



AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA
ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER
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Geraldine’s American Legion restores ride for local veteran

BY BETHANY MONROE DeBORDE | THE RIVER PRESS
VETS HELPING VETS

When Painter Brothers American Legion Post 102 members learned of a veteran in their community whose only vehicle had broken down, they pooled their resources and skills and helped him get back on the road.

This winter has been laced with bad luck for Pat Romanchuk, a Vietnam War-era U.S. Navy veteran and retired truck driver who has lived in Geraldine for 26 years. He ran short on firewood – and funds – recently, so the local American Legion Post helped him get a cord of firewood to heat his house. Less than two weeks later, his pickup broke down.

Romanchuk said he went out to start his truck to drive to Fort Benton for jury duty earlier this month when he discovered the clutch had gone out. He called the courthouse to explain he couldn’t make it, now stranded at home and without room in his tight budget to afford repairs.

Post 102 Auxiliary member Monica Rice makes a point to check in with several veterans in the community and when she called to chat with Romanchuk, he admitted he was discouraged by the vehicle break-down.

Rice told him she’d look into it, but knew the Post had invested a lot into improvements at the Vet’s Hall this past summer and didn’t have much to spare.

Post 102 Commander Andy Rice (Monica’s son) and Adjutant Mike Allison pulled the pickup into Allison’s garage to assess the situation.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PAINTER BROTHERS AMERICAN LEGION POST 102
American Legion Post 102 Commander Andy Rice (on the creeper) and Post 102 Adjutant Mike Allison (assisting) work on Geraldine veteran Pat Romanchuk's pickup, replacing the clutch and completing other repairs.

Monica Rice contacted The American Legion Department of Montana, and they contributed \$300 toward parts, supplemented by \$360 from Post 102 and \$100 from the Auxiliary.

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Important Upcoming Dates

Feb 5 Four Chaplains Sunday
Feb 25 Post Oratory Contest
Certifications due to Districts
Feb 26-Mar 1 .. Washington Conference
Mar 1 Eagle Scout OTY Nominations due to Dept.
Mar 4 Dist. Oratory Contest
Certifications due to Dept.
Mar 11 Dept Oratory Contest- Bzmn
Mar 25 Women Vets Event
Apr 17 pre-Dept. Convention Mtg in Lewistown
Jun 10-16 2023 AL Boys State
Jun 22-25 Department Convention

Department of Montana 2023 Spring District Meetings

MAR 26 .. Dist 6 Helena
Ft Harrison Lodging 406.324.3355
APR 1 Dist 3 Calgary
APR 15 ... Dist 9 Denton
APR 16 ... Dist 8 Power
APR 22 ... Dist 7 Manhattan
APR 23 ... Dist 11 Billings
APR 29 ... Dist 4 Lakeside
APR 30 ... Dist 5.. Hamilton (COR)
MAY 6 Dist 10 Baker
MAY 7 Dist 1 Poplar
MAY 13 ... Dist 2 Saco

Dist. Commanders – Please verify dates by email response to Erin Carpenter that you are on track to host on the dates assigned.

***Dress Code for Dist. meetings: Legion Cover; Legion Polo**

Highline is rolling with momentum

SUBMITTED BY SHAUN HELDT, SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Along with the creation of The American Legion Chapter 11 Riders, Havre Post 11 has grown interest and membership as a direct result of the administration of the chapter Director, Les Johnson, and Assistant Director Brian ‘Carp’ Carpenter.

It was apparent Post 11 needed some excitement, and another reason to be a member. For those Active Members, Veterans and Sons that also ride Motorcycles, the Riders Chapter has managed that! Of course, every member of the Riders Chapter “must be a member of The American Legion.”

The Post has picked up 14 new members so far in 2022. The Chapter hopes to enlighten everyone on the RIDERS GROUP and the importance of our group to The American Legion, service men and women and our Veterans in our Community.

As for our Havre Post 11 Riders Group, the charter members Bill Tucker, Brian Carpenter, and Les Johnson, in 2018, started working towards growing a Chapter in Havre, MT. Bylaws for the group were established in December of that year, and formally accepted by American Legion Post 11 shortly after. The first official meeting was December 1, 2018, with 10



POST 11 RIDERS continued on page 4

BIG K WINNERS

2023 New Year Drawing \$100

Buck Buckmaster

Helena Post 2

January – \$400

Helen Cassidy

Livingston Unit 23

The next \$400 drawings will be in **February** and **March**, as well as, the **\$500 Legion Birthday drawing in March.**

Disbursements of the Big K Dividends to Districts, Posts, Units and Squadrons will be sent by mail.

(see pg 15 for the Big K form)

DEADLINE
APR. 1, 2023
May - July. issue
Submit all articles by above date to:
lmtprpub@gmail.com
Send **hard-copy** only to:
AL Dept. of Montana
Armed Forces Reserve Cntr
PO Box 155
Helena MT 59636-0155
*See page 15:
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COMMANDER LONG

As we bid farewell to 2022 and hello to 2023, let's pause to reflect on our past year. I hope each of you had a very Merry Christmas and are looking forward to a Happy New Year. December was a whirlwind for us as we worked very hard to achieve 80% of our Department's goal for membership. We came awfully close, ending 2022 at 78.41%. Thank you to all the Post, District, Zone Commanders and each of the members of the Montana Department for stepping up to make this happen. Finally, I want to thank everyone who participated in our weekly calls to reach out to our members to see how they were doing and to let them know we care, because at the heart of membership is letting every veteran know that they matter, and this is how we grow the Legion.

On membership, I want to extend my thanks to the Districts that met or exceeded 80%. District 2 came in at 88.54% as of December 31, 2022. District 1 was close behind at 85.17%. District 11 was right behind with 85.11% and District 10 was at 83.44%. Congratulations to everyone in those Districts for working hard to achieve this. I was on a Zoom conference call with National Vice Commander Doug Uhrig a few days ago and he singled the Department of Montana out for being in first place in membership in the Western Region and ninth place overall. That speaks volumes to each of you and what Montanans can do when they set their mind to it. Finally in membership, I want to recognize the 13 Posts that have achieved their goal for the 2023 membership year.

We are nearing the time where we are going to see many of our youth programs getting started. The oratorical scholarship program is just around the corner, and I am hoping to see a contestant from every District this year. Our essays and government survey programs will be coming due very soon as well. Information on these programs was in the packet you received in July, if you haven't looked it over,

take a minute and get it out to your communities.

American Legion Boys State is coming in June at Fort Harrison, registration is open, and I encourage each Post to find and sponsor boys for this program. This is one of our most important youth programs; civics, community involvement, and our way of government is worth participating in. The boys run for city, county, and state offices and also learn how a bill becomes law by writing bills and moving them through the House and Senate.

American Legion Baseball is gearing up as well. These games are what America is all about; it's our national pastime. Being there is important to these young men as they work hard at the game; I have seen some of the best sportsmanship at these games and tournaments.

The Montana legislature is now in session, and we are tracking several bills that are important to veterans in Montana. Please watch for information on these in the coming months and speak your mind to your Senator and Representative to urge them to support the bills. We have learned over time that veterans in the gallery always influence those who may need a little urging in the debate phase. So, if you are able to come to Helena at the time these bills are debated, do so.

Finally, I want to introduce several new people who have stepped up to help lead our Department for



Lowell Long
Department Commander

the rest of this Year. First, I want to welcome Scott Miller who stepped into the role of the Department of Montana Vice Commander upon the resignation of our previous Vice Commander Lonnie Johnson. Scott has taken membership very seriously and I am sure many of you have been on the receiving end of his informative emails and attempts to pull us together as large as Montana is. I want to thank Lonnie for his dedication to The American Legion and wish him well in his future endeavors. With Scott moving to the Vice Commander position, it opened the position of District 11 Commander, so welcome Charles Miller who stepped up to fill this vital position. I also want to thank Irene Dickerson for stepping up to fill the District 10 Commander position upon the death of the District Commander. These are valuable additions to your Executive Committee and Department leadership. Last, I would like to introduce Rick Brown who has stepped up to fill the vacancy as our Department Chaplain. Rick is a VA certified Chaplain and has many credentials that make him an asset to our Department. Thank you to Chaya Semple, our past Chaplain, for her years of dedication to the Department of Montana as our Chaplain. She has done an excellent job for us, and I wish her well as she moves on.

As I say to my Post every month, without you there would not be an American Legion in Montana or in your community. I challenge you to get involved with your Post and help them with any events they have planned for the year, it's how we ensure the Legion will be here for another 100 years.

I am also available to come and participate in any event you may have that you would want me to attend. There is nothing I like more than visiting with Legionnaires and veterans about what is important to them. I can be reached at crazymarinevet@outlook.com or 406.945.4209. As we move forward, let us remember this—We, together, are The American Legion. We, together, are a strong voice in our communities for veterans. 🇺🇸

Department of Montana Adjutant

Duane Cunningham



Duane Cunningham
Department Adjutant

Greetings and Salutations Legionnaires, I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and have started on all the New Year's resolutions that we hope to accomplish. We are in the midst of the winter, and it is the slower time of the year for Legion activities. However, 2023 brings us the Biannual Legislative Session and important Veteran issues that The American Legion

hopes to push passage on. What does that mean for you? An opportunity to make a difference!

During the Legislative session I will be asking all of you to step forward and be one of the "Caps in the Capital" to show support for Veteran related bills. You do not have to testify or speak at a hearing; your presence in the Gallery with your American Legion Cap speaks volumes regarding American Legion support for the bill. Regardless of how our legislators may truly feel about an issue, your presence signifies a potential vote in an upcoming election. You truly can have influence by simply being in the Capital. If you are interested in coming to the Capital, please email me at deptmtadjutant@gmail.com and I will add you to the email blast that goes to the District Commanders for distribution for upcoming hearing dates. All Blue Caps matter!!

Changing topics, I want to thank all of you for renewing your membership and taking the time and effort to push the membership efforts. Montana is currently doing outstanding, and it is because of you. However, the last 25% is always the hardest to get. Please keep up the great work, reach out to your fellow Legionnaires, do a buddy-check and make sure that their dues are paid. Regarding Membership renewals, I have been trying to squash a myth about a membership year. Membership in The American

Legion is based on a calendar-year from January 1st to December 31st. When a member pays their dues, they are paid up for that membership year. They will also receive 12 monthly subscriptions to The American Legion Magazine.

The renewal process begins in July for the upcoming membership year. Renewal notices are sent out in July, October, January, March and May. When a member renews, they are removed from future renewal notices for that year. There are times when a member pays their dues, but they still receive a renewal notice. If dues are paid to the local Post, it does take a little longer for the renewal to process and the member may receive another renewal notice. If this occurs, please check with your local Post to ensure they have received your dues. If you renew after December 31, you would need to re-register with the Legion Insurance Trust if you had previously signed up for LIT. This is a big reason that we push for renewal by 31 Dec of every year. You can re-register at [Home - lit \(thelit.com\)](http://Home-lit.thelit.com)

So, stay warm my friends! Spring is coming! Reach out to your neighbors and any veterans you may know who just need a little company in these next few months before the thaw. 🇺🇸

GO ARMY BEAT NAVY!!!!

VICE COMMANDER MILLER



Scott Miller
Department Vice Commander

This is my first article for the Legionnaire since I was elected to be your Department Vice Commander at the Department Fall Conference October 2022. First, I want to thank all of you for entrusting me with the responsibilities that come with this position within our Department, and it was a great honor to be nominated for this position by Hal Rice, our National Executive Committee member and Past Department Commander.

Since October, I have seen the level of communication between the Post, District, and Department build across the state and it has shown with the

membership drives that have been conducted and the number of renewals and new members. All these members have shown their dedication and our officers are stepping up in their leadership so both have allowed our Department to reach 79.30% and we are ranked 10th in the Nation. As a Department, we are well on our way to achieving our goal of 95% retention and 103% of our membership. That is because of the Legionnaire spirit displayed across Montana to ensure each of your Posts remain alive and active in these small towns and larger cities. As we get new members, we have to remember that a quality Post with good leadership keeps and builds our Department. This is your American Legion and the Veterans with the "Blue hats" are the members with the authority to take the Legion into the future.

