Deming is located in the Southwestern part of New Mexico, 33 miles North of the Mexico border, a land of an ever present sun and flowing desert rocks and cacti. Deming has been named a "Rock-Hunters Paradise."

The history of the area dates back nearly 1,000 years ago, when the Mimbres Indians, the first people known to inhabit the area, lived in villages along the Mimbres River and farmed the area. Primitive though they were in other respects, the pictures of daily life they painted inside their pottery reflect their gifted creativity and unsurpassed skill in reproducing likeness of animals and birds. Known throughout the world, some beautiful samples of the magnificent Mimbres Pottery are on display in the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum.

It was about 1800 that the Americans entered Southwest New Mexico. Deming's first years were hard ones, with the usual problems of a small Western town. It had such a bad reputation that some outlaws rounded up in Arizona were given one way tickets to Deming. Back in 1850 it was a Butterfield Stage Trail stop.

Retire in Deming

Deming is the county seat of Luna County and was founded in November, 1881. Named for Mary Deming Crocker, wife of a railroad magnate of the Southern Pacific Railway system the town was the result of railroad expansion to the West. The Southern Pacific, building toward the Pacific coast, reached this point in late 1881, and made preparations for the construction of a round house and repair shops. This activity furnished the incentive for the erection of a city of tents and shanties. Six months later, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe completed its junction with the Southern Pacific at Deming, thus assuring Deming a prominence in the Southern part of New Mexico.

During the year of 1882, settlers flocked in, and substantial buildings were erected. E. Germain and Company opened the first store in Deming, using old boxcars for storerooms. Pictures of Deming's growing up years can be found on the picture page.

The business district of Deming is located on what was a Wayndotte Script Location. As the result of treaties with the Wayndotte Indians on March 17, 1842 and January 31, 1855, the U.S. government issued land warrants, later termed "Wayndotte Script." which were good for land in the public domain.

With a population of 1600 persons in 1887, Deming had two schools, one private and one public, a Methodist and a Congregational Church and four hotels. By 1891, there were in addition to the other churches an Episcopal and a Catholic church which was under construction. There were two newspapers, the Headlight (which is still in existence) and the Advance. This same year a "City Club" was organized, composed of the citizens of Deming, and having for its object the establishment of a library and the promotion of social, commercial and scientific development for the community.

In 1923 and 1924, a serious economic decline hit the Deming area. Demings two banks, The Bank of Deming and the First National Bank were forced to close their doors. Recovery was slow. Like many other towns, Deming had its problems during the depression. The coming of World War II stimulated growth in the community. As a part of the war effort, the Deming National Guard was called into federal service and was sent to the Philippines. This unit was the 200 Coast Artillery commanded by C.G. Sage, the publisher of the local paper. Altogether, there were about 246 men from Luna County in the regiment. In the Philippines, most of these men participated in the infamous Battan Death March where several Deming soldiers lost their lives. Most of them remained prisoners of war until 1945.

During the first World War, the War Department established Camp Cody near Deming, as a training encampment that covered over 2000 acres. At the termination of the war, Camp Cody was used for a tuberculosis sanatorium for ex-soldiers. It was operated by the Catholic Sisters of the Holy Cross. In 1939 Camp Cody was completely destroyed by fire and the sanatorium closed at the same time. During World War II, an Army Air Force Base was installed in Deming, located at what is now the "Municipal Deming Airport and Industrial Park." This base trained bombardiers and there were over 5000 men stationed at this base.

There was not a serious decline in Deming's economy following World War II as there had been after WW I. Deming's industry and farming grew and its population increased to its present day size of 14,116 (Census Bureau 2000)and Luna County is 25,016 people of mixed nationalities. Deming has grown 20% and Luna County has grown 38% since the 1990 Census. Today Deming is a full service community with low cost of living, affordable taxes, taxi service, municipal airport, hospital/ambulance service, nursing home, senior citizens center, library, over 40 churches, over 80 listed organizations, 18 hole golf course, civic center, public auditorium, schools and a community college.