



A large crowd gathered for the annual Memorial Day program in Clark that was held at the Clark American Legion Hall on Monday. Top left, Whitlock is shown with Medals of Excellence awards he gifted each student that read essays and poems that they made for Memorial Day. From left to right are Alex Nesheim, Logan Borns, Whitlock, Eve



Gaikowski and Emree Werdel. Top right, from left to right are Daxton Anderson, Greg Janisch and Kaden Janisch of the Clark Boy Scout Troop 23 demonstrating the proper process of retiring an American flag.

## Secretary of S.D. Dept. of Veterans Affairs speaks at Clark Memorial Day program

Monday, May 29, Memorial Day in Clark was observed with the annual program hosted by members of the Cagley-Smith Post 60 American Legion.

Post Commander Rob McGraw welcomed everyone in attendance, followed by the processional of Legion and Auxiliary members. The Posting of Colors was done by the local Legion Color Guard, and Post Chaplain Stan Jongbloed gave the invocation.

Special music was performed by Amy Nelson and Grace Adam. Poems were read by Clark third grader Eve Gaikowski and Annie Spieker on behalf of her son, Ethan Spieker. Fourth grade students, Emree Werdel, Alex Nesheim and Logan Borns read essays they had written about the holiday to the large crowd in attendance.

The speaker for the event was Greg Whitlock, Secretary of South Dakota Department

of Veterans Affairs. He spoke on the importance of honoring our veterans, past and present.

To end the program, members of the Clark BSA Troop 23, the local boy scout troop showed the proper process of retiring an American flag. Leader Greg Janisch supervised members Aiden Bowers, Daxton Anderson and Kaden Janisch in their demonstration while member Ethan Zemlicka read the steps and meaning of the process to the audience.

Wreath ceremonies were

here held at Flat Iron Park, St. Hill Cemetery. Boniface Cemetery and Rose



## Members awarded 50 Continuous Years of Membership Certificate at Raymond Memorial Day service

Baker Post #209 Raymond American Legion honored past and present veterans during their Memorial Day service on Monday. During the service, members Bruce Schmidt, center, and John Maas, right, were awarded certificates for 50 Continuous Years of Membership in the American Legion. The certificates were presented to them by Adjutant David Lewis, left.

WEATHER			
Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
May 23.....	83	60	0
May 24.....	84	58	0
May 25.....	85	61	0
May 26.....	78	61	0
May 27.....	81	61	0
May 28.....	83	59	0
May 29.....	84	59	0
2023 precipitation to date	5.04"		
2022 precipitation to date	7.82"		



Located north of Clark on 424 Avenue, just south of Rose Hill Cemetery, Taylor Merkel and the Merkel family have this 1944 John Deere Model B on display. On the breezy Memorial Day holiday this year, the American flag was seen beautifully blowing in the wind in the sunshine, showing the Merkel family's patriotism.

## Fourth generation family member gifted tractor on patriotic display

Driving north out of Clark on 424 Avenue, there is a new patriotic display in front of the Nate and Megan Merkel home. Their son, 16-year old Taylor is known to many for his patriotism and love for anything red, white and blue. In the past, the family has displayed a large red, white and blue wrapped straw bale with flags of different U.S. Military branches hanging from the bale.

Over Memorial Day weekend this year, that bale was replaced by a 1944 John Deere Model B tractor, with a large American flag standing atop the machinery piece. The tractor is newly owned by Taylor Merkel, the fourth generation in his family.

Merkel explained, "The tractor was originally owned by my grandpa's (Bob Benson) uncle. My grandpa Bob hated that tractor when he was a kid because he always had to try to start it by hand and would go push hay piles with it."

Eventually, the Benson family would get new equipment, and that tractor was parked. It sat there until it was later donated to the Clark FFA by the Benson family so they could get it running and sell at auction, which they did. The tractor was out of the family, or so they thought.

Years later, Taylor's great-uncle, Fred Ford asked Bob if he knew who bought it, and he did.

Ford got ahold of the owner and brought it back into the family. Ford went on to restore the



Taylor Merkel is pictured above, sitting in the driver's seat of the tractor that his great-uncle, Fred Ford gifted him. The tractor is parked on display at the home Taylor and his parents, Nate and Megan Merkel, one-quarter mile north of Clark.

tractor with help from Dan Nelson, and Tony Werdel completed the paint restoration.

"Just last year, my grandpa and I got the John Deere running after a couple years with the help of Wayne Heilman. I started treating the tractor like it was mine. Ford came to visit, and I took it out to show him. He was really appreciative of the care I was giving it. A little later on, I received a letter in the mail by Fred that he was gifting me the tractor. So, now I am the fourth generation of our family to use this tractor," states Merkel.



## Bradley Memorial Day Services blessed with beautiful weather

Monday, Memorial Day, marked the day for several services throughout Clark County, including the Larry F. Hartman Legion Post #108 in Bradley.

Several Bradley natives, Clark County residents and others showed their support for fallen heroes that were laid to rest in the Prairie Hill Cemetery as well as all of the fallen veterans that were Bradley area natives.

The memorial program this year was dedicated to deceased veteran, Maurice Russel Rick who passed away June 1, 2021. Rick's daughter,



Valerie Foster read the memorial in honor of Rick followed by the reading of "In Flanders Field."

Hank Rosso of Watertown provided the Memorial Day Address and led the crowd in prayer. Valerie Foster went on to complete the reading of the deceased veterans and the program commenced with Chris Olson playing "Taps" on the trumpet.

After the program at Prairie Hill Cemetery, all community members and attendees were invited to the Bradley Community Center for fellowship and a meal.