

# Yankton College Honors Greyhounds Who Gave All

BY ROB NIELSEN

rob.nielsen@yankton.net

Yankton College closed its doors to students in 1984, but a legacy of service lives on.

Yankton College sent soldiers to nearly every major conflict between World War I and the Iraq War. Of the many men who went off to war, 44 did not return. Their sacrifices have been recognized with a plaque that has been on display in the lobby of the Summit Activities Center since 2002.

Yankton College Executive Director Jan Garrity said the wartimes the college witnessed had profound effects on the student population school itself.

"When it was wartime during the college years, it put a strain on the finances of the college," Garrity said. "Everything kind of evolved as governmental procedures evolved. Once there was the Selective Service Act, there were so many people that just stepped up to the plate while they were in school and they signed up for the wars. They had to interrupt their education; and some of them never returned, of course."

Yankton College's history of service goes all the way back to founder Joseph Ward who, before founding the college in 1881, had been a rifleman in the Civil War and later an enlistee in the United States Christian Commission which helped care for wounded soldiers.

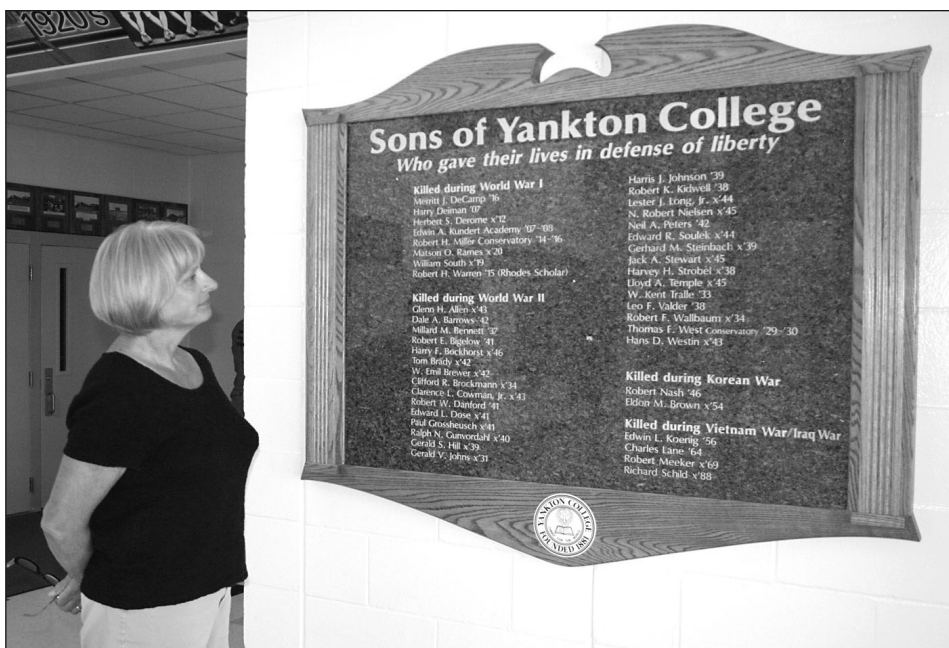
The first Yankton College student killed in war was Robert Warren, son of then YC president Henry Kimball Warren, on Nov. 25, 1916. The United States hadn't officially entered World War I, however, Warren volunteered to serve with the American Ambulance Service in France. He was posthumously awarded the French Medal of Honor along with a medal from the Belgian government.

Meanwhile, the city of Yankton, along with the college, became caught up in the war effort. The college established a unit of the Student's Army Training Corps and required all able-bodied male students to join.

In total, eight former students would die during The Great War.

Being in wartime put many strains on the school, as it did with many campuses across the country. During World War II, the college collaborated with the Navy to train pilots through its Civilian Pilot Training course.

Registrar Judi Olson said the military demands for men added to the school's



ABOVE: Yankton College Executive Director Jan Garrity looks over the plaque posted in the lobby of the Yankton High School/Summit Activities Center with the roll of all Yankton College students and alumni who died in war. BELOW: Robert Warren was the first Yankton College war casualty. He died in 1916 while serving as a volunteer with the American Ambulance Service in France. He was the son of Yankton College president Henry Kimball Warren.



PHOTO: YANKTON COLLEGE

long-standing money woes.

"Another thing that put a cramp on Yankton College's finances was the Department of Navy," Olson said. "They'd pull those cadets in the blink of an eye. The school would be planning for them to come on a certain date and the Navy would say they aren't up to our standards and we're not sending them. That caused quite a bit of financial problems."

Extra-curricular activities also felt the effects of the war, Garrity said.

"Lots of activities were canceled because of the war," she said. "The football teams were eliminated

nearly every other year because of their involvement as servicemen and there just weren't enough big guys left to make a team."

World War II claimed 30 lives affiliated with Yankton College.

The Korean War added a further two to the list of those Yankton College grads making the ultimate sacrifice.

Garrity said the Vietnam War proved a bit uneasy for the college's population.

"They had protests in Yankton," she said. "In our little community, we had a little unrest."

Three Yankton College graduates died in the conflict.

About a decade after the war in Vietnam ended, the college closed its doors to students when financial struggles got the best of it. The campus now serves as the home of Federal Prison Camp, Yankton.

One more former student, Richard Schild, was lost during the Iraq War.

Those former YC students who lost their lives during wartime were memorialized with a plaque dedicated by the Yankton College Y-Club during a 2002 reunion. The plaque includes the following names:

#### KILLED DURING WORLD WAR I

Merritt J. DeCamp '16  
Harry Deiman '07  
Herbert S. Derome '12  
Edwin A. Kundert (Academy) '07-'08  
Robert H. Miller (Conservatory) '14-'16  
Matson O. Rames x'20  
William South x'19  
Robert H. Warren '15 (Rhodes Scholar)

#### KILLED DURING WORLD WAR II

Glenn H. Allen x'43  
Dale A. Barrows '42  
Millard M. Bennett '37  
Robert E. Bigelow '41  
Harry F. Brockhorst x'46  
Tom Brady x'42  
W. Emil Brewer x'42  
Clifford R. Brockman x'34  
Clarence L. Cowman, Jr. x'43

Robert W. Danford '41  
Edward L. Dose x'41  
Paul Grossheusch x'41  
Ralph N. Gunvordahl x'40  
Gerald S. Hill x'39  
Gerald V. Johns x'31  
Harris J. Johnson '39  
Robert K. Kidwell '38  
Lester J. Long, Jr. x'44  
N. Robert Nielsen x'45  
Neil A. Peters '42  
Edward R. Soulek x'44  
Gerhard M. Steinbach x'39

Jack A. Stewart x'45  
Harvey H. Strobel x'38  
Lloyd A. Temple x'45  
W. Kent Tralle '33  
Leo F. Vader '38  
Robert F. Wallbaum x'34  
Thomas F. West (Conservatory) '29-'30  
Hans D. Westin x'43

#### KILLED DURING KOREAN WAR

Robert Nash '46  
Eldon M. Brown x'54

#### KILLED DURING VIETNAM WAR

Edwin L. Koenig '56  
Charles Lane '64  
Robert Meeker x'69

#### KILLED DURING IRAQ WAR

Robert Schild x'88

(X = Non-Graduate)

For more information on both the military and general history of Yankton College, read Robert F. Karolevitz's "Yankton College: A Continuing Story."

You can follow Rob Nielsen on Twitter at [twitter.com/RobNielsenPandD/](https://twitter.com/RobNielsenPandD/). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net/](http://www.yankton.net/)



COURTESY PHOTO

Matt Michels, current lieutenant governor of South Dakota and a Yankton attorney, began his military career stationed in the Philippines.

## Michels Recalls His First Years In The Military

BY MATT MICHELIS

LCDR United States Navy

In July 1985, I was deployed to Subic Bay Naval Station on the western part of the main island of the Republic of the Philippines. The Philippines has a great deal of history connected to not only the United States during the Spanish American War and World War II, when MacArthur did return, but also a connection to our South Dakota National Guard in that South Dakota units did serve in the Republic of the Philippines.

When I arrived, although I had received my commission as a United States Naval Officer in the Judge Advocate Generals' Corps, my first year of law school and had various temporary assignments, this was my first set of "permanent orders."

Immediately upon arrival, I became a member of the international law group negotiating cases with local officials pertaining to sailors and marines who committed crimes within the country of the Philippines and outside the jurisdiction of the base. My main job was not only to be a diplomat but to secure jurisdiction over the service member so if evidence warranted that administrative proceedings or court martial would commence. The situations and issues varied on a daily basis from alleged assaults, thefts, up to and including very heinous crimes of rape and manslaughter. I actually ended up as a regional prosecutor later that year and tried my first cases on board a ship in Singapore.

About a year into my tour, I was assigned to a negotiating team with my Air Force counterparts and diplomatic team from the United States Embassy in Manila to embark on negotiating extensions of the Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Station/Naval Air Station. These negotiations were very sensitive and were classified due to the fact that President Carter, during his term of office, had signed an agreement to relinquish the ownership and operation back to the Republic of the Philippines government. This was very problematic because of the insurgency rise in the southern Philippines that really was the predecessor organization to al-Qaida and radical Muslim factions.

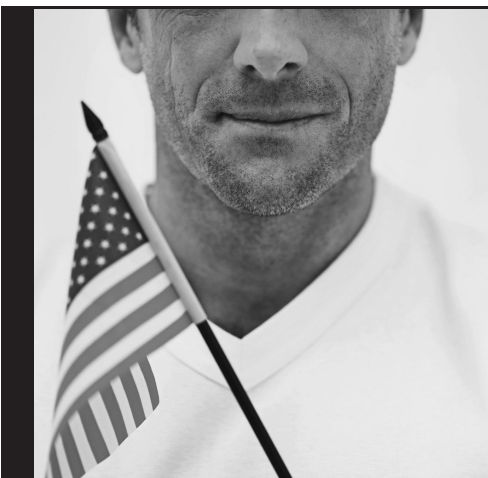
Before I started this tour of duty, I had no knowledge of the international tension nor strategic importance of this area of the world and rapidly became aware of the numerous amounts of terrorist activity that took place and was not publicized. Then, as is now, the radical Muslims of those factions have only one goal in mind and that is to destroy the United States of America. Simultaneously, President Marcos was deposed as president through a military coup d'etat and the situation throughout the country and especially the bases became significant security issues. There was plenty of weaponry, and at one point gunfire erupted while I was on patrol with our security team. Our training had served us well as we took cover and evaded militants attempting to enter the base.

I was privileged to negotiate with the new government of President Aquino and the Republic of the Philippines attorney general, along with our diplomatic corp an extension of the base treaty for a few more years. By the early 1990's the bases had been turned over to the Republic of the Philippines and, ironically given the serious issues that are taking place in that part of the world, according to press accounts, discussions are currently underway to allow training to resume at both of those bases. The Republic of the Philippines sits near strategic interests of the United States including China, Japan, Malaysia and obviously shipping and access routes to the Middle East. Before I was assigned my next duty station in Mayport, Florida, I was humbled and honored to receive, from the Secretary of the Navy, the Navy Achievement Medal for my efforts. One segment of my citation reads:

"Lt. Michels' negotiations with local Philippine officials during an extremely sensitive timeframe, which included a revolution, Coup d'etat and complete change of governmental officials, prevented the occurrence and problems that could easily have ballooned into a major international incident. Additionally, he played a major role in providing support for the labor negotiation team during a major strike by the local Subic Bay base employees union which closed the gates of all United States military facilities in the Republic of the Philippines."

Go Navy!

**"... at one point gunfire erupted while I was on patrol with our security team. Our training had served us well as we took cover and evaded a militants attempting to enter the base."**



## Thank You Veterans & Soldiers!

We recognize the many sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform both today and throughout our nations history. We honor their courage and dedication, and we thank them for their contribution to our country.

**HyVee**  
EMPLOYEE OWNED

2100 Broadway, Yankton • 665-3412

They are our family, friends and neighbors; everyday citizens, yet so much more.

They are the brave men and women who have been on the front lines in defense of our freedom.

We take this opportunity today to say thank you to all who have served for our Armed Forces.

We would especially like to thank the veterans of the Hunhoff and Rokusek families who have served in the military.

**Senator Jean Hunhoff & Family**

