

Americanism Program

For many years Post 28 has promoted citizenship awards to local schools, including oratorical contests on some phase of the Constitution and sending representatives to Boys' State. Many schools and churches have been presented flags, the most recent being a presentation of a Palmetto State Flag to the University of South Carolina, Spartanburg branch.

Credit is due the following who have contributed helpfully in the preparation of this paper: Marion W. Burgin, Judge Bobo Burnett, Mrs. Madga Calus, J. Wm. Davenport, M. Frank Edwards, John L. Farmer, Mrs. Miller C. Foster, Chas. E. Godfrey, Dr E. I. Johnson, Harvey W. Johnson, Dr. Lionel Lawson, Broadus R. Littlejohn, Carl W. Littlejohn and Sam Manning. (Given to Jesse Campbell by Mike Burgin in 1973)

Boys' State

The 2013 rising high school seniors sponsored by Post 28 to attend the Boys State program are from the following schools:

1. Spartanburg HS—Noah S. Martin, Andrew B. Culbertson, Alexander S. Camp, and William Valainis
2. Byrnes HS—Tristan R. Arrowood, Michael E. King, Brandon R. Chamberland, and Adam B. Asbill
3. Broome HS—Codi Royer, Tery Burt, Justin Leuthiphohn, and Justin Andrus
4. Dorman—Eric S. Moe, Charles A. Pickens, and Jacob L. Rupp
5. Spartanburg Day School—Craig N. Lyon

Americanism School Awards

Local schools generally participating in Americanism School Awards by Post No. 28 have been:

- Carver
- Cleveland
- Dorman
- Evans
- Fairforest
- Florence Chapel
- D. R. Hill
- Jenkins
- Lincoln
- Roebuck
- Southside
- Spartanburg
- Mary Wright

Public Service Citations

Gen. Wm. Childs Westmoreland, native of Pacolet, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, was presented with a life membership in Post No. 28 at the time of his Armistice Day Address

here in 1968. Also honored in 1971 was a member, former Senator Howard Wofford McCravy, with a *Citation for Public Service* in connection with his authorship of the first School Bus Stop Law, widely copied in the other states, doubtless saving many lives of children across the Nation. Also, a *Citation for Meritorious Service* was given to Gray Devereaux Lindsey for his heroic act in life saving, rescuing Bobby Joe Gibson, II, from drowning in Duncan Park Lake, June 29, 1971. Gray was sent to Boys' State in 1970 by the Post.

Cowpens Battlefield Preservation

Members have also for a number of years supported the project to have the Cowpens Battleground site developed as a National Battlefield Site, with some increase from the present 1.24 acre plot. Former Commander Sam Manning has taken the lead in working on this project.

District, State, & National Leadership

A number of Post 28 members have been selected for District, State, or National office in the American Legion. The late Miller Antonio, Texas, annual convention, 1928; finished out the unexpired term in 1933 of the late Richmond Hobson Hilton, drowned in Lake Murray August 13, 1933 as Department Commander; served as Department Adjutant 1922-23 and 1925-29; served on the National Executive Committee 1933.

Two other members of Post 28 served as Department Vice Commanders: Gary Evans Foster, Medal of Honor recipient (1937 – 1937) and Robert H. Lawrence (1948 – 1950). J.J. Bullard served as Department Adjutant, 1944-1958.

- Robert "Bob" H. Ashmore and Dr. E. I. Johnson served as 4th District Commander in the 1930s; and Marion W. Burgin and Robert A. Lawrence, Commanders of District 8 subsequent to the redistricting.
- J.J. Bullard and Russell B. Lentz served as Department Athletic Officers 1939 – 1942.
- Dr. J. W. Fraser, former Pastor of Central Methodist Church, was appointed a member of the Special Committee on Department Awards in 1926.
- The late Dr. Henry Nelson Snyder, President of Wofford College, received a Department Plaque as the Citizen of the Year which cited him as a "Scholar, Educator, Patriot" at the 1929 convention.
- Former Spartanburg resident, Former Governor, Congressman, Supreme Court Judge, Secretary of State, and in WW II Assistant President James F. Byrnes was honored at the Department Convention in 1942 as the Citizen of the Year in which he was cited as "Maker and Interpreter of Laws."
- Federal Judge and Former President of the University of South Carolina, Dr. Donald S. Russell, was the Citizen of the Year in 1964 in which he was cited as "Scholar, Educator, Benefactor of Youth."

The 40 & 8

The fun side of the American Legion, the 40 & 8 (*La Societe des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux*) has been well represented by members of Post No. 28 in the past. The following

members of Post No. 28 have held various offices in the Department's Grande Promenade, a part of the regular annual Legion Conventions:

- Joe Calus, Dr. E. I. Johnson, and Robert Kelsey have served as Chef de Gare
- Ralph M. Caldwell and Mike W. Burgin, as Grand Conducteur
- H. A. Brakefield and Herbert A. Tripp as Grand Correspondent
- Harvey Johnson as Grand Avocet
- H. T. E. Neuberger as Grand Historian
- Dr. E. I. Johnson and Robert Kelsey, Cheminot National
- M. W. Burgin, Grand Commis Voyageur
- Dr. E. I. Johnson, Harvey Johnson, Robert Kelsey, R. H. Lawrence, Russell B. Lentz, and Duane Livingston, Grand Cheminots
- Rev. Waldo M. Lever, Grand Aumonier
- Joe Bell, Grand de La Porte

Civic Leadership

Events in the history-making by members of Post No. 28 over the half century since its founding, are inseparable from the character and personalities of its leaders. Perhaps the major credit for helping the organization define its aims and purposes in the early days should be given to the late Miller C. Foster. An able, talented native son, with an academic and legal background, he sought to lead out in a program envisaging adequate care for the needy veterans and their dependents, and that vigilant preparedness for defense of our country was the best insurance against future wars. Critical of the profiteers of World War I, he proposed a universal draft be made ready against the happening of a future war. This would correct inequities and more nearly equalize the burden of defense as between those who go to battle and those who do their bit on the home front.

