N. Y. Beulah Gutzard and Mae Pritchard Central girls. Sumner News, R. N. P. B. D. B. Frank Kalous, Sr., Mason and Plasterer, P. B. A. N. Y. Krula's Hall; S. A. Referee's Sale, Stewart Estate, Monday, December 31st in front of Farmers & Merchants Bank, T. H. Cheney, Referee.

Definitions

A. Advertiser.
R. A. Regular Advertiser.
H. A. Homeless Advertiser.
H. A. Has or have advertised.
F. A. Free Advertiser.
P. B. A. N. Y. Please Begin After New Year.
S. B. N. C. A. Scolded because of non-charge advertising.
R. N. P. B. D. B. Real Newspaper all the time; Practically lasted most the time; Not a dead beat any of the time.

Lodge

MODERN WOODMEN OF AMERICA
Box Elder Camp, 2867.
Robt. Liville, V. G. Robt. Putbrese, W. A. Frank Kalous, Jr. clk
I. O. O. F.
A. T. Cannon Lodge, 167.
Elective officers to be installed next meeting in January:
D. Pritchard, N. G. R. W. Johnson, V. N. G. E. A. Erickson, Sec'y. A. R. Watson, Treas. J. A. Hadeen, chaplain.
Every Monday night.
MASON
Compass and Square, 218
John Hillis, M. R. W. Johnson, sec.

First Tuesday on or before full moon.

RENNER, 226

Mildred Erickson, N. G. Mattie Watson, Sec. Letta Bruce, Treas. 1st and 3rd Wed. evenings.

T. H. Cheney, precinct member, County Council of Defense.
E. A. Lavery, Lincoln precinct member, Co. Council of Defense.

R. W. Johnson, fuel administrator, this precinct.

H. B. Roper, Chrm. Branch-Chapter Red Cross.

Mrs. Letta Johnson, Sec., Treas. Branch-Chapter Red Cross.

CASH SUBSCRIPTION BOOSTERS

REGULARS

Harry Schindler, by A. Ross, verified	Oct. 1, '17
Miss Della Bruce	Nov. 2, '17
A. J. Lakin	Dec. 1, '17
H. W. Footman	Jan. 2, '18
Wm. Clayton	Apr. 14, '18
W. H. Spillinger	Apr. 24, '18
H. S. Clouse	Oct. 2, '18
R. E. Smith	Nov. 1, '18
John E. Jantunen	Nov. 1, '18
Fred Henderson, by Victor Kallio	Oct. 1, '18
E. J. Hansen	Nov. 1, '18
A. J. Stevens, by Ray Hansen	Jan. 1, '18
H. E. Hansen	Nov. 1, '18
Geo. H. Lodge	Nov. 1, '18
Chas. C. Dittie	Nov. 1, '18
Arthur Swanson	Nov. 1, '18
E. J. Grombich	Nov. 1, '18
W. H. Swanson	Nov. 1, '18
E. A. Anderson	Nov. 1, '18
E. A. Anderson, by W. C. Warden	Nov. 1, '18
E. A. Anderson	Nov. 1, '18
G. A. Anderson	Nov. 1, '18
Mrs. J. J. Anderson	Nov. 1, '18
J. H. Overwood	Nov. 1, '18
Chas. C. Dittie	Nov. 1, '18

*Thomas Herbert Cheney was the grandfather of Vice President Dick Cheney.

Dawson County Historical Museum

Christmas Open House

Sunday, December 15th
2:00 – 4:00

Food, Games, Music
Christmas Crafts



give
BIG
Lexington
November 14, 2019

Thank You!

During Give Big this year we raised almost \$9000. We're well on our way to our 2019-2020 goal of \$20,000 to restore our Baldwin Train Engine.

*May your fire be warm
and your home be bright.
Merry Christmas!*

*From the Staff and Board
of the Dawson County Historical Museum*

