

George

Widman's



Since the 1940s Widman's Candy Shop – the home of the “Chipper” a “chocolate covered” potato chip – has been a cornerstone in Grand Forks, ND. Owner George Widman is a fourth generation candymaker who shows up to work every day. “I’m 86 and my wife is 82 and we’re here every morning ‘til night. I’ll keep on going until they haul me out,” he said.

That time almost came in the spring of 1997 when the Red River reached record levels. The business sits just a block from the river and the floodwaters destroyed everything in the candy shop.

Most people who lose their entire business at the age of 76 would probably just give up, but not George. “No never. You know why? It took me 30 years to pay for this building,” he said with a determined grin.

After refinishing the store and buying all new equipment, Widman's Candy Shop was up and running – in the same location – within a year after the flood. In fact, it was one of the first businesses to repopulate the downtown business district.

Even though the flood of 1997 has been dubbed the “Flood of the Century”, Widman has learned from his experience and won't get caught off guard again. “We've got an idea on what we'd do – we've got a plan,” he said. And that plan likely includes continuing to supply the Red River valley with “Chippers” for many years to come.

