



AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA
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November 2022 - January 2023

Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola, National Commander of The American Legion

Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola (pronounced Tree-Ola) was elected national commander of the nation’s largest veteran service organization on Sept. 1, 2022, in Milwaukee during The American Legion’s 103rd national convention. His theme as national commander is “*V.E.T.S., Veterans, Education, Teamwork and Sponsor.*”

A life member of American Legion Post 1682 in Rockland County, N.Y, he served in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserves from 1969 to 1974. He completed a tour aboard the USS Nitro, an auxiliary ammunition ship with the Sixth Fleet. He was honorably discharged as a boatswain’s mate third class. He is also a member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 1682 based on the World War II service of Jim’s father.

Jim spent his entire working career in the automotive service industry, where he began as a parts manager at a local Chevrolet dealership and went to serve in many capacities of management. At the time of his retirement in 2017, he was director of service and parts at a New York Metro Mercedes Benz dealership. After a brief time at home, he began an

entirely new career as a school bus driver for the Falmouth School District and part-time motor coach operator.

Jim served in many offices at every level of The American

Legion. He was elected department (state) commander of New York for 2010-2011, and chaired several national commissions to include the Legislative Commission, Veterans Employment and Education Commission and the Membership and Post Activity Committee. He served on the National Security Commission and was elected national vice commander for 2016-2017.

He married his wife Saveria (pronounced Sa-Vare-ee-ah) in 1973. They have two daughters, Laura and Jeanette; a son-in-law, Michael; and three grandchildren, Alexander, Abigail and Natalia. The Troiolas include three generations of American

Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion membership.

Jim currently lives in Maine to be close to a daughter and his grandchildren, while still being within driving distance to the Department of New York.



National Commander Vincent J. Troiola



I had the distinct pleasure of traveling with the National Commander of The American Legion for a couple days in September. He came to Montana whereas many consider us a flyover state; he ate with us, he laughed with us, and most of all—shared himself with us. I learned he is a very humble man who loves his family and this nation and has dedicated the next year to this Legion family. He believes in the Legion and its mission, in veterans and their families, and working to get the very best for all of them. So, I took this shot of this New York man sitting unassumingly among Montanans on a Friday night, under the lights, watching football. Visiting, talking about weather and crops, wearing his Legion cap ready to share its story with a veteran just Being the One.

His ‘Be the One’ campaign hits pretty close to home for this issue, the number one killer of veterans is suicide and we each need to heed the words and Be the one to make a difference in someone else’s life.

CHRISTINE MILLER, CLARKS FORK POST 71 | LEGIONNAIRE EDITOR



Important Upcoming Dates

November is Membership Retention Month be sure your 2023 membership dues are paid so you don’t miss important updates from The American Legion

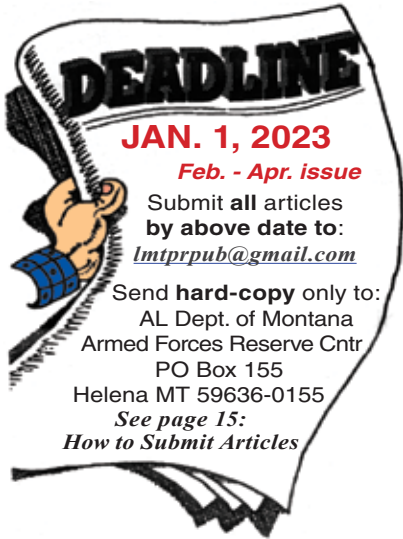
Nov 6Daylight Saving Time Ends
Nov 8ELECTION DAY
Nov 9Dept. 70% Target
Nov 10AL Auxiliary Birthday 1919
Nov 11Veterans Day
Nov 23-25Dept. HQ Closed
Nov 24Thanksgiving
Dec 7Dept. 80% Target
Dec 22-Jan 2Dept HQ Closed
(Erin on Vacation)
Jan 15.....LEO & FF Due
Feb 5Four Chaplains Sunday
Feb 25Post Oratory Contest
Certifications due to Districts
Mar 1Eagle Scout OTY Nominations
due to Dept.
Mar 4Dist. Oratory Contest
Certifications due to Dept.
Mar 11Dept Oratory Contest- Bzmn/
Belgrade
June 10-162023 AL Boys State



BIG K WINNERS

The Big K for next year (2023) is now open for membership until December 31, 2022. You may purchase as many memberships as you desire until 1000 are sold throughout the Department. Posts, Units and Squadrons may also purchase memberships in the Big K.

