



SPECIAL EDITION

PID Bill Gackle, 1927-2023

Lion from
Kulm was a
first from
North Dakota

KULM, N.D. —Bill Gackle, the first Lions Clubs International district governor from North Dakota and a person who was influential in many things, especially in his home community, passed away July 30, 2023, at his home.

Bill served on the international board for two years after being endorsed at the Multiple District 5 convention in 1981.

Continued on next page



Bill Gackle passed away July 30, 2023.



PID Bill Gackle took Bob Corlew to the top of the North Dakota State Capitol on a visit to Bismarck. Corlew went on to serve as international president of Lions Clubs International. Bill knew the capitol building well from his years in the state legislature.

Bill: Joined Kulm Lions Club in '65

Continued from previous page

MD5 consists of North Dakota, South Dakota and Saskatchewan. MD5 had only three international directors before Bill.

Bill joined his home club, the Kulm Lions Club, in 1965.

Three other Lions from North Dakota – Bruce Schwartz of Bismarck, Robert Littlefield of Fargo and Patricia Vannett of Mandan – followed PID Bill's footsteps as international directors. Each commented on PID Bill's legacy.

Said PID Robert Littlefield, "PID Bill was a force to be reckoned with because he had big plans and wasn't afraid to be himself. He did so much for his local club and its members, faithfully keeping them loyal to Lionism and providing a social outlet as they served their Community and surrounding areas. **Continued on next page**

A story that suggests something about PID Bill's larger than life persona, that may be partially myth, is his survival of a plane crash in Africa when he and other members of the International Board of Directors were on a visitation. As the story goes, they all survived to tell about it, but PID Bill soon after took on the nickname 'Tiger Bill.' He loved being a Lion and was so proud to be the first international director from North Dakota to serve on the Board. When I had the chance to visit him, he was always gracious and full of fun. blessing When I sought the endorsement to run for International director, I met with PID Bill to get advice and his. He gave me good advice and was supportive. He was one of a kind and he will certainly be missed."

From PID Bruce: "When Bill served on the Lions Clubs International

Bill: Late PID 'was fun to be around'

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Board of Directors from 1981 to 1983, he brought a personal quality to his small town and farming experiences. After his term on the International board, he remained an influential leader in Multiple District 5.

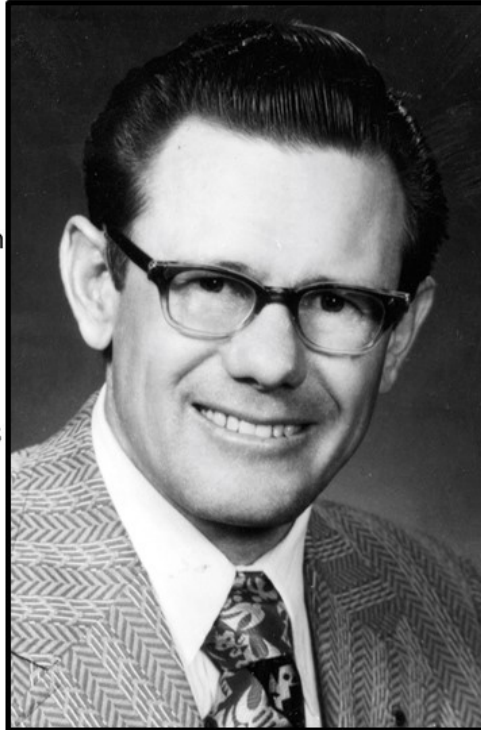
"Bill was fun to be around. You could always depend on him to keep things interesting. You always knew where you stood with Bill Gackle."

From PID Patricia: "One of the first times I met PID Bill was at a 5NE Spring Rally. I was teaching the secretaries on how to report their service. Lion Bill asked me for some private help because he wanted to know exactly how to do it in order to make sure his club did the job. I guess that tells the story. He always wanted to do a good job."

MD5 has had seven more international directors since PID Bill's term. That included the three from North Dakota, two from South Dakota and two from Saskatchewan.

MD5 Council Chair Jeanette Bean offered her thoughts of PID Bill.

"Our deepest sympathies to the family of PID Bill Gackle," she said. "Lion Bill was a remarkable man



Bill Gackle's official portrait as international director of Lions Clubs International.

wonderful experience for both myself and PCC Kevin (Bean). Lion Bill will be forever remembered. Rest in peace our friend."

William Frederick Gackle was born on December 7, 1927, to Otto and Alice (Higdem) Gackle in Kulm. Bill graduated from Kulm High School in 1945 and went into service in the United States Army Air Force. During his time in the service, Sergeant Gackle was an Aircraft Mechanic, specializing in B-29s and AT-6 electronics. Always looking for an opportunity to stand out, Bill was

Continued on next page

Bill: Married Marilyn in 1950

Continued from previous page

a champion boxer, winning the Light Heavyweight Division. Sergeant Gackle was discharged in 1949 and shortly after, came home to Kulm and married Marilyn Bernice (Goehner) Gackle on August 20, 1950.



Marilyn and Bill Gackle are pictured in the center.

The couple began their farming, ranching and dairy operation, and over the next several years grew their farm and family, and Frederick, David, Mary Alice, and Jonathan were born.

Bill went on to spend six years in the National Guard; was elected to seven terms in the North Dakota Legislature where he served as the vice president of the Judiciary Committee and chairman of the House Finance and Taxation Committee.

He chaired the committees for both the 75th and 100-year celebration of Kulm's founding; taught Sunday school; and was a youth group leader alongside Marilyn at Kulm's First Congregational Church for seven years; formed and served on the Kulm Community Development Corporation; was a charter member of Kulm First, Inc.; served as president and director of the Lamoure County Farm Bureau; was chairman of the fundraising

committee for the Kulm Community Center; and played in the Kulm City Band for 80 years.

Bill was preceded in death by his mother and father; brothers: Don and Robert; wife, Marilyn; granddaughter, Shawna Gackle; and infant great-granddaughter, Mercedes Zenker.

He is survived by his children: Fred (Linda) Gackle, Dave (Carol) Gackle, Mary (Gackle) Zenker, and Jon (Tonya) Gackle; 12 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; and many nieces, and nephews.

Memorial donations may be directed to Hospice of the Red River Valley, Dakota Lions Sight and Health, and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

A funeral service was held Monday, August 7, at First Congregational Church, Kulm. Burial was in Kulm Congregational Cemetery. |

