

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 19, 2016

CONTACT: Jeff Mammenga, Media Coordinator, (605) 773-6000,
jeff.mammenga@state.sd.us

Cultural Heritage Center program recalls early days of South Dakota basketball tournaments

PIERRE, S.D. – March is basketball tournament time in South Dakota.

The history of South Dakota's high school basketball tournaments will be highlighted in a program at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre on Tuesday, March 8.

"Bob Swanhorst will tell about South Dakota's high school basketball tournaments when there was only one class," said Michael Lewis, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation. "He is one of the leading scorers in South Dakota boys basketball history and was also an outstanding college player and coach."

The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society and the sponsor of the program. The free program will begin at 7 p.m. CST on March 8. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Swanhorst led Cresbard to a runner-up finish at the 1956 state Class B boys basketball tournament and to the state championship one year later. He scored 2,404 points in the four years he played at Cresbard, which is now No. 5 in state history. He set records in scoring and rebounds while playing at Augustana College (now Augustana University) and was named twice to the all-North Central Conference first team.

As a coach, Swanhorst guided Webster to the 1966 State "A" title and Huron College to the 1974 NAIA national tournament. Swanhorst was chosen the State "B" player of the decade for the 1950s in voting conducted by the Rapid City Journal, and selected to the Sioux Falls Argus Leader's high school centennial team in 1989. He is a member of the South Dakota Basketball Hall of Fame and the Augustana Hall of Fame.

Swanhorst retired from teaching and coaching in 1998. He lives in Sioux Falls and is currently board president of the South Dakota High School Basketball Hall of Fame. The board has researched all of South Dakota's tournaments, and Swanhorst is currently writing and describing each year from 1912 until 1935.

In the program, he will tell about South Dakota's high school basketball tournaments during those years, talking about the teams and sharing stories about some of the players.

"What I found most interesting is that the first or original tournaments were not the brain child of the State Athletic Association but begun by officials at a private college in South Dakota," Swanhorst said. "The tournament was and is never, never static. There are changes almost annually."

But while the game has changed with time, what has not changed is that the state high school tournaments reflect the culture of the state.

“The culture gives us a peek into how attitudes change and develop and are reflected by the South Dakota [High School] Activities Association administration of the tournaments,” Swanhorst said.

Call (605) 773-6006 for more information about the program.

-30-

About the South Dakota State Historical Society

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society’s world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.

About the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation

The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation is a private charitable nonprofit that seeks funding to assist the South Dakota State Historical Society in programming and projects to preserve South Dakota’s history and heritage for future generations.