The first drawing for \$100 will be the New Year Drawing on January 1, 2023
(see pg 15 for the Big K form)



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COMMANDER LONG

Summer has ended and our District Meetings are completed. It has been a busy time traveling to all the District meetings and visiting with all the Legionnaires that came out to those meetings. We returned from the National Convention with a lot of new ideas we picked up and a reaffirming of some things we were already doing. We elected a new National Commander, Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola of New York. He has a lot of knowledge and passion about our organization. His theme is, ‘Be The One’ to raise awareness about Veteran suicide and how we can work to help prevent this from happening. He is encouraging us to reach out and make that call to check on those who are having problems assist where we can.

When running to Commander, my intended focus was our programs. I strongly believe that if our Posts are working the programs that they have chosen and are visible in their communities, membership will follow. In The American Legion, we have tended to quietly go about doing what we do, often people don’t realize that it is The American Legion that’s getting things done. We must start doing a better job of telling what we do. Put your events and activities in the newspapers and other media to let people know you are active.

We have had a focus in the last couple years to begin putting The American Legion in front of all our programs to make sure people know that we are the ones doing that program. It has started with putting The American Legion in front of Boys State, but we need to do it with all our programs.



Lowell Long
Department Commander

The American Legion Boys State, The American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Program, The American Legion Baseball, The American Legion Fatality Marker Program, The American Legion Essay Contest, and The American Legion Government Survey and so on lets people know that we are the ones doing these programs. I have been

talking to many people lately about our programs and have found that most people outside those who actually work the programs, didn’t know that these were run by The American Legion, or existed. Most did not even know who did them. This falls directly on us, we did not address it correctly, or advertise ourselves. I hope to hear the words The American Legion in front of all things we do in the future.

Moving on, thank you all for all the work you do in your communities. I want to remind you that if your Post or District is having an event that you would like to have me attend, let me know. I would love to come and spend time with you and share in any event you have.

Membership is something we all have a responsibility for within The American Legion. We all know people who have served in our communities and hear of others at times. Please reach out to these veterans and ask them to join. You should have an application form, and a quick spiel as to why you joined The American Legion when talking to prospective members. It becomes easier to recruit when you are ready. It doesn’t stop there, after signing someone up, follow through with them and make sure they feel welcome in your Post, introduce them to the other members of the Post, mentor them and encourage them to share ideas to help your Post. These new members are the lifeblood of our organization, it is within them that the legion will continue long after we are gone.●

Dale B. Hewitt Nov. 12, 1983 – Sept. 20, 2022 Commander, Glendive District 10 & Post 28

Dale B. Hewitt, age 38 of Glendive, Montana, passed away on Saturday, September 24, 2022, at his home. A Graveside Service with Military Honors was held at 1:00 PM on Saturday, October 1, 2022, in Dawson County Cemetery in Glendive with Pastor Simon Bergen officiating. Following the graveside service, a celebration of Dale’s life was held at The American Legion Club in Glendive. Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements.



Glendive in 2014 and spent four years working for Glendive Medical Center in the maintenance department. He worked other various jobs, including Triple T Meats. At the time of his death, Dale was Commander of The American Legion Post 28, as well as, District 10 Commander.

He enjoyed golfing, fishing, shooting, cooking, and barbecuing. He loved spending time with family, especially his nieces and nephews. Dale

was social, and a people person. He had a big heart and would do anything for anyone.

Dale was preceded in death by his maternal and paternal grandparents, nephew Joshua Davis, brother-in-law Pete Romine, uncle John Myrstol, and uncle Dale Hewitt.

He is survived by his parents Doran and Sandra Hewitt of Glendive; siblings Tony (Kim) Hewitt, Tammy (Rachel) Ybarra, and Tracy Romine, all of Hardin, MT; Deuce Hewitt, and Dale’s twin sister Brandy (Derek) Williams, all of Glendive; numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

VICE COMMANDER JOHNSON



Lonnie Johnson
Dept. Vice Commander

District Meetings have come and gone, as well as, National Fall Meetings, and Department Fall Conference. Always the big topic—Membership, of course. After traveling around the Department and attending the Membership Workshop at National, we find out that everyone has their challenges. Both National and Department have membership incentives available for meeting and/or exceeding objectives. Believe it or not, we have Post revitalizations, mergers and new Charters all happening right now right here within the Department of Montana! Do not allow the membership updates to scare you. Utilize them as a tool to reach out and see what we can do to help. We are a Family—that includes The American Legion Auxiliary, The Sons of The American Legion, and The Legion Riders. Let us all work together. I always speak about being “Visible.” A great way to be “Visible,” is to make sure that we include the whole Legion Family in our functions and get-togethers. Do not forget to support your other local Veteran’s organizations and civic organizations as well. There is proven success in recruitment from these groups that benefits us all. Keep supporting the four pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.●

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COMMANDER - LOWELL LONG
VICE COMMANDER - LONNIE JOHNSON
ADJUTANT - DUANE CUNNINGHAM**



Chaplain's Corner

CHAYA "HIYA" SEMPLE, DEPT. CHAPLAIN

“Am I My Brother’s Keeper?”