In December, I was able to attend the National American Legion College at our National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was a week-long course with other Legionnaires from across the country and we were given classes in leadership,

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COMMANDER - LOWELL LONG
VICE COMMANDER - SCOTT MILLER
ADJUTANT - DUANE CUNNINGHAM

Post Everlasting



Oct/Nov/Dec 2022

- ☆ BENTZ, ROBERT, Vietnam – US Army – 6-yr. member of Post 119, Billings
- ☆ CHRISTMAN, EDWARD, Vietnam – US Army – 25-yr. member of Post 84, Belfry
- ☆ CLARK, RONALD, Vietnam – USMC – 14-yr. member of Post 20, Dillon
- ☆ COURVILLE; ED, Vietnam – US Coast Guard – 7-yr. member of Post 106, Whitefish
- ☆ DAVIES, GRIFFIN, Vietnam – Unknown – 11-yr. member of Post 106, Whitefish
- ☆ HUTTON, FRANCIS, Korea – US Marines – 34-yr. member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ KOUF, ROBERT, Korea – US Army – 31-yr. member of Post 35, Baker
- ☆ LINDSLEY, NORMAN, Vietnam – US Army – 35-yr. member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ ROWE, DON, Vietnam – US Army – 20-yr. member of Post 119, Billings
- ☆ SAYLOR, CLIFFORED, Vietnam – US Navy – 36-yr. member of Post 119, Billings
- ☆ SCHLADWEILER, LEONARD, WWII – US Army – 12-yr. member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ SEWARD, JAMES, Korea – US Navy – 10-yr. member of Post 119, Billings
- ☆ SWANK, DAVID, Korea – US Army – 23-yr. member of Post 89, Sheridan
- ☆ TAYLOR, STEVEN, Vietnam – US Navy – 13-yr. member of Post 8, Hardin
- ☆ VERNARD, HAROLD “Skip”, Persian Gulf – US Army – 11-yr. member of Post 117, Billings
- ☆ WHITFIELD, WALTER, Vietnam – US Army – 11-yr. member of Post 31, Twin Bridges
- ☆ WILCOX, TIMOTHY, Vietnam – US Army – 6-yr. member of Post 89, Sheridan

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.



Chaplain's Corner

CHAYA “HIYA” SEMPLE, PAST DEPT. CHAPLAIN

“To everything there is a season...”

I pray this finds everyone reading this issue of the Montana Legionnaire well.

Some members in the Department of Montana Legion Family have become somewhat aware of my family situation. In September 2021, my dear husband was formally diagnosed with Severe Neurocognitive Processing Disorder, aka, dementia. Not mild, not moderate – severe.

This past September his declining mental status became noticeably more pronounced. That was a wake-up call for me that quality time with him is not promised and may be growing short.

In March we will be married 43 years. As a result of the recent deterioration in his cognitive status I came to the painful conclusion that I needed to pull back from commitments that take me away from home in order to focus my attention and energies on what time we have left together in this life.

With that, I have resigned my duties as Department Chaplain. I am very

grateful for the faith placed in me by the Department Commanders who have appointed me to serve in this position. I believed I had more time to continue to serve when I accepted this most recent appointment. I deeply regret I am unable to fulfill my term of office.

Thank you very much to all the Legion Family Members who have been supportive with encouragement. It has been a great privilege to serve you as Department Chaplain. Please welcome and support my successor, Rick Brown. He has a wealth of experience serving veterans both as a chaplain serving and training in the VA System, as well as in District and Post levels. Rick has a great respect for all faiths. Please warmly welcome him when you see him.

May you be well!

Until we meet again...

Chaya Semple
Past Dept. Chaplain



Department of MT Honors Four Chaplains

The American Legion of Montana will be honoring the memory and sacrifice of the Four Chaplains

February 5, 2023

2pm

Interfaith Service

First Baptist Church, 525 2nd Avenue North
Great Falls, MT 59401

AMERICAN LEGION

Women Veteran’s Symposium

Since the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force, the number of women serving in the military has grown exponentially. Ultimately, these hero’s make the transition from Servicemember to Veteran.

Veterans make up 7.5% of the overall adult population in America. There are nearly 2 million living women veterans in the United States. Women currently make up approximately 10% of the overall veteran population. That means that 1 in every 10 veterans is a woman.

On March 25th, a Women’s Veteran’s Symposium will be conducted to highlight, educate and offer opportunities to Montana’s Women Veterans. Guest Speakers will provide insight into various Veteran benefits.

When: March 25th, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Kleffner Ranch
305 Highway 518, East Helena , MT 59635

Lunch will be served, cost is \$25.00 per plate. Registration for the meal is required.

Sponsored by The American Legion , Kleffner Ranch and Stockman Bank

For questions or to donate, contact the American Legion at (406)-324-3990



VICE COMMANDER continued from pg. 2

resolutions, history of the Legion and many other things along with just being able to meet Veterans from other Departments to understand how they are doing things. It was an exceptionally good course; I learned many new things about the Legion, and I now have quite a few new friends in different corners of our national Legion family. If you would like to go to the NALC let me know and I can help get you started with the process. We always need help within our Department with training, so talk to our Department Adjutant and he will help get you started with that.

Our Country looks to Veterans for leadership, and The American Legion is an organization filled with leaders that support the Four Pillars of our Legion. We have 11 District Commanders that are working extremely hard to support all of our Post commanders. This is a very tough position within The American Legion to ensure membership is met and the Post is conducting meetings, along with implementing Legion programs, and I want to thank all of them for the challenging work they are doing.

Now that we have moved into 2023, we have a full year ahead of us and it starts with “Buddy Checks” to check on our members not to ‘do’ membership, so I want to thank all of you that answered the phone call when a member took time to call you.

The American Legion Boys State is looking for more High School Juniors this year. The momentum is there after a highly successful session last year. This year looks to be even more exciting now that we will have American Legion Auxiliary Girls State being conducted at the same time.

District Spring meetings will begin in March, and I look forward to seeing more members attending these meetings in each of your Districts. My goal is being able to meet as many members as I can in our Montana Department of The American Legion, and I encourage you to think about attending the Department meeting and having a voice at the next level. This is the time to get involved and be part of the future of The American Legion.

Service Officer

CANDY HERING, DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER



Candy Hering, Service Officer

Greetings Legionnaires!

Let’s talk about the new PACT ACT a bit more since that still seems to be the hot topic in the health-care and claims department.

If you or your veteran spouse/friend/neighbor were previously denied for health-care due to non-eligibility, you may now be eligible. If you think you may have benefits under this new law, or you want to check if your eligibility has changed—please contact your local service officer. They can help you apply.

If you have been previously denied service connection for a medical condition that is now on the list of presumptive conditions, or you are a surviving spouse of a veteran and were denied or never applied

for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and think you may now qualify, again please contact your local service officer for help determining if the law change helps you and to reapply for benefits.

AGENT ORANGE LOCATIONS: Vietnam, inland waterways (Brown Water), Thailand base perimeters, Korean DMZ, C-123 aircraft, 12 miles off the coast of Vietnam (Blue Water)

***NEW LOCATIONS: Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Guam, American Samoa, Johnson Atoll

AGENT ORANGE CONDITIONS: Al Amyloidosis, Chronic B-cell Leukemias, Chloracne, Diabetes Mellitus Type 2, Hodgkin’s Disease, Ischemic Heart Disease, Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma, Parkinson’s Disease, Peripheral Neuropathy, Porphyria Cutanea Tarda, Prostate Cancer, Respiratory Cancers, and Soft Tissue Sarcomas.

***NEW AGENT ORANGE CONDITIONS: Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, Parkinsonism’s, Hypertension, and monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance.

GULF WAR LOCATIONS: Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Persian gulf, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and the air space above these areas.

*** NEW GULF WAR LOCATIONS: Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, Yemen or the airspace above

MVAD/AL accredited offices throughout the state:	
Belgrade.....	(406) 551-7855
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
Miles City	(406) 232-1203
Missoula.....	(406) 542-2501

GULF WAR CONDITIONS: Undiagnosed multi symptom illness, Fibromyalgia, and infections of Brucellosis, Campylobacter jejuni, Coxiella burnetti, Malaria, Mycobacterium tuberculosis, Nontyphoid Salmonella, Shigella, Visceral leishmaniasis, and West Nile virus.

*** NEW GULF WAR CONDITIONS: brain cancer, gastrointestinal cancer, glioblastoma, head cancer, kidney cancer, lymphatic cancer, lymphoma, melanoma, neck cancer, pancreatic cancer, reproductive cancer or respiratory cancer, asthma (diagnosed after service), chronic bronchitis, COPD, chronic rhinitis, chronic sinusitis, constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchitis, emphysema, granulomatous disease, interstitial lung disease, pleuritis, or pulmonary fibrosis or sarcoidosis.

GERALDINE POST 102 continued from pg. 1

TFG Parts Stop - NAPA in Fort Benton provided a deep discount on parts and Andy Rice and Mike Allison contributed about 20 hours of labor, replacing the pickup’s clutch and completing various other small repairs and tune-ups.

While the work was underway, community members gave Romanchuk rides to the post office and store. He received his working truck back on Monday, Dec. 19 – an early Christmas gift.

Romanchuk isn’t a member of American Legion Post 102 -- “I don’t join clubs,” he said. However, he did carry the flag for military funerals in the community until his disability forced him to quit.

“That’s a big part of what The American Legion is about – you don’t have to belong to the organization for us to want to be able to reach out and help out another veteran,” Andy Rice said. “A key part of the organization is taking care of the veterans. Whether they belong or not, we always want to pitch in and help.”

Romanchuk served in the U.S. Navy from 1969 to 1972. He went to school to be a watchmaker, “but then somebody invented the \$2 watch.”

So, he returned to truck driving, which is how he supported himself for most of his life. He also worked as a jeweler and casting bronze statues, even being tasked with repairing the reins on a Remington sculpture. When disability forced him to retire early from truck driving, he moved from Wolf Creek to Geraldine and took a maintenance job at Geraldine School. He will turn 72 in February and is fully retired now.

He and his late wife Jennifer, a retired teacher from England, always enjoyed helping others, but being on the receiving end of the helping hand is much less comfortable for him. Still, he wanted to speak up about The American Legion’s generosity.

“These guys need a pat on the back for this,” Romanchuk said.

Romanchuk is quick to offer a joke and remains upbeat, but his string of winter misfortune hasn’t ended. He sat down to enjoy Christmas dinner in front of his TV on Sunday and the TV died.

“That’s life, isn’t it?” he said. “There’s an entire country over there in the Ukraine and every one of them is suffering more than I am.”

Romanchuk had to cash in some of his pensions to pay for healthcare when his wife was sick, so he tries to get by on a small fixed income. Jennifer died in 2016. Today, it’s just “me and the old house and the old dog and the old pickup,” he said. “I’m just worn out.”

He describes his faithful dog as “better than Shep” and credits her with saving his life two years ago when he suffered a stroke in his shed during 20-below temperatures. She stayed with him and kept him warm for hours, moving his body to keep him from freezing to the floor until he regained enough consciousness to make his way into the house.

“When I eat meat, she eats meat,” Romanchuk said, as he cooked up a chicken fried steak dinner for the two of them on Tuesday evening. He may not have a TV to keep him company on cold winter nights now, but he doesn’t take for granted the companionship of a faithful canine.

He also knows he’s part of a community that looks out for each other. Amidst worldwide news full of hatred and heaviness, he said it’s encouraging to know that Montanans still take care of their neighbors.

POST 11 RIDERS continued from pg. 4

members paying annual dues of \$20. A dress code was established to make our group stand out while out in the community; red t-shirts under leather vests, these have the 22 a day Veteran Lives Matter logo on them, in support of the deployed Soldiers and to keep them in our thoughts, and for those that have returned to bring attention to the 22 Veterans that commit suicide a day on average. This is along the lines of the National Commander’s Be the One Campaign.

Establishing the group is just step one, you must keep busy so both the members and the community can see the benefits of belonging in The American Legion and the Riders group.

The following are a few events that this group of Riders has either created or taken part in. 2021 saw our chapter host a 22 a day Veterans Suicide and Prevention Awareness Poker Run, Veterans Day of that same year they attended the Havre Eagles Manor and Retirement Home to spend time with residents that are Veterans. 2022 Memorial weekend a Montana Wounded Warriors Weekend of events was hosted. It started with 75 entries for a 150-mile Poker Run. Donations were collected for weeks and live and silent auctions held at the banquet. We also included a live band to entertain the guests. The bottom line is \$10,700 was raised for the Montana Wounded Warrior Program. These people provide Veterans with Disabilities hunting and fishing trips! Kind of The American Legions version of Make A Wish Foundation!!

