



MITCHELL CONNECTIONS

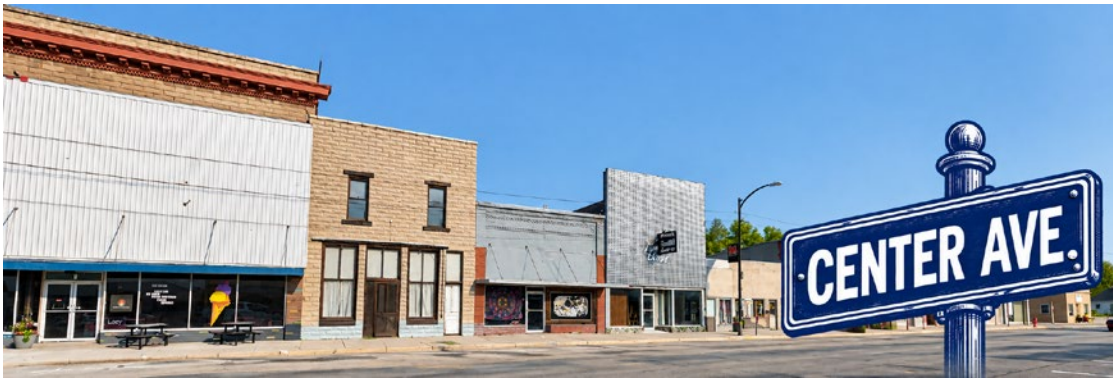
Celebrating the people, places, & stories of Mitchell, Nebraska

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WHEN MITCHELL TRADED TREES FOR NUMBERS

How 257 blue and white signs changed Mitchell



Before Mitchell had numbered streets and avenues, residents found their way around town using street names. Many were named for trees—including Walnut, Poplar, and Elm.

By 1929, community leaders believed the system needed to be simplified.

That June, the Mitchell Community Club proposed a new plan patterned after the numbering system used in Scottsbluff. Center Avenue would keep its name. Avenues east of Center would be identified by numbers, while avenues west of Center would be identified by letters.

The 55 people attending the meeting agreed with the proposal, which was then presented to the Mitchell City Council.

But Mitchell did not end up with the combination of letters and numbers the Community Club had recommended.

THE PLAN CHANGES

In September of 1931, City Council met with Mitchell Postmaster A. B. Jones to get the street-renaming project underway.

This time, city leaders decided to use numbers throughout

the new system rather than a combination of letters and numbers.

Once the decision was made, the city clerk ordered 257 new street signs. Each would have a blue background with white lettering and would be placed throughout Mitchell to properly identify its streets.

Those signs marked more than intersections. They marked the end of Mitchell's tree-named streets and the beginning of the numbered system we recognize today.



FROM THE EDITOR

donna@mittchellinvitation.com

Welcome to the second issue of Mitchell Connections! Thank you for all the positive comments and encouraging words after our first issue. It was wonderful to hear that people enjoyed reading about our community.

For nearly 30 years, I've written and designed newsletters for businesses and nonprofit organizations. What I've always enjoyed most is discovering something I didn't know before—a fascinating find in an old newspaper, a tidbit from a business owner, or an everyday person doing something special.

That's really what Mitchell Connections is about. You won't find paid advertising in these pages, but you will find Mitchell businesses. From downtown storefronts to cottage bakers, local makers, and others serving our community, I want to share what makes them worth knowing about.

That's Mitchell Connections—connecting our businesses, our history, our events and, most importantly, our people.

— Donna

Those signs marked more than intersections

They marked a town on the move.

— Sometimes the most ordinary things hold the most surprising history. —

A CENTURY OF DISCOVERIES

From Mitchell Mercantile Co. to The Happy Dackle

A look at Mitchell — then and now — and the potential that remains in our downtown.



B6247 Interior View Mitchell Merc. Co., Mitchell, Nebr.

Mitchell Mercantile

1308 Center Ave.



The Happy Dackle

Our town was in its infancy when the first mercantile took up a small space at the corner of Center Avenue and Elm Street, now known as 13th Street.

Two owners later, that tiny mercantile had doubled in size. Its shelves were filled with hundreds of products, while controversy and legal battles energized local gossip. Somehow, the mercantile lived through it all, remaining more profitable than ever.

But it couldn't survive fire. By 1904, the mercantile was gone.