In a word, yes. We *ARE* our brothers’ (and sisters’) keepers! Our National Commander Jim Troiola is spearheading a “*Be the One*” campaign to help veterans at risk of/or struggling with thoughts of suicide. We learned in our September The American Legion magazine about proven therapies that have been developed and saw a checklist we can use to proactively help veterans at risk of suicide.



BE THE ONE

TO ASK VETERANS IN YOUR LIFE HOW THEY ARE DOING.

TO LISTEN WHEN A VETERAN NEEDS TO TALK.

TO REACH OUT WHEN A VETERAN IS STRUGGLING.

Listed actions for “non-veterans” included: asking veterans in your life how they’re doing, listening when a veteran needs to talk, and reaching out when a veteran is struggling.

I can’t emphasize enough how important those actions are for veterans to take, too! Sometimes, a veteran only feels safe speaking with another veteran and will minimize their situation to a non-veteran. Sometimes, even when speaking to another veteran, a struggling veteran doesn’t want to appear weak, so they “suck it up” and dismiss concerns you have about them. “I’m ok. I’ll be fine.” They may even become angry that you noticed something is off – they didn’t put up a solid shield to protect their most vulnerable feelings and emotions.

Listen to your gut and keep connecting with them, anyway.

We, of The American Legion Family, work hard to help and serve veterans – it’s vital we work to prevent suicide upstream of the crisis that precipitates suicidal ideation. If we even have a hint something is off, we can’t afford to wait!

Do you know of a veteran:

- who is having family or relationship difficulties?
- who has recently experienced a significant loss - death of loved one, friend, family member or pet/or due to natural disaster?
- who has recently received a serious medical diagnosis?
- who is experiencing an academic, career or personal setback?
- with a recent retirement, work-related or financial problems?
- who rubs people the wrong way. It’s usually a front.
- having struggles with the VA?
- not meeting their Legion obligations to which they freely committed?

They are at risk.

- experiencing severe, prolonged, and/or perceived unmanageable stress?
- displays a substance abuse behavior – whether drugs or alcohol?
- has a sense of hopelessness, or helplessness?

No matter in which branch of the military we may have served, many of us learned early on how to “put on a good show” for the higher-ups and pretend all is well when it was anything but ok. We’re still pretty good at it no matter how many decades we’ve been out of the service. Old habits die hard.

Do you conduct buddy checks in person if you cannot reach your local members by phone? When you do stop by their home, do you leave your phone in the car, so you won’t be distracted if the veteran starts talking to you? Putting your phone on silent doesn’t work – they can hear the buzz. It’s distracting.

Do you make an effort at your meetings to get to know the new members who show up? Do you reach out to the recently divorced/separated/widowed veterans and follow up with them at regular intervals?

How do you meaningfully involve single members in your post? Do you even know who they are? Loneliness also is a risk for suicide.

A suicidal person may not ask for help, but that doesn’t mean help isn’t wanted. Most people who die by suicide don’t want to die – they just can’t bear the pain of their situation any longer. The feelings and impulses that lead people to suicide are complicated and may include biological, psychological and social conditions. Up to 90% of all persons who die by suicide suffer from a treatable severe mental illness.

If you’ve lost a loved one to suicide, it is important that you understand the connection between suicide and serious mental illness in order to forgive your loved one and yourself.

We are a Legion Family and just like a family, we need to actively be “our brother’s (or sister’s) keeper.” We can’t wait! Getting suicide prevention training is helpful – contact your local health department. It’s free. Learn about resources available in your community/county so you can help a veteran get the help they need.

If you, someone you know, or a loved one are in a suicidal crisis, go to the emergency room or call 988. Stay with the person until they are fully under the care of a medical professional.

“Suicidal thinking is equivalent to a heart attack for the brain. Treat it like the life-threatening condition it is.” (National Alliance on Mental Health Montana)

With our eyes, our ears and our hearts open, we can Be the One to prevent a veteran’s suicide.

May you be well!

