



AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA
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CORVALLIS HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE WINS MONTANA AMERICAN LEGION ORATORICAL CONTEST

HELENA, MT – MARCH 11, 2017

The Montana American Legion High School Oratorical Competition sponsored by The American Legion of Montana and its 129 Posts located throughout Montana concluded in Helena on Saturday March 11. Michael McKay of Corvallis who attends Corvallis High School prevailed over four other contestants for the right to represent Montana at The American Legion National Finals. The National competition will take place April 22-23, 2017 in Indianapolis, IN.

McKay won the local competition sponsored by Corvallis Post 91 and then went on to take the District contest in Florence a week later for the chance to compete in the state finals. Eric Reed of Harlowton took second place followed by Carter Johnson of Big Sky for third followed by Isaiah Hesford of Boulder in fourth.



Department Commander Hal Rice of Geraldine with Michael McKay of Corvallis, The American Legion Department of MT Oratory Winner 2017.

In addition to the awards by winners of the various elimination rounds of the National Competition, university scholarships of \$18,000, \$16,000 and \$14,000 will be awarded to the 1st through 3rd place winners in the National Finals.

Each state winner who competes in the first round of the National Contest will receive a \$1500 scholarship.

Participants in the second round who do not advance to the national Final round will receive an additional \$1500 scholarship. The top three youth orators who have won all previous rounds will vie for the top honors in the National contest.

The American Legion will pay the expenses of the state winners.

The American Legion State Oratorical Chairman is Jeff Holmes, Harlowton, Montana.



Contestants 2017 (l-r): Isaiah Hesford, Boulder SR; Michael McKay, Corvallis Soph; Alexandra Moore, Billings Jr; Carter Johnson, Big Sky Jr; Eric Reed, Harlowton, Jr.

The American Legion established the annual oratorical contest in 1939 as part of its multi-faceted Americanism Program. The focus of the competition has always been the United States Constitution.

The subject of the prepared oration portion of the contest must be about some phase of the constitution of the United States, emphasizing the duties and obligations of a citizen to the United States government. The prepared oration must be an original effort of each contestant and should be 8 – 10 minutes in length.

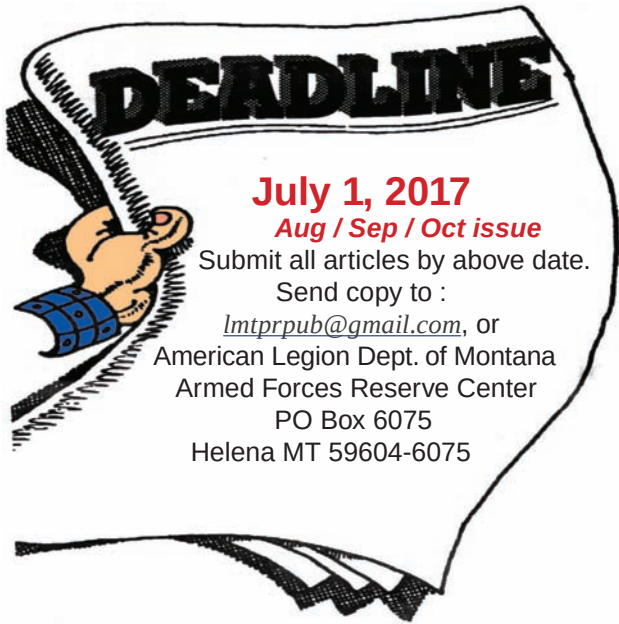
The Montana state winners 1st through 4th places are eligible for monetary scholarships from The American Legion of Montana. Also as part of The American Legion program fee waiver scholarships are available from the various units of the Montana University system as well as Carroll College. Information on these scholarships is available from high school guidance counselors or The American Legion.



2017 Contestants and volunteers

Important Upcoming Dates

May 1.....	Certification of American Legion Officers due to Department Headquarters
May 8-11	National Spring Meetings – Indianapolis, IN
May 8.....	Certification Form, Top Recruiter due to Department Headquarters
May 15	Consolidated Post Reports due to Department Headquarters
May 15	Dept Officers Convention Report due to Department Headquarters
May 24	Department Convention Delegates Strength date
Jun 1.....	Nat'l Convention Registrations due to Department
Jun 4 -9	American Legion Boys State, Carroll College, Helena
Jun 14	Flag Day
Jun 14	US Army Birthday
Jun 15	Dept Convention Delegate Form due to Department
Jun 20-25 .	Department Headquarters Closed (Department Convention)
Jun 21	Department Finance Committee meeting, Billings
Jun 21-22.....	Department Legion College
Jun 22.....	Department Executive Committee Meeting, Billings
Jun 23-25	Department Convention, Billings
Jul 1	2018 Membership Year begins
Jul 1	2018 Big K Membership opens
Jul 4	Independence Day
Aug 2 -6.....	American Legion Baseball Regional Tournaments
Aug 10-15	American Legion Baseball World Series
Aug 18-24	National Convention, Reno, NV
Sep 4	Labor Day Observed



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COMMANDER - PETER ‘HAL’ RICE
VICE COMMANDER - LARRY DOBB
ADJUTANT - GARY A. WHITE

COMMANDER RICE

I am not sure if there are words to describe my year as commander. A lot of ‘ups,’ a few ‘downs,’ and so many great memories!

So far this spring I have been to District Meetings in Missoula, Polson, Colstrip, Park City, Great Falls, Lewistown and Butte. Scobey, Havre and White Sulphur Springs yet to go. All the meetings have been good, some better than others. I have enjoyed meeting all the Legionnaires, SAL, and Auxiliary members across Montana.



Peter ‘Hal’ Rice
Department Commander

Membership: Thanks to all recruiters, Post members and officers who have kept us in the top 10 all year. As this issue of the Legionnaire goes to press, the Department of Montana is in 4th place nationally for membership. Keep it going!

I am looking forward to Department Convention in Billings and would like to see a lot of new faces there. Please come! You might like it! Same with the national convention in Reno. How could you not have a good time there.

I also attended the Department oratorical contest in Helena. I was very impressed with these young people as they gave their speeches. I wish more students would try this as there is a lot of scholarship money available. As Legionnaires, we owe it to our youth to try and get them involved in American Legion programs.

In closing, I again want to thank everyone for a great year and a rousing “Hell Yeah” for membership and making Montana proud. 🇺🇸

BIG K WINNERS

The Big K \$400 winner for February was Larry Strokland of Libby Post 97. Larry’s name was drawn by Justin Carpenter of Lewis & Clark Post 2 Helena.

The March \$400 winner was Phil Bratton, Stevensville Post 94, Phil’s number was drawn by Denny Lenoir of Helena Post 2.

The American Legion Birthday drawing of \$600 was won by George Schlosser of Lewis & Clark Post 2, Helena. George’s number was drawn by Department Vice Commander Larry Dobb of Harlowton Post 15.

The \$400 winner for April was Dusty Bailey of Sweetgrass Post 73, Dusty’s number was drawn by Justin Carpenter of Lewis & Clark Post 2 Helena.

The next \$400 drawing will be in May.

Disbursements to the Districts, Posts, Units and Squadrons were done at the Spring District Meetings.

VICE COMMANDER DOBB

We are three quarters of the way through the membership year. As I write this article, the Department of Montana is looking good. We have exceeded the ten-thousand-member mark. Based on percent of goal, we stand fifth in the nation and first in the Western Region. District 9 and 43 individual Posts have met or exceeded goal. And District 11 is at 97 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, we have around 20 Posts that are below the 75 percent mark and probably will not make their goal. Remember we must continue to recruit new members to replace those we lose to Post Everlasting and the approximately fifteen percent that fail to renew each year. I am well aware how hard it is to get new members during these last few months, but we must keep trying.

On another subject, I want to address not just being a member, but being an active member. Especially for those who accept positions as Post officers. Attendance at the Department Convention and District Meetings is not that good in most cases. Last year there was genuine concern that there would not be enough Posts represented at the Department Convention to have a quorum to allow us to conduct business. The same situation applies at many District Meetings. I am currently part way through my third cycle of attending all of the various District Meetings across Montana. Post attendance ranges from excellent to poor. Some only have three or four Posts out of a dozen with representative’s present, while one had eleven out of thirteen. The latter figure is what all Districts should shoot for. Posts that do not attend their District Meeting fail to “get the word” so to speak. When a Post is not represented they miss information given out in the various briefings by Department officers. The Department Adjutant tells me that almost all the questions he receives from Posts throughout the year, concern information that was covered at the District Meetings. While in the ideal world, the Post commander and adjutant (as a minimum) would be present at every District Meeting, I fully understand reality. We all have jobs, families and other commitments. If a key Post officer just can’t make it, send a vice commander, finance officer or a past Post commander. Send someone to “get the word” and cast your Posts vote on any issues that come up.



Larry Dobb
Department Vice Commander

As a final comment, every Post should make an effort to be represented at the Department Convention. In looking through the Department History Books, I was impressed by the participation at early Department Conventions. In an era before the interstate highway system, when very few people even owned a car and they had to travel by train, the Department Convention was well attended and many Posts brought large contingents to include Drum and Bugle Corps. Not to mention, many of those members got to the train depot by horse and buggy. Today we can jump in our climate controlled vehicle and cruise down modern highways at up to 80 mph. What’s our real excuse for not being represented? 🇺🇸

From the Desk of the Adjutant GARY WHITE

Recently while testifying before the Legislative House Taxation Committee I was asked by a Representative why I believed veterans should receive special benefits. I pointed out to her Article II, Section 35 of the Constitution of Montana and a few other things, however I wished I had read to her from the following emails I have received recently. Both have been around before, but I have not checked the accuracy of the statements, but if true probably convey how I should have responded to the question. I think most of our Legionnaires can relate to both as well.



GENERAL PETRAEUS ABOUT OUR MILITARY TODAY –

Thanks to my fellow veterans: I remember the day I found out I got into West Point. My mom actually showed up in the hallway of my high school and waited for me to get out of class. She was bawling her eyes out and apologizing that she had opened up my admission letter. She wasn’t crying because it had been her dream for me to go there. She was crying because she knew how hard I’d worked to get in, how much I wanted to attend, and how much I wanted to be an infantry officer. I was going to get that opportunity.

That same day two of my teachers took me aside and essentially told me the following: “David, you’re a smart guy. You don’t have to join the military. You should go to college, instead.” I could easily write a theme defending West Point and the military as I did that day, explaining that USMA is an elite institution, that it is actually statistically much harder to enlist in the military than it is to get admitted to college, that serving the nation is a challenge that all able-bodied men should at least consider for a host of reasons, but I won’t.

What I will say is that when a 16 year-old kid is being told that attending West Point is going to be bad for his future, then there is a dangerous disconnect in America, and entirely too many Americans have no idea what kind of burdens our military is bearing.

- In World War II, 11.2% of the nation served in four (4) years.
- During the Vietnam era, 4.3% served in twelve (12) years.
- Since 2001, only 0.45% of our population have served in the Global War on Terror.

These are unbelievable statistics. Over time, fewer and fewer people have shouldered more and more of the burden and it is only getting worse. Our troops were sent to war in Iraq by a Congress consisting of 10% veterans with only one person having a child in the military.

More ADJUTANT page 15

Throwing my hat in the ring!

★ ★ Vote ★ ★

Larry Dobb

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

2017–2018



- US Air Force (Retired)
- 30+ Year Member of The American Legion
- Member Harlowton Post 15
- Past District 9 Commander (2 Years - 100% Dist Cmd)
- Current Department Vice Commander

DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

MEMBERSHIP GOAL ROSTER

2017



		Year end Goal 2017	Year To Date Total	Year End 2016	percent of Goal
DISTRICT #1					
22	WOLF POINT	43.....	31.....	42.....	72.09%
41 ☆	GLASGOW	79.....	82.....	78.....	103.80%
45	HINSDALE	57.....	49.....	56.....	85.96%
49	HOMESTEAD	10.....	9.....	7.....	90.00%
55	POPLAR	34.....	32.....	33.....	94.12%
56	SCOBAY	59.....	47.....	48.....	79.66%
58	PLENTYWOOD	49.....	42.....	48.....	85.71%
61	BROCKTON	49.....	27.....	48.....	55.10%
81	CULBERTSON	95.....	74.....	94.....	77.89%
85	BAINVILLE	30.....	25.....	29.....	83.33%
104 ☆	NASHUA	13.....	14.....	12.....	107.69%
122 ☆	OPHEIM	33.....	34.....	32.....	103.03%
229 ☆	WESTBY	16.....	16.....	15.....	100.00%
	TOTAL	567.....	482.....	542.....	85.01%

11	HAVRE	129	86	128	66.67%
48	CHINOOK	46	44	45	95.65%
50 ☆	BIG SANDY	26	26	25	100.00%
57 ☆	MALTA	90	95	89	105.56%
67	ROCKY BOY	35	22	34	62.86%
79 ☆	SACO	10	15	9	150.00%
88	CHESTER	39	36	38	92.31%
109	TURNER	30	28	29	93.33%
110	FORT BELKNAP	13	10	12	76.92%
TOTAL					41836240986.60%

36 ☆	VALIER	55	55	54	100.00%
37	CONRAD	60	57	59	95.00%
40	CUT BANK	61	53	60	86.89%
43	SHELBY	54	44	53	81.48%
69	GALATA	36	35	35	97.22%
73 ☆	SWEETGRASS	73	73	72	100.00%
127	BROWNING	30	13	29	43.33%
CN20 ☆	CALGARY	46	46	45	100.00%
TOTAL					41537640790.60%

52	THOMPSON FALLS	61	56	60	91.80%
72 ☆	COLUMBIA FALLS	87	97	96	111.49%
74	EUREKA	46	44	45	95.65%
86	BIG FORK	65	51	64	78.46%
97 ☆	LIBBY	172	179	172	104.07%
106	ST IGNATIUS	80	54	79	67.50%
108	WHITEFISH	66	61	65	92.42%
112	POLSON	116	102	116	87.93%
126	CHARLO	14	13	13	92.86%
129	PARADISE	61	56	60	91.80%
137	KALISPELL	214	207	213	96.73%
138 ☆	RONAN	55	55	54	100.00%
139	TROY	20	19	22	95.00%
TOTAL					1057994105994.04%