Perhaps the member who fought hardest for a home for the Legion, realizing his dream in 1937, was Joseph "Joe" Calus, an adopted South Carolinian from his native Belgium. One of the most active members of the Post, he persisted in this project. Finally in the midst of the Great Depression of the 1930s, he got his first real contribution from Broadus Littlejohn, after offering to make an investment of his own. After that several, including Andrew Manning, Wallace Dupre, M. C. Foster, John L. Farmer, the late Olin D. Johnston, the late Isaac Greenwald, who warmed his heart by telling Joe that "*if you need more come back to see me,*" and others whose names were not now available, chipped in. Late as the movement seemed to be headed for success, special programs were developed to meet the cost of the materials. With his first donations, Joe bought two trucks and started hauling stone, donated by local quarries. When the WPA authorities saw that much of the stone was in place on the lot of Duncan Park, they gave authority for the work to be begun under the direction of Monroe Barnett.

Legion Baseball

Certainly in the athletic department, Post 28 excelled. With the able Sarge W. P. Hughes as the head coach, the Spartanburg Junior Legion Baseball Team won the National Pennant in 1936 in the finals with Los Angeles. The finals were played at Duncan Park and never before or since have such large crowds filled that stadium.

Again in 1938 the Legion Junior team was runner-up to San Diego, again in the finals at Duncan Park field. These two series attracted a lot of interest locally and helped to put Spartanburg on the map. Members of the 1936 Little World Series Pennant winning team were:

- Pedro Mahaffey (c)
- Pete Fowler (1b)
- Boots Holt (2b)
- Roy Prince (ss)
- Pepper Martin (3b)
- Buster Key (rf)
- Guy Hughes (cf)
- Claude "Blackberry" Thomas (lf)
- Ray Linder (c)
- James Thomas (p)
- Dobson (p)
- Cooksey (p)

Among the coaches in addition to "Sarge" Hughes were:

- Tuck McConnell
- Ty Wood
- James Lambert
- George Floyd
- Tom McIntyre
- Curtis Powell
- "Bob" Tallant
- Carlisle Bagwell
- Frank Helderman
- Paul Edwards

Since its inception, Carl Littlejohn and Herbert Tripp have been a great strength to the Legion Baseball program and the contributions of Mike Burgin and Ralph Caldwell cannot be overstated. For a number of years Bob Ashmore and after him Sam Manning served as manager or as athletic officer of the team for approximately 8 years.

Commitment & Loyalty

Broadus R. Littlejohn, consistent member of the Post, who, with his associates expanded a back-street grocery into a formidable chain, never lost the common touch, preferring to help the program from the back stage, never permitted his name to be presented as Post Commander, although he could have held the honor. Broadus Senior and Broadus Junior, both members of the Post have never turned down the opportunity of rendering service in behalf of its program. Both have tendered constructive ideas and have helped to make the Legion here an asset to the community.

Among the many who have made appreciable contributions to the program of Post No. 28, are briefly mentioned as follows:

- Major John D. Frost, WW I veteran, who was active in getting the program off the ground; three trustees in the 1930s.
- Russell B. Lentz, Broadus R. Littlejohn, and John L. Farmer, who set up the first real financial reserve the Post ever had occasioned by the great pulling power of the two Little World Series in the American Legion Junior Baseball program held here in 1936 and again in 1938.
- Virgil Evans, founder 1930 of Radio Station WSPA, who is credited with planting the idea of the need for a permanent Legion Home.
- The late Allen Lambricht and Miller C. Foster for starting the Post Commanders Club; the late J. Eugene Brown, World War II veteran, whose talents, rooted in a dedicated belief in the cause of the Legion, stimulated interest in its activities, particularly pronounced in the Americanism program.
- John Farmer and Russell B. Lentz for their leadership as well as their personal sacrifices in aiding the hundreds of World War I veterans marching through Spartanburg, without jobs, enroute to Washington seeking governmental help for their plight in the midst of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The hard core faithful who almost never missed a meeting are:

- Francis M. Stallings, confirmed bachelor with a slight limp; Sergeant Donald S. Crum, familiarly recognized on the street wearing his G.I. uniform of WW I and campaign hat, transplanted native of Tiffin, Ohio.
- Game M. Hill, keeper of the pot-belly stove down on Magnolia Street to warm visitors in cold weather, and who is a missionary in his own right on Sundays, keep the lights of his Christianity brightly burning.
- Marion W. Burgin, with a great heart unable to turn down any request for help in the program; W. Paul Williams, noted for his faithful dedication to the Legion.
- Ralph Caldwell, who sees that the building is kept in order.
- Carl Littlejohn, who has sounded taps a thousand times in almost every cemetery in Spartanburg County was a well-trained and talented leader of the Drum and Bugle Corps, which at its height had 40 to 50 members and uniforms and equipment aggregating \$8,000. It won fame in National Convention appearances and was the city's pride and joy in the annual Armistice Day parades.

Mock Trial Project

A special project, gotten up principally by a group of attorneys, was a mock trial, presented widely in the 1930s and which helped to swell the membership and revive interest in projects of the Legion. Among the cast were: Leroy Moore, C.C. Brown, Andrew Manning, John C. Lanham, Carl W. Littlejohn, Tom Littlejohn, Mike Burgin, Dr. E.I. Johnson, and others.