Post Everlasting



July/Aug/Sep 2022

- ☆ BOUCHER, LAWRENCE, Vietnam – Unknown – 42-year member of Post 45, Hinsdale
- ☆ BRAACH, WALTER, Korea – US Army – 1-year member of Post 89, Sheridan
- ☆ BURTON, ROY, Vietnam – US Army – 13-year member of Post 106, St Ignatius
- ☆ COFFMAN, RICHARD, WWII – US Army – 37-year member of Post 5, Miles City
- ☆ GOERNDT, FREDRICK, WWII – US Army – 21-year member of Post 35, Baker
- ☆ GRADY, ARDEN, Vietnam – Unknown – 1-year member of Post 45, Hinsdale
- ☆ GRAHAM, THOMAS, Korea – US Army – 3-year member of Post 5, Miles City
- ☆ GUNDERSON, WILFORD, Korea – US Army – 22-year member of Post 88, Chester
- ☆ HARVEY, DERBY, Korea – US Army – 13-year member of Post 106, St Ignatius
- ☆ HUGH, HOWARD, Vietnam – US Navy – 15-year member of Post 20, Dillon
- ☆ HUTTON, FRANCIS, Korea – US Marines – 33-year member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ INCASHNA, ANTOINE, Vietnam – US Army – 11-year member of Post 106, St Ignatius
- ☆ JACQUIER, CHARLES, WWII – Unknown – 26-year member of Post 106, St Ignatius
- ☆ JARREL, ROGER, Vietnam – US Navy – 14-year member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ JONES, WILLIAM, Vietnam – US Navy – 12-year member of Post 341, Great Falls
- ☆ KLESALEK, ROBERT, Korea – US Army – 22-year member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ MARKS, EVEREST, WWII – US Air Force – 61-year member of Post 45, Hinsdale
- ☆ MARTIN, DOUGLAS, Vietnam – US Army – 19-year member of Post 45, Hinsdale
- ☆ MAUK, MICHAEL, Vietnam – US Army – 5-year member of Post 108, Whitefish
- ☆ NELSON, DAVID, Korea – US Navy – 5-year member of Post 21, Anaconda
- ☆ ROSDAHL, ARNIE, Korea – US Navy – 36-year member of Post 89, Sheridan
- ☆ SHERYAK, DAVID, Panama – US Army - 5-year member of Post 341, Great Falls
- ☆ TOWNSEND, RAYMOND, Vietnam – US Army – 50-year member of Post 93, Three Forks
- ☆ VOLDSETH, KENNETH, Lebanon-Grenada – US Navy – 47-year member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ WALLACE, GLENN, WWII – US Army – 75-year member of Post 21, Anaconda
- ☆ WHITE, JAMES, Vietnam – US Army – 31-year member of Post 2, Helena
- ☆ WRIGHT, GEORGE, WWI – US Army – 68-year member of Post 45, Hinsdale

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.





Mark Your Calendars!!!
March 25th, 2023

First Annual Women Veteran Symposium

The Kleffner at East Helena MT
To honor & recognize Montana's Women Veterans who served and sacrificed in defending our country and our freedoms. offering...

- ~ available resources through the VA Healthcare system
- ~ support groups
- ~ various Veteran-specific organizations offering aid, assistance, & comradery to those who served

Save the date now!
Additional information will be forthcoming.

Hosted by The American Legion Department of Montana

GIVE A GIRL THE RIGHT SHOES



AND SHE CAN CONQUER THE WORLD

Department of Montana Adjutant

Duane Cunningham

Greetings and Salutations, lots of happenings the last few months. The first piece of news would be that Department has finally resettled back into the Headquarters space. After 10 months and four moves, Department has its home back. We apologize for the inconvenience regarding location and availability at times with the phones and internet.

The big thing this summer was National Convention in Milwaukee. By car, plane and even train, 37 Montana delegates attended Convention this year. Eight of us took the train to Milwaukee, it was my first Amtrak experience, and I must admit, it wasn't too bad at all; the tickets were only around \$312.00 round-trip, check in procedures, luggage rules and carry-on baggage were easier, and less stressful than flying. Really enjoyed the conversations with fellow Legionnaires and was even able to catch up on a little work. The ride was around 26 hours and dropped us off four blocks from the hotel. If the opportunity to take the train to Convention comes up again, I recommend giving it a try.

Our hotel was right across the street from the Convention Center. Convention 2022 had a multitude of interesting speakers and events, a lot of American Legion business was completed throughout the week and a new National Commander was installed as Vincent James Troiola became The American Legions 104th National Commander. Commander Troiola's theme as national commander is "V.E.T.S., Veterans, Education, Teamwork and Sponsor." Commander Troiola's initiative is the "Be the One" campaign designed to bring Veteran suicide awareness to the forefront of Veteran issues. The American Legion's new "Be The One" campaign aims to raise awareness about the veteran suicide rate and empower everyone to take the initiative to save the life of a veteran who is at risk.