13	ST REGIS	58	55	57	94.83%
27	MISSOULA	357	322	356	90.20%
38 ☆	DARBY	12	13	12	108.33%
47 ☆	HAMILTON	106	112	105	105.66%
63 ☆	CONDON	44	50	43	113.64%
68	MISSOULA	35	25	34	71.43%
83 ☆	CLINTON	15	15	14	100.00%
91 ☆	CORVALLIS	118	130	117	110.17%
94	STEVENSVILLE	219	194	218	88.58%
101 ☆	MISSOULA	52	54	51	103.85%
113	ARLEE	32	23	31	71.88%
124 ☆	FRENCHTOWN	39	39	38	100.00%
125 ☆	DRUMMOND	56	56	55	100.00%
131	ALBERTON	48	33	47	68.75%
134 ☆	FLORENCE	47	49	47	104.26%
135	LOLO	141	125	140	88.65%
TOTAL					11,3791,2951,36593.91%

1	BUTTE	191	169	190	88.48%
2	HELENA	739	671	738	90.80%
9 ☆	LINCOLN	53	54	53	101.89%
10	DEER LODGE	72	55	71	76.39%
20	DILLON	185	159	184	85.95%
21	ANACONDA	245	224	244	91.43%
24	WHITEHALL	102	89	101	87.25%
31 ☆	TWIN BRIDGES	42	44	41	104.76%
33 ☆	PHILIPSBURG	10	10	10	100.00%
42	TOWNSEND	116	109	115	93.97%
46 ☆	BOULDER	22	31	21	140.91%
89 ☆	SHERIDAN	62	63	61	101.61%
115	BUTTE	102	80	101	78.43%
TOTAL					119411758193090.57%

AT LARGE					
105	HELENA	184	145	188	79%

14	BOZEMAN	353	311	352	88.10%
19	BIG TIMBER	194	172	193	88.66%
23 ☆	LIVINGSTON	168	169	167	100.60%
25	WHITE SULPHUR	62	58	61	93.55%
30	BELGRADE	262	223	261	85.11%
65 ☆	ENNIS	29	40	28	137.93%
78	W YELLOWSTONE	28	27	27	96.43%
87	MANHATTAN	175	167	174	95.43%
93 ☆	THREE FORKS	39	43	38	110.26%
99 ☆	BIG SKY	51	53	50	103.92%
118	GARDINER	36	34	35	94.44%
TOTAL					13971297138692.84%

3	GREAT FALLS	255	237	254	92.94%
6	CHOTEAU	101	87	100	86.14%
26	FORT BENTON	49	39	48	79.59%
51	AUGUSTA	49	37	48	75.51%
64	DUTTON	61	49	60	80.33%
80	FAIRFIELD	32	29	31	90.63%
102	GERALDINE	113	107	112	94.69%
103	POWER	31	28	30	90.32%
130	VAUGHN	47	44	46	93.62%
133 ☆	CASCADE	28	32	27	114.29%
341	MALMSTROM	153	111	152	72.55%
TOTAL					91980090887.05%

★ DISTRICT #9					
115	★	HARLOWTON.....	101.....	109.....	100.....107.92%
16	★	LEWISTOWN.....	375.....	458.....	434.....122.13%
18		ROUNDUP.....	61.....	59.....	60.....96.72%
53		STANFORD	26.....	19.....	25.....73.08%
62		DENTON	23.....	20.....	22.....86.96%
70		JUDITH GAP	66.....	61.....	65.....92.42%
76	★	HOBSON	46.....	48.....	45.....104.35%
96	★	ROY	19.....	19.....	18.....100.00%
120	★	WINIFRED	30.....	30.....	29.....100.00%
TOTAL			747.....	823.....	798.....110.17%

5	MILES CITY	80	73	79	91.25%
12	SIDNEY	44	35	43	79.55%
28	GLENDIVE	122	101	121	82.79%
29 ☆	CIRCLE	17	17	16	100.00%
32 ☆	TERRY	99	101	98	102.02%
35	BAKER	136	102	135	75.00%
39	FORSYTH	95	90	94	94.74%
44 ☆	COLSTRIP	28	30	27	107.14%
60	EKALAKA	15	12	15	80.00%
77 ☆	LAME DEER	10	11	5	110.00%
114 ☆	FAIRVIEW	37	37	36	100.00%
128	BROADUS	13	12	13	92.31%
TOTAL					69662168289.22%

4	BILLINGS	503	460	502	91.45%
8	HARDIN	51	46	50	90.20%
17	RED LODGE	60	54	59	90.00%
34	COLUMBUS	62	56	61	90.32%
71	FROMBERG	23	18	22	78.26%
84	BELFRY	39	35	38	89.74%
92	HYSHAM	24	21	23	87.50%
100 ☆	PARK CITY	60	64	59	106.67%
111	CUSTER	59	57	58	96.61%
117 ☆	BILLINGS	120	156	119	130.00%
119	BILLINGS HGTS	172	166	171	96.51%
123 ☆	LAUREL	107	109	106	101.87%
TOTAL					12801242126897.03%

☆ Post or District has reached or surpassed its incentive Goal

2017 INCENTIVE GOAL	11,000
2017 MEMBERSHIP TO DATE	10,195
2016 TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	10942
TOTAL PERCENTAGE	92.68%



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Cut it out

TEN LARGEST POSTS

Post	2	HELENA	671 MEMBERS
Post	4	BILLINGS	460 MEMBERS
Post	16	LEWISTOWN	458 MEMBERS
Post	27	MISSOULA	322 MEMBERS
Post	14	BOZEMAN	311 MEMBERS
Post	3	GREAT FALLS	237 MEMBERS
Post	21	ANACONDA	224 MEMBERS
Post	30	BELGRADE	223 MEMBERS
Post	137	KALISPELL	207 MEMBERS
Post	94	STEVENSVILLE	194 MEMBERS

DISTRICT STANDINGS

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE	COMMANDER
9	110.17%	Demorise Allen
11	97.03%	Richard Klose
4	93.95%	Jack Fay
5	93.69%	Bill Applegate
7	92.77%	Randy Kemp
3	90.60%	Charlie Coutts
6	90.47%	Lori Perkio
10	87.93%	Clancee Collins
8	87.07%	Kim Kay
2	86.60%	Lowell Long
1	85.01%	Joe Yeoman

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION March 31, 2017

SQUADRON	GOAL 2017	TO DATE
WOLF POINT 22	10	0
☆GLASGOW 41	10	27
PLENTYWOOD 58	10	8
☆CULBERTSON 81	23	26
NASHUA 104	10	8
HAVRE 11	16	10
☆CHINOOK 48	19	20
☆MALTA 57	10	18
GALATA 69	42	40
THOMPSON FLS 52	10	0
LIBBY 97	10	6
POLSON 112	10	3
MISSOULA 27	17	7
HAMILTON 47	10	5
CONDON 63	10	0
CORVALLIS 91	10	19
STEVENSVILLE 94	21	22
LOLO 135	34	16
☆BUTTE 1	29	32
☆HELENA 2	76	95
ANACONDA 21	33	15
TOWNSEND 42	18	17
BUTTE 115	19	3
☆BOZEMAN 14	51	52
BIG TIMBER 19	22	10
BELGRADE 30	64	49
☆LIVINGSTON 23	10	13
☆MANHATTAN 87	27	30
☆BIG SKY 99	12	19
☆GREAT FALLS 3	16	16
☆CHOTEAU 6	16	20
FORT BENTON 26	10	0
GERALDINE 102	53	45
☆VAUGHN 130	17	17
HARLOWTON 15	22	17
LEWISTOWN 16	128	104
MILES CITY 5	11	8
☆BAKER 35	34	35
☆FORSYTH 39	45	50
BILLINGS 4	27	14
BELFRY 84	23	17
☆BILLINGS 117	1	35
CUSTER 111	11	9
HQS POST 9999	0	0
TOTALS	1047	957
☆ SQUADRON GOAL MET		

Jan/Feb/Mar 2017

- ☆ SANDERS, VERNON W., PAST DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN, 1/6/17 – WWII – US Army - 27-year member of Post 34, Columbus
- ☆ KILLHAM, THOMAS, 1/3/17 – Vietnam – US Army - 37-year member of Post 16, Lewistown, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SCHRUMPF, DONALD, 1/16/17 – Vietnam – US Army – 5-year member of Post 18, Roundup, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ COLEMAN, MARION, 1/16/17 – Korea – US Marines – 1-year member of Post 123, Laurel
- ☆ WILHELM, ELMER, 1/3/17 – WWII – Branch - 1 year member of Post 123, Laurel
- ☆ STAUDINGER, WILLIAM, 1/21/17 – Korea – US Army - 6-year member of Post 123, Laurel, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ UNDERWOOD, PATRICK, 1/23/17 – Korea – US Air - 10-year member of Post 87, Manhattan
- ☆ NICHOLS, GEORGE, 1/11/17 – WWII – US Navy - 4-year member of Post 47, Hamilton
- ☆ KUNTZ, PHILLIP, 1/11/17 – Korea – US Navy - 2-year member of Post 138, Ronan
- ☆ LILLY, WALEN, 1/6/2017 – WWII– US Navy – 7-year member of Post 87, Manhattan
- ☆ MILLER, JOHN FRANCIS, 1/6/2017 – Vietnam – US Navy – 15-year member of Post 2, Helena, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MARCHIE, THEODORE A., 1/9/2017 – WWII – US Army - 8-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MADSEN, LESLIE 'LES' C., 1/14/2017 – WWII – US Army – 70-year member of Post 76, Hobson, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ EBLEN, LEE, 12/16/2016 – Korea – US Marine – 11-year member of Post 30, Belgrade
- ☆ WILLIAMS, JOHN H., 12/25/16 – Korea – US Army - 13-year member of Post 86, Big Fork, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ KREIG, DANIEL, 12/14/16 – Vietnam – Unknown - 19-year member of Post 101, Missoula
- ☆ PAGE, JACKIE L, 12/6/16 – Vietnam – US Navy - 1-year member of Post 47, Hamilton
- ☆ SHANAHAN, WARD A, 1/23/17 – Korea – US Navy - 28-year member of Post 2, Helena
- ☆ SWETISH, EDWARD A., 1/20/17 – WWII – US Army- 67-year member of Post 20, Dillon, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ ANDERSON, JAMES H., 1/29/17 – Korea – US Army - 29-year member of Post 20, Dillon
- ☆ LOVELESS, ROBERT, 8/22/16 – Korea – US Air - 9-year member of Post 111, Custer
- ☆ SWETISH, EDWARD, 1/20/17 – WWII – US Army - 67-year member of Post 20, Dillon, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ HAUGLAND, GARTH L, 1/16/17– Korea – US Army - 25-year member of Post 20, Dillon, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ KUNTZ, PHILLIP, 1/12/17 – Korea – US Navy - 1-year member of Post 138, Ronan
- ☆ MALOIT, WILLIAM, 1/28/2017 – Korea – US Marine - 49-year member of Post 5, Miles City
- ☆ LILLY, WALEN, 1/4/17 – WWII – US Navy - 7-year member of Post 87, Manhattan
- ☆ JOHNSON, RODGER C., 1/3/17 – Korea – US Army - 37-year member of Post 20, Dillon, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ ALDRICH, DONALD, 1/13/17 – WWII – US Navy - 20-year member of Post 42, Townsend
- ☆ TUSS, VERN, 1/29/2017 – Korea – US Marine - 28-year member of Post 21, Anaconda
- ☆ DAY, JACK, 1/25/17 – Vietnam – US Army - 20-year member of Post 21, Anaconda, Interred with Military Honors

Post Everlasting

Day is done
Gone the sun
From the lakes
From the hills
From the sky
All is well
Safely rest
God is nigh
Fading light
Dims the sight
And a star
Gems the sky
Gleaming bright.
From afar
Drawing nigh
Falls the night
Thanks and praise.
For our days
Neath the sun
Neath the stars
Neath the sky
As we go
This we know
God is nigh.

- ☆ REDFIELD, WALTER, 1/28/17 – Korea – US Army - 35-year member of Post 16, Lewistown, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MUELLER, GEORGE D., 10/15/16 – WWII – Branch - 39-year member of Post 16, Lewistown, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SCHLICHENMAYER, JERRY C, 9/2/16 – WWII – US Air - 25-year member of Post 16, Lewistown, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SCIUCHETTI, JOHN, 12/3/16 – Vietnam – US Navy - 3-year member of Post 16, Lewistown
- ☆ EISENBACHER, EARL, 1/2/2017 – Vietnam – US Army - 31-year member of Post 13, St Regis, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SHINN, JOHN C., 8/24/2016 – Korea – US Air - 27-year member of Post 23, Livingston
- ☆ BURTON, ROBERT, 12/30/2016 – Vietnam – US Army - 11-year member of Post 4, Billings, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ QUILICI, JOE, 8/14/2016 – WWII– US Marines - 18-year member of Post 1, Butte
- ☆ ELIASON, GORDON M, 12/23/2016 – Korea – Unknown - 62-year member of Post 22, Wolf Point
- ☆ LEWIS, JIM, 1/26/2017 – Vietnam – Unknown- 3-year member of Post 16, Lewistown
- ☆ SEAHOLM, MARLIN, 1/30/2017 – Korea – US Army - 14-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ BROWN, ROBERT, 2/12/17 – Persian Gulf – US Army - 19-year member of Post 15, Harlowton, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SEEKINS, JAMES W, 2/6/17 – Korea – US Navy - 35-year member of Post 5, Miles City
- ☆ CONNELLY, CLARENCE, 12/31/2016 – Korea – US Army- 47-year member of Post 36, Valier, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ FELBER, JOSEPH, 2/14/2017 – WWII – US Air - 10-year member of Post 91, Corvallis
- ☆ KUNTZ, VALENTINE, 2/21/2017 – WWII – US Army - 20-year member of Post 30, Belgrade, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MATTHIS, HARRY, 2/18/2017 – Korea – US Army - 2-year member of Post 16, Lewistown
- ☆ NICK, MONTE, 2/19/17 – Vietnam – US Army - 11-year member of Post 2, Helena, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SIMONS, EARL DEAN, 2/12/17 – Korea – US Army - 36-year member of Post 100, Park City, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ PENNINGTON, ELMO, 2/18/17 – Vietnam – US Army - 14-year member of Post 2, Helena, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ OBERT, DOMINIC J, 1/31/2017 – WWII – US Army - 11-year member of Post 84, Belfry, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ GARNESS, DONALD E, 2/10/17 – Korea – US Air - 7-year member of Post 130, Vaughn
- ☆ MILLER, SIDNEY, 1/23/17 – Vietnam – US Navy - 7-year member of Post 46, Boulder
- ☆ PORTER, MICHAEL, 1/25/17 – Vietnam – US Army - 5-year member of Post 105, Helena, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ WILLIAMS, JOHN H, 2/13/17 – Korea – US Army - 13-year member of Post 86, Big Fork, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MAKER, ROBERT W, 2/18/17 – WWII – US Air - 70-year member of Post 91, Corvallis
- ☆ ELICH, JOHN, 10/2/16 – WWII – US Army - 38-year member of Post 1, Butte, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ LEHFELDT, WILLIAM, 10/1/16 – WWII – US Army - 7-year member of Post 18, Roundup, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ ZELL, RAYMOND, 10/24/16 – WWII – US Army - 25-year member of Post 43, Shelby, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MAKER, ROBERT, 3/1/17 – WWII – US Army - 69-year member of Post 91, Corvallis, Interred with Military Honors

Governor signs off on Veterans Flag

BY ROGER HAGEN

Governor Steve Bullock signed the bill designating the Veterans Flag in Shelby, MT on March 10, 2017, so it will now be on all Montana maps, and will allow the MT Department of Highways to install signage directing travelers to the site. Governor Bullock was amazed at the cost and that it was done with private money and very little government involvement, and in a very short timeframe. There was a small group of Legionnaires in Helena at the State Capitol building for the signing of the bill.



L to R seated: Representative Rob Cook(R) who pushed the bill through the House, Governor Steve Bullock(D), Senator Llew Jones(R) who pushed the bill through the Senate; standing: Mike Harwood (USMC), Steve Osgood (USA), Mary Ann Harwood (USA?), Dave Sandon(USA), Roger Hagan (USA) American Legion lobbyist who testified for us at the legislature, John Alstad (USMC), Jim Yeagley (USAF), Ron Elery (USA), Hank Coolidge(Civilian Contractor who secured \$22,000 worth of Pipe for flagpole on the Project. His dad was in USMC and WIA in Korea, Bob Karhu (USA), Bob Longcake (USAF)

MEMBERSHIP... MEMBERSHIP... MEMBERSHIP

RICHARD A. KLOSE SR., DISTRICT 11 COMMANDER

Membership is a subject that we all hear at our meetings. They may be a Post, District, Department, or a National meeting. Some Legion members have told me that they’re tired of going to meetings and all that is talked about is membership. Some members said that they quit going to meetings for that reason.

Well, there is a way to slow some of that down. First, at the beginning of each membership year, when you get your renewal notice, just take a few minutes to write a check, put it in the return envelope and drop it in the mail the same day. You can also go online type in “legion.org/renew” and in a few minutes, you’re renewed. If everyone would do this, by the end of August, when the National Headquarters adds in the “PUFLS” all our Posts would be very close to their membership targets for the new membership year. Some Posts would need to add a few new members to replace the ones that they lost due to deaths.

For the hundreds of American Legion members with a “105” Post location, you can help local Posts meet their membership targets by transferring those members to a local Post.

As of this publication our Montana legislature is in session, and when you read this it will

be over for 2017. Please contact our Congressional delegates in Washington D.C. help us get the vacant VA positions in Montana filled. Ask them to ensure the VA in Montana hires qualified personal, to provide the care that Montana veterans need. That means 150 more voices from elected officials speaking out for veteran services in Montana.

How can this help? Well, with good membership numbers and improved services for our veterans, we can show some of those veterans who are not keen on joining any organization that we have worked hard to get services for them, so now we want them to help us by joining the American Legion. With high membership numbers, and the best VA services in any state, Montana can be the leader in the nation in both categories.

Finally, our Department Convention is June 22 through 25 in Billings. Plan on attending. I know for some this a long way from home, but attend and schedule an extra day or two after the convention to take in some of the beautiful places in “Big Sky Country” on your way home making for a fun vacation.

Remember, renew right away, and I will see you at Department Convention!

Service Officer



SERVICE OFFICER KELLY ACKERMAN

On March 27, 2017, I served as the POC for a VHA/VSO Community Care Listening Session held at VA Montana. The forum was led by Dr. Baligh Yehia, the current Deputy Undersecretary for Health, Veterans Administration, and Jake Leinenkugel, the Senior White House Advisor to the Veterans Administration. We selected 8 veterans representing each war era from the American Legion, and had 2 veterans representing DAV and 1 from VVA.

The Listening Sessions are being conducted in 5 states with the goal of gathering information to gain a better understanding of the Veteran’s personal experience in using care in the community. Secretary Shulkin, through the Community Care Team wants to hear the positive and negative experiences and suggestions for improvement with the Choice Program in order to improve Community Care in the future.

The highlights of the forum were the following:

- Experience of each Veteran with community care.
- Geography/location considerations when accessing care (challenges with a rural state).
- Eligibility considerations
- Using tele-health
- Referrals
- Scheduling/ self-scheduling
- Care Coordination
- Improved technology with scheduling

Because of the rural and frontier geography in Montana, we understand that community care will always be a necessity. As opposed to metropolitan areas, we don’t have medical specialties within driving distances in most places. However, we suggested that any future community care program utilize VHA schedulers who understand the challenges of driving across MT, and which areas provide DAV transportation services.

All of the veterans participating in this forum felt that Dr. Yehia and Mr. Leinenkugel heard our challenges and difficulties, and will adequately represent the veterans of MT moving forward. However, as with most of these programs that require congressional intervention, time will tell whether we see the improvements that benefit those of us living in MT.

Personally speaking, I appreciated this team making one of their five visits be to the veterans in MT!

As always, the goal of our 10 Montana Veterans Affairs Service Offices staffed with accredited Veterans Service Officers is to assist all veterans and their dependants with their VA benefits. Please contact us for more information.

MVAD/AL offices throughout the state:

Belgrade	(406) 388-4601
Billings	(406) 248-8579
Butte	(406) 533-0910
Great Falls	(406) 452-2265
Havre	(406) 265-4225
Helena	(406) 495-2080/2081/2082
Kalispell	(406) 755-3795
Lewistown.....	(406) 538-3174
Miles City.....	(406) 232-1203
Missoula	(406) 542-2501

Thank you for your service to our great Country!

HELENA INDEPENDENT RECORD | AL KNAUBER | MAR 31, 2017

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day: Slow walk offers a balm to troubled times



Veterans, friends and family march around the State Capitol Thursday morning during the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans ceremony in Helena.

Crowds around the Capitol building are a common sight with the Legislature in session, but the men and women who gathered on a nearby street corner weren’t there for politics.

Some of the men and women were old enough to be the mothers and fathers of the uniformed soldiers and sailors who joined them Thursday for the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day walk.

Their journey would take them around the Capitol building before ending at the Department of Justice building where a ceremony would be held in its atrium.

Larrey Lattin, 71, is an Army veteran who served in the Central Highlands of Vietnam from 1965 to 1968. He was a crew chief on a two-engine airplane, a Caribou, that supplied remote Special Forces camps.

No greeting awaited him when he returned to the United States after his three-year tour of duty.

PHOTOS BY THOM BRIDGE, HELENA IR



“I was looked at pretty much with disdain,” he said.

“Nobody actually said anything to me, but I could see the looks,” he recalled of the glances and stares he received as a soldier in uniform.

Even still, he was happy to be home and rejoin his wife and their new baby.

“I got home in one piece and was happy to be here,” he said.

Mike Collins, 70, spent his time from 1966 to 1970 off the southern coast of Vietnam as a radar man on the USS Corry, a destroyer.

He returned to Helena, where he was born and raised, after his tour of duty and thought for a moment before he said he assessed his reception as “OK.”

“There were other, larger cities ... it wasn’t good for my fellow veterans and shipmates,” said Collins, who explained he was just happy to be home.

People in Montana weren’t as negative about those who served in the war, he said.

Military service runs in his family. Two of his three brothers served, as did two of his three sons.

An uncle died during World War II and his father served in the Army. After returning to the United States from the South Pacific, he stayed in Helena.

Steve Cook, 67, is a Marine Corps veteran who served in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. He spoke as he walked. He was an amphibian tractor crewman serving near the dividing line between North and South Vietnam and brought supplies to two of the Marine Corps northern compounds.

Originally from Portland, Oregon, he’s been a Helena resident since 1983. He sums up how he felt

More WELCOME HOME page 14

CALL TO CONVENTION

TO: Officers and members of The American Legion Posts in Montana

GREETINGS

The 99th Annual Convention of The American Legion, Department of Montana is hereby called to meet and assemble at Billings, Montana June 23, 24, 25, 2017 to transact and consider such matters as are included in this Call and any other business which may properly come before it.

PURPOSE

The Convention is called for the purpose of electing officers to the ensuing year, electing delegates to the National Convention, amending the Department Constitution, presentation of annual reports, and the transactions of such other business as may be brought before it in conformity with the provisions of the National and Department Constitution.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION

Representation in the Convention will be by Posts. Each Post in good standing shall be entitled to two delegates and two alternates and in addition shall be entitled to one delegate and one alternate for each one hundred members, or major fraction thereof, whose dues have been received by the Department 30 days prior to the date of the Convention, or May 24, 2017. A Post, to be in good standing, must have a minimum of ten paid members and no indebtedness to the Department.

CREDENTIALS

Posts shall submit to Department Headquarters in Helena prior to June 10, the names of delegates and alternates. Cards for voting delegates will be in the Convention office. Each Post delegation should select a Chairman prior to departure of delegates for the Convention.

DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A regular meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday, June 22, 2017 at 3:00 P.M. The first stated meeting of the Department Executive Committee following the Department Convention will be held immediately upon adjournment of the Convention. The term of office of the newly elected members will commence immediately with the adjournment of the Convention.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

All Department Officers and District Commanders will be sworn into office at the conclusion of the session on Sunday morning, June 25, 2017 and will automatically become members of the Department Executive Committees.

Any inquiries for information with reference to the Convention will be answered from Department Headquarters.

Gary A. White
Department Adjutant

Peter ‘Hal’ Rice
Department Commander



Chaplain's Corner

SAM BIRKY, DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN

As Legionnaires, our May calendars need to include two dates in honoring God and Country. The first is the National Day of Prayer Thursday, May 4th and the second is Memorial Day, Monday, May 29th. It is fitting we begin the month in honoring God and end the month honoring our fallen comrades.

“**National Day of Prayer** is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people of all faiths to pray for the nation. It was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of the United States Congress, and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. Our Task Force is a privately funded organization whose purpose is to encourage participation on the National Day of Prayer. It exists to communicate with every individual the need for personal repentance and prayer, to create appropriate materials, and to mobilize the Christian community to intercede for America’s leaders and its families. The Task Force represents a Judeo-Christian expression of the national observance, based on our understanding that this country was birthed in prayer and in reverence for the God of the Bible. “*Taken from www.nationaldayofprayer.com website.*

1952: On April 17, a bill initiated by Mr. Conrad Hilton of Hilton Hotels and Senator Frank Carlson of Kansas was passed (Public Law 82-324) that the President of the United States was to set aside an appropriate day each year, other than Sunday, as a National Day of Prayer.

1983: The first National Day of Prayer observance, organized by the NPC, takes place at Constitution Hall in Washington D.C. with featured speakers Vice President George Bush and Dr. Lloyd Ogilvie.

1987: Senator Thurmond writes the bill then introduces it to the Senate Judicial Committee. It became bill S.1378, which would amend public law 82-324

1988: Rabbi Haberman and Rabbi Tanenbaum express their support of the bill.

1988: Monday, May 5 – the Judiciary Committee in the Senate and the Committee on the Post Office and Civil Service in the House each release the bill for vote

1988: Wednesday, May 7– 4:00 p.m. final confirmation is given that the bill passes unanimously in the Senate (a few days later in the House).

1988: Thursday, May 8 – President Ronald Reagan signs into law Public Law 100-307 the designation of the first Thursday in May as the annual observance for the National Day of Prayer

1998: President Bill Clinton signs into law - Pub. L. 105-225, August 12, 1998, 112 Stat. 1258: The President shall issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a National Day of Prayer on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as individuals.

Memorial Day is a US federal holiday wherein the men and women who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces are remembered.

In the 237 years of United States history, the citizens of this nation have been called upon to serve in 35 armed conflicts. According to several sources, *there have been 1,319,853 casualties during these conflicts. The deadliest conflict was the Civil War in which 623,026 or 46% of all Americans were killed in action. These statistics do not include the wounded and the families of the service members who gave their life in service to their country.*

The holiday was formerly known as Decoration Day and originated after the American Civil War to commemorate the Union and Confederate soldiers who died in the Civil War. Memorial Day had been extended to honor all Americans who have died while in the military service.

Many people visit cemeteries and memorials, particularly to honor those who have died in military service. Many volunteers place an American flag on each grave in national cemeteries. Memorial Day is a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving, while Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans.

The practice of decorating soldiers’ graves with flowers is an ancient custom. Soldiers’ graves were decorated in the U.S. before and during the American Civil War. A claim was made in 1906 that the first Civil War soldier’s grave ever decorated was in Warrenton, Virginia, on June 3, 1861, implying the first Memorial Day occurred there.

