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## Byron Menke Speaks



Byron Menke, owner of Menke Auction & Realty in Treynor, spoke. Byron grew up in Nebraska and was always intrigued with farm sales, sale barns, and eating lunch there plus homemade pie. When Byron was a high

school senior, he talked to a distant relative about being an auctioneer. He was told to go to school, then come see him and he would let him help a time or two.

So his dad made him a deal. If he walked all the beans before the August session, he could go. He attended the Auction College at Mason City, Iowa, the largest at the time. The ten day school cost \$465 for room, board, and tuition. This was the late 70's and the dress and grooming was strict. No hair could hit the collar, and a barber was nearby! Approximately 110 men and women ranging from 16 to 72 attended from 30 states, Canada and Europe.

Guidelines for behavior were strict as was the schedule. Menke stated the first three days made you want to jump off a cliff as they constantly did tongue twisters and number talking. By the end, the public was invited to an auction and each student could sell an item and also serve as a ring man. He never regretted going.

When Byron was done, he was fortunate to be asked to join two established auctioneers back home in Wayne, NE who broke him in. He states his best critics were order buyers who taught him not to go too long – “When done, say, ‘Done’.” One time all five order buyers walked out the back door half way through the auction. Byron was thinking, “Now what do I do?” When they returned they stated, “Last warning!” At that time the largest livestock auction was in Norfolk, NE and he was asked to help on Saturdays and so he got his start.

He eventually moved to Treynor in 1986 because he accepted a job at IBP in CB. When

he was a child, his family would go visit “the Iowa People”. His relatives were the Heithoff family so he is also related to the Vorthmanns, Timms, and Brunings – more relatives than in Wayne, NE. So now he is part of “the Iowa People.”

His first auction in Iowa was Babe and Madelyn Parker’s farm sale. Fifteen years ago he moved into the warehouse in Treynor. The mood started changing for attending auctions and there were fewer buyers. For estates, sellers’ antiques were put together for one sale. Now he says antiques are worth a fraction of what it was. Younger buyers want new.

COVID really kick-started online auctions. Online and hybrid live bidding are now common. Estate auctions are difficult to have today and it’s really hard for Byron to let an elderly couple know that. Often the expenses for auctioning would be greater than the value of the items. Antiques can still be pulled and sold with other estates.

Other alternatives could be finding a place such as Many Treasures. There is also someone in Atlantic who will pull out antiques and collectibles and sell the rest at a thrift store. Habitat, Micah House, etc. does not pick up anymore. It was mentioned there is an online auction called Caring Transitions. Byron stated when his parents were moving, he tagged their items and then the family had first choice to buy. A large garage sale was held the next day and the rest was donated to a charitable organization.

Today he stated a nice couch might bring \$10, and a formal dining table with hutch you can hardly give away. You can’t give fine china away. Young people today don’t use display cases.

Today Menke auctions a few live auctions and averages 16-18 non-profit charitable auctions in the area. There are more and more land auctions as well as residential houses (including higher end homes) being auctioned.

Collections such as antique signs or farm signs can be sold more successfully online. You can locate vintage sale groups on Facebook, which is an important means of advertising. Check out [menke-auction.com](http://menke-auction.com)

### Next week's Speaker:

Tiffany Blevins, Manager of Treynor Dollar General.

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#### Famous Quote

*"There is no substitute for hard work."*

*Thomas Edison*

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#### Meeting Minutes

Jordan Campbell called the meeting to order. There were 18 members present. Byron Menke was a guest.

Campbell led the pledge and offered the prayer. Keith Denton and Steve Chambers shared a joke.

**50/50:** Chad Gutttau won.

**Attendance:** Steve Irwin's name was drawn and claimed.

**Birthdays:** None:

**Anniversaries:** Keith Denton paid \$2 to announce his and Georgia's 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We're glad we could help you remember, Keith!

**Bragging Rights:** (Dollars are contributed to benefit local youth programs.)

1. Gary Funkhouser stated that NWMS plays tonight. The tournament was moved to Maryville.

#### Community:

1. The Treynor Pops Concert is Monday, March 13.
2. There is also a Legion Fish Fry Monday evening.
3. It was announced that the Miracle Field which will serve those with special needs at The T in Treynor has received an \$800,000 grant!
4. It was announced the Mouse Derby made over \$5000 and was fun.
5. It was stated that Jerry Lustgraaf fell and hurt his hip.

#### Business:

1. Can Kennel sorting will be at 3 PM Wednesday and will benefit Studio 7 Dance Team.
2. John Klein circulated a grant application for \$5000 through Western Iowa Community Foundation Impact Grants for expenses for the can kennel if the Glenwood cooperative recycling center should close.
3. Dale Willenborg states the Cub Scouts will put our flyers about collecting food and the Optimists will also put out flyers for flags at that time.
4. John Klein stated 160 new plastic can kennel bags have been donated by Home Depot.

#### Auction Items: None.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

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#### HUMOR

##### Marquees:

- Frog parking only, all others will be toad.
- I want to grow my own food, but I can't find bacon seeds.
- This is my step ladder. I never knew my real ladder.

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#### Calendar

##### Events

Mar 15	Can Kennel Sorting 3 PM
May 1	Mulch Madness 12:30-3:30 PM

##### Birthdays

##### Anniversaries

##### Programs:

Mar	Linda Danker (last two weeks)
Apr	Keith Denton
	John Klein (last Sat.)
May	Dale Willenborg

##### Speakers

Mar 18	Tiffany Blevins, Manager of Dollar General
Mar 25	TBA