There were 26 Resolutions passed at the 103rd National Convention; of them, Montana had two out of three of its own resolutions pass. The resolutions were:

Resolution No. 6: Increase Cancer Screenings by the Department of Veterans Affairs Origin: Montana Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (As Amended)

WHEREAS, Early detection of cancer improves the likelihood of surviving it; and

WHEREAS, Virtually 50,000 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) enrolled veterans are diagnosed with cancer each year; and

WHEREAS, If VA enrolled veterans were a state in the U.S. it would rank 10th in the nation for cancer diagnoses; and

WHEREAS, Eight cancers were the most frequent among veterans in 2010: prostate, lung, colorectal, melanoma, kidney, bladder, liver and intrahepatic bile duct; and

WHEREAS, All veterans have a 40 percent increased rate of breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, "Beating cancer starts with knowing you have it" and "71% of cancer deaths are caused by cancers not commonly screened for"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 30, 31, September 1, 2022, That The American Legion urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to increase cancer screenings including novel screenings; and, be it finally



Duane Cunningham
Department Adjutant

Amended)

WHEREAS, The United States has fossil fuel (coal and oil) energy sources capable of sustaining a growing economy for at least 200 years; and

WHEREAS, Status of energy independence was recently achieved; and

WHEREAS, Our national energy capability exceeded the combined capability of the Middle East and Russia combined; and

WHEREAS, National policies were established to protect the world climate against climate change; and

WHEREAS, The climate change concerns resulted in actions to modify our national energy independence; and

WHEREAS, The surrender of national energy independence has resulted in our energy needs for both civil and military purposes dependent upon foreign, often unfriendly, sources; and

WHEREAS, Energy resources are a key component of our economy which in turn is directly related to military capability; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 30, 31, September 1, 2022, That, The American Legion immediately contact the House and Senate Committees for National Defense, Energy, and Homeland Security to advocate for renewal of efforts to attain and retain energy independence; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Executive Committee instruct the National Security Commission to call for immediate advocacy efforts at the department level seeking support from elected officials, in a manner similar to the previous efforts to encourage protection of our Flag.

There was one other resolution that came from Montana regarding the National Defense budget not being dependent on a federal Continuing Resolution when lawmakers cannot agree on a Federal budget. This resolution was tabled because of its similarity to a previous passed resolution.

Upon returning to Montana, we geared up for the start of Fall District meetings and for a National Department visit from the new National Commander. The first few weekends of District meetings went smoothly with the new start time and agenda, most meetings were wrapping up just prior to lunch and ran more smoothly and efficiently with the District business being completed prior to any guest speakers. The only snafu to our plans was District 4, when they had a COVID outbreak in Libby two days prior to the event and we had to improvise with an impromptu Zoom meeting. There were some technical issues, but once folks figured out the importance of turning their microphone on and off, it went just fine and could be an option in the future if gas prices continue to rise faster than Dracula at a Halloween blood drive.

Commander Troiola's visit to Montana was a whirlwind but successful event. The Commander and

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge the Department of Veterans Affairs to add liquid biopsies for cancer screening to annual physicals for all veterans with a preference on those with Food and Drug Administration approval.

Resolution No. 4: Energy Independence Origin: Montana Submitted by: Convention Committee on National Security (As

his Aide arrived in Helena around 10:30 Thursday night and after a quick night's sleep we attended a POW/MIA Remembrance Event in Helena Friday morning. Commander Troiola gave a poignant speech about the day and its true meaning. Upon completion of the reading of the names of Montana's remaining POW/MIA brethren; the day continued with a stop at the State Capital and a visit with Governor Gianforte's Policy Director Glenn Oppel to discuss Montana Veteran specific issues. It was a lively, informative and effective discussion.

After a quick trip through the Montana Historical Society and the Nutter/Shore Trophy Room, it was off to the Veterans Hospital at Fort Harrison for a tour of the facility and a quick lunch with Veterans in the VA canteen. We wrapped up at the VA and since I planned on keeping the National Commander out past his Friday night bedtime, we took him back to the hotel for a quick siesta.

Around 1600 we headed down the road to Three Forks, Montana where Post 93 and Commander Don Carlson hosted a tailgating event prior to Friday nights Class B football game against Whitehall. With around 35 Legion Caps in attendance the National Commander acted as the Honorary Captain and conducted the coin toss. The officiating crew for the game were all Veteran's and Legionnaires. Both the Whitehall and Three Forks fans, school administrators and players thought it was a big deal to have a distinguished guest in attendance, and made the event very memorable. We do need to work on the whole American Legion recognition thing though. One of the captains asked me after the Commander departed the field if he was a General, I of course responded with a simple, "No son, he had bigger dreams than that, he is an Admiral."