In 1863, the cemetery dedication at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, was a ceremony of commemoration at the graves of dead soldiers. Following President Abraham Lincoln’s assassination in April 1865, there were a variety of events of commemoration. The sheer number of Union and Confederate soldiers who died in the Civil War meant that burial and memorialization took on new cultural significance. Under the leadership of women during the war, an increasingly formal practice of decorating graves had taken shape.

According to legend, in the summer of 1865 a local druggist Henry Welles, while talking to friends, suggested that it might be good to remember those soldiers who did not make it home from the Civil War. Not much came of it until he mentioned it to General John B. Murray, a Civil War hero, who gathered support from other surviving veterans. On May 5, 1866, they marched to the three local cemeteries and decorated the graves of fallen soldiers. It is believed that Murray, who knew General Logan, told Logan about the observance and that led to Logan issuing Logan’s Order in 1868 calling for a national observance.

The Tomb of the Unknowns located in Arlington National Cemetery

Copying an earlier holiday that had been established in the Southern states, on May 5, 1868, in his



capacity as commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, the veterans’ organization for Union Civil War veterans, General John A. Logan issued a proclamation

calling for “Decoration Day” to be observed annually and nationwide. It was observed for the first time that year on Saturday May 30; the date was chosen because it was not the anniversary of any particular battle. According to the White House, the May 30 date was chosen as the optimal date for flowers to be in bloom.

Memorial Day, Boston by Henry Sandham

Memorial events were held in 183 cemeteries in 27 states in 1868, and 336 in 1869. The northern states quickly adopted the holiday. Michigan made “Decoration Day” an official state holiday in 1871 and by 1890, every northern state had followed suit. The ceremonies were sponsored by the Women’s Relief Corps, a women’s auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), which had 100,000 members. By 1870, the remains of nearly 300,000 Union dead had been reinterred in 73 national cemeteries,



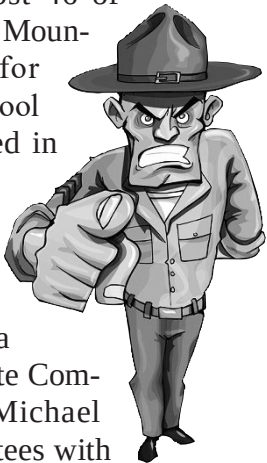
More **CHAPLAIN** page 13

POST 46 Boulder Honor Student Enlistees

On March 9, 2017, Post 46 of Boulder hosted dinner at Mountain Good Restaurant for seven Jefferson High School students who have enlisted in the military.

Prior to the meal the enlistees were presented Certificates of Appreciation from Post 46. Montana Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Major, Michael Perkio presented the enlistees with words of appreciation for their dedication and commitment to our country through their enlistments into the military. State Command Sergeant Major Perkio also presented each enlistee with a his Challenge Coin.

To students: Wade Warren, Kaden Massey, Brooke Atkinson, Latrice Vossler and Garrett Siler— Boulder Post 46 thanks you for committing a portion of your lives to the defense our country.



A Shared Reflection

ED SPERRY, PAST DEPARTMENT CMDR. 2001-2002

I turned 89 in March; an obvious time for reflection. Over 30 years of service to the Legion can give one a barrel full of things to reflect upon. One subject, probably for good reason, never gets discussed. Simply put; what is the role of a Legionnaire of advanced age? My peers are in their 80s and are no doubt dealing with this question. If not, they should be? The poem that follows addresses this issue in a unique manner and may help some legionnaires who are either approaching or in my era as they mull their role.

Time to Leave the Herd

Back deep within the Lodgepole Pine he stealthily glides through, driven by a primal urge to do what he must do. It’s fall and time to carry on a ritual long passed down. Survival of his species. It’s now he who wears the crown.

The regal bull collects his cows. With grunts and antler prods instinctively he builds his herd. But time has changed the odds for young bulls no longer flee; but challenge his stern warnings— they disrespect authority.

It is a story oft repeated in the Chronicles of Life. From Elk and Deer to Buffalo, truth slices like a knife. One climbs the trail of dominance to rule with just a word, then time puts forth an edict— “this bull must leave the herd.”

Reflecting on my own life, things I’ve learned and things I’ve done. Years traveling up that same old Trail, shining moments in the sun. But now the mirror of reason has been wiped of all its fog. Reality reveals no pup; but one tired used old dog To dreams that stay just as they were, dreams only, not full-filled. Hopes and plans abandoned along the side trails on that hill. And I’ve now heard that edict; time has issued forth that word. “You still have days of life ahead but it’s time you leave the herd.” [from ‘Tracks & Trails’ by permission of author J R Strand]

Whether your current lot be at Post, District, Department or National you can be replaced. Correction! Let’s face it, we should be replaced. Our role should be to seek a replacement, mentor if needed, and then for the good of the Legion get the hell out of the way!

Helena, Mont. sailor continues 75 years of Seabee tradition

<http://navyoutreach.blogspot.com/2017/03/helena-mont-sailor-continues-75-years.html>

BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS STEVE WATTERWORTH, NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

NORFOLK, VA. — “We Build, We Fight” has been the motto of the U. S. Navy’s Construction Force, known as the “Seabees,” for the past 75 years. Today, Helena, Montana native and a 2005 Capitol High School graduate, Petty Officer 2nd Class Marcus Peters builds and fights with the Navy on the East Coast and around the world as a member of the Navy serving at Amphibious Construction Battalion 2 (PHIBCB Two) located in Norfolk, Virginia.

Peters is a builder, which is responsible for carpentry and general construction.



“I like that my job gives me the chance to help out this country and other countries,” said Peters.

The jobs of some of the Seabees today have remained unchanged since World War II, when the Seabees paved the 10,000-mile road to victory for the allies in the Pacific and in Europe, according to Lara Godbille, director of the U. S. Navy Seabee Museum.

“I like that this command is versatile,” said Peters. “I like working on all of our craft and elevated causeway system.”

For the past 75 years Seabees have served in all American conflicts. They have also supported humanitarian efforts using their construction skills to help communities around the world following earthquakes, hurricanes and other natural disasters.

“The amphibious Seabees have a distinguished history and the men and women of today’s amphibious construction battalions proudly carry on that legacy,” said Capt. Christopher Laplatney, PHIBCB Two commanding officer. “The Seabee’s can do spirit continues to burn bright.”

Seabees around the world will take part in a yearlong celebration in 2017 to commemorate the group’s 75-year anniversary. The theme of the celebration is “Built on History, Constructing the Future.”

Working with the Seabees and serving in the U.S. Navy has allowed Peters to continue learning about the legacy he wants to leave to future sailors.

“I’m the first one in my family to serve in the Navy,” said Peters. “It’s the chance to serve this country.”

Senator Tester Update

As the Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, I have been working on a number of bills to honor the service and sacrifices of Montana veterans.



The Education Development for Troops and Veterans Act

My bill will provide education benefits to folks who often have to leave behind schools, job and homes to serve their country. It will make sure that members of the National Guard and Reserve are getting the same protections and benefits as their active duty counterparts, and it will establish a grant program to build and maintain veterans education centers on college campuses.

The Veterans Choice Program Improvement Act

Veterans who use the Choice Program are already seeing their care affected by the looming sunset of the program. My bipartisan bill makes sure that the funds initially given to the Choice Program are being used to provide veterans with care close to home while fixing some of the problems that have plagued Choice. This bill will end the confusion and

out-of-pocket costs for veterans so they can see their doctor faster.

Along with this bill, I’ve been working with VA Secretary Shulkin and folks in Montana to put scheduling for Choice appointments in the hands of VA Montana. Health Net hasn’t been cutting it, and they’ve had more than enough opportunities to improve their services for veterans. I’m hopeful that by allowing the VA to once again schedule appointments with local providers, we will gets veterans in the door faster and bring providers back into the Choice Program.

The Deborah Sampson Act

Women are signing up to serve and taking on combat roles like never before. When they return home with the mental and physical injuries of war, they look to the VA for service-related and gender-specific care. My bipartisan bill makes sure that the VA is equipped to serve every woman who walks in the door and strengthens the legal and housing services for women veterans.

As the Senate considers my legislation, I urge you to call all of Montana’s representatives in Congress to make sure that they’re upholding their commitment to our veterans.

Please know that my door is always open to you. I thank you for your service to our nation. It’s an honor to serve you in the United States Senate.

Women Veterans Coordinator

KIM KAY MCCARTY MARTIN

Hi everyone! I was happy to attend all District meetings except for the first one due to previous commitments. While at the District meetings, I have been talking about Legion membership of women veterans and what NOT to say to get women veterans to join or renew their membership. I was told of an occasion where at a Post meeting one of the male members told a female member to get him a drink. Needless to say, she is no longer an American Legion member. A couple weeks ago, our Post was recruiting Legion membership by going door to door asking for renewals when we met a veteran who had been a Legion member for twelve and a half years. He stated he got out of the military because he didn’t want to take orders from a female. He also wasn’t renewing his membership because the Post Commander is a female. Well, I just happen to be that female Commander! It is very disappointing and, as Legionnaires, I thought we had gotten past all this. We all know that we need the membership numbers to have a stronger voice in Congress in order to take care of all veterans. We need to treat each other with respect, be professional, and move forward.

March was Women’s History Month and April is Military Sexual Trauma Awareness month. Military sexual trauma is not specific to women, men too have been affected. There are support groups and individual counseling at Vet Centers in Montana. To find a Vet Center near you go to VA.GOV and click on locations for the address of a Vet Center in Great Falls, Kalispell, Missoula or Billings and soon to be in Helena. Vet Centers are not located in VA facilities, even though the mental health departments in VA facilities can address these issues as well. Seeking help is not a weakness, even if it may be difficult to ask for help. Seeking help is courageous! Fort Harrison VA will have an MST Awareness event on April 26 at their Fire Department starting at 1000 am.

Leaving the military after one tour or upon retirement can be a hard adjustment. The following are

true stories related to this. These documentaries are just as significant to male veterans as it is to female veterans. “Journey to Normal,” was released in 2015 and follows female service members for two years after their deployments. You can see previews on You Tube and read more online by Googling journey-tonormal.org. “Soldier On: Life after Deployment” is another documentary that has been released this year. It follows three veterans as they try to adjust to civilian life. I am in the process of seeing when this documentary will be shown in Montana. Once I find out the date and place, I will get the word out through American Legion Department of Montana and Post Officers.

Everyone is invited to the 6 April 2017 dedication in Billings of the Women’s WWI Memorial in Yellowstone County. Ed Saunders spent many years dedicated in finding 23 women veterans with ties to Yellowstone County. The Ceremony will be at 10:00 a.m. on the County Courthouse lawn, 217 N. 27th Street, Billings.

This year the Montana American Legion Women Veterans’ committee are hosting five Recognition Luncheons. The luncheons will take place in Columbia Falls on the 13th of May at the Night Owl Restaurant; in Townsend on the 6th of May at the Townsend American Legion Post 42; in Great Falls on the 3rd of June at 525 2nd Ave North; in Miles City on the 10th of June at the VFW Post; and Poplar on the 17th of June, location to be determined. Please let women veterans know about these luncheons. Women veterans do not have to be a Legion member to attend. Please RSVP on the form shown below so we can prepare for the luncheons. The Women Veteran Recognition Luncheons are complimentary informative luncheons, we rely on donations and your support. If your Post or an individual would like to donate to these luncheons, please send donations to: PO Box 2081, Great Falls MT 59403 identifying your donation in the memo section as “Women Veteran Luncheons.” Your support is greatly appreciated.

COMPLIMENTARY WOMEN’S VETERANS RECOGNITION 2017 LUNCHEON RSVP

I will be attending the luncheon on:

___ 13 May – Columbia Falls ___ 6 May – Townsend
___ 3 June – Great Falls ___ 10 June – Miles City

NAME _____ SERVICE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Mail or Email RSVP to:

Kim Kay McCarty Martin, PO Box 2081, Great Falls MT 59403, IDIDinND@hotmail.com
Linda Cousineau, PO Box 913, Townsend, MT 59644, Lcousineau@gmail.com
Clancee Collins, 701 Woodbury St, Miles City, MT 59301, clancee@midrivers.com

Department Legion College Opportunity

JOSHUA CLEMENT, POST 2 COMMANDER AND DISTRICT 6 VICE COMMANDER.

In 2017, Department of Montana is conducting our initial Department of Montana Legion College 21-22 June, prior to Department Convention in Billings. This is an opportunity for Legionnaires of all levels to grow in their abilities and knowledge of our great organization. National American Legion College has great curriculum and I have had the privilege to attend as a student and last year as a facilitator. With this knowledge and both National and Department of Wisconsin (home of our next National Commander) we are looking to provide core knowledge of The American Legion beyond the American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI). Our curriculum will focus on leadership, program generation, resolution writing, parliamentary procedures and meeting execution. In addition to developing ourselves to be better Legionnaires, this will be an excellent venue to network and collaborate on successes various Posts or Districts are having.

Early Registration is a simple email sent to: legionnaire.clement@gmail.com with your contact information, Post number, current position, desired future positions, number of years with The American Legion and year completed ALEI (proof not required).

Late / Final Registration will begin at 5:30pm on 21st of June, with class starting at 6pm. Training will recess by 10pm and reconvene at 8am on Thursday 22nd of June. We will be providing a hosted, working (pizza) lunch on Thursday. This course is open to any Legion family members with the understanding the programs will be based on four pillars of The American Legion. This training is ideal for any Post level officers and ones inspiring to serve above the Post level. Only prerequisite is the completion of ALEI, which is the base level of this training.

This training is being put on at no cost, outside the cost to bring you to Billings two nights prior to Department convention. The department has not authorized any compensation for this training but it has been sanctioned by Department Training Committee and Commander Rice. Students will receive Certificate of Completion and be part of the chartering class of Department of Montana Legion College. Finally, this training assists Department Leaders in the selection of future committee assignments or other positions with in the Legion.

Our Department College is not a substitute to the National American Legion College, merely an abridge version that is open to all Legion members. Along with my fellow Legion College Graduates, I strongly encourage anyone to apply for attendance to the National American Legion College conducted annually the last week of October in Indianapolis with all expenses paid. It was sad to represent Montana as part of the Staff without having a student in the College Class.

Any question, please feel free to email or call me (Josh Clement) at 406.431.1803.

Wreaths Across America

LINDA JUVIK, LOCATION & FUNDRAISING GROUP COORDINATOR, MT POW/MIA AWARENESS ASSN.

Montana POW/MIA Awareness Association is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to placing wreaths at Montana State Veterans Cemetery, Fort Har-



risson, MT and has been dedicated to this goal since 2015. In the past two years they have partnered with Wreaths Across America™ (WAA) as the fundraising group for this location and place live green wreaths in December, remembering our Montana veterans.

WAA is a nonprofit organization, founded to

continue and expand the annual wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. In 1992 businessman, Morrill Worcester of Maine began one of our nation's finest tributes to our fallen heroes with the donation of 5,000 wreaths at Arlington.

In 2005, after a photo of the stones at Arlington adorned with wreaths and covered in snow circulated around the internet, the project received national attention. Individual wreath laying began in 2007 at veterans' cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and beyond. By offering sponsorships to the public, WAA hopes that one day a wreath will be placed at every veteran's resting place for the holiday season.

Through this nationwide program, company president Morrill Worcester seeks to recognize Veterans, active duty military and their families. His goal is to remind the public to **REMEMBER** the Veterans, **HONOR** their service, and **TEACH** younger generations about the value of their freedoms and the importance of honoring those who sacrificed so much to protect those freedoms.

Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine donates ceremonial wreaths to each state, representing each branch of the service and POW/MIAs. By 2016 over 1.2 million sponsored wreaths were placed at 1250 participating locations. This was accomplished with the help from hundreds of fundraising groups, corporate contributions, and donations of trucking, shipping and thousands of helping hands.

Montana POW/MIA Awareness Association has taken the responsibility of hosting the National Remembrance Ceremony at the Post Chapel, Fort Harrison. Simultaneous wreath ceremonies at all locations coordinate with the WAA ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. A minute of silence is observed to remember the fallen, the prisoners of war, the missing in action, and to honor those who have served and are serving in this great nation's armed forces. Past ceremonies at the chapel involved local Boy Scouts and Venture Scouts Posting the Colors and leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Memorable features of the ceremony included the opening and closing prayers, guest speaker and posting a ceremonial wreath for each branch of the military

Andrew Pearson Squadron 117 gets their Charter

Sons of The American Legion Andrew Pearson Squadron 117 received their charter from SAL Detachment of Montana Commander Lowell Long at the Post 117 Fourth Annual Benefit Banquet on Saturday, April 1 in Billings. There were 25 charter members of the new Squadron aged two to sixty-two in attendance that evening to receive the document from the Commander. Squadron members lined up in front of the podium for the presentation and then each one signed the document.



Displaying the Squadron colors for the first time. (L-R) Ron Pearson, Jim Lish, Kris Pearson, Tim Carson, George Blackard.

Squadron 117 Commander Tim Carson presented Andrew Pearson's father Ron and Andrew's son Kris with Honorary Life Memberships to the Squadron along with new SAL covers. Squadron members Jim Lish, Paul Deverniero, Ron Dinkel, and George Blackard with the help of long time Post 117

supporter Jeff Flatness raised the funds needed to fly the Pearsons from Virginia to Montana so they could attend the event. It was an emotional evening and the first time JonMarie or Kris had been able to attend a function hosted by the Post named for Andrew.



service. Each wreath is decorated with a red velvet bow, an American flag and service flag to represent a branch of service. A POW/MIA wreath is posted next to the branch of service wreaths.

A remembrance wreath in memory of the 43 Montana service members killed since 9/11, while fighting the nation's wars in the Middle East is placed last. One by one, their names are read. With each name, hometown, military branch, rank and age when they perished, Scouts place a white carnation in the Gold Star wreath. The patriotic ceremony closes with the Retiring of the Colors. The ceremony is typically not long, but is very moving.

The 2015 wreath placing ceremony was started at Montana State Veterans Cemetery, Fort Harrison, where more than 2900 veterans are buried. Association members set up specially built wood stands in the center circle on Heroes Road, where 146 vibrant green wreaths were placed by volunteers the first year. 227 wreaths were placed in 2016. An inspiring sight through the efforts of veteran's organizations, business and individuals, who had the power to make a difference and actually did it.

Many members of Montana POW/MIA Awareness Association are veterans, all are patriotic citizens. Fortunate to be living in a military community, they want to pay a debt of honor to the fallen. Currently in the early stages of fundraising, the success of the WAA mission is dependent entirely upon financial support

like yours. They are hopeful that 2017 will be no exception.

Wreaths are \$15 each. The association would like to ask that you consider becoming a wreath sponsor. As a sponsor, you will receive positive recognition and in a unique way be part of the REMEMBER, HONOR and TEACH national mission. Share in this opportunity to remember our American military heroes – one wreath at a time. All it takes is hard work and dedication to the WAA Program.

Sponsors may make a check out to "Wreaths Across America" and send it to the address below. Memorial wreath sponsorships are solicited throughout the year, and wreaths will be placed in December on National Remembrance Day. Proceeds from funds raised by the association will be dedicated to statewide veterans' charitable causes. If you have any questions about sponsorship opportunities or the association, please contact: Linda Juvik, Location and Fundraising Group Coordinator, Montana State Veterans Cemetery, Fort Harrison (MTSVCH) Location, Montana POW/MIA Awareness Association (MT0010P) Fundraising Group, P.O. Box 7693, Helena, MT 59604, ohmswtohm@msn.com, 406.442.0493



Convention Registrations



THE AMERICAN LEGION OF MONTANA DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

BILLINGS, MONTANA

June 21– 25, 2017

SCHEDULE

Subject to Change

All Events Will Be at The Red Lion Unless Otherwise Noted

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

2:30 PM – Finance Committee

5:30 PM – Montana Legion College – Rm 1010

Thursday, June 22, 2017

8:00 AM – Montana Legion College – Rm 1010

10:00 AM – Forty & Eight Promenade – Jefferson

1:30 PM – Sons of The American Legion (SAL) Meeting – Gallatin

3:00 PM – Department Executive Committee – Jefferson

6:00 PM – 40 & 8 Barbeque – Courtyard

Friday, June 23, 2017

7:30 AM – Past Dept. Commanders Breakfast – Madison

8:45 AM – Call To Order - Department Commander Hal Rice - Ballroom

Introduction of Heads of Montana Veterans Organizations

Other Distinguished Guests

10:00 AM – Convention Committee Assignments - Gary White,

Department Adjutant

10:20 AM – Awards

12:10 PM – Children and Youth Luncheon – Madison

1:15 PM – Convention Committees Meet – Rm 1010, Jefferson, Gallatin,

Little Missouri

2:00 PM – Mylegion.Org Training, Libby Vickers, Nat'l HQS – Gallatin

3:00 PM – Veterans Choice Act Presentation – Gallatin

3:30 PM – District Caucus (if needed) – Rm 1010

3:20 PM – Coordinated Children & Youth Committee – Boardroom

4:00 PM – Hospitality Rooms

6:00 PM – Cocktail Hour – Auxiliary Banquet

7:00 PM – Auxiliary Past Presidents Banquet; *Open to All* – Bighorn

Saturday, June 24, 2017

7:00 AM –Go Getters Breakfast – Madison

9:00 AM - Business Meeting – Reports – Ballroom

1:15 PM – Women Veterans Meeting – Jefferson

2:00 PM – District and Zone Commander Training – Rm 1010

3:00 PM – Legion Riders –Jefferson

4:00 PM – Hospitality Rooms

6:00 PM – Cocktail Hour

7:00 PM – Joint Banquet – Bighorn / Stillwater

Sunday, June 25, 2017

8:00 AM – Joint Service to God and Country – Madison

9:00 AM – Final Business Session – Ballroom

Unfinished Business

New Business

Election of Department Officers

Commander

Vice Commander

Zone Commander 7, 9 & 11

Zone Commander 4, 5 & 6

NEC

Alt NEC

Historian

Election of National Convention Delegates

Selection of Year 2020 Convention City

Installation of New Department Officers

12:00 PM – Meeting of New Department Executive Committee –

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Drive Carefully on Your Way Home!

American Legion Department of Montana Convention 2017

June 22nd–25th

Hosted by Andrew Pearson Post 117



Name(s) _____

☐ Legion ☐ ALA ☐ SAL

☐ Legion ☐ ALA ☐ SAL

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Registration \$20 X _____ = \$ _____

40 & 8 BBQ \$18 X _____ = \$ _____

Past Dept. Commander's Breakfast \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Children & Youth Luncheon \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Auxiliary Banquet \$23 X _____ = \$ _____

Past Dept. President's Luncheon \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Incoming President's Luncheon \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Joint Banquet \$27 X _____ = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Convention Hotel

Red Lion Inn Hotel & Convention Center

1223 Mullaney Lane

Billings, MT 59101

Room Rate \$92

Everyone who rents a room at the convention hotel will be entered into a drawing for \$500 CASH and a gift package worth over \$500!

(One name per paying guest / per room rate)

Questions

George Blackard

C# 406-855-6781

geoblackard@yahoo.com

Send Registration Form & Payment To

Post 117 Convention

PO Box 866

Billings, MT 59103



The American Legion Family

2017 AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION

RENO, NEVADA

AUGUST 18 – 24, 2017

GRAND SIERRA RESORT & CASINO

2500 East Second St

National Convention Reservation form for Legion, SAL & Auxiliary

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

Please reserve the following accommodations for _____ persons. I will be sharing a room with _____.

Enclosed is a check to cover one night's room deposit, plus others as noted.

_____ King (1 or 2 persons) \$129.95 (this includes tax of 13%) \$ _____

_____ Double (1 or 2 persons) \$129.95 (this includes tax of 13%) \$ _____

_____ Commanders Banquet @ \$46.00 each \$ _____

_____ Parking Rate – Free \$ _____

_____ Hospitality Room - \$16.00 \$ _____

_____ Registration (nondelegates only; delegates are paid) \$25.00 ea \$ _____

_____ Parade Transportation (if not needed will be refunded) \$19.00 \$ _____

(Note: ALL Convention attendees must be registered and have a Convention badge to ride buses, attend convention functions and enter the convention hall) If you are attending Commander's Banquet please advise Department by 25 February, 2017.

TOTAL \$ _____

I / We will arrive (DATE) _____ (TIME) _____ Do not leave blank

I / We will depart (DATE) _____ (TIME) _____ Do not leave blank

LEGION ONLY – I would like to be a delegate and would serve on the following Committee, (official delegates must be nominated and elected at the Department Convention in Billings, June 23 – 25, 2017).

1st Choice _____

2nd Choice _____

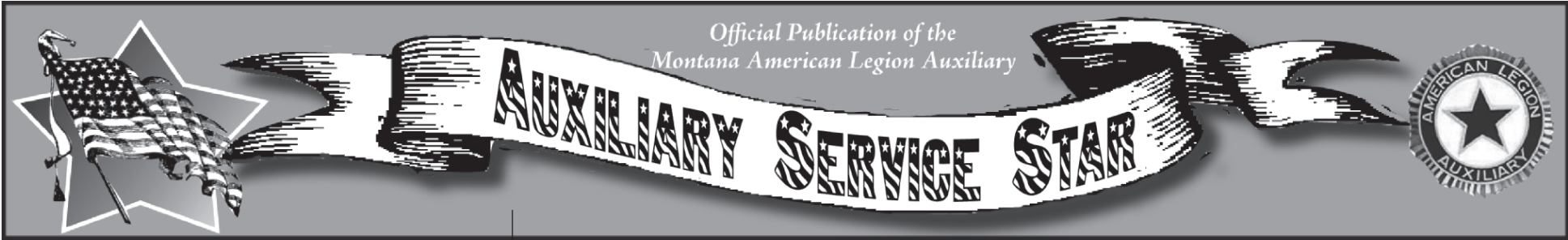
ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS: JULY 1, 2017, early receipt will guarantee staying with the Montana Delegation

Please send check payable to the American Legion of Montana and this form to:

Department Adjutant

PO Box 6075

Helena, MT 59604-6075



President

JANETTE BOSSEN

Hello Montana,

Hope you all are having fun with all of the activities you have done or have planned to do for our Veterans and their families.

May is Poppy month so get out and let the public know what a Poppy stands for and why we do what we do. Get your places set up to hand them out. Make sure you wear something that lets them know who we are also. Get into the schools and get those Poppy Posters going as there have been lots of good ones done by the children.

Also, hope you have a great Memorial Day celebration planned in your community to honor our Veteran's. Plan a picnic or just have friends over for a BBQ and have some fun.

Summer is fast approaching. June is for the Juniors Activities so let's get them involved in helping out our Veterans to help them learn why they are so important to us all. We need to get the younger ones going in our great Organization so we will not go by the wayside.

June 22-25 is also Department Convention in Billings and I hope to see a lot of you there. We will have some fun and get business done, then have more fun. Come and join in. Meet new ALA members and support our upcoming Department personal. Show them that you care about them and our organization.

Then there is July. HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA!! Let's have a BBQ and watch some great fireworks to celebrate America's Birthday. Please remember the Veterans that are alone.

Have fun and be safe.

God Bless you all and keep up the great work that you all do!★

For God and Country



Janette Bossen

Secretary

JAIMIE DeBATES

From Mission Control...
(aka Department Headquarters)

Happy Spring!! I love it. New growth and fresh colors. You should see the new applications rolling in like tumbleweeds in the wind. **GREAT JOB OUT THERE IN UNIT-LAND.** As of this writing our Department is at **OVER 92 percent** of goal. That's the **GOOD** news. The **BAD** news (isn't there always?) is that we're still behind where we were last year at this same time. How can that be when so many Units have reached 100 percent? Think about it. It's **NEVER** too late to bring a member current. You just have to make the first effort to contact them and let them know we miss them and we **NEED** them. And don't forget the date of birth of those new applications.

President Jean is working hard to ensure a superb convention in Billings in June. Make your reservations now and come hear the latest information from all your department officers. Honestly – we're not boring and the news is **NEW**.

Deadlines are quickly approaching for me to get your information to the national office. As you know I bring your membership rosters and member cards to convention. If it's not correct now we need to jump on that right away. Help me help you please. Your Unit Officer Reporting form is due to me by May 1st. I cannot be liberal with the deadline so please don't keep asking.

I'll be heading to Indianapolis in early May for the leadership conference. Terry Kemp and Kathy Long will be with me and we're proud to represent this great department so please lend us your ears at convention with the latest and greatest we'll be bringing back.⬆



Jamie DeBates

Remember to file your 990 E-Postcard. And there seems to be a little confusion about the Inclusion Letter some of you recently received. That does **NOT** mean you never have to file 990 again. They are two separate issues. Call me if you need more info.

Many thanks for all your hard work. Each of you really do make a difference.★

Membership

KATHY LONG

I have enjoyed being our cheerleader (*Membership Chairman*) getting in our membership for the year 2016-17. We are in the last few months to get in our membership for the year and I hope to report at Department Convention that we as a Department made goal. This will mean that several more Districts will have made goal as well. I am planning a surprise at Department Convention but I am not telling until we get there.

At the time of this writing, only one District does not have a Goal Unit, I have been watching all Units closely because I would like to see all Units make goal. I know that my expectations may not happen, but when I set the goals for each Unit being only one more than you had made last year; I was hoping that would be an incentive for you to go out and get more members for the Auxiliary. I am very pleased that several of you took that incentive and got extra members. In the end this helped boost the morale of several people, I hope this can continue into the future and hope for the people in The American Legion Auxiliary.

Our programs are important for the future of our country and our organization. I hope to continue our work as your Department President. May God Bless each one of you.★



Kathy Long



Unit 15 Harlowton

Harlowton Unit 15 Veterans Chair initiated *Cookies for Airmen*. Once a month Auxiliary members bake and take cookies to the local missile base in Harlowton. Pictured is Chairman Jo Elrod and one of the service members on the first cookie delivery.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MECHELLE HOLMES

Deceased Members					
OCTOBER 1, 2016 - MARCH 31, 2017					
Unit	Unit City	Name	Unit	Unit City	Name
Unit 2	Helena	Annette A Doyle	Unit 50	Big Sandy	Patricia Chauvet
Unit 3	Great Falls	Hazel Petrus	Unit 51	Augusta	Ellen Mulcare
Unit 11	Havre	Wanda A McKinney	Unit 56	Scobey	Louise French,
Unit 14	Bozeman	Barbara A Brooks			Delores Danelson
Unit 18	Roundup	Chrycentie Liggett	Unit 58	Plentywood	Sharon Germann
		Lulu M Foulk			Primrose L States
Unit 20	Dillon	Estella Blomquist			Colleen K Borah
		Anna Henderson	Unit 60	Ekalaka	Bernice Walter
		Beverly Hren,			Frances B Nies
		Clarice L Walters	Unit 64	Dutton	Kay Aune
		Aileen Warrick	Unit 70	Judith Gap	Lois Poulton
Unit 21	Anaconda	Margaret J. Snow	Unit 71	Fromberg	Agnes R Buechler
		Beatrice McCarthy	Unit 81	Culbertson	Lucille Timm,
Unit 23	Livingston	Mary Lee			Ellamae A Iverson
		Georgia S Sumner	Unit 84	Belfry	Betty Waters, L V Spencer
Unit 25	White Sulphur	Beth Berg, Jean B Ellison			Shirley A Ungefug
		Francien R. Hutzenbiler	Unit 91	Corvallis	Mary J Hasselfeldt
Unit 28	Glendive	Beatrice Clapp, Pat Kalloch	Unit 94	Stevensville	Minnie Kelly
Unit 34	Columbus	Marilyn L Maltzberger	Unit 97	Libby	Rosalie Wenholz
Unit 35	Baker	Catherine J Gorder	Unit 105	Department	Maeona E Smith
		Dorothy R Neary			Amy S Campbell
Unit 39	Forsyth	Myrtle M Bay	Unit 107	Peerless	Vicki J. Fouhy-Canfield
Unit 41	Glasgow	Dorothy Bell, Issella Cook			Marjorie Fladager
		Mary A Moen	Unit 111	Custer	D R Hodson
Unit 42	Townsend	Kathern Ragen,	Unit 129	Plains	Karen K Frey
		Barbara Johnson			

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

KAREN SUSAG, CHAIRMAN

Now that all the report is into our Department Chairmen we are looking forward to another great year in the ALA to assist our veterans and service members. I will have volunteer sheets available at Department Convention for Unit members to help keep track of their volunteer's hours for the following year.

There are so many ways we can aid our service members and Veterans. Work with your Unit historian and visit with a veteran to record his/her "story". We are losing too much history of untold by our heroes! A friendly, "How are you doing?," and a smile can work wonders for someone who may be having a not so good day. Search for VA&R information on our National website: ALAforVeterans.org for a wealth of information on what you can do and instructions on how to do it. The last thing I printed off was how to do a Stand Down.



For those of you who are caregivers there is a VA Caregiver Support Line toll free 1-855-260-3279. Veteran Caregivers can speak to a licensed social worker for support, education and referrals. The Caregiver website: www.caregiver.va.gov will give additional information as well as a link for resources and services.

To the wonderful quilters in our organization – check out Quilts of Valor, Ann Rehbein is Executive Director. www.QOVF.org for more information or you may contact me at mksusag@live.com



Remember... we need to wear our Auxiliary Emblem when doing Auxiliary business and volunteering. We need to let the public know what we do.

Harlowton Unit 15 honors 60-year member



Harlowton Unit 15 honored Clara Reed as a 60-year member at its February meeting. Clara received a plaque and was pinned by her granddaughter, Navy Veteran Karena Robertson Dale, a member of American Legion Post 15.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY MECHELLE HOLMES



Now that we're well into Spring, we see new life sprouting all around us and it seems wherever I go, I see messages from our Father God. Blue skies, glorious clouds, rumbling rivers, green grass and snow-capped mountains together. I hope it's giving you the energizing feeling it has me.



Just as we see the plants around us growing stronger, let's deepen our roots and branch out. Reach out and do something for someone in need. Perhaps a mom in need of childcare for an hour or two, a veteran family member needing a ride to church or a meeting, picking up groceries for or watching a movie with a homebound elder. If someone is grieving, do something other than sending the usual card to show you care. Is this God working? I believe so. In helping others we may also feel the Holy Spirit within ourselves.

I recently attended an open house and read this framed artwork: "God didn't promise days without pain, laughter without sorrow, nor sun without rain. But He did promise strength for the day, comfort for the tears and light for the way." You may have seen this before but what a beautiful reminder. And here's another reminder: take time to read the inspiring words of our National Chaplain in "Reflections" in the Auxiliary magazine. ☺

For God and Country; Amen



Department Raffle

1st prize is \$1,000

2nd prize is \$500

3rd prize Red-White-Blue Golf Bag

Tickets:

\$5/ea. or 6/\$25

The raffle is open to EVERYONE. Sell to friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.

Even one ticket per month helps the Auxiliary, plus increases your chances of winning.

Tickets can be mailed or e-mailed to you by contacting Jamie DeBates. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask.

Drawing at 2017 Department Convention in Billings.



PHOTO BY LEILA SEYFERT, GOLF BAG MODELED BY JENNIFER HERMAN

Steve Daines

United States Senator for Montana

Veterans Update – March 2017

• S.697 TAX RELIEF FOR GUARD AND RESERVE TRAINING ACT

On March 22nd I introduced the Tax Relief for Guard and Reserve Training Act, which increases service members' ability to deduct training-related expenses from their income taxes. In February, three veterans from the Montana Chapter of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard (EANGUS) visited Washington and brought to my attention that current law only allows members to claim mileage expenses beyond 100 miles from the member's residence to their duty location.

My bill lowers that threshold to 50 miles, adds lodging and meals, and exempts all travel expenses from the 2% floor on itemized deductions. I had the opportunity to discuss this measure with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dunford, during a Defense Appropriations hearing on Defense Readiness. I was pleased to report back to the Montana National Guard Association during their Annual Conference in Great Falls on March 24th that the bill had been formally introduced.

Montana EANGUS and the Montana American Legion have both expressed their support for this bill. Our guardsmen and reservists do enough for our country without having to shell out additional funds to pay for their training.

• MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

In a March 14th letter to the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, I asked her to reconsider a proposal to centralize the tasking of Military Funeral Honors. When it comes to this important mission, Montanans are better at running Montana.

• IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUITY AT THE VA

I cosponsored two bills to improve accountability and continuity at the Veterans Administration. The first bill, The Veterans Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act, provides for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct. During my meeting with Dr. Shulkin in January, and at his confirmation hearing in February, he expressed this as the type of legislation he needs to improve accountability within the VA. The second bill, The Veterans Choice Improvement Act, provides assurance to participating medical providers with outstanding payment balances by removing the August 7th Choice expiration date and allowing the program to continue until all funds are exhausted in early 2018.

This bill also makes VA the primary payer under Choice, removing third party administrators from the customer service role, and allows for certain medical documents to be shared to improve the quality of veteran healthcare. This is the first step towards reform of the Veterans Choice Program.

• NATIONAL DESERT STORM/DESERT SHIELD MEMORIAL

A joint resolution approving the location of a monument to honor the members of the Armed Forces who served in Operation Desert Storm/Desert Shield passed the Senate with unanimous consent on March 8th, and was presented to President Trump on March 20th.

• MONTANA CIVIL AIR PATROL VISIT



Civil Air Patrol Lieutenant Colonel Bob Schneller, from Kalispell, and Air Patrol Cadet Major Justin Ramey, from Eureka, visited my office on March 2nd. Cadet Ramey was in D.C. as part of a small group of cadets from across the nation selected for a weeklong Civic Leadership Academy.

Billings Andrew Pearson Post 117 Banquet



Keynote speaker Major Janel Weise Montana Army National Guard.

On Saturday, April 1, Andrew Pearson Post 117 hosted their 4th Annual Post 117 Benefit Banquet at the Red Lion Inn in Billings. The attendance was very good at approximately 225 people with many dignitaries in attendance including Mayor Tom Hanel, City Councilmen Mike Yakawich and Shaun Brown, County Commissioner Denis Pitman, and Veterans Liaison for Senator Daines’ office Denny Lenoir. Both Mayor Hanel and Commissioner Pitman would become brand new SAL members before the night was over. Also in attendance were Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Lowell Long, Auxiliary Department President Jean Bossen, Zone Commander Michelle Harada, and District 11 Commander Jim Bossen.

The distinguished guests for the evening were Andrew Pearson’s wife JonMarie Pearson, son Kris Pearson, father Ron Pearson and his wife Sandy Pearson. JonMarie and Kris were flown from Virginia to attend the event by Sons of The American Legion Squadron 117. (see page 8)



Dustin Bretz of Bretz RV & Marine receives the Employer of Veterans Award from Post 117 Commander Mitch Howe.

The theme for the evening was Honoring Women in The Military and the keynote speaker was Post 117 member and U.S. Army Major Janel Weise. Comrade Weise did an excellent

job sharing stories of women in military history and of those women she was deployed with and currently serves alongside. It is an honor to have Comrade Weise as a member of our Post.

Post Commander Mitch Howe presented Supervisory United States Deputy Marshal Tim Hornung with the Post’s 2016 Law Enforcement Officer of The Year Award. Hornung retired from the Army after 22 years of service and continues his service to our state and nation with the U.S. Marshals Service. The nomination letter from Hornung’s supervisor stated “While there are many descriptive terms that I could use to define Hornung, the most applicable are that of a self-less, lead from the front patriot who loves nothing more than serving his God, Country, and fellow man”. Upon receiving the award Hornung thanked God, and Hornung’s wife and family for their many years of support and sacrifice.



Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshall Tim Hornung (L) receives the Post 117 Law Enforcement Officer of The Year Award from Post 117 Commander Mitch Howe.



Post 117 member Chris Grudzinski (L) receives a Certificate of Distinction for creating the Veteran’s Meat Locker from Post 117 Commander Mitch Howe.

Post member Chris Grudzinski received a Certificate of Distinction for his work creating and operating the Veteran’s Meat Locker. Comrade Grudzinski hand delivers meat from the Veteran’s

Meat Locker to veterans all across Montana fifteen pounds at a time. The meat consisting of deer, elk, antelope, beef, and pork is donated and always processed at a reputable processing facility. All veterans are eligible to receive this gift regardless of their financial means. Comrade Grudzinski is a very active member of the veteran community in Montana and a true asset to our Post.

One of the newest members of Post 117, Leslie Cartner was awarded “Montanan of The Week” by U.S. Senator Steve Daines and the award was presented by Daines’ staff member Denny Lenoir. Comrade Cartner was the driving force behind the formation of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps Yellowstone Battalion in Billings. Comrade Cartner serves her fellow veterans as a dental technician at the VA Billings CBOC.



Post 117 Member Leslie Cartner receives Montanan of The Week award from Denny Lenoir of U.S. Senator Steve Daines’ office.



Post 117 Cmdr Mitch Howe (R) receives a Citation for Exemplary Service from Post 117 Cmdr George Blackard.

Outgoing Post Commander Mitch Howe received a Citation For Exemplary Service from the Post for his service as Post Commander and representatives from Bretz RV and Marine received an Employer of Veterans Award.

Park Post 23... Lest We Forget

DEAN GILBERT, HISTORIAN , LIVINGSTON PARK POST 23

Early Park County (Gallatin County) Montana Territory residents were assimilated from battle worn and displaced soldiers at the end of the Civil War of 1864 and those seeking adventure in the gold mining locations of the west. Others were battle tested from the Spanish American War of 1898. All were seeking a new beginning and a place that offered “elbow room.” Immigrants from East of the Mississippi River, created wagon trains, heading west on the Oregon Trail to find a new way of life. They became the homesteaders of the new land away from the big rivers but chose a spot where there was a good springs and fertile land to farm. Others joined the big cattle drives from Texas to the grass lands of the Montana Territory. These drovers stayed with the livestock, creating huge ranches, settling the West that we now call Park County Montana. These enthusiastic and adventuresome young men stayed in the valley, becoming the homesteaders, miners, and businessmen that crafted the foundation of our

society. They came from all walks of life and had to create their lives from what-ever was at hand or could be made by hand. Later settlers were from the European and Scandinavian nations that were willing to brave the hardships of the frontier to carve out a niche in the west. These people became sheep herders and farm laborers. When they became established, they sent for their wives and families to join them. All settlers had to use hard labor and ingenuity to accomplish their goals.

As time advanced, the young men of the next generation had to register for the draft under the order of President Woodrow Wilson on June 15, 1917. Utilizing the training their fathers and neighbors had prepared them to answer the call to go to war which turned out to be WWI. The First Contingent of Park County, Montana men, ages 21 to 31, left Livingston on the Northern Pacific Troop Train on September 6, 1917. The Second Contingent left on September 20, 1917 and the Third Contingent left on October 4,

1917 from Livingston Montana. Their destination was a Training Center at American Lake, Washington. The Training Center (now called Fort Lewis) issued these men uniforms, taught the recruits formations and a few strategic military maneuvers then were shipped directly to the war zone in Europe. There were 136 men from Park County that answered the call for service to their country. Some of the men were new arrivals to the United States, could not yet speak the English Language, but registered for the draft, and went to war for their new country, The United States of America. Other men were inducted into the Navy and Marines.

The American Legion, Park Post 23, Livingston Montana was formed in 1919 to assist the soldiers returning from the battlefields of Europe to gather and tell of their experiences, and to help assimilate back into a peaceful society. Park Post 23 kept an inactive file of all returning military personnel, helping to find work and keeping in touch with every man at least every 30 days, checking on their transition back into the Park County society.

SEND-OFF OF SAMMIES ~ SEPTEMBER. 20, 1917

COMPLIMENTS OF THE YELLOWSTONE GATEWAY MUSEUM

Nearly ten million young American men 1,753 of them from Park County registered for the army in the first military census ever taken



in the United States on June 5, 1917. As the first contingent of eight men left Livingston on Sept. 7, stores were closed, school was dismissed, residents turned out en masse, and the group was escorted from the court house to the depot by the Gateway City Band. The same type of farewell was given these National Army Recruits two weeks later by three or four thousand Park County residents. Those drafted for this contingent were: Glen A. Dunn, Charles R. Stinnett, Matthew Kain, Ray Wismer, A. A. Mortimer, H.E. McParlin, Bert Johnson, Joseph Stermitz, George Ford, Ignace Petek, Philip Cushing, Frank Roe, Darrel Youngberg, Otto Reynolds, Joe Sidebotham, Panagertes Maropoulos, Ernest Howell, Paul Chamberlain, Edward Morrison. Howard Gardiner, Otto Melin, Abner Brown, Chauncey Thompson,

W. Russell Jordan, Earl Shorthill, Lewis Parsons, Lee Beckman, Pietro Farnere, William Donahue, James McLaughlin, Otto Bachman, Berton Reese, John Watson, Paul Burnett, Arthur Brookings, Clarence Collier, Jack Perry, Bennie Behrendsen, George Tronrud, Angelo Cieri. Elmer Knight, Robert Marsh, Patrick McCarville, Earl Laffon, Clayton Gipe, William Sangster, William Wright, Don Estes, Ernest Walker, William Yambor, Frederick Johnson, Americo Pasquini, Lloyd Baxter, Elmer Crane. Frank Bostick, Richard Schulze, Mike Brysion, George Pfol, Ralph Johnson, Edgar Witherby, Fred McGuire, Leland S. Crate, E. E. McVay, J. Burton, Leo Purcell. Bert Johnson and Ed Witherby were in charge of the group. Known to have been killed in action were Russell Jordan and Darrel Youngberg.

CHAPLAIN

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located near major battlefields and thus mainly in the South. The most famous are Gettysburg National Cemetery in Pennsylvania and Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington, D.C.

Confederate Memorial Monument in Montgomery, Alabama

Evidence exists that shows General Logan had adopted and adapted for the North the annual Confederate Memorial Day custom that had been in practice in the South since 1866.



The U.S. National Park Service attributes the beginning to the ladies of Columbus, Georgia. The separate tradition of Memorial Day observance had emerged earlier in the South and served as the prototype for the national day of memory. Historians acknowledge the Ladies Memorial Association played a key role in its development. The most important was the United Daughters of the Confederacy, which grew from 17,000 members in 1900 to nearly 100,000 women by World War I. They were “strikingly successful at raising money to build Confederate monuments, lobbying legislatures and Congress for the reburial of Confederate dead, and working to shape the content of history textbooks.”

On April 25, 1866, women in Columbus, Mississippi laid flowers on the graves of both the Union and Confederate dead in the city’s cemetery.

Soldiers National Monument at the center of Gettysburg National Cemetery.

The ceremonies and Memorial Day address at Gettysburg National Park became nationally well known, starting in 1868. In July 1913, veterans of the United States and Confederate armies gathered in Gettysburg to commemorate the fifty-year anniversary of the Civil War’s bloodiest and most famous battle.



Since the cemetery dedication at Gettysburg occurred on November 19, that day (or the closest weekend) has been designated as their own local memorial day that is referred to as Remembrance Day.

Memorial Day endures as a holiday which most businesses observe because it marks the unofficial beginning of summer. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) advocate returning to the original date, although the significance of the date is tenuous. The VFW stated in a 2002 Memorial Day Address: “Changing the date merely to create three-day weekends has undermined the very meaning of the day. No doubt, this has contributed a lot to the general public’s nonchalant observance of Memorial Day.



Starting in 1987 Hawaii’s Senator Daniel Inouye, a WW II veteran, introduced a measure to return Memorial Day to its traditional date and continued introducing the resolution until his death in 2012.

Traditional observance

On Memorial Day, the flag of the United States is raised briskly to the top of the staff and then solemnly lowered to the half-staff position, where

it remains only until noon. It is then raised to full-staff for the remainder of the day.

The half-staff position remembers the more than one million men and women who gave their lives in service of their country. At noon, their memory is raised by the living, who resolve not to let their sacrifice be in vain, but to rise up in their stead and continue the fight for liberty and justice for all.

The National Memorial Day Concert takes place on the west lawn of the United States Capitol. The concert is broadcast on PBS and NPR. Music is performed, and respect is paid to the men and women who gave their lives for their country.

For many Americans, the central event is attending one of the thousands of parades held on Memorial Day in large and small cities all over the country. Most of these feature marching bands and an overall military theme with the National Guard and other servicemen participating along with veterans and military vehicles from various wars.

One of the longest-standing traditions is the running of the Indianapolis 500, an auto race which has been held in conjunction with Memorial Day since 1911. It runs on the Sunday preceding the Memorial Day holiday. The Coca-Cola 600 stock car race has been held later the same day since 1961. The Memorial Tournament golf event has been held on or close to the Memorial Day weekend since 1976.

Fun Facts

There have been 144 national calls to prayer, humiliation, fasting and thanksgiving by the President of the United States (1789 – 2015).

There have been 67 Presidential Proclamations for a National Day of Prayer (1952 – 2015). Gerald R. Ford (1976), George H. Bush (1989 – 91) and Barack H. Obama (2012) are the only U.S. Presidents to sign multiple National Day of Prayer Proclamations in the same year.

Every President since 1952 has signed a National Day of Prayer proclamation.

Thirty-four of the 44 U.S. Presidents have signed proclamations for National Prayer. Three of the Presidents who did not sign a proclamation died while serving in office. Two Presidents, not included in the count—William Howard Taft and Warren Gamaliel Harding, signed proclamations for Thanksgiving and Prayer.

Records indicate there have been 1,419 state and federal calls for national prayer since 1775 and counting.

WWI women veterans

Ed Saunders, Laurel, Montana

America entered WWI one hundred years ago this year. Women served in uniform in WWI, mostly as nurses in the US Army Nurse Corps. They volunteered for service before they were allowed to vote in federal elections. They volunteered to go into harm's way to serve. Many never came home. History has forgotten most of these women.



Thank-you to Clair Johnson, Billings Gazette newspaper, Billings, Mont., for her fine article on a long journey to find and forever thank these women.

Read the full article *Army veteran seeks recognition for WWI women veterans* at: http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/army-veteran-seeks-recognition-for-wwi-women-veterans/article_e5a2da02-727e-59df-af67-fc61283920bd.html

Miles City Post 5

SUBMITTED BY CAROL PRAHL

Miles City Post 5 members and volunteers folding the flags. The Miles City Star ran a photo on November 14 showing the flags going up with the help of volunteers and Post 5 members. The help is always appreciated since there were 55 flags to put up and take down.



Miles City Post 5 repinning ceremony

MILES CITY STAR | STAR PHOTOS/STEVE ALLISON

Miles City observed Veterans Day [Friday, Nov. 11, 2016] with a variety of activities around town. Below left, volunteers and members of Miles city American Legion Post 5 place U.S. flags at the Eastern Montana State Veterans’ Cemetery. Below right, VA chaplain Steve Rice



lights a candle for a recently deceased vet at the Veterans Affairs Community Living Center while Carol Prahl reads off the name. The Center held a re-pinning ceremony to again honor veterans with the medals they received during their military service. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 1957 also held a ceremony.



Bozeman Post 14 7th Annual Breakfast

SUBMITTED BY LEN ALBRIGHT.

Post 14 hosted the 7th Annual “Chief’s” breakfast for the Bozeman Police Department. Post member Dave Sweet, John Parra, Commander Jim How, and Zone Commander Len Albright (behind the camera) set up and cooked pancakes, sausage, and eggs for the officers in attendance. It was a great way to interface with local law enforcement and even get a couple of members.



Montana Selected for 2017 Navy Week

America’s Navy is coming home to the Montana in 2017, one of 15 locations selected to host a Navy Week, one of the Navy’s signature outreach programs.

Montana Navy Week is scheduled for Aug. 14 – 20, 2017, coincident with the Montana Fair in Billings, Mont., and is designed to give residents an opportunity to learn about the Navy, its people and its importance to national security and prosperity. The Navy Week will be centered in Billings, Bozeman and Helena in order to allow the largest number of Montana residents to meet and interact with their Navy Team. The Navy plans typically include the following elements in the week-long celebration:

- The Navy Parachute Team, the Leap Frogs
- Navy Divers and Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams
- Navy Band musical performances
- Senior Navy Leadership
- USS Constitution Sailors
- Namesake Sailors
- Navy simulator(s) and other interactive displays
- Visits to area schools
- Community service projects and events with local organizations
- Visits with local veterans

Since 2005, the Navy Week program has served as the Navy’s signature outreach effort into areas of the country which do not have a significant Navy presence, with 195 Navy Weeks being held in 71 different U.S. cities.

“Navy Weeks are designed to help Americans understand that their Navy protects and defends America on the world’s oceans, that their Navy is deployed around the world around the clock, and is ready to defend America at all times,” said Cmdr. John Gay, Director of the Navy Office of Community Outreach, which plans and executes the Navy Week program. “Because the Navy is concentrated primarily on both coasts, we’re challenged to communicate our mission away from fleet concentration areas. That’s where the Navy Week program comes in.”

Navy Weeks focus a variety of outreach assets, equipment and personnel on a single city for a week-long series of engagements with key influencers and organizations representing all sectors of the market.

“During a Navy Week, 75-100 outreach events are coordinated with corporate, civic, government, education, media, veterans, community service and diversity organizations in the city,” said Lt. Cmdr. Brett Dawson, Navy Office of Community Outreach Event Planning Department. “We bring in as much of the Navy as we can to showcase the great work that our people do and the exciting tools of the trade. This can range from Navy divers to interactive STEM displays to Sailors from around the world and stationed locally.”

For more information about 2017 Montana Navy Week, contact:

Lieutenant Junior Grade Mack Jamieson, 901.874.5823, william.jamieson@navy.mil

WELCOME HOME

when he returned with a single word: “lonely.”

“It just wasn’t a welcoming environment,” he said.

This year’s walk was about half the size of last year’s event, the first since it was authorized in 2011 by the Montana Legislature.

That event drew veterans from across the state. Even though there were fewer participants this year, Ray Read, Montana Military Museum director who helped organize it, wasn’t disappointed.

Some of those who participated last year felt vindicated and didn’t need to come, Read said.

“It needs to happen in Billings, in Valier, wherever there’s Vietnam veterans,” he said.

“Our ultimate goal was not to have a major Montana event in Helena but to have an event in Helena.”

Some of the walkers were alone. Others walked in twos and threes. This was a time of silence for many, broken with a bit of light banter by others.

Daniel Pocha, part of the Little Shell Chippewa Tribe, greeted walkers outside the atrium with a burning twist of dried plants. The line of people passed through a smoke of what Pocha said were sacred plants: cedar, sweet pine, sage, sweet grass and tobacco.

“It cleanses you,” he said. “It brings your hopes and prayers to the Creator.”

Inside the atrium, the veterans and those who accompanied them sat or stood. Perhaps 40 or more people filled the chairs that were reserved for them with white slips of paper.

“Forty-four years ago is that day that marked the return home of our nation’s Vietnam veterans,” Gov. Steve Bullock said as he addressed the crowd.

“Unfortunately these combat veterans didn’t receive the welcome home that generations of Americans did in previous wars. We owe all these brave soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen a debt of gratitude that indeed we can never truly repay.”

The experience of those who served was unique and made all the more difficult when they returned home to a country in turmoil and no services to honor them, Bullock continued.

Montana has the highest proportion of veterans in the nation, he said.

While calling for the sacrifices of those who served in Vietnam to never be forgotten, he asked that the sacrifices of those who have served elsewhere also not be forgotten.

Last year’s walk was the first time that many Vietnam veterans were told welcome home, Bullock said before adding, “it’s something that we must not do just once a year but indeed every day to ensure that our warriors understand that we appreciate the sacrifices that they made then and the continued sacrifices that so many carry on their shoulders even today.”



PHOTOS BY THOM BRIDGE, HELENA IR

The Veterans of the Vietnam War were commemorated Thursday morning during the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony at the State Capitol complex.

Maj. Gen. Matthew Quinn, the adjutant general of the Montana Army National Guard, disregarded his prepared remarks when he spoke.

The night before the event, he walked alone through the Carroll College campus before retracing his steps, he said.

He said he thought of the solitude of being a veteran “and I thought back to May of 1991 when I returned to Germany from Desert Storm and

there was a great crowd there -- family, other citizens.”

He also recalled his return from duty in 2004 when he arrived in Kalispell. School had been dismissed for the day. The street, from the airport to the old armory, was lined with people welcoming them home.

As he walked through the college campus, he thought about how it would have been to return to what awaited Vietnam’s veterans: solitude, no greeting or scorn.

Among those who greeted the returning soldiers in 1991 and 2004 were the Vietnam veterans, Quinn said.

“They turned that scorn, that pain into a commitment of never again.”

“You are why America is saying never again and let’s never forget. My personal thanks to what you have done to improve this nation for our veterans,” Quinn said.

Lattin appreciated the welcome.

“Overall, the mood of the country has changed. Iraq and Afghanistan, they were treated much better,” he said.

“In retrospect, I’m proud of my service but there’s 58,000 dead boys and ladies that should have never been there,” Lattin said and added, “it was a mistake.”

This event was a recognition of the veterans for Collins who said this was also a time to join other veterans in recognizing the war.

“I had a lot of friends that gave their lives,” he said.

And the war’s legacy continues to claim those who fought there, Collins added and explained a veteran who was exposed to the herbicide and defoliant Agent Orange died last week.

“It just continues. Some of them have just gone through a lot.”

“The acknowledgement of the Vietnam era has become a lot broader, a lot better known, a lot better accepted,” said Cook.

“There was a time when it was something that you never really admitted to, being a Vietnam veteran.”

“It’s changing,” Cook said. “There’s more appreciation expressed from civilians ... as opposed to the way it was immediately after the conflict.”

Ronan Post 138 Oratorical winners

Ronan Post 138 advances Daniel Koehler to District 4 level of the American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest.

Daniel competed against fellow classmates from Ronan High School, Roman Hall second place and Jarret Richey third place. The Contest was moderated by the Ronan Post 138 Oratory Chairman Glen Sharbono. Several members of the community helped with judging, time keeping, and all other aspects of the contest making it a smooth process. Ronan Post 138 awarded \$150 in total to the top three places along with Bronze, Silver, and Gold Oratorical Medals and Certificates of Appreciation to all participants of the contest as well.

First place winner Daniel Koehler, along with Roman Hall, attended American Legion Boys State in Helena. Daniel then attended American

Legion Boys Nation in Washington DC. Daniel Koehler is also an Eagle Scout, he has two grandfathers who were Korean War Veterans. Daniel is a Senior at Ronan High School and plans to attend the Air Force Academy in the near future



Daniel Koehler 1st place; Roman Hall 2nd place, and Jarret Richey 3rd place.

ADJUTANT

continued from pg. 2

General Petraeus continued remarks... response to why our veterans deserve special benefits

fact, the average citizen was asked to sacrifice nothing, and has sacrificed nothing, unless they have chosen to out of the goodness of their hearts. The only people who have sacrificed are the veterans and their families. The volunteers.

The people who swore an oath to defend this nation. You stand there, deployment after deployment and fight on. You’ve lost relationships, spent years of your lives in extreme conditions, years apart from kids you’ll never get back, and beaten your body in a way that even professional athletes don’t understand. Then you come home to a nation that doesn’t understand. They don’t understand suffering. They don’t understand sacrifice. They don’t understand why we fight for them. They don’t understand that bad people exist. They look at you like you’re a machine - like something is wrong with you. You are the misguided one – not them.

When you get out, you sit in the college classrooms with political science teachers that discount your opinions on Iraq and Afghanistan because YOU WERE THERE and can’t understand the macro issues they gathered from books, because of your bias. You watch TV shows where every vet has PTSD and the violent strain at that. Your Congress is debating your benefits, your retirement, and your pay, while they ask you to do more But the amazing thing about you is that you all know this. You know your country will never pay back what you’ve given up. You know that the populace at large will never truly understand or appreciate what you have done for them. Hell, you know that in some circles, you will be thought as less than normal for having worn the uniform. But you do it anyway. You do what the greatest men and women of this country have done since 1775. YOU SERVED. Just that decision alone makes you part of an elite group.

This next, is a well written, thought provoking article about a father who put a couple of his kids through expensive colleges but one son wanted to be a Marine. Interesting observation by this dad and something for all of us to evaluate as we consider who we are in today’s world.

BY FRANK SCHAEFFER OF THE WASHINGTON POST –

Before my son became a Marine, I never thought much about who was defending me. Now when I read of the war on terrorism or the coming conflict in Iraq, it cuts to my heart. When I see a picture of a member of our military who has been killed, I read his or her name very carefully. Sometimes I cry.

In 1999, when the barrel-chested Marine recruiter showed up in dress blues and bedazzled my son John, I did not stand in the way. John was headstrong, and he seemed to understand these stern, clean men with straight backs and flawless uniforms. I did not. I live in the Volvo-driving, higher education-worshipping North Shore of Boston. I write novels for a living. I have never served in the military.

It had been hard enough sending my two older children off to Georgetown and New York University. John’s enlisting was unexpected, so deeply unsettling. I did not relish the prospect of answering the question, “So where is John going to college?”

Taxes did not increase to pay for the war. War bonds were not sold. Gas was not regulated

from the parents who were itching to tell me all about how their son or daughter was going to Harvard. At the private high school John attended, no other students were going into the military.

“But aren’t the Marines terribly Southern?” asked one perplexed mother while standing next to me at the brunch following graduation. “What a waste, he was such a good student,” said another parent. One parent (a professor at a nearby and rather famous university) spoke up at a school meeting and suggested that the school should “carefully evaluate what went wrong.”

When John graduated from three months of boot camp on Parris Island, 3000 parents and friends were on the parade deck stands. We parents and our Marines not only were of many races but also were representative of many economic classes. Many were poor. Some arrived crammed in the backs of pickups, others by bus. John told me that a lot of parents could not afford the trip.

We in the audience were white and Native American. We were Hispanic, Arab, and African American, and Asian. We were former Marines wearing the scars of battle, or at least baseball caps emblazoned with battles’ names. We were Southern whites from Nashville and skinheads from New Jersey, black kids from Cleveland wearing ghetto rags and white ex-cons with ham-hock forearms defaced by jailhouse tattoos. We would not have been mistaken for the educated and well-heeled parents gathered on the lawns of John’s private school a half-year before.

After graduation one new Marine told John, “Before I was a Marine, if I had ever seen you on my block I would’ve probably killed you just because you were standing there.” This was a serious statement from one of John’s good friends, a black ex-gang member from Detroit who, as John said, “would die for me now, just like I’d die for him.”

My son has connected me to my country in a way that I was too selfish and insular to experience before. I feel closer to the waitress at our local diner than to some of my oldest friends. She has two sons in the Corps. They are facing the same dangers as my boy. When the guy who fixes my car asks me how John is doing, I know he means it. His younger brother is in the Navy.

Why were I and the other parents at my son’s private school so surprised by his choice? During World War II, the sons and daughters of the most powerful and educated families did their bit. If the idea of the immorality of the Vietnam War was the only reason those lucky enough to go to college dodged the draft, why did we not encourage our children to volunteer for military service once that war was done?

Have we wealthy and educated Americans all become pacifists? Is the world a safe place? Or have we just gotten used to having somebody else defend us? What is the future of our democracy when the sons and daughters of the janitors at our elite universities are far more likely to be put in harm’s way than are any of the students whose dorms their parents clean?

I feel shame because it took my son’s joining the Marine Corps to make me take notice of who is defending me. I feel hope because perhaps my son is part of a future “greatest generation. “As the storm clouds of war gather, at least I know that I can look the men and women in uniform in the eye. My son

is one of them. He is the best I have to offer. He is my heart.

Two excellent articles that say what I didn’t say to the Legislator.

The 2017 Department Convention in Billings is fast approaching and I hope every Post has made arrangements to send a delegate. Remember delegates are apportioned according to the paid membership of your Post thirty days prior to Convention, **May 24th**, for this year. Each Post is entitled to two delegates and two alternates, plus an additional delegate and alternate for each one hundred members or major fraction thereof (51 or more). Therefore a Post with 151 members would be entitled to 4 delegates and four alternates.

The Department Convention is the governing body of the American Legion of Montana (the Executive Committee when not in convention), if your Post is not represented at convention then your Post will have no voice in the operation of the Department. If your Post only sends one delegate, but is authorized four, then the one delegate will cast all four votes. Remember you must elect your delegates at your Post meeting and then submit your delegate list to Department Headquarters no later than **June 15, 2017**. Your Post must be in good a standing in order to seat a delegate; good standing means at least ten members and owes no money to the Department.

You need not be a delegate to attend convention, any 2017 paid members can attend and voice their opinion at any committee meeting or general session, however they will not be allowed a vote. At Convention, there will be votes on resolutions, committee reports, the 2020 Department Convention site, National Convention delegates and election of Department officers.

As you can see there are many votes that will be required, if you want a say in how the American Legion of Montana operates, it is imperative that you attend convention and let your voice be heard and your vote count.

Department Headquarters will be closed for Department Convention June 20 – June 25

The 2018 Post packets will be available for pick up at the Department Headquarters office at the hotel in Billings starting June 21. If you will not be at Convention your new District Commander will get your packet and is responsible for delivering it to the Post. Post packets will contain your new 2018 membership cards and roster, and all publications and printed material for Post operations. If you want to make other arrangements for delivery contact me at Department Headquarters in Helena prior to June 18.

New District Commanders will receive training and material at this Convention as well.

For more information on Department Convention contact Department Headquarters at 866-793-1257 (toll free).

The Department Education Committee is offering a Legion College training session to anyone who wishes to attend June 21 5:00 PM-9:00 PM, continuing June 22 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. at the Convention hotel.

Department Headquarters will be closed for Department Convention June 20 – June 25

District 4 Oratorical winners

GLEN SHARBONO DISTRICT 4 VICE-COMMANDER/ADJUTANT

District 4 advances Colin Norick to the Department level of the American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest. The contestants, along with District 4 Oratorical Chairman Jeff Nelson, are pictured in the order in which they placed.

1st Place, Colin Norick of Columbia Falls High School; 2nd Place, Daniel Koehler of Ronan High School; 3rd Place, Sophia Skwarchuk of Flathead High School; 4th Place, McKenna Stahlberg of Stillwater Christian High School; and in



5th Place, Reed Harbin of Polson High School. District 4 paid out \$275 in prize money to the top three places along with Bronze, Silver, and Gold District level medals. Each participant also received a certificate of appreciation. The family of the winner was also given \$100 from the District to help in the costs of accompanying their child to the Department Contest in Helena on March 11, 2017.

Thank you all the Judges, Time Keepers, Tabulators and Ushers that helped to make this year’s event a success.

Missoula Post 101



SUBMITTED BY SERGEJ MICHAUD.

Missoula’s St. Patricks Day Parades once more lead by the Forgotten Warriors American Legion Post 101, Missoula color guard.

Buddies in Business



PAID ADS ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT
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2 inch ads are \$55 per year

3 1/2 inch ads are \$85 per year



*Big Timber
American Legion
Post #19*

Drop in to see us!

110 E 3RD AVENUE, BIG TIMBER, MT

Post Meetings - 1st Wed. 7 p.m.

Open 7 days a week

M-F 1 p.m. to close

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**Silver Bow Post #1
and Auxiliary**

American Legion of Montana

Welcome

MEETINGS:
FIRST & THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH @ 8:00 P.M.
DINNER: THIRD WEDNESDAY @ 6:30 P.M.
LEGION HALL IS ACROSS THE STREET FROM RAMADA COPPER KING

**Liberty County
American Legion
Post #88**

*Welcome to our Post Meeting
Every 1st Wednesday at 7 p.m.*

Liberty Co. Community &
Senior Center
618 East Adams
Chester, Montana



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POST #4**

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Space
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**American Legion
Post #2**

3095 Villard Ave.
Helena, MT

*Monday thru Saturday
Open at 10 a.m.*

*Sunday - Open at Noon
all meetings 2nd
Thursday each month*



Americanism



Youth



**American Legion
Gallatin Post #14**

Striving for Legiontown USA

225 East Main Street
Bozeman, MT 59715

Open daily
Monday through Friday 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 a.m.
Sunday 10 a.m. to Midnight



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Defense



Veterans



We Salute Our Servicemen & Women

**Welcome To
American Legion
Club 30**

**We invite all veterans to stop
in and support YOUR club.**



31 W. Main • Belgrade • 388-3430

**Sons Of The
American Legion**

Detachment Of Montana

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
MEMBERSHIP CALL:
(406) 324-3989
or **(406) 324-3990**
Or Write to P.O. Box 6075,
Helena, MT 59604.



Wayne Hintz, CPA, PSC

Certified Public Accountant
PHONE 406-443-6220
FAX 406-442-5659
1215 Eleventh Ave • Helena, MT 59601
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Member Post #2



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MEMBER POST #16
LEWISTOWN, MT



Montana Legionnaires!
Visit the *Montana Military Museum*
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just west of Helena.
Fort William Henry Harrison Museum
Foundation & Montana Military Museum
For more information write to:
ATTN: Museum Director/Curator
P.O. Box 125
Fort Harrison, Montana 59636-0125
myfun51@msn.com • 406-324-3550



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