



DISCOVER
AMERICA'S STORY

The Mooreland Leader Case Study

- Mooreland, Oklahoma
- The Mooreland Leader founded & continually published since 1903
- Owner & Publisher: Tim Schnoebelen
- Learned about Discover America's Story & launched digitization initiative: 2014
- Digital archives available so far: 41 years
- Digitization funding generated by advertising/promotion sales: 100%
- Archive URL: <http://mor.stparchive.com/>

For 112 years, The Mooreland Leader has documented the community history of Mooreland – a town of about 1,300 in northwest Oklahoma. The town is along the Santa Fe main line and, being 130 miles from Oklahoma City, is in the heart of oil country. The newspaper, published each Thursday, was founded in 1903 by Omer Schnoebelen and today is run by the 3rd and 4th generations of the family.

As well as being committed to keeping the community informed, the Schnoebelens have a commitment to preserving the Mooreland history the paper has documented over the decades. In addition to their print archive, Tim Schnoebelen led an effort 40 years ago to convert the archives to microfilm – the way newspapers were archived in that era. Though it was comforting to have a film copy, Tim described searching the microfilm archive as time-consuming and arduous.

As the Internet and digital technology evolved, he focused on a new goal – finding an affordable way to make the archive online accessible and searchable so that everyone could enjoy looking back at Mooreland's history and retrieving information they need.

Tim Schnoebelen, Publisher of The Mooreland Leader: *“This project has been on my bucket list for several years. The archives are currently difficult if not impossible for individuals to access and search, but once they are digitized and placed online, the community will be able to truly discover Mooreland's story.”*

The Search for a Solution.

Schnoebelen knew an accessible archive would be a huge hit in Mooreland. When, at the newspaper's centennial celebration, they placed old newspaper photographs on a table for the community's taking, people snatched up the images and had a ball sharing them with family and friends.



Then, when the newspaper's Facebook page “Preserving Mooreland, OK History” was created in February 2015, the community responded just as enthusiastically. Within weeks of the launch, the page had nearly 1,500 “likes” and was responsible for 200,000 clicks on newspaper photos promoted through the page.

The next step was to make the complete archive online accessible and searchable to meet the community's insatiable appetite for the stories and images of the town's past. He knew the answer was digitization, but how would he be able to make it work with the limited resources of a small market newspaper?

Schnoebelen reached out to SmallTownPapers, Inc. which specializes in archiving solutions for small market and community newspapers. While discussing costs and benefits, he learned about Discover America's Story – an upcoming new program to help publishers generate a fresh revenue stream which could be used to support archive digitization. Even before the program had been officially announced, Schnoebelen was immediately sold and eager to get started.

Making it happen.

While SmallTownPapers was working to create the first digital images of the archive for the newspaper to see, Tim Schnoebelen was talking up the program in Mooreland. With Discover America's Story, the community is encouraged to rally around the historical preservation project and local businesses and organizations can demonstrate their support through program sponsorships. Within the first couple of weeks, Schnoebelen had secured his first sponsors and was building promotional pieces to promote Discover America's Story and his early adopters.

 <p><i>Thank you to our local sponsors of</i> DISCOVER AMERICA'S STORY</p> <p>We continue towards our goal of having all issues of The Mooreland Leader since the beginning in 1903 online by late fall.</p> <p>Business sponsor logos and individual sponsors will be on display permanently on The Leader's website and the Discover America's story (archive) website. Both websites are currently online, but are not yet completed.</p> <p><i>Preserving Mooreland's Past. One publication at a time.</i></p>		<p>Current Sponsors:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1031 850 1218 976"> <p>DUSTIN DONLEY CONSTRUCTION SERVICES MOORELAND, OK (580) 994-6195</p> <p><small>HOTEL, RENTALS, TRAVEL, STORAGE, PARTY, HOME, BUSINESS, ETC.</small></p> </td> <td data-bbox="1226 850 1412 976"> <p>M.E.D.O. Mooreland Economic Development Organization <i>Moving Mooreland Forward</i></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1031 987 1218 1102"> <p>MOORE'S ROOFING 323 SOUTH MAIN MOORELAND, OK (580) 994-8417</p> <p><small>COMMERCIAL ROOFING AND RESTORATION CALL US FOR YOUR FREE QUOTE</small></p> </td> <td data-bbox="1226 987 1412 1102"> <p>SMITH & CO. Auction & Realty 1102 Oklahoma Ave Woodward, OK (580) 254-3975</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>DURO-LAST THE WORLD'S BEST TIRE</p> <p>Sean & Tawn Merrill Lawrence & Doris Romine David & Joyce Coats Elmer & Karen Ansley JoAnn Teter Tim & Karen Schnoebelen</p> <p>If you or your business would like to be a sponsor, call us at (580) 994-5410, or come by the office at 202 North Main in Mooreland for information. Make checks payable to The Mooreland Leader. Mail to P.O. Box 137, Mooreland, OK 73852</p>	<p>DUSTIN DONLEY CONSTRUCTION SERVICES MOORELAND, OK (580) 994-6195</p> <p><small>HOTEL, RENTALS, TRAVEL, STORAGE, PARTY, HOME, BUSINESS, ETC.</small></p>	<p>M.E.D.O. Mooreland Economic Development Organization <i>Moving Mooreland Forward</i></p>	<p>MOORE'S ROOFING 323 SOUTH MAIN MOORELAND, OK (580) 994-8417</p> <p><small>COMMERCIAL ROOFING AND RESTORATION CALL US FOR YOUR FREE QUOTE</small></p>	<p>SMITH & CO. Auction & Realty 1102 Oklahoma Ave Woodward, OK (580) 254-3975</p>
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The new revenue allowed him to give the go-ahead for more archive issues to be digitized and placed online at the newspaper's dedicated archive page – mor.stparchive.com.

Getting the word out.

The Mooreland Leader started with a series of warm introductory articles written by Tim which were placed prominently on the newspaper's front page explaining what Discover America's Story is all about. Additionally, they published a quarter page of bullets about the project – why it's needed, what it will mean for the community and how people can participate. Then they created a series of advertisements to continue to promote the project and its growing list of local sponsors.

Discover America's Story provided the newspaper with logos and language about the project as well as templates for press releases, articles, blogs and social posts which serve as a starting point for the

publisher. Already having an active Facebook page gave the newspaper a great vehicle for continually building interest in the new and growing online archive.

Tim Schnoebelen: *“When finished, people will be able to conveniently search and take a look at every Leader issue from April 18, 1903 to the present. We’ll have more than 50,000 archive page images and our new issues will be digitized adding about 600 images per year.”*

See The Mooreland Leader archive at: <http://mor.stparchive.com/>

Learn more about Discover America’s Story at: www.discoveramericasstory.com