Saturday morning, we all piled into the Legion vehicle for a trip to Dutton, Montana, and the Fall District 8 meeting. The District held a great meeting and the Commander enjoyed meeting the Legionnaires from that area. We stopped in Craig at Izzac's for a wonderful dinner that night and then put the National Commander on a 6 a.m. flight to Kansas. Since the convention, the Commander has been on the road and still had an additional 53 days of travels before he returns to Maine for a well-deserved break. I would like to thank everyone who made the Commanders visit a success. He truly enjoyed the stop.

I will end this unfortunately on a somber note, as we recently lost a member of the Legion Family. District 10 Commander Dale Hewitt of Glendive passed away last month. Dale was relatively new to the Montana American Legion, but brought enthusiasm, energy, passion and genuine concern for his fellow Veterans and Legionnaires in the same way that he did while serving in the United States Marine Corps. Dale was a newly elected Post #28 Commander and took over as District 10 Commander this Fall. Dale hit the ground running, bringing new Legionnaires into Post 28, and working to revitalize District 10 overall with new and exciting ideas and outreach. He will be missed. Again, please do your buddy checks, check in on one another and don't be afraid to "Be the One" and ask the tough questions, you can make a difference.

Until next time. God Speed and God Bless The American Legion. 🇺🇸

THE AMERICAN LEGION
Boys
STATE
A WEEK THAT SHAPES A LIFETIME

Now is the time to start getting out and finding the best candidate to sponsor for both The American Legion Boys 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 lifetime in those who gain the opportunity. Boys state date is June 10-16, 2023.

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.

Silver Bow Post #1 and Auxiliary
AMERICAN LEGION OF MONTANA

Welcome

MEETINGS:
1ST & 3RD WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH-7:00 P.M.
DINNER: 3RD WEDNESDAY-8:00 P.M.
NEW LEGION HALL - 3201 WYNNE AVENUE
BUTTE MT

FAMILY

Big Timber American Legion Post #19

DROP IN & VISIT US!

110 E 3RD AVENUE, BIG TIMBER, MT

Post Meetings - 1st Wed. 7 p.m.
Open 7 days a week
M-F 1 p.m. to close
S-S 10 a.m. to close

Pizza Every Day - Friday Night Burgers & Sandwiches

American Legion Gallatin Post #14
Striving for Legiontown USA!

225 East Main Street
Bozeman, MT 59715

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

FAMILY

AMERICAN LEGION District 2 • Havre Post #11

Meetings 2nd Monday each month, 7pm at
Havre Eagles Club
201 1st Street • Havre

AL AUXILIARY as well!

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Valley Post #41
Glasgow, Montana

Meetings 3rd Thursday @ 7 pm at the Vets Hall

Cassidy's Bar & Grill

105 S. Main St.
Plentywood, MT 59254
406-765-2350

Good for 1 FREE Drink

POW/MIA Remembrance in the Park

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE MILLER, DEPARTMENT PR

What’s the old saying, if it’s raining, we ain’t training? September 16th is National POW/MIA day and just like the last 43 years, Ray Reed, our Department Historian, hosted the event to remember all of those from Montana.

By 0730, when he was setting up in the park, it had been raining all night—something no Montanan complains about in the Fall; happy to see it and it kept no



Hal Rice and Nat'l Commander Troiola

one away nor staying busy setting up for the ceremony. I love veterans in the rain, a few umbrellas but most were hugging up to tree trunks. We were honored to have National Commander Jim Troiola start his visit with us.

Reed had all 53 names printed with



corresponding date, conflict, and hometown. I cannot stress just how moving that is to hear their names spoken. They left Montana one day long ago looking upon the beauty she holds to never return; I like to think they carried that picture in their heads to the end.

After the Commander spoke, rather eloquently, attempting to fight the rain on his prepared remarks, each name was read by whomever in the crowd wanted to participate. By the end of the reading of the names the trees had started leaking the rain and it was making its way through pretty solidly so most made the dash to the car. If you’re ever in Helena on September 16th, Ray Reed puts on this special ceremony every year and it’s something everyone should be a part of at least once.



Ray Reed, Department Historian

Are You Ready

DISASTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE
CHAYA SEMPLE, DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATOR
Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.

Are You Ready for a Disaster?

We see the headlines in the news – an earthquake, hurricanes, landslides, tornadoes, or wildfire have gobbled up homes and displaced many families. Outside of the massive flooding in Montana in June, 2022 has been a relatively quiet year for us compared to many we’ve experienced in the past when it comes to disasters.

That doesn’t mean it can’t happen to you! No one wants to think about that, though. It doesn’t feel good at all to speculate losing everything or having severe damage to your home or Post. Winter weather can arrive at any time. Are you prepared for it?