One year later, Mr. Quivey planned a new store to replace the famous mercantile on the same city lots where its ill-fated predecessor once stood. Excavation began, then quickly halted when an opportunity arose to expand the project by purchasing an additional city lot.

A year later, Mitchell Mercantile opened in its new 75-by-140-foot building at Center Avenue and Elm Street.

Although the building was complete, the store kept changing. Kept evolving.

In 1912, a second floor was added across the entire building. Merchandise was carefully placed upstairs, just in time for Christmas. Mitchell Mercantile became known as the biggest store in western Nebraska.

Imagine walking into a store in Mitchell more than 100 years ago and finding

groceries, clothing and furniture.

That wouldn't be too surprising.

But what about a windmill? A wagon? A pump? Everything needed to furnish an entire house?

Or even a casket?

Mitchell Mercantile carried all of those things and more.

If a family needed funeral services, the store could even provide a hearse and a funeral director.

For a town the size of Mitchell, it must have been quite a place to explore and discover something totally unexpected.

Why go anywhere else when you could probably find it here?

More than a century later, people still walk through those doors wondering what they might find.

The merchandise has changed. The thrill of discovery has not.

The Happy Dackle began by using only part of the building. Over time, more vendors came in, more merchandise appeared, and the store spread farther toward the back.

Walk through today and you might find handmade goods, home décor, clothing, collectibles, gifts—or something you

weren't looking for at all.

That is exactly what happened to one shopper.

About a year after The Happy Dackle opened, a woman spotted a lid that matched a butter dish she owned. Years earlier, she had broken the lid from a butter dish that had belonged to her great-great-grandmother. For some reason, she had kept the bottom.

And there, among everything else in The Happy Dackle, was a matching lid.

Misty remembers the woman being so happy that she cried.

The Happy Dackle is still changing. Still evolving.

That's another part of the story that sounds familiar.

Mitchell Mercantile grew across three city lots and later added an entire second floor. The Happy Dackle has also grown little by little, using more of the building as the business has developed.

Different businesses. Different times. Very different merchandise.

But for more than a century, this building has offered Mitchell shoppers the same sense of anticipation:

You never know what you'll discover.



YOUR MITCHELL

People to meet. Places to go. Things to do.

IN MITCHELL'S KITCHEN

WHITE CHILI

I have no idea where my mother got this recipe, but she made it for as many years as I can remember during the cold winter months. It sure was good!

2 cups diced chicken (cooked)
1 can chicken broth
1 clove garlic, pressed
1 15-oz can navy beans
1 15-oz can great northern beans
1 onion, chopped
1 Tbsp. oil
8-oz chopped green chilies
1/2 tsp. of each: salt, cumin, oregano,
and cayenne pepper
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup milk or half & half

In a large pot, saute onion & garlic in oil. Add remaining ingredients except sour cream and milk. Bring to a boil, then simmer about 30 minutes. Remove from heat. Add 1 cup sour cream & 1/2 cup milk or half & half. Serves 6 - 8

Do you have an old family recipe with a Mitchell connection?

Do you have an old recipe that was always special? Something mom or grandma used to make?

I'd love to hear about it.

donna@mitchellinvitationco.com

DOWNTOWN STARTS WITH THE BUILDINGS

FROM THE EDITOR

My mother's hometown still exists. People still live there. But the downtown is gone.

Businesses disappeared, buildings sat unused, repairs were put off, and eventually there was very little left for another business to move into. As the town declined, I also watched residential property values fall sharply.

I think about that when I look at downtown Mitchell.

Businesses will always come and go. Some will last for generations; others will close after only a few years. But the buildings are different. They are what make a downtown possible in the first place.

If we want new businesses in Mitchell in the future, we need buildings they can actually move into.

Some of our downtown buildings now need substantial work before that can happen. Restoring an old commercial building can cost a tremendous amount of money. An owner may care very much about a building and still find that the repairs are more than one person can reasonably take on.

That is why I don't think this should become a matter of simply pointing fingers.

Nebraska law allows communities to create a vacant property registry—one way to identify buildings that have been sitting empty, keep track of their condition and ownership, and begin planning for their rehabilitation and reuse.

But a registry alone will not save a building.

A notice will not repair a roof. A fine will not replace wiring. Changing ownership does not make the repair bill disappear.

The building still has to be saved.

Maybe that is where Mitchell needs to think differently.

Small businesses do more than fill storefronts. They employ people, buy

from other businesses, collect sales tax and keep money moving through the community.

When a downtown loses usable buildings, it also loses places where those businesses can begin.

That is why I believe this is bigger than any one property owner.

The buildings may be privately owned, but whether they survive affects all of us. Perhaps the city, property owners, businesses and residents need to begin talking together about what it will actually take to preserve these buildings before the cost becomes impossible.

We already have an example of why that matters.

The building that now houses The Happy Dackle has served Mitchell for more than a century. Businesses have changed, merchandise has changed, and the building itself has changed. But it is still here.

And because it is still here, another business has a place to begin.

My mother's hometown did not lose its downtown all at once. It happened little by little.

I don't want Mitchell to realize too late that the same thing happened here.

Businesses will come and go. The buildings are what give the next business a place to begin.

Saving downtown starts with saving the buildings.



*Pick up a copy, read online,
or share with a neighbor!*

Mitchell Invitation Co
1315 Center Ave
Next to Redz

BEFORE YOU VOTE, ASK THEM.

Meet Mitchell's candidates. Hear their ideas. Ask the questions that matter to you.



PUBLIC MEET & GREET • OCTOBER 21 • 6PM • CORNERSTONE COFFEE

Names on a ballot tell us who is running. They do not tell us what the candidates believe, what they would change, or how they would lead Mitchell.

On October 21 at 6 p.m., the candidates for the upcoming mayor and City Council election will take part in a public Meet & Greet at Cornerstone Coffee. Everyone is invited to attend, hear from the candidates, and ask questions.

LOCAL ELECTIONS SHAPE DAILY LIFE

Local elections may not get as much attention as national races. Yet the choices made at City Hall often affect our daily lives the most.

Our elected leaders work for the people of Mitchell. They are our voice in deciding what our community needs today and what Mitchell should become in the future. We should choose leaders who will listen, explain their decisions, answer our questions honestly, use public money wisely, and put Mitchell's needs first.

A vote does more than fill an empty seat. It

gives someone the authority to speak and make decisions on our behalf. If we elect leaders who do not listen or take action, the same problems may continue. When we choose thoughtful, responsible leaders, our concerns have a better chance of being heard—and our community has a better chance of moving forward.

That is why voting should involve more than choosing a familiar name. Before we vote, we should learn what each candidate stands for and how that person plans to serve Mitchell.

The Meet & Greet gives us a chance to do that.

We may not all agree on what Mitchell needs most. But listening to the candidates and comparing their answers can help each of us make an informed choice.

Voting is the final step. Learning who the candidates are—and what they plan to do—is where an informed vote begins.

COMING UP IN MITCHELL

OCTOBER 2026

OCT. 10 & 24
9-1 PM
PEACEFUL PRAIRIE WINTER MARKET
Starting October 10 and continuing every other Saturday! Shop a variety of handmade goods, homemade baked treats, and unique creations from local makers.
📍 40090 Brookway Dr., Mitchell

OCT. 17
11 AM-1 PM
SAMPLE SATURDAY
Dorothy's Bakery will have samples fresh from the oven! Taste cookies and various cinnamon roll flavors.
📍 Mitchell Invitation Co. 1315 Center Ave

OCT. 20
5:30 PM
BUSINESS RESOURCE PRESENTATION NIGHT
Financial Advisor Dail Eastman from Edward Jones. This event is open to everyone. Sponsored by Mitchell Chamber of Commerce.
📍 Nile Theatre Downtown Mitchell

OCT. 21
6 PM
MEET THE CANDIDATES
Meet the Candidates for the upcoming City Council and Mayor Election. Sponsored by Mitchell Chamber of Commerce and Cornerstone Coffee.
📍 Cornerstone Coffee Downtown Mitchell

OCT. 24 & 25
MONSTER BASH
Join the fun with skills training class, costume contest, chili potluck, trunk or treat, and spooof races.
📍 Platte Valley Dirt Riders 60417 Mitchell South Rd

OCT. 31
2-4 PM
TRUNK OR TREAT
Bring the family downtown for a festive evening of consumes, treats, and community fun. Redz will also host a Husker football tailgate.
📍 Downtown Mitchell

Event details may change. Check with the host before heading out.