

# DOWNNS

Chamber of Commerce

## SPOTLIGHT MEMBER OF THE MONTH



S.H. Domoney came to America from England as a young lad. His family settled in Cloud County (Aurora) where they established a store in 1902. He put in a line of furniture and as with many pioneer businesses selling household goods; he also became the village under taker. Many furniture stores built their own products and since they had the boards (lumber), they were called upon to build coffins and bury the dead.

A fire in 1904 leveled the structure that housed the furniture and funeral business in Aurora. Domoney decided to find a different town rather than rebuilding and Downs was the kind of town he was looking for.

Unlike many early proprietors in the business, he took the view that the furniture and embalming business should be in separate buildings and that is the way he set it up in Downs, having one of the first funeral parlors in the area. S.H. Domoney kept up with the latest in developments such as buying an early motorized Dodge hearse to replace the horse-drawn black hearse. Over the years, the Domoney family has continued the combination business of furniture and funeral home.

At one time the Domoneys (Vernon and John, third generation) operated the ambulance service. Of course, the maintaining of such an emergency service again fell into place much like furniture stores having the boards to build coffins. Having the funeral hearse was the type of vehicle that could be used to haul sick and injured persons.

John and Vernon became partners in 1959 when their father, Harry Domoney passed

away. The fourth generation, Dewey Domoney, attended the University of Kansas and later mortuary school in Oklahoma before returning to Downs in 1981. He has been the owner of Domoney's Furniture and Funeral Home since 1991. The furniture store was totally remodeled after a storm in 2010 took the roof off part of the building, damaging much of the furniture and the interior. The spacious original tin ceilings were saved and are an important reminder of the history of the business.

The furniture business attracts people from as far away as Dodge City, Great Bend, Topeka, Wichita, Hastings—just to name a few. Dewey is very dedicated to selling quality built furniture and providing top notch customer service after the sale! Dewey, like his predecessors, has worn many hats during his era in the business. Several years ago when the man providing Alltel phone services to the Downs community decided to move, Dewey stepped up and took on the responsibility of selling and servicing Alltel phones in the furniture store. About the same time, Downs Monuments and Memorials become for sale and became part of the company.

Dewey is a licensed embalmer and funeral director and owner of the dual business. Pam Meier is a licensed assistant funeral director and is a full-time employee associated with both businesses plus she helps customers design headstones. Also employed is Sonja Collard who helps with sales, funeral paperwork, and internet sites. Isaac Schoen is a part-time employee who helps with deliveries and other duties.

*Thank you for your support!*

**Domoney Furniture  
& Funeral Home**  
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