

Ron served in the U.S. Navy for 27 years. In 1999, Ron and his wife Marsha moved to Watertown where Ron joined the American Legion Department Headquarters Staff as the Department Assistant Adjutant. He was appointed Acting Department Adjutant in July 2000 and Department Adjutant at the Mid Winter Conference in February 2001.

During his tenure as Department Adjutant, Ron provided important counsel and advice to veterans, family members, VA officials, veterans' service officers, State legislators and congressional members on a range of issues. In particular, under his leadership, the American Legion in South Dakota has provided dozens of forums for veterans and their families in towns all across South Dakota to inform them of their benefits as veterans. I have always appreciated the time he has taken to visit with me in Washington, DC, and in South Dakota and update me on the events and issues important to the members of the American Legion.

It is with great honor that I share his impressive accomplishments with my colleagues, and I thank him for his service to this Nation and its veterans. Ron's consistent dedication to serving his country is admirable. His commitment to both the Navy and the legion reflect Ron's strong character and work ethic. Countless veterans have benefited from his loyalty and devotion. I wish Ron, and his wife Marsha, all the best in retirement and thank him for his many years of service.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF BERESFORD, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the community of Beresford, SD. This progressive community will have a chance to reflect on its past and future, and I congratulate the people of Beresford for all they have accomplished.

Founded as a railroad depot town in 1883, Beresford was named after investor Lord Charles Beresford. The first building in Beresford was a saloon, soon followed by a general store called Sunnyside. The Beresford Study Club started a library in 1923 with donated books and fundraised for more. The library continues to serve as a valuable resource for the community.

Beresford and its citizens are a credit to the State of South Dakota. I am proud to join with the community members of Beresford in celebrating the last 125 years, and looking forward to a promising future.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF BRITTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I rise in order to pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the community of Britton, SD. Britton is a progressive and friendly

community infused with hospitality, beauty and spirit.

Founded when J.B. and F.B. Squier laid claims in the vicinity, Britton developed further after Colonel Isaac Britton, general manager of the Dakota & Great Southern Railroad, visited and determined the area to be an ideal place for a railroad. Many changes have taken place since that first claim shanty in 1884, and the community now includes an impressive two-story school building and expanded medical facilities, both highly acclaimed. Britton has also established a strong economic base with over 25 businesses.

As the county seat of Marshall County, Britton continues to be a thriving community with many recreational opportunities including a nine hole golf course, new library, movie theater, bowling alley, swimming pool, three city parks and Prayer Rock Museum.

One hundred twenty-five years after its founding, the "Gateway to the Glacial Lakes" remains a vital community and a great asset to the wonderful State of South Dakota. I congratulate Britton and its citizens on reaching this historic anniversary.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF CLEAR LAKE, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the community of Clear Lake, SD.

This county seat was founded when the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad went through the area. The first depot was a box car, with other businesses quickly being erected including a general store, a butcher, and a blacksmith. Clear Lake also had a notable system to alert the town to fires, first with a triangle, then a bronze bell that is displayed in the town today.

Clear Lake is noted for its prosperous farmland and picturesque lake. This thriving town celebrated their achievement of 125 years with a weekend celebration filled with music, food and contests. Its population continues to grow as the citizens find new ways to hold onto their heritage while looking to the future. I am proud to represent Clear Lake, and would like to congratulate them on their historic anniversary.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF EMERY, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the community of Emery, SD. I offer my congratulations to the people of Emery on reaching this momentous occasion.

Emery was named after the original settler, Sloan Miller Emery, who came to the area after leaving the banking industry in Minnesota. Soon after its original settlement, businesses began to sprout including a post office, a

grain elevator, and several stores. A medical practice was started in 1891. Emery has continued to thrive throughout the years, and will be celebrating their anniversary July 3-5, 2009 with games, hot air balloon rides, and fireworks.

After 125 years, the city is stronger than ever. I am pleased to publicly honor the achievements of this wonderful South Dakota community as they reach this juncture, and wish them all the best in the future.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF LEOLA, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the community of Leola, SD. I am proud to honor the people of Leola on this memorable occasion, and to extend my congratulations to them.

Settlers founded Leola in 1884 as a homestead site and named it after the daughter of Captain E.D. Haynes. The community quickly grew, getting its first newspaper, The Leola Blade, in 1885. Known as the "Rhubarb Capital of the World", Leola holds a biannual festival to celebrate and sample the various uses of this unique fruit. The town also has a Threshing Bee in September of every year to honor their forefathers' way of life with live demonstrations of antique threshing machines and an antique tractor show.

Located near the Ordway Prairie Memorial Preserve, Leola is also an excellent place for nature and history lovers to experience beautiful South Dakota prairie and its wildlife as the settlers did so many years ago.

The seat of rural McPherson County is a close-knit community infused with hospitality, beauty, and an exceptional quality of life. Small communities like Leola are the epitome of what makes South Dakota great, and I am proud to represent this thriving town.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF TORONTO, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the community of Toronto, SD.

Toronto was founded by four farmers who all donated land to the township. The farmer who donated the most land, Mr. McCraney, named the new community after his hometown of Toronto, Canada. The Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern Railroad built a depot which became a popular landmark, providing a gathering place for the citizens. In 1898, Toronto became the smallest town in the United States to have electric lights, with telephone service following 3 years later. This resilient town made it through seven major fires as well as severe bouts of small pox and Spanish influenza. I have a personal bond to the community as my grandparents Reverend Peder and Anna Ljostveit are buried in the Toronto Cemetery.