

Seneca Variety Store

By: Michaela J. Altenhofen

What's exciting about small businesses is the history it holds. Some small businesses have a short history, but others hold decades of stories and former owners. Seneca Variety Store has been located on Seneca's Main Street for over 40 years. It started as a Ben Franklin store. The owners of the Seneca Variety are Jack and Dona Willmeth. They bought the store in October 2011 from the previous owners Cyril and Sue Steinlage.

When you walk in the front door of the store you will be welcomed by an old fashioned lamp post with a street sign that reads "Everything & More". And, it's true! Seneca Variety has just about everything you can think of: fabric, notions and crafts; toys, games and puzzles; gifts, cards and home décor; office, school and home supplies. People from the Northeast Kansas and Southwest Nebraska region shop at Seneca Variety. When asked what makes people come to Seneca Variety instead of a big box store like Wal-Mart Dona stated, "Our prices are just as competitive, you don't have to travel out of town, and you are supporting the local economy by shopping here."

Over the past few years Seneca Variety has had some accomplishments they are proud to share. In 2013 they were named the Emerging Business of The Year from the Kansas Small Business Development Center. Jim's Formal wear named Seneca Variety as an Elite Retailer of the Year for 2015.

Dona and Jack are constantly working to make the store better and improve their product line. They have the largest selection of Melissa & Doug toys in the entire region. Last year, they added tuxedo rental and helium balloons. Seneca Variety offers a punch card too. For every \$15 spent you get a punch on the card and after 10 punches you get a \$15 gift certificate for the store.

Dona and Jack always want to make sure that customers receive friendly and courteous service. If you can't find what you need at Seneca Variety (which is pretty hard to do) they are happy to try and get it for you. The store is located at 425 Main Street in Seneca, Kansas and open Monday – Friday 8:30-5:30 pm and Saturday 8:30 am- 4:00 pm.