American Legion Riders Post 11 Havre have made themselves available to the community. Some of the ways in which we have done that, are, post the colors for ALL the various branches of the Military at events like Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Legion Baseball Tournaments, Rodeos, and Concerts. We sponsored and worked on Memorial Day to serve lunch to the people in in Havre. The Chapter has

donated to those in need, veterans, deceased and injured, a local Hockey Team, High School Rodeo Team, Eagles Angel Tree Christmas Program, and the Havre Beneath the Streets Program. On Memorial Day we help with the “place a flag at every veteran’s grave” program, at our local Cemetery. As a group we arrange for longer annual member rides, thus far to White Sulfur Springs, Lewistown, Helena and this year Billings/Laurel.

This year the chapter created an important event in remembrance of 9/11, which will now be an annual event. This was held precisely at 9:11AM at Havre’s town square on September 11th. The Riders did this in conjunction with Havre’s Honor Guard. There

was an Invocation, the National Anthem, an amazing speech by member Dale Herd, and Benediction. An escorted Ride by a Montana State Trooper out to Beaver Creek followed these items. Once there, aa moment of silence was offered and all returned to Havre to host a luncheon at the Havre Elks Lodge. This was open to everyone in Havre, and 70 people were served.

The Rider have made it known that if there are any Veterans that have motorcycles, within a

50-mile, radius they would be honored to have them join the group in Havre and show them how things are done. If you were inclined and could get 10 members you could start your own Charter of American Legion Riders. Chapter 11 Director, Les Johnson’s phone number is 406.394.2287 where you can call with any questions.

The group in Havre is immensely proud of it’s own program to supply scholarships to children and grandchildren of Retired and Active Service Members. This is in conjunction with the Havre High School and is a \$500 Scholarship to further their Education. Once again, the goal is to give thanks and recognition to people in and out of the service.

2023 National Box Car Fundraiser



Grande Du Montana has been limited to 100 2023 National Box Car Pins. To qualify to apply for the annual maintenance fund our Grande must raise a minimum of \$150 in pin sales and other donations. This year's fundraiser includes the Box Car pin (100), National Crew Card (100), and the Second Chance Card(100); @ \$5 each.

Buy a 2023 National Box Car Association Pin at \$5 & the Grand retains \$2 for support of the Box Car and its programs. With a purchase of a 2023 Crew Card you become eligible for a cash drawing with \$100 for first draw; \$75 for 2nd draw, and \$50 for third draw. **But wait!!** This year we have added a Second Chance Drawing; which will generate cash prizes of \$125 for First Draw, \$100 for Second Draw, and \$75 for Third

Draw — **only 100 cards are available.**

After Pin and cards are paid for, the remainder will be placed in support of the Maintenance and upgrade of the Montana MERCI CAR located at the Montana Military Museum at Fort Harrison. This year, Montana's car marks its 74th year.

Buy and proudly wear the 2023 National Box Car Association Pin—feeling lucky buy a crew card, all proceeds going to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Montana MERCI CAR

The drawing will be held at the 2023 Convention, 40&8 Social in Lewistown, MT Members of the 40&8 have the pins and cards. Please contact: Linda Cousineau, Eddy White, Jed Damson, Lowell Long, Dick Ellwein, Elmer Palmer, Kim Kay McCarty Martin, Don Jones...or Ray Read for details @ 406.458.9847 or 406.235.0290, or e-mail mylur51@msn.com. Thank you!



Nurses Training and Child Welfare

Grand du Montana is selling pins for the 40 & 8 for the Child Welfare program. The price for the pins is \$5 and the proceeds will go to this program. We only have an allocation of 80 pins for 2023. Proceeds go to support our on-going Nurses Training Scholarship. This has averaged \$500 per year since inception.

1955-2023 — 68 years x \$500 = \$34,000

\$25 for All Five Items—All for Good Causes



Are You Ready?

DISASTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE

CHAYA SEMPLE, DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATOR

Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.

Spring is on the way—Are you ready?

The calendar tells us we still have more winter to come; however, as I write this, we recently experienced Arctic cold temperatures and are now, at the beginning of the year, experiencing temperatures that are normal for mid-late February.

It's obvious the climate is changing – and historically, it has changed many times before. While serving in the Air Force, learning to repair weather equipment, we were told the world was entering a new ice age. We had some dandy Arctic blizzards which also supported that idea.

Thankfully, that didn't happen!

We also learned about climatic cycles—those alive pre-WWII are taking all this change with their eyes on the big picture—they were here in the 1920's and 30's and experienced drought, mild winters and high temperatures. The west was on fire during the 19-teens due to drought. We see from the fossil and geologic record, seas have risen and fallen many times throughout the ages; however, we weren't alive then to witness (and feel) those changes.

While all can make personal choices in the way to respond to climate change, one thing is very clear: we will have disasters, regardless. More some years—less in others.

Are you prepared? Ice jams are already being reported as unseasonable temperatures occur. What are your plans for flooding? Do you have flood insurance if living in (or your Post is in) a flood-prone area? Are you prepared to evacuate on short notice if necessary?

Conversely, last year's climate record had much cold and snow the end of February into March. Are you prepared to deal with that? Do you have more than 96 hours of food and water at all times in your home in case you are stranded by deep snow?

While considering our New Year's resolutions, it's not too late to resolve to be ready by practicing your emergency plan.

Now is the time to review your emergency plan, supplies and stock up, if needed. For more information on how you can prepare, go to <https://www.ready.gov/>

May you be well!

Wreaths Across America

SUBMITTED BY CAROL PRAHL, POST 5

Custer, Mont., is out there on the prairie where the wind

blows and only the hearty survives. Every town out there was carved out by strong Montanans and still today the same kind of people live in Custer who take the time to maintain the Eastern Montanan Veterans Cemetery and remember those who served and came before them. Graves span the ages of veterans who



found their final resting place in Montana, while many Montanans are buried where they fell on far away shores, and a few remain missing in action. Regardless of the places or circum-



stances, Custer Post 5 continues to support our Eastern edge and on a blustery day helped lay wreaths as part of the Wreaths Across America program.

Department travels to Canada

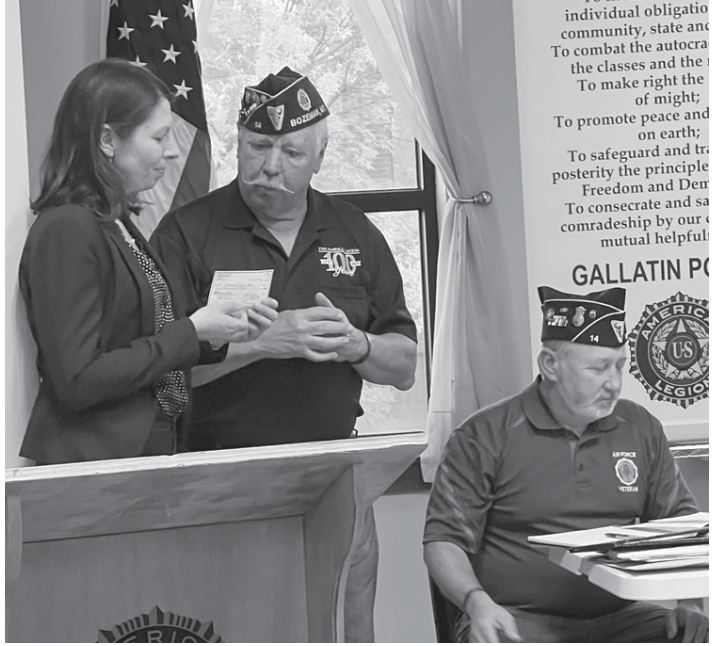
SUBMITTED BY JEN DALRYMPLE, BROADWATER POST 42

A group of ten American Legion Department of Montana members participated in Remembrance Day Ceremonies in Canada. Past Department Commanders Jeff Nelson, Larry Dobb, David Driver and Jim Grosset (not pictured), past Department Adjutant Gary White, District 6 Commander Linda Cousineau, Janice Dobb, Ray Stolp, past Post 42 Commander Jen Dalrymple and Auxiliary member Valerie Grosset (not pictured) represented the only American contingent present. The Canadian combined five-community Ceremony was held on the 11th month, 11th day, 11th hour at Coleman Consolidated High School and two smaller ceremonies at the Royal Canadian Coleman Branch in Coleman and at the Bellevue Branch in Bellevue. The Canadians were very gracious hosts, and we all enjoyed the time with our northern comrades in arms as we honored our Veterans past and present.



American Legion and the Opera??

SUBMITTED BY RANDY KEMP, POST 14



The American Legion Gallatin Post 14 invited Susan Miller to its October meeting. Susan Miller is the Director of Intermountain Opera. The opera company planned a special performance honoring veterans on Veterans Day 2022.

In the picture Len Albright, Post 14 Commander, is presenting a check to Susan to help with the cost of the production. Post 14 received 30 tickets to the performance.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Boys★
STATE

A WEEK THAT SHAPES A LIFETIME

Now is the time to get out and find the best candidate to sponsor for both The American Legion Boys State and The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State. We must get the information into the schools and take ownership of a week that will change a life in those who gain the opportunity. Both Boys State and Girls State tentative date is June 17-22, 2023, (they are to run together). Don't hesitate to get sponsorships from other places—if a VFW or other organizations or individuals want to sponsor a candidate, by all means, share the information and help them help a student.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Girls★
STATE

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Judith Gap American Legion Auxiliary Unit #70
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Hamilton Navy Veteran Ronald Osborn’s Washington D.C. Honor Flight

(DETAILS PROVIDED BY RONALD AND DAVID OSBORN; PHOTOS BY DAVID OSBORN)

Initiated in 2005, the Honor Flight Network is a national network of 129 independent hubs working together to honor our nation’s veterans with an all-expenses paid trip to visit the memorials in Washington, D.C. dedicated to service to our country; a trip many of our veterans may not otherwise be able to take. Participation in an Honor Flight gives veterans the chance to share this experience with other veterans, to remember friends and comrades lost, and share their stories with each other. The Honor Flight vision is to have all of America’s veterans experience the honor, gratitude, and community of support they deserve. More than 200,000 veterans have participated to date. The Honor Flight Network is currently connecting with veterans who served from World War II through the Vietnam War, as well as catastrophically ill and injured veterans from all eras. The Lone Eagle Honor Flight “hub” supports veterans who do not live near regional hubs. Eligible veterans can apply for an Honor Flight experience at <https://www.honorflight.org/>.

Hamilton resident Ronald Osborn, served in the United States Navy as an Aerographer’s Mate (AG) during the Korean War. He was thrilled to be selected to participate in an Honor Flight to our Nation’s Capital, October 3rd through 5th, 2022, arranged by the Lone Eagle hub. Ronald’s son, David “Ozzie” Osborn of Alaska, accompanied him as his required “Guardian” travel companion. The Osborn’s flew from Missoula to Baltimore on October 3rd and met many other Honor Flight veterans at their Hilton Hotel. Ronald won the honor of participating in



the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery! The tours started early the next morning with Honor Flight veterans in blue shirts, “Guardians” in red shirts. Ronald was no stranger to Washington D.C., having been stationed at the Pentagon in Fleet Weather Central for a year and a half prior to his discharge from the Navy in 1955. He said it was wonderful to see the Capitol and Washington Monument again, but all the other sites were new to him. Because of the walking, climbing and frequent stops, he conceded to use a wheelchair along with 14 other veterans. Their first major stop was the Eisenhower Memorial portraying impressive full-sized statues of Ike giving the last address to those in the D-Day invasion. The buses passed the Botanical Gardens, several branches of the Smithsonian Museum, and many government buildings enroute to the Navy Memorial with fountains, full-sized Sailor, bronze reliefs, and museum. Ronald expressed that visiting the memorial of the Marines raising the flags at Iwo Jima was an unforgettable experience. The tour also included the memorial of Veterans Disabled for Life, the Air Force memorial, and a hilltop view of the 9/11 memorial at the Pentagon with its incredible array of cantilever benches for each of the victims from the Pentagon and the airplane that hit the Pentagon. The 639-acre Arlington cemetery is the final resting place for more than 400,000 veterans and their families. Ronald said that his personal participation in the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the meticulous direction of the Honor Guard was the most honorable and humbling part of his Honor Flight tour. His son David

said that while he was honored to accompany his Dad throughout the entire Honor Flight, this was also one of his favorite experiences of the tour. From Arlington, they visited many memorials along the National Mall including the Washington Monument as well as the Lincoln, World War II, Korean, and Vietnam memorials. Ronald especially appreciated the Korean Memorial with bronze statues of soldiers in battle posture in search mode and the sobering



Vietnam Wall with the names of 58,318 service members who died. He was thrilled to visit the FDR memorial honoring President Franklin D. Roosevelt, depicted in a wheelchair, which was unusual for the times. He and another veteran took photos in their wheelchairs beside FDR’s statue. The Honor Flight visit ended with dinner, fellowship with many new friends, and a wonderful surprise “Mail Call” where each veteran received a large envelope filled with messages from friends, family, and school kids wishing them well and thanking them for their service. Ronald and David were honored to participate in the Honor Flight program and encourage all eligible veterans to apply – “it is truly a life-changing experience!” For more information, visit <https://www.honorflight.org/>.

Gallatin Blue Star Memorial

SUBMITTED BY RANDY KEMP

The American Legion Gallatin Post 14 conducted an honor guard on October 31, 2022. At 3PM members of Post 14, Post 30, VFW Post 12112, Montana Vehicle Club and Bozeman Police/Fire Department gathered together to honor the Blue Star Memorial being moved to the new Bozeman



rest area at Interstate 90 and 19th Street in May 2013, but had to be moved due to the closure of the rest area.

Post 14 Honor Guard (l-r) Len Albright, Bud Sievert, John Ross, Jim Howe, and Bethany West.

Police/Fire Department Public Safety Building, which was built on the corner of Rouse Street and Oak Street in Bozeman. The Blue Star Memorial was originally established the

The Legion is the Salvation's salvation!

SUBMITTED BY RANDY KEMP, GALLATIN POST 14

The American Legion Gallatin Post 14 has once again volunteered to help the Bozeman Salvation Army during their fundraising by ringing the Red Kettle Bell at Smiths grocery store.

We all see them and hear them in the holiday season, and this is one of the biggest most recognizable fundraisers there is — as of late many bell ringers have to be hired, volunteers are just not willing to do this.

Post 14 stepped up in a big way and said, “send us!” Volunteers from The American Legion Gallatin Post 14 began ringing the bell on November 25, 2022, and continued to ring the bell all day every Friday during the entire season.



Bud Sievert and Randy Kemp during their shift on Red Kettle Bell duty.

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FAMILY

Fun facts of The American Legion

BY DUANE CUNNINGHAM, DEPT ADJ

Trivia Time

There is no secret I love the Legion; I love everything that those who came before us stood together and fought for so that all veterans have a voice. Sometimes I am asked what is the Legion? Or, what does the Legion do? How can an organization with as much history as the Legion be so virtually unknown? We just need to have the points and the knowledge to spread to the world.

Hint, hint, use them while speaking with a potential new Legionnaire on why they should join The American Legion.

- There are nearly 2 million members of The American Legion, making it the nation’s largest wartime veterans service organization.
- The American Legion has more than 12,000 Posts in communities throughout the United States. In addition to Posts in every state, The American Legion has Posts in the District of Columbia, France, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines.
- In 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the original GI Bill, or Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, ushering in monumental changes in U.S. society. Six months earlier, The American Legion wrote the first draft of what later became the “GI Bill of Rights” — considered The American Legion’s single greatest legislative achievement.
- On Aug. 9, 1921, a Legion-led effort resulted in the creation of the U.S. Veterans Bureau, which later became the Veterans Administration.
- The first “Flag Code” is drafted during a Legion conference in Washington in 1923. Congress adopts the code in 1942. Today, The American Legion is at the forefront of efforts to pass a constitutional amendment to protect the U.S. flag from physical desecration.
- The American Legion donated \$1 million to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund for construc-

tion of the Wall in Washington, becoming the largest single contributor to the project.

- Legion Baseball was formed in 1925 during an American Legion South Dakota Department state convention. By 1926, Legion Baseball Posts in 15 states developed. Today, the program registers more than 5,400 teams in all 50 states, Canada and Puerto Rico.
- Approximately 20,000 young men annually participate in Boys State; a Legion program dedicated to promoting leadership. Boys State alumni include former President Bill Clinton, news commentator Tom Brokaw, professional basketball player Michael Jordan, astronaut Neil Armstrong and many more.
- Since 1938, The American Legion National High School Oratorical Program: “A Constitutional Speech Contest,” has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation’s laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.
- Since 1919, American Legion Posts have sponsored more than 2,500 Scouting units across the country. And annually, The American Legion honors an Eagle Scout of the Year with a \$10,000 scholarship.
- In August of 2022, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act became law giving millions of veterans suffering from illnesses caused by toxic exposures eligibility for VA benefits. The PACT Act, which covers veterans from Vietnam through Iraq and Afghanistan, is the most significant expansion of benefits and services for toxic-exposed veterans in more than 30 years and addresses a broad spectrum of toxic exposures. This law could not have passed without the support of The American Legion.

So, take these facts—because they are provable solid facts, not opinions—and use them to spread the mission of the Legion and the accomplishments we have secured and make it known that together we as veterans can accomplish anything.

Fatality Marker placed

BY CAROL A PRAHL, CUSTER POST 5

On October 26, 2022, Custer Post 5 Commander Bob Prahl placed the White Cross Fatality Marker for Past Custer Post 5 Commander, Ralph “Duke” J. Dukart Jr., on I-94 near MM60. Ralph passed away on December 9, 2021, from injuries sustained in an accident on I 94.



Post 5 Commander Bob Prahl, places White Cross Fatality Marker

Ravalli Post 47 and Veterans Day

SUBMITTED BY NANCY DEZELL

Hamilton honored Veterans in a big way on Veterans Day 2022. The Post encouraged all churches, fire halls, and organizations to ring their bells at 11AM on November 11 to commemorate signing of the Armistice that ended WWI (11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918). Several schools hosted programs to honor those who have served in the Armed Forces.

The Ravalli County Museum hosted their annual Veterans Day program in Hamilton with a wreath laying ceremony in front of the Doughboy Statue, with a Color Guard by Ravalli Post 47 and firing detail by the Marine Corps League, Bitterroot Detachment #937. Wreaths were presented by The American Legion Auxiliaries from Post 47 and Post 91, the GFWC-Bitterroot Woman's Club, and the Ladies of St. Francis of Assisi in remembrance of all Veterans.

The largest crowd present in recent years moved indoors to the 2nd floor to hear several speakers,

participate in singing patriotic songs enthusiastically led by Laurie Burnham, Barbara Burnham-Edmunds, and Tricie Callahan-Stover; a presentation by Ravalli Post 47; and enjoy cake and coffee donated by the GFWC-Bitterroot Woman's Club. Hamilton Mayor Dominic Farrenkopf, Sharon Parks-Banda representing Senator Steve Daines, and Shibu Arens representing Senator Jon Tester, shared their appreciation for Montana Veterans.

Special guest, Navy veteran Ron Osborn, presented a photo slide show and talked about his “life changing experience” on an Honor Flight trip to Washington D.C. with his “Guardian” son David ‘Ozzie’ Osborn.

Finally, Ravalli Post 47 treated members and their guests to dinner at B.J.'s Restaurant in Hamilton. Commander Deb Strickland presented a patriotic quilt to long-time member Mike Shine for his dedicated service to the Post, especially on the Color Guard. She said, “Mike shows up with his cane in rain, snow, sleet, heat or hail to honor our Veterans.”

Commander Strickland also presented a quilt to 101-year-old Post member Tom Long in appreciation for his U.S. Army Service in World War II and American Legion membership. We had a great day of honoring our Veterans, past, present, and future.



Outdoor Veteran’s Day ceremony with presentation of Colors and wreaths at Ravalli County Museum (l-r) Chaplain Nancy Dezell, Past Commander Paul Rosenburg, Butch Smith, Mike Shine, 1st Vice Larry Keogh, Past Commander Marcus Burnham)



Post Commander Deb Strickland and Chaplain Nancy Dezell present a patriotic quilt made by Deb Tennant to Honor Guard Post Member Mike Shine.

2023 BEST PERCENTAGE POST

POST ...71	FROMBERG	192.50%
POST ...65	ENNIS	120.00%
POST ...58	PLENTYWOOD	118.03%
POST ...39	FORSYTH	111.50%
POST ..426	LAKESIDE	110.00%
POST ...50	BIG SANDY	109.09%
POST ...125	DRUMMOND	108.06%
POST ...51	AUGUSTA	105.88%
POST ...31	TWIN BRIDGES	105.00%
POST ...36/69	VALIER/GALATA	100.00%
POST ...120	WINIFRED	100.00%

2023 DISTRICT STANDINGS

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE	COMMANDER
2	89.11%	Jed Damson
11	85.47%	Chuck Miller
1	85.17%	Joe Yeoman
10	83.44%	Irene Dickerson
6	79.68%	Linda Cousineau
5	78.65%	Terry Wahl
4	77.42%	Dave Bennett
7	75.66%	Dan Smart
3	75.27%	Dusty Bailey
8	70.23%	Andy Rice
9	69.41%	Robert Miller

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Department Fall Conference 2022

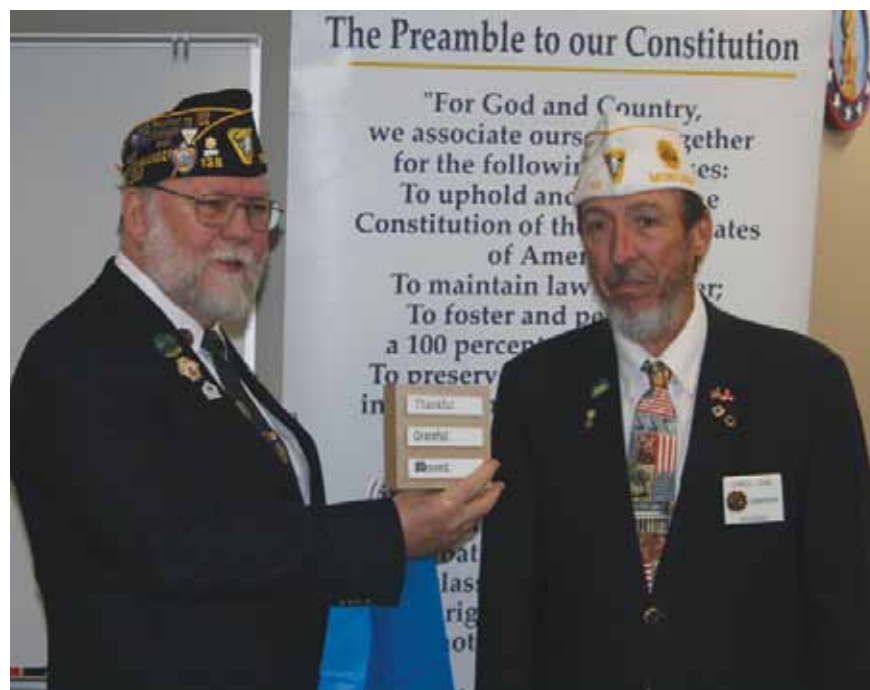
Fall Legion College



SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE MILLER

Fall conference this year was a bit of an abridged activity from what it has been in years past. The thought was to save money and get business done and get on with the winter that was to come.

That being said, taking the opportunity for the Department to host its own Legion College course was an excellent plan. Glen Sharbono led the course which was attended by some 15 attendees from across the state. Subjects covered were of a wide range and designed to help folks go back to their respective Posts with both new and old knowledge and be able to start stepping into stronger leadership rolls. The overall consensus from those in attendance was that it was well worth the 2-day course, and much was learned, as well as, many ideas shared which can sometimes be of a greater help to Posts than anything.



Josh Clement gave a brief overview of what American Legion Boys State looked like this year with our official move out to Fort Harrison and the successes around that, and is looking forward to changes and a higher attendance this coming year. The Auxiliary formally submitted a request to indeed co-host the Boys and Girls at the same time both at Fort Harrison with Josh Clement as the overall director. This is a huge change, but can afford us the opportunity to grow and expand both programs in partnership with the Auxiliary. Flexibility is going to be the key moving forward, but the

intention is to build an even better program than both groups already have, moving forward.

Friday night found us together with the Auxiliary at the Montana City Bar and Grill for an amazing banquet of more food

than you knew what to do with. The prime rib was by far among some of the best I personally have eaten, and I consider myself somewhat of a pro when it comes to this delectable treat. The respective commanders Lowell Long and John Meachum, and President Yvonne Kostecky took the opportunity for a little trivia teaser with fun facts about each of them with small prizes which escalated into quite the competition. Why is it when you gather us together no matter the prize—it's a room full of fools who want to win, no matter what!

Saturday, we reconvened; the Past Department Commanders Meeting was held prior to the Executive Board reconvening. Committee chairs had submitted reports as required, and having been posted and no objections were accepted as written. New business from the conference committees was reviewed and Lonnie Johnson resigned as the Department Vice Commander. This brought a slew of discussion, and with that Hal Rice nominated Scott Miller from the floor, and seconded by Glen Sharbono. The vote was unanimous, and Scott Miller was elected as the Department Vice Commander for the remainder of the year.



Two members announced their intention to run for Department office in the spring; Scott Miller for Department Commander, and Ray Read for Vice Commander. Everyone is encouraged to get involved; if you think that you have a particular skill and would like to run for office, please let us as a Department know. The official fall conference of 2022 was ended with a memorial service led by Chaya Semple, a bit of a change from the normal order of events but ending early on Saturday allowed plenty of time for folks to travel home saving that second night in a hotel for many.

Friday afternoon the resolutions committee met, and Saturday morning the finance committee met and was briefed by Stockman Bank on our account management. The Legion College presented certificates and pins to the graduates, just prior to lunch. The official meeting of the Department of The American Legion was called to order by Commander Lowell Long; we as a whole heard from Auxiliary President Yvonne Kostecky, who then left for her own Auxiliary Conference. The executive committee then broke into conference committees to meet for official business.



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Fall Legion College Session

BY CHRISTINE MILLER

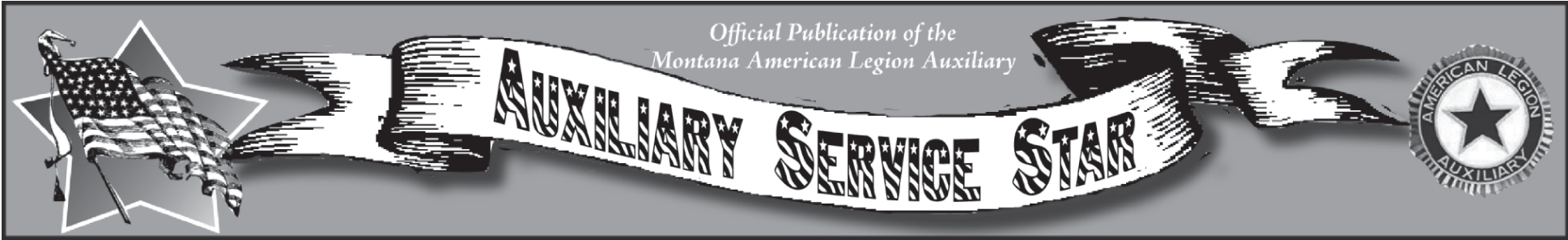
Fifteen delegates from across the state came to Helena prior to the Fall Conference to gain knowledge, share ideas, and take the next step to being the next leaders of The American Legion in Montana.

The idea of a Department Legion College was born out of necessity, not everyone will be afforded the opportunity to make it to Indianapolis to attend the National Legion College. Those delegates that we are able to get to Indianapolis, come home and share their experiences, the classes and knowledge that they garnered, and also draw on their own leadership backgrounds to improve our own Department. Glen Sharbono, past Department commander, stepped in to lead this fall session and he put on quite an impressive course attended by both new and more seasoned members of the Department. No one left without learning at least one new thing, and this is what is meant to happen when great minds gather to both learn and share ideas. The attendees were: Bill Rich, Linda Cousineau, Kim Kay, Keith Stark, Dorothy Goodwin John Meacham, William Cummins, Bill White, David Bennett, Dave Corner, Jerry Collins, Dan Smart, Robert Lehman, Lorie Noble, and Larry Dobb.



Dept. Commander Lowell Long, College graduate Jerry Collins, and Glen Sharbono.





**President**
YVONNE KOSTELECKY



Welcome to 2023 my fellow Montana Auxiliary members!

It is so hard to believe that we are starting a new year, but we have come so very far in our organization. I am enormously proud of our accomplishments and look forward to making it even better.

For January, I want you all to continue to focus on your memberships. I am hoping that we can get even closer to getting 100%. Please reach out to those members that have not paid yet to see what you as a Unit or a member can do to help them. We need to always try to do our Buddy Checks on our members especially during the winter months. It can become a very lonely time for them, and we can all use a friendly voice occasionally or a nice visit. Stay connected with your local Posts to see if they need anything or if you could possibly bring dessert to their meeting—doesn't hurt to sweeten up those Veterans whenever we can. You should be talking with your local Juniors in high school about ALA Girls State. Ask your school if they have anyone who might be interested in the Oratorical contest.

In February again keep working on your membership to get to 100%. If you notice that a Unit is struggling, don't be afraid to contact them to see if there is something you can do to help them, contact their members. We are all in this together trying to make this a wonderful organization to belong to. Show the love ladies and gentlemen. February is the month of love so maybe you can bake some cookies for your Posts or for your local Veterans who may not be members of the Legion, take cookies to the VA. Again, show the love from the ALA.

Ladies and gentlemen, you should have set up times with your school or girls who are Juniors to get information to them about the ALA Girls State Program that we will be offering. Hopefully, you are also talking with them about the Poppy Program and scholarships. Please get yourselves out to the public and let them know all we as an organization can offer.

In March, we are starting our District meetings again. Let the Department officers know ahead of time if you would like them to come to your meetings. State the time, place, and date. Also let your Units know so that they can make plans to come, to have Department officers travel across the state and very few people come to the meeting is not fair for them. Maybe have your Units RSVP if they are coming or not. Ladies do not forget about your reports send out reminders to the members about Community Service. Again, check on your members show you care about them, and they are not just a number or name in your Units.

In April, you should have by now your applications for ALA Girls State and be deciding on who you are sending. Your reports are due to the Department Chairmen by April 15th. No later, so get them in early so everyone can then send their reports to National!! District meetings are still going on. Start working on what you can do to help with Memorial Day for your Units, Posts, and community. It is never too early to start making plans for State Convention in Lewistown. I would love to see you all there!! And hopefully we are about done with snow and cold!!!

I know this next six months is going to go by way too fast for me. I was so incredibly nervous about being your Department President, but am now immensely proud and love to brag about being your President. I look forward to seeing you all in 2023.

May the good Lord watch over all of you, keep you safe and warm now and always.☺

God Bless you & God Bless America

**Secretary**
RENEE LOEHR

Hello from the Department of Montana Secretary and Auxiliary Emergency Fund Chairperson!

We have had a challenging holiday season in Montana. Please remember that the *Auxiliary Emergency Fund* (AEF) is available for service members and their families if needs arise. Talk to your service families about their needs. We don't need to wait to be asked if we see someone in a military family that could use a hand. Electric bills have increased in the extreme cold, as well as other fuel used to heat our homes. Children need warm coats and hats. Any need you know of contact me. It doesn't take any time at all to receive funds to help.

We have a new Northwest division chairperson for the AEF, Ann Ritacco. I have not yet met her but intend to as soon as possible. I have received a couple of emails from her, so we know she is available and ready to help us.

Montana continues strong in our new member and renewal numbers. Please take the time to encourage each other to talk to people about the ALA. We are proud of our organization and want to encourage people to join and help our veterans.

God bless you!☺

**ALA 2022-2023
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**Constitution and Bylaws**
KAREN SUSAG

At Fall Conference I went over the updated changes to the Department Constitution and Bylaws and emailed it to each District President so they could get a copy out to all Units. Please look it over and email comments and/or changes to mksusag@live.com The Constitution and Bylaws committee is also working on making the document gender neutral. Any input is welcome. Thank you.

Park City Unit 100 Spreading Christmas Cheer

SUBMITTED BY JEANETTE BOSSEN, PARK CITY UNIT 100 PRESIDENT



Top Photo:
Riley, Baby
Jackson,
Emily, Daisy
and Matt
Henckel.

PHOTOS BY
GREAT GRANDMA
JEANETTE
BOSSEN



Daisy, Emily and Riley Henckel
putting holiday touches to the tree.

In Loving Memory of Our Deceased Members
JULY 1 - DEC. 31, 2022

Unit	Unit City	Name
Unit 11	Havre	Lola Holst; Susan Templet
Unit 15	Harlowton	Clarene Dysart
Unit 32	Terry	Diana Maragos; Delila Scheid
Unit 41	Glasgow	Adeline Mitchell
Unit 42	Townsend	Delores Sofil; Linda Allen; Norene Sears
Unit 45	Hinsdale	Darlene Jones; Du Ann M. Lacock; Peggy Jane Mayfield
Unit 51	Augusta	Darlene Montgomery
Unit 56	Scobey	Dolores Becker
Unit 58	Plentywood	Gay Laney
Unit 69	Galata	Iva Kolstad; Kim Macdonald; Betty L Marshall
Unit 70	Judith Gap	Pauline Siebenaler; Paulette Amundson
Unit 73	Sweetgrass	Harriet M. Karst; Gertrude R Des Rosier
Unit 91	Corvallis	Barbara L Ivanoff
Unit 94	Stevensville	Betty Lowell
Unit 103	Power	Pamela J. Jackowski
Unit 105	Department	Alice Carlisle
Unit 120	Winifred	Fannie Ehlert
Unit 126	Charlo	Fae Laud; Dorla J Scott
Unit 135	Lolo	Gloria Roark
Unit 137	Kalispell	Lynn M. Shaw

District 5 Fort Harrison Visit

JERRY ESMAY, DISTRICT 5 AUXILIARY UNITS



Pictured l-r: Jerry Esmay AL Post 94, Bill White, Amy Claridge & Carda Taylor from Volunteer Services; Sandy Runkel, VAVS Director Ft. Harrison; and Mickie Esmay, AL Auxiliary 5th District President.

Judith Gap ALA Unit 70 Celebrate the 70s

SUBMITTED BY FRAN ALAN OF JUDITH GAP UNIT 70 MEMBER

The Judith Gap American Legion Auxiliary Unit 70 celebrated members of their Unit who have been members for 70 or more years. The ladies were recognized at the Judith Gap Legion and Auxiliary's annual Christmas party. There are nine members of the Unit who are 70-year members. The ladies were presented with pins and certificates. Those who were able to attend the party were Cherie Neudick (71-yrs), Patti Kowalczyk (72-yrs), Terry McLaughlin (73-yrs), and Jeanne Jenni (73-yrs). The ladies were sure that their moms had enrolled them in the Auxiliary very shortly after they were born.



Halloween Fun at Stevensville Unit 94

SUBMITTED BY CHERYL BURGMEIER, MEMBER OF STEVENSVILLE ALA UNIT 94

Stevensville ALA Unit 94 handed out treats at Trunk or Treat for Halloween fun. The Auxiliary gave out candy along with coloring books and information on joining the Legion Family.



Chief Joseph Unit 135 Adopts a family for Christmas

SUBMISSION AND PICTURE TAKEN BY DEBORAH HANCOCK, CHIEF JOSEPH UNIT 135, LOLO

The Unit participates in the Town Pump Adopt-a-Family program each year. The picture shows what was bought for a mom and her 9-year-old son. The items were delivered Sunday, Dec 18 to a very grateful mom. The Unit also provided a \$50 grocery gift card to Winco. Unit 135 is hoping to be available to others in need this winter.



Mickie and Jerry Esmay traveled to the Veterans hospital at Fort Harrison, MT on Wednesday, November 16, 2022, to deliver quilts, hygiene products, and lots of clothing items for the homeless veterans. Items donated for the Veterans Gift Shop were also included in the delivery. These items had been collected by the members of the 5th District Auxiliary Units.

A welcoming party of representatives from Volunteer Services (Bill White, Sandy Runkel, Amy Claridge, and Carda Taylor) were present for the delivery.

Later, Vickie Crawford, formerly from Stevensville, joined the group with several bags of knitted and crocheted items to include hats, mittens, scarves, and baby items.

Additionally, banners and artwork created by Stevensville School students were presented for the hospital staff to use in decorating for the holidays.

Laurel Unit 123 honors Veterans Day and Pearl Harbor Day

SUBMITTED BY ROXY ROBERTS, ALA LAUREL UNIT 123

On November 5th the Laurel American Legion Auxiliary Unit 123 and Post 123 along with many



PHOTOS BY ROXY ROBERTS

Flags at Yellowstone National Veterans Cemetery

Unit 100 Park City Veterans Day Celebration

SUBMITTED BY JEANETTE BOSSEN, ALA UNIT 100 PRESIDENT

ALA Unit 100 Park City along with Park City Schools held a Veterans Day celebration.

Our guest speaker was Bird Colonel Russ Dewell. Student Council President Wyatt Hamilton was master of ceremony.



Veterans in attendance

volunteers placed flags at the Yellowstone National Veterans Cemetery for Veterans Day. Then, on November 10, 2022, Auxiliary Unit 123 held a Pizza Party for The American Legion Post 123 for Veterans Day. Other events the Unit was involved in included laying a wreath for the Pearl Harbor Day ceremony on Dec 7th; Nancy Conter laid the wreath. Unit 123 members also helped the Laurel Hometown Troops pack Christmas boxes for deployed service members.



PHOTO BY GARY SAXBURY, POST 123

Bob Saxbury in foreground.



Yellowstone National Veterans Cemetery a part of Wreaths Across America

PHOTO AND SUBMISSION BY ROXY ROBERTS, LAUREL UNIT #123

On Dec 17th Laurel Unit 123 members, Roxy Roberts and Nancy Conter volunteered to work the Wreaths Across America event at the Yellowstone National Veterans Cemetery. They spent 6 hours unloading wreath boxes, placing them at the cemetery, handing them out to the other people who volunteered to lay them at headstones and then cleaning up after.



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Post 89 Sheridan participate in Christmas all over town

SUBMITTED BY MIKE MORGAN, ADJ

Post 89 kicked off the holiday season with a float in Sheridan's Annual Christmas Stroll Parade, making a point to include both elderly homes. Dave Dixon volunteered his "Classic Red Truck" for the Post to use as a float. After the parade ended, Santa manned a chair downtown for the rest of the Stroll where over 40 kids



Dave Dixon was the driver assisted by his grandkids. Post members riding in the back of the truck included Jim Fordyce, Cliff Morgan (Post CDR), Charlie Rossiter, and Greg Granken

Be the One

BY JAMES HUDSPETH, POST 99

One of the members of The American Legion Post 99 recently required a quadruple bypass. A problem with Montana is that winter doesn't wait for anyone and as winter crept on us, we as a Post got busy helping one of our own. The Legion partnered with the Sons of the American Legion and decided to help him get ready for winter by filling his wood storage. Everyone knows that heat is the biggest stressor to get through a winter. Mark Fisher, a member of the Sons, organized the work session and provided the trailer, splitter and one of the chain saws. Kenny Alley



provided the other chain saw. Tom Estes of the Sons did the splitting while Seth Grigg-Ryan and 'Cuz' cut the logs. These guys set their minds to it and in short order had his woodshed full and our friend and comrade's mind clear to concentrate on healing only. His rehabilitation is ongoing, but he is warm and knows that once he raised his hand and swore to support and defend this nation—and in that has a brotherhood for life!

Big Sky Post 99 and the Sons of the American Legion assisting teachers

BY JEREMY HARDER

Big Sky Post 99 has a way of finding things to do that are out of the box and much needed. When they see a need they seem to step up as a group and make it happen. This particular project has taken them to the local school and recognizing teachers and classrooms.

There is not a teacher in any classroom that at some point is not spending their own money to make sure that the youth they teach have all that they need. American Legion Post 99 and Unit 99 of the Sons of the American Legion, working together are lending it's purse, so to speak, where it is needed.

With the generosity created by the community at large in supporting The American Legion and the Sons by attending Bingo Nights, purchasing honey at the Farmer's Market, and other fundraisers, we have been able to offer the Big Sky School District Staff a \$300 stipend for their dedication to our school district.

Each month the Legion will randomly draw a name from a list of staff members and the recipient will then receive a \$300 check and a thank you card from the Legion.

Introducing the first recipient of the award and December's winner.... Ms. Cadie Williams!

Ms. Williams teaches the 4th grade and loves her students. She also is the assistant girls soccer coach and brings so much to not only the school, but the community is better for it having her in it



Ms. Cadie Williams, 4th grade teacher and assistant girls soccer coach

visited him, some of whom had letters to give Santa.

On the 15th of December, the Sheridan Elementary School conducted its Pre-K to 6th grade Christmas Concert featuring individual class musical programs for family and friends. At the end of the concert Post 89 provided a Santa Claus to meet with the kids in the audience and after hearing what the kids wanted for Christmas, they were provided with a bag containing fruit and candy. Other Post members were stationed at the school entrance to hand out oranges to the departing families. Over 90 children visited Santa and received their treats. Leftover bags of goodies were taken to the Tobacco Root Mountain Care Center (nursing home) and the local Assisted Living Facility (Home Park) for distribution to their residents.



Santa Mike Morgan (Post 89 ADJ).

The Veterans of Townsend Thank you

SUBMITTED BY TONY WAGNER

This Veterans Day, The American Legion Broadwater Post 42 celebrated Veterans Day with a ceremony that was attended by both veterans and Townsend community members, 60 – 70 in all. The ceremony was conducted by Post and Auxiliary officers and included guest speaker Julie Dooling, District 70 House Legislator, who told us about her military family tradition and about several of her family members who served during wartime. Post 42 family speakers included Tony Wagner, filling in for the Post commander, Post Adjutant David Corner, Auxiliary President Debbie Westfall, Finance Officer Janet Wagner and woman veteran, Post 42 member James Swan, and prayers were led by Post Chaplain Larry Westfall, and Auxiliary Chaplain Judy Lund.

During the ceremony, we asked for Townsend community members to share a little about the veterans in their family and honor them. The ceremony ended with membership awards given to 12 Legionaries for their service. One of our members, Martin Clark, received an award for 45 years of membership in The American Legion!

When the ceremony ended all were rewarded with a build-a-burger lunch. The cost of the meal was covered by donations.

We would like to thank all those who attended and hope to see you and maybe even more of our community at our next military ceremony!



Scott Miller for Department Commander



I am Scott Miller and currently serving you as your Department Vice Commander. I wanted to ensure members know who I am and that I am a Candidate for the office of Commander for the Department of Montana 2023-2024.

My eligibility comes from my honorable service in the United States Army for 25 years—serving in the US Army involved in Operation Just Cause, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom. I retired from the Army in 2018 as an Army Sergeant Major.

I want to take the opportunity to tell you about myself; after a long military career what matters to me most is my family. I have been married to my wife, Christine, for 33 years. She is also a Legionnaire and serves as the Adjutant of American Legion Post 71, and Public Relations for the Department. We have three children: our oldest daughter, Jessica is married to Staff Sergeant Michael Steinbeisser who is a member of American Legion Post 71, they have two sons and a daughter and are stationed at Fort Gordon, Georgia; Kayla Miller is our middle daughter and lives in Sumter, South Carolina and is a fifth-grade teacher;

our son, Wyatt Miller, served five years in the United States Army and is an active member of American Legion Post 71, he is now back home in Montana and attending Montana State University Billings. They mean the world to me and make me strive to be better every day.

I am currently a Carbon County Commissioner in Red Lodge, Montana. I have my own small cattle ranch in Bridger, Montana, which my family has called home since 1880. I have horses and am a certified Herd to Human instructor to help veterans with PTSD and traumatic brain injuries through our non-profit (PALS).

I have been involved in The American Legion over the last 33 years with breaks here and there when deployments would happen, and I would lose track of time. Membership remained important to me as I am a veteran that can trace his family's military service to the Revolutionary War; so regardless of when home I would find a Post and find a way to be a part of what they were doing. The Legion to me is much more than a civic organization, it is a family of sorts that few can belong to, but a place that understands veterans better than anywhere else. I am currently the Montana Department Vice Commander, with the additional duty of Department Membership Chairman. I was the Commander, and Vice Commander for American Legion Post 71 in Fromberg. I was the Commander and Vice Commander for District 11 in the Department of Montana. I am currently on the Department Finance Committee and American Legion Boys State Committee while being the lead counselor for American Legion Boys State. I am a member of the Sons of the American Legion and a member of the 40 & 8

Little bits of Robert's Rules of Order

BY DUANNE CUNNINGHAM, DEPT. ADJ.

An item I often hear during District meetings is confusion with Robert's Rules of Order when running your meeting. Let's bust a few myths that exist and expose the facts that debunk those myths.

Calling the Question ends debate. One of the biggest myths out there. During a debate, a member may call for the question, meaning that they would like to end debate and vote on the motion. That wish must be seconded by another member and then voted on by the body. To win that vote requires 2/3 of the body. No one member can end debate; that requires a 2/3 vote.

A motion is always necessary. While having a motion is always proper, there are times when things can be moved along quickly. For non-controversial items, the chair can ask if there are any objections. Hearing none, the chair may declare that the motion passes by unanimous consent. The key here is unanimous. Any single objection requires the item becomes a motion and goes through that process.

Only one motion can be on the floor at a time. This is a myth, mostly because is mistaken for the real rule that there can only be one "question," or "immediately pending motion" on the floor at a time. Pending motions can be made that are secondary motions made while handling the main motion. It sounds as confusing as it can be in reality, but do know that there can be multiple motions on the floor if they are made as secondary to the main motion.

Nothing can be done without a quorum. While it is true that no substantive decisions can be made without a quorum. There are things that can be done by those who are attending. You can call the meeting to order, and that meeting will count towards any minimum number of meeting requirements, unless otherwise stated in a bylaw. Members who meet without a quorum can also discuss items informally, gaining consensus for when a vote is called. Finally, the group can "continue" a meeting. This is an important distinction from calling a "special meeting." A continued meeting is considered an extension of the

meeting in progress, not a new "special meeting" that requires notice.

Minutes must be approved before actions take effect. This is not true because the minutes are not the events and actions, rather they are the record of the events and actions. The approval of minutes is only to approve the accuracy of the record. The actions are in effect as soon as adopted unless a rule or condition explicitly states otherwise.

Sometimes we need to just print it out in plain English and put it out there. There are no dumb questions when it comes to this stuff, and at the end of the day it is still your meeting; make it fun and don't get bogged down in the weeds with small details. The Legion belongs to each and every member—each has and equal voice and should be heard. That is where Roberts Rules come into play to maintain order, but we must always enjoy what we are doing.



Big Sky honors Post 99 and all veterans of the community

BY JAMES HUDSPETH

The Big Sky community honored veterans on Veteran's Day with a breakfast at the new Community Center and a great program at the local High School gym.

The School program started with an acapella group singing the National Anthem in a very moving way that one might say always touches veterans differently than many other Americans. The third grade followed that with a reciting of the Preamble to the Constitution. That group of 9-year-olds accomplished something I wonder if many Americans can today.

Our Speaker was a retired Senior Master Sergeant, Jonathan Gilbert, from the Air Force, he is a member of Post 99 along with his wife. Veterans of each Service were identified along with a history of each of the Armed Forces.

A short Flag folding demonstration with a description of what each fold means took place right before a POW candle lighting ceremony and description of the table setting. The entire student body was in attendance.

The day was concluded with a very moving playing of TAPS.

USS MONTANA BENEFIT COOKBOOK



A cookbook has been developed for the benefit of the **USS Montana**, a world-class submarine that was recently commissioned by the US Navy. The cookbook is intended to offer the "flavor" of Montana to anyone who opens the pages. Each crew member of the USS Montana is to receive a copy, with the extras now being available for sale. Beyond the actual cost of printing the cookbooks and cost of mailing, all funds from sale of the cookbooks will be donated to the USS Montana Committee, which is a 501-C-3 non-profit organization. For most purchasers that would be a tax-deductible donation of approximately \$13.75. Receipts will be provided. In addition to the recipes, the cookbook includes information about a number of Montana's veterans, as well as historic places and interesting events such as the Cornish immigrants in Butte and their famous Pasties, the Great Montana Sheep Drive in Reed Point, and the Oxford Saloon in Missoula.

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Early talk of National Convention

BY CHRISTINE MILLER

So, it is way out but, in many ways, it isn't because this is a haul travel-wise for us and many are watching flights currently. There was a \$430 ticket out of Bozeman last week; you may want to stay alert and watch that, Southwest airlines has free luggage and is a good deal into Charlotte. The airport is a ways from the downtown area—be aware.

It is going to be HOT; the humidity will be THICK so be prepared, and no, it won't cool down when the sun goes down, we lucky Montanans will question why people choose to live there.

Charlotte Motor Speedway and the NASCAR Hall of Fame are something we don't have here. Carowinds amusement park is right there in Charlotte, and Billy Graham library is also there. There is lots to do and shopping for sure; they have an IKEA which is an experience in itself. The downtown is old and historic and there are many tours

you can take in the area; many surrounding the revolutionary war, as well as the civil war, and depending on your adventure level, there are haunted ghost tours. The food is amazing in this area and there are many things to try; Ninety's Donut Shop has an ice cream-filled donut that is indeed worth leaving the beaten path as well. Scott and I have lived in the area and visited Charlotte as we had friends there before and this will be a fun destination, I assure you.

Friday, August 25, 2023 – Color Guard Competition at 4:00PM.

Saturday, August 26, 2023 – Competitive Concert Band Contest and Exhibition Concert Band performance. Contests will start at 1:00PM. Rules and applications will be on the website by mid-January.

Sunday, August 27, 2023 – Patriotic Memorial Service starting at 11:00AM.

Tuesday, August 29, 2023 – National Commander's Banquet. Banquet Entertainment is close to being finalized. Looking at a tribute band — similar to Fall Meetings Entertainment in 2021. Banquet tickets will be \$60 each. You may make your checks payable to The American Legion of Montana. Tables are Rounds of 10.

We will have shuttle transportation and off-site transportation information coming from National.

Please check the website often for updated information regarding notable items, events, etc. for Charlotte at www.legion.org/convention. Currently provided: the hotel listing by Department, hotel map, and Posts that desire to host functions.

With the Charlotte Knights Minor League Baseball being in town, American Legion Family Night is tentatively planned for Saturday night, August 26. Discounted tickets and more information will be forthcoming

2023 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION REPORT

The 2023 American legion Department Convention will be held in Lewistown, MT from June 21- June 25. The actual business session of the convention for all non-committee members starts June 23 at 1100.

The convention hotel is the Yogo Inn, located at 211 E Main Street. The room rates start at \$120 a night however, this does not include taxes. Taxes are subject to change and the exact amount will be determine in June. It is imperative that you book your rooms ASAP as there are multiple events taking place that weekend in Lewistown and rooms will fill up fast.

The Yogo Inn is a preferred central Montana hotel for travelers with unique Montana history sites, outdoor pursuits, special events and downtown activities. It is a full-service hotel and conference center with the finest accommodations in Central Montana. The hotel has available dining at Stetson's Restaurant or a refreshing libation in the Golden Spike Lounge. The hotel also has a year-round heated indoor pool and spa.

Convention registration will be open on Thursday morning at 9am, we are looking for help manning the registration table, if you are interested, please contact Department HQ at deptmtadjutant@gmail.com.

Department Convention 2023 will have a slightly different feel and schedule. With no Post stepping forward to host the 23 Convention, Department and its staff of

only two has to pull off an event normally hosted by a staff of 20. It is our plan to try and try some new ideas to make Convention more family friendly and a fun time, but you will see some changes to the normal routine, prepare for that to occur and be open-minded. The Joint Banquet will be Friday evening as a way to kick off Convention, the cost will be \$45.00, and it is nonrefundable. There will be a silent auction and games to liven up the evening.

We are planning a number of activities to involve the entire Legion Family. Saturday afternoon there will be a golf scramble hosted at the Judith Shadows Golf Course. It is a 9-hole tournament with teams formed by blind draw, registration is \$40 per person. Hole prizes and awards will follow at the Legion Family BBQ. There will also be a Poker Run on Saturday afternoon, registration is also \$40/rider with prizes awarded at the Legion Family BBQ, so dust off the Harley or in the case of the Vice Commander his Schwinn 10 speed with the handlebar tassels and come on out for a relaxing ride.

All convention registrations and deposits will be due no later than 1 June 2023.

The convention locations for the upcoming years are:

2024 - Glasgow
2025 – Calgary
2026 – TBD

2023 AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

AUGUST 25 – 31, 2023

HYATT PLACE CHARLOTTE DOWNTOWN

222 S. CALDWELL ST

National Convention Reservation form for Legion, SAL & Auxiliary

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

Please reserve the following accommodations for _____ person(s). 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) \$155.00 (plus tax @15.25% subject to change)	\$ _____
_____ Double (1 or 2 persons) \$155.00 (plus tax @15.25% subject to change)	\$ _____
_____ Double (3 persons) \$179.00 (plus tax @15.25% subject to change)	\$ _____
_____ Double (4 persons) \$189.00 (plus tax @15.25% subject to change)	\$ _____
_____ Handicap Accessible \$155.00 (plus tax @15.25% subject to change)	\$ _____
_____ 1 Bedroom Suite \$190.00 (plus tax @15.25% subject to change)	\$ _____
_____ Commanders Banquet @ \$60.00 each	\$ _____
_____ Parking Rate – Valet Only \$32.00 per day	\$ _____
_____ Hospitality Room - \$25.00	\$ _____
_____ Registration -\$25.00 ea.	\$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____	

(Note: ALL Convention attendees must be registered and have a Convention badge to ride busses, attend convention functions and enter the convention hall) If you are attending Commander's Banquet please advise Department by 1 March 2023, no late tickets will be sold.

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

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

LEGION ONLY – Are you interested in being a delegate? Yes _____ No _____

(official delegates must be nominated and elected at the Department Convention in Lewistown June 23-25, 2023).

ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS: JULY 1, 2023, early receipt will guarantee staying with the Montana Delegation.

Please send this form to the **Department Headquarters PO Box 155 Fort Harrison MT 59636** payable to **The American Legion of Montana Convention Fund.**

THE AMERICAN LEGION OF MONTANA

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

LEWISTOWN, MONTANA

JUNE 21-25, 2023

Schedule Subject To Change

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2023

1600 Planning Committee/Finance Committee

THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023

1100 - 1200 – Department Executive Committee
1300 - 1400 – Parliamentary Procedure Training
1300 - 1400 – Post Service Officer Training
1400 - 1500 – Resolutions Committee - Resolutions Review
1400 - 1500 – District and Zone Commanders Training
1500 - 1600 – Forty and Eight Promenade
1800 - 2100 – Legion Family Night with the Lewistown Red Birds

FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2023

0730 - 0830 – Past Department Commanders Breakfast
0730 - 0830 – Past Department Presidents Breakfast
0730 - 0830 – Incoming Presidents Breakfast
0900 - 1200 – Call to Order, Awards, Special Guests, Committee Assignments
1210 - 1330 – Americanism Luncheon
1345 - 1500 – Convention Committees Meet
1500 - 1600 – Resolution Committee Wrap Up Meeting
1530 - 1600 – Coordinated Children and Youth Committee Meeting
1600 - 1700 – District Caucus (If Needed)
1600 - 1700 – National Convention Attendees Meeting
1800 - 1830 – Cocktail Hour – Joint Banquet
1830 - 2100 – Legion Family Joint Banquet

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023

0700 - 0800 – Go Getters Breakfast
0800 - 0930 – Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Meeting
0945 - 1230 – Business Meeting - Reports
1300 - 1700 – Golf Scramble and Poker Run Events kick-off
1800 - 1900 – Legion Family BBQ

SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 2023

0745 - 0830 – Joint Service to God and Country
0900 - 1200 – Final Business Session:

Unfinished Business

New Business

Election Of Department Officers

Commander

Vice Commander

Zone Commander—2,3, &8

Zone Commander—1&10

Historian

Election of Nat'l Convention Delegates

Selection of Year 2026 Convention City

Installation of New Dept. Officers

1200 - 1330 – New Department Executive Committee Meeting

Drive Carefully On Your Way Home

Schedule Subject To Change

THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA



CONVENTION 2023
JUNE 22-25, 2023

Hosted by Department



Name(s) _____ ☐ Legion ☐ ALA ☐ SAL

_____ ☐ Legion ☐ ALA ☐ SAL

Kids attending? _____ ☐ ALA ☐ SAL ☐ Daycare Needed

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____

Registration* \$25 X _____ = \$ _____

Red Birds Night 6/22 \$25 X _____ = \$ _____

Past Dept. Commander's Breakfast 6/23 \$25 X _____ = \$ _____

Past Dept. President's Breakfast 6/23 \$25 X _____ = \$ _____

Incoming President's Breakfast 6/23 \$25 X _____ = \$ _____

Americanism Luncheon 6/23 \$25 X _____ = \$ _____

Joint Banquet 6/23 \$45 X _____ = \$ _____

Poker Run 6/24 \$40 X _____ = \$ _____

Golf Scramble 6/24 \$40 X _____ = \$ _____

Legion Family BBQ 6/24 \$30 X _____ = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Convention Hotel

Yogo Inn

211 E Main ST.

Lewistown MT 59457 406.535.8721

Room Rate: \$120 plus tax

Ask for The American Legion Room Block



Send Registration Form & Payment To

The American Legion of Montana

PO Box 155

Fort Harrison MT 59636-0155

Questions

Erin Carpenter

C# 406.324.3990

amlegmtsec@gmail.com

Registrations not required for youth attendees.

Women are Veterans too

SUBMITTED BY ANDY HENION, LEGIONTOWN, U.S.A.

As a woman in the service in the mid-1970s, Theresa Robinson remembers the catcalls, the vulgar comments, the crude jokes. It was a man’s Navy, and the constant harassment left her feeling humiliated and invisible among her male counterparts. That feeling of invisibility would follow her for several decades as Theresa struggled to be seen and recognized as a veteran. But these experiences – and Theresa’s ability to speak out for her female comrades – also paved the way for the active role she’s taken in the veteran community. “I personally don’t need the recognition. I don’t need anybody to thank me for what I did or what I’m doing now,” Theresa says. “But I want there to be a female presence in our armed forces for generations to come. I want females to feel like they’re visible, not invisible. I want somebody to see us.”

When Theresa joined the Navy in 1974, it was a different time. It was common for men to whistle at and make inappropriate and even vulgar remarks about how a woman looked. She came to accept it as life in the military. “But when I look back on it now,” she says, “it’s not the way life should have been.” During her time at the Naval Training Center’s Personnelman Class "A" school in Orlando, she said groups of men would stand in the third-floor windows and “rate” the women’s behinds as they walked by in their dungarees. She and her female comrades would think: “‘This is stupid, this is just stupid.’ But there was nothing you could do about it.”

When she arrived at her duty station in San Diego, the former Naval Air Station Miramar, the harassment continued. Not having a car, she would walk from her barracks to the office in the hangar where she worked as a personnelman, or records clerk, often in dress uniform. “It was not pretty walking to work; it was just awful,” she says. “The things that would be hollered out of car windows. You’d want to look at people and say, ‘Man, do you kiss your wife with those lips? Do you kiss your kids with those lips?’ Back at the barracks, she considered wearing her dungarees to work, but found that wasn’t any better “because people could see a lot more with your dungarees on. So, then you start wearing a big coat to cover everything up. All of that did not feel good.”

On a base dominated by males, Theresa never thought about telling anyone. “Who were you going to tell, some other man? They weren’t going to do anything, and I was just a lowly enlisted person.”

This was a time when women were not allowed to serve aboard ships. But Theresa remembers being invited on a day cruise aboard the USS Kitty Hawk with some fellow servicewomen. “It was a great experience,” she says. “But immediately following the day cruise we were told to go change our clothes, go to another location for a dinner and dancing. Upon arriving it was evident they needed us there so the guys would have someone to dance with. It was very degrading.”

After serving for two and a half years, Theresa – who had married in the service – was discharged and transitioned to the active reserves. Her husband still had a year of service left, so they remained in San Diego. While serving as a reservist and coming in once a month, she found she was not looked on very favorably by active-duty people. She decided she was done with the military after she became pregnant with her first child. But once discharged, there was no help transitioning to civilian life. The transition assistance programs that exist today were not in place at the time “Nobody sat down with you and told you, here’s where the VA is, don’t forget to sign up for The American Legion, don’t forget these benefits are available to you,” Theresa says. “It was, here you go, bye!”

After her husband was discharged, they moved back to Grand Rapids to raise their family. She always knew she was a veteran, but never talked about it. “It was the end of Vietnam, nobody wanted to hear any of that,” she says. Nobody would ask her if she was a veteran. They still don’t. Over the next 20 years, Theresa was a stay-at-home mom for her four children. She says her military training helped her immensely in leading her “troops,” staying organized, ahead of disaster and

always being prepared. Once her children had grown, she earned a Realtor license. She found that putting together the extensive paperwork for a home sale is similar to the service records she dealt with every day in her military job. “Some things just do not leave you,” she says. Theresa started identifying as a veteran about 15 years ago. She cites The American Legion as a major factor. Her brother-in-law convinced her to attend her first Legion meeting. She joined, and after just a few meetings was voted Second Vice Commander of American Legion Post 258.

She worked her way through the leadership chairs and eventually served as Post Commander. After that, she got involved with the United Veterans Council of Kent County, once again working her way up through the chairs and ultimately serving as Commander for three years. She remains active in both organizations and is also a member of AMVETS, the Michigan Women Veterans Coalition and a mentor with the Kent County Veterans Treatment Court.

“If I hadn’t joined The American Legion, I probably would not be as active in the veteran community as I am today,” Theresa says. “So, I do identify as a veteran, proudly. I’ve tried to do what I can.”

But it hasn’t come without adversity. She’s had to prove herself every step of the way. “It has become very, very, very evident to me that females in the military and female veterans are invisible,” she says. “Sometimes to their comrades, most often to civilians.”

Theresa often finds herself in public places with other veterans, all of them wearing veteran apparel. While the men are thanked for their service, the women are rarely addressed – and if they are, they are typically asked if their husband served or if they have a child serving.

“There is not a week that goes by that this doesn’t happen,” she says. “I’m still invisible. I’m standing here with a sign that says I am a female veteran, I served in the Navy, and people still don’t recognize.”

Theresa isn’t afraid to stand up and say “I am a veteran” or to speak up for her fellow women veterans when exclusionary language is being used, but she acknowledges that not everyone is able to do this. Just as the women who served before her helped pave the way for her to serve in the 1970s, she hopes she can help future generations of servicewomen. “I’d like to think that now as a veteran, I’m doing everything that I can do to help female veterans be recognized, be visible and be safe,” she says. “That when they serve on active duty, you’ve got to feel safe, you’ve got to feel like you’re a person – that you’re not some little plaything for somebody else, that you’re not going to be abused. I feel that as a veteran, that’s my job now.” When Theresa talks with recently discharged women veterans, she finds they are facing many of the same issues she did and still have no place to go. As a Veteran, she hopes she brings more awareness of the role servicewomen play and helps inspire a national movement that pushes the military to make changes.

“The good old boys club in the military has got to stop,” she says. “Females should not have to feel unsafe while they’re serving our country. Females should not have to feel objectified. Females should not have to feel that they can’t go up for a job because they’re afraid of their male counterparts. Promotion should come because of your skillset, because of how you’ve proven yourself, not because of your physical attributes.” She believes all veterans bear responsibility to help female veterans feel visible. She urges male veterans to notice their female comrades and introduce them when they are ignored. It’s as simple as speaking up and saying, “She’s a veteran, too. She served.”

“I think, and this is just one person’s opinion, female veterans can’t be separated, female veterans have to be included,” Theresa says. “Don’t celebrate me and my service on female veterans day. I will stand tall shoulder to shoulder with my brothers that I served with on November 11th every single year. That’s my Veterans Day. That belongs to me because I am a veteran.”



BIG 1,000 CLUB

Would you like six opportunities to win \$400, one to win \$100, one to win \$500, and one to win \$2,000? Join the Big K (1000) Club and be one of the 1000 members eligible to win. Membership is just \$25 a year and is open to all Legion, Auxiliary and SAL members over 18 years of age.

This is a fundraiser for Posts, Units, Squadrons, Districts, and Department; proceeds will be used to strengthen and increase programs such as Oratory, Government Survey Scholarship, Baseball and American Legion Boys State, as well as membership programs.

If you are interested in joining contact your Post Adjutant or Department Headquarters. Membership closes December 31, 2022, the first of 6 monthly drawings for \$400 beginning January 2023, a \$100 New Year drawing, \$500 on the Legion Birthday, and \$2,000 at Department Convention.



BIG 1,000 CLUB

Submit completed form with \$25 Membership Fee!

American Legion Dept of Montana
Armed Forces Reserve Center
P.O. Box 155
Fort Harrison, MT 59636-0155

Name: _____

Post/Unit/Squadron: _____

ID Number: _____

Phone Number: _____

WAGNER RECEIVES SEA SCOUT LEADERSHIP AWARD

SUBMITTED BILL RICH, POST 2

During a Special Squadron Bridge of Honor held on January 4th at Lewis and Clark Post No. 2 in Helena, Lone Sea Scout Robert Wagner (also an Eagle Scout with Post 2–sponsored Troop 217) received the Sea Scout Leadership Award. Robert recently stepped down as Council/Squadron Boatswain at the end of 2022 to attend college in New York. Robert is presently an Ordinary and is one requirement from Able. He has been attending meetings and working with Ship 272, SSS Green Lantern II in New York.



His wish is to return to the Montana Scout Council for his Quartermaster Bridge of Honor. His mother, Danyeil Wagner presented his award.

Pictured at right: Bill Rich (r) Lewis and Clark Post 2 Commander, as well as, Montana Scout Council Member and Sea Scout Squadron Commodore, congratulating Robert Wagner on his Sea Scout Leadership Award



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District 1 Commander
Joe Yeoman
Proud US Army
Vietnam Veteran and
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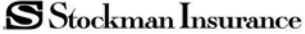




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Leslie Davis
Salon Owner/Cosmetologist



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Licensed Agent

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Coverage • Nonprofits and Fraternal Organizations

Beware the Fraudsters & Scammers says the JAG

TIM FOX, POST 2, DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE

There's no better cause to invest our time and money than veteran organizations. But which of those veteran organizations are legitimate? Sometimes that's difficult to determine, especially when there's high-pressure tactics involved. Unfortunately, it's not uncommon for fraudsters and scammers to take advantage of America's love and appreciation for her veterans.

In 2021, the Federal Trade Commission reported that active-duty military personnel, veterans, reservists, members of the National Guard, and their military families lost over \$266 million to fraudsters. That number was up from \$107 million lost in 2020. According to the FTC, most of that loss was to veteran charity scams.

So, what is a veteran charity scam? Veteran charity scams are fraudulent charities that use the pretense of helping military veterans and their families to raise money. These fraudsters typically don't use the money they raise for any legitimate veteran purpose, and instead the individuals that run these scams pocket the money for themselves or for their fundraising businesses.

Veterans are a vulnerable group, and often it is the veteran that is scammed, but all Americans are vulnerable, retirees are favorite targets of fraudsters because they've worked hard all their life and typically have savings, retirement accounts, and other assets that can be ripe for the picking. In addition, our older generations can often get

befuddled by the high-tech mechanisms and pressure tactics of scammers.

The scammers often use our personal information to help make them look legitimate by using first names, referencing things they know about us, and by communicating directly to us through phone numbers, e-mail addresses, social media, and through other means. In some cases, the criminals need nothing further from their victims to apply for credit cards, take out loans, or to steal directly from bank and investment accounts. If the scammer is purposely targeting veterans, they might already know your branch of service, former rank, or other personal military service information.

Here are some helpful tips when trying to identify if a veteran charity (or any charity) is legitimate:

- Don't be in a rush and do your homework. Research the organization on the Internet, with the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance (<https://www.give.org>), with Charity Navigator (<https://www.charitynavigator.org>), or with GuideStar (<https://www.guidestar.org>) before giving them money.
- If they ask you for personal information like birthdates, social security numbers, bank account numbers they are likely a scammer.
- If they ask you for credit card numbers or bank account numbers over the telephone over e-mail, don't respond because it's likely a scam.

Sleigh the day and Membership Montana Department's Leadership sports Ugly Sweaters

BY DIANE CUNNINGHAM, DEPT. ADJ



***Slim-Fast Santa Elf
CDR Lowell Long***



***Hawaii 5-0 meets
Yellowstone Elf, Vice CDR
Scott Miller***

The 2023 Membership Drive is well underway and that often requires that desperate measures be taken to reach target dates and goals that the membership committee has set. This holiday season a membership challenge was issued to Department's leadership contingent. The Challenge—if Montana reached 80% by Christmas, the membership Elves would wear Ugly Christmas Sweaters for display in the Legionnaire.

For whatever reason 80% seems to be the toughest hurdle for Montana to clear historically. Well, we didn't quite make the 80% target by



***Sketchy Friends Elf,
Dept. ADJ Duane
Cunningham***

Christmas, but it appears through the hard work of a whole lot of Santa's other elves that we will clear the 80% target prior to National's deadline of 19 January as we currently sit at 79.53%.

So, without further ado, I present you the three Membership Elves:

Be thankful folks, if we wouldn't have made 80%; you would be looking at 11 District Commanders and 4 Zone Commanders dressed as Santa's Workshop Elves, and it would have certainly caused Christmas to be cancelled.

- If they have a web site, check to see if the website is "secure." Secure web sites will often show a "padlock" icon next to the web address in the Internet browser, and secure web addresses begin with "HTTPS" rather than the unsecure "HTTP." Web sites that are not secure can be used to trick you into downloading malicious software that can compromise your computer and your personal information.

Keep in mind that scammers don't just prey on our desire to help veterans. There are numerous scams out there targeted toward our desire to help law enforcement, fire fighters, kids with special needs, animals, or other seemingly worthy causes. You can use the above tips to protect yourself from all manner of scams.

Other steps that you can take to protect yourself from scammers include freezing your credit through one of the major credit bureaus like Experian, Transunion, or Equifax, regularly checking your bank account and credit card statements, frequently changing your usernames and passwords on online accounts, and signing up for identify theft protection.

Both the Federal Trade Commission Bureau of Consumer Protection (<https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/bureaus-offices/bureau-consumer-protection>) and the Montana Department of Justice's Office of Consumer Protection (<https://dojmt.gov/consumer/>) have great resources on their web sites, including an online complaint filing system if you believe you are a victim of a scam. The Montana Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) can also be contacted by telephone (800-481-6896; 406-444-4500) or by e-mail (contactocp@mt.gov) if you have questions about a charity, or if you wish to file a complaint. There is no charge to Montanans for these services.

While it can sometimes be embarrassing if you fall for a scam, please know that it can happen to anyone. It's important to report suspected scams to the FTC or the OCP so that they can attempt to bring these fraudsters to justice, and so that fraudsters don't victimize others.

Discuss these issues at your next Post meeting, or with your local community service groups. We all have a duty to get educated, and to share our knowledge. If you know someone who might be vulnerable to these scams, do a "Buddy Check" and let them know what you know.

The bottom line is that there are plenty of great veteran organizations that are worthy of our support. If you feel like giving, maybe start with a donation of time or money to a known and reputable organization like The American Legion, the VFW, the DAV, or to your local TAL Post. You can't go wrong with donations to those organizations, and you can be assured that the donation will be used wisely and appropriately.

Stevensville Post 94 gets a new flag display

BY CHERYL BURGMEIER

Zander Martinez of Boy Scout Troop 1976 completed his Eagle Scout project. Zander took the initiative to lead the way to reconstructing the flag display area at the Legion Post to include the addition of a pole for the newly formed Space Force. The display as a whole brings a lot to the Stevensville American Legion Post 94.



Ravioli Post 47 Veterans Day Honoring Women

NANCY DEZELL, 2ND VICE/CHAPLAIN

The Ravalli Post 47 and Ravalli County Museum partnered to create an amazing display for Veteran's Day entitled, "Honoring Women in the Uniformed Services" on the 2nd floor of the museum on Bedford St.

The display includes officer and enlisted women's Service uniforms and vintage photos from all Services (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard) and most eras -- WWII, Vietnam, Desert Storm to present day. A poster summarizes 200-plus years of contributions of women in the service.

The display was open to the public until December 31, 2022.

Special appreciation to Museum Executive Director B. Michelle Nowling, Julie Bethman (Exhibits & Marketing), Bill Whitfield (Historian & Archivist), Nancy Dezell (Ravalli Post 47 2nd Vice Commander & Chaplain - two Air Force uniforms on display), Deborah Strickland (Ravalli Post 47 Commander - Vietnam era Army uniform), Patricia Ryan-Swindler (Army Vietnam uniform), Alice Foster (vintage Air Force uniform) and Mari K Meiners (Navy uniform) and the GFWC-Bitterroot Woman's Club monetary donation in support.