If you haven’t already done so, here’s how you can prepare for a disaster:

1. Gather some simple supplies together in one easily accessible place in addition to having medications and important papers handy to grab if you must evacuate in a hurry. Do you have at least three days of non-perishable food and at least a gallon of water per person per day for at least three days? What about your pets or other animals? How about spare cash? If power is out, ATMs and banks are not dispensing money. Gas stations can’t sell gas. You can get an easy Emergency Preparedness Kit checklist at ready.gov
2. Next, do you have a plan? Do you have a weather radio? With batteries that work? How about a battery-operated radio, with spare batteries, so you can listen to the emergency alert station on AM and find out what’s going on. Typically, in disasters, phone communication is available to call out of state as local calls overwhelm local phone lines and bandwidth of cell phone towers. Do you have a designated contact person out of state with whom everyone can call and check in? Do you have a pre-designated meeting place should no one be able to return home? Are you prepared to shelter-in-place if advised to do so? Have you shared your plan?
3. If you’re disabled, elderly or no longer drive, have you arranged with a neighbor or nearby friend to come and get you out of harm’s way? The government won’t be sending anyone to save you before the disaster. Disasters, when they happen, are chaotic. With Hurricane Ian, over 700 persons had to be rescued just in one county – a tremendous challenge. In Montana, disasters often happen without that much warning. If you don’t have to leave, do you have someone who will physically check after it’s over to make sure you’re ok? Get out early!
4. Posts and members affected by Hurricane Ian and other natural disasters to come still need your help! In case you don’t remember the spring article and because the need is urgent, I would be remiss not to remind you that you can donate directly to the National Emergency Fund (NEF). Your Post can work to raise funds for the NEF – it’s even a line on the annual Consolidated Post Report. New members may not realize the point of the NEF is to get financial help to current Legion members and current Sons of The American Legion affected by a Declaration of Disaster (County, State, Presidential) as soon as possible – in the form of a grant to help with out-of-pocket expenses in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. Even if you have insurance! Eligible grant applicants must be out of their homes as a result of damage from the disaster to apply. The grant (up to \$3,000 for members and \$10,000 for Posts) is only for personal out-of-pocket expenses incurred. (Keep your receipts if it happens to you!) Every penny donated to the NEF goes to a current member or Post displaced by disaster. You can also donate one half of one percent of the cost of all your purchases through Amazon (without any cost to you!) through Amazon Smile. Go to smile.amazon.com and choose American Legion National Emergency Fund just below the Amazon search bar.

How will you help?

May you be well!

Who says the VA doesn’t care...

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE MILLER, MT LEGIONNAIRE EDITOR

Get in a room full of veterans anywhere and conversation soon turns to the VA, and out comes the horror stories; equally, no one has not been disappointed by them at one time or another.

Here in Montana, there is a guy who seems to have taken on the mission of changing that narrative.

I have spent the last couple of months traveling to district meetings and events for the paper; every time, in walks what I as a teen of the 80s would call a ZZ Top drummer look-alike.

This sharp dressed man is Todd Dunlap, he is working hard to change the system from Ft. Harrison VA where he maybe has an office.

I say, because I only ever see him at a minimum of a couple hundred miles away, in the field, speaking directly to small groups of veterans. There hasn’t been a district meeting this fall where I have not seen him.

Why, you might say, is this man doing this?

Todd is a Navy veteran retired after 24 years of service he was able to return home to Montana where he grew up. He is determined to make the new programs that the VA is implementing with a design for the east coast work out here in the very different environment of Montana.

You must admire a man who tells it like it is. He fully admits to what the VA is doing that isn’t working, but also follows it up with a fix in progress.

He never dodges a question. He stays long after he speaks answering personal questions of anyone who has one.

To this veteran who got out back in the 90s, the changes in the VA, its care, its transparency, and its availability to those who have earned it have changed exponentially.

I, like Todd, will agree it has plenty of room to continuing to improve but it is a vastly different place today than it once was.

In saying that, I must say it is largely in part because of good men like Todd Dunlap, who have a passion to help others. Therefore, he will obviously be embarrassed by this article because accolades are not why he does what he does, but sometimes it is good to just tell someone, “I see what you’re doing, and it is awesome! Thank you.”



Todd Dunlap

Area Club shares with Post 25

SUBMITTED BY: JOANNE CUMMINS



gift. The club raises money to benefit Charities and Youth and their families around the State of Montana, this year they had more than 120 riders.

The Wraith RC riding club donated \$1,000 from the proceeds of the poker run held in White Sulphur Springs on July 10. Meagher American Legion Post 25 was very pleased to receive such a generous

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Judith Gap American Legion Auxiliary Unit #70

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Dear American Legion Family and Friends,

In my year as national commander of The American Legion, I can think of no greater goal than to reduce the number of veterans who die by suicide each day.

I made this a priority during my speech when I accepted the honor of being elected commander during our 103rd national convention last week in Milwaukee.

“My platform and No. 1 priority for my year as national commander will be tackling the toughest challenge facing veterans: veteran suicide,” *I said in my acceptance remarks.* The American Legion is asking you to ‘Be the One’. And by you, I include every one of us, military and civilian alike. We all need to ‘Be the One,’ to begin thinking, talking and acting to save just one life.”

What does it mean to Be the One?

For a veteran, it means reaching out for help to assist a loved one, or calling a help line in times of crisis. The new 988 emergency suicide hotline is a valuable resource. You can also *chat online at this webpage* [<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>] or text **838255**.

For a spouse, family member or caretaker, it means recognizing when the veteran is struggling and getting them the help they need. You are in a position to not only see the risk but have the trust of the veteran in his or her time of crisis.

For fellow veterans, friends and other civilians, it also means being proactive to get the veteran the help they need. Don’t assume someone else will act. Take the initiative.

In the coming months, National Headquarters will roll out resources, stories of how Posts and members are demonstrating how they are working to minimize the veteran suicide rate. For now, you can *find additional information here.* [<http://www.legion.org/betheone>] I also encourage you to listen or watch The American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcasts this month as they are all dedicated to the topic of suicide prevention. The episodes are published each Tuesday morning and can be found here.

As part of this initiative, I encourage you to share how you or your Post is promoting Be the One, supporting programs that help those suffering from PTSD and similar initiatives. Share your stories on our Legiontown *website*.

Together, we can all make a difference in the lives of veterans. That is why The American Legion is known as ...

Veterans Strengthening America.

JAMES TROIOLA, NATIONAL COMMANDER
THE AMERICAN LEGION



NATIONAL COMMANDER and FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

SUBMITTED BY RANDY KEMP

The American Legion Post 93 in Three Forks, MT hosted a get-together for the National Commander, Vincent Jim Troiola, at Friday night’s football game.

Commander Carl Mohler, and his Post hosted an amazing tailgate meal for all Legionnaires in attendance and arranged for National Commander Troiola to do the coin flip to start the Three Forks High School football game. The game was officiated by all referees who are military veterans; impressive to watch them all keep up with the high school players. [see page 1 photos] Commander Troiola shared his pin and message with the Three Forks coach who was also a veteran and not part of our evening.

The event was attended by various American Legion Post members, American Legion Auxiliary members, Department of Montana personnel, and Zone Commander Bill Cummins. See cover page for additional photos.



Post 30 awards Stan Milesnick Scholarships

In March 2016, the Stan Milesnick Scholarship Fund started after a generous donation from the Milesnick family. American Legion Post 30 (Belgrade) has been managing the Milesnick Fund since

2016. On the 8th of September 2022, Post 30 in coordination with MSU Veteran center, awarded three \$2,500 scholarships to deserving MSU students. Emily Vaughan a Veteran and current member of

the Montana Army National Guard, Dean Beggs a Navy Veteran, and Kimberly Abney a military dependent family member were awarded their scholarships at the new MSU Veteran’s center in Romney Hall.

Since 2016, Post 30 has awarded \$48,550 scholarships to deserving MSU Students.

(l-r) Joe Schumacker, George Morales, Kimberly Abney, Emily Vaughan, Hank Adams, Jim Bratsky, and Dean Beggs.



WSS Post 25 treats First-Graders to Backpacks

SUBMITTED BY JOANNE CUMMINS

Meagher American Legion Post 25 presented backpacks to Ms. Stidham’s First Grade Class on August 30, 2022, at a White Sulphur Springs School.

The backpacks were filled with the school supplies needed for the current school year. The class had 12 students who received the packs with the Legion Emblem and a name tag bearing the student’s name. Many Legionnaires state this is the most fun day for themselves; just the joy alone these kids exhibit makes it all worth it.



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POST ...62	DENTON	92.31%
POST ...125	DRUMMOND	88.71%
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POST ...31	TWIN BRIDGES	80.00%
POST ...51	AUGUSTA	79.41%
POST ...32	TERRY	64.65%
POST ...57	MALTA	61.05%

2023 DISTRICT STANDINGS

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE	COMMANDER
3	59.46%	Dusty Bailey
6	58.15%	Linda Cousineau
11	57.32%	Scott Miller
7	54.87%	Dan Smart
5	53.90%	Terry Wahl
1	52.46%	Joe Yeoman
4	51.93%	Dave Bennett
10	50.57%	
9	47.78%	Robert Miller
2	46.15%	Jed Damson
8	45.53%	Andy Rice

National Convention 2022 Milwaukee or BUST

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE MILLER, POST 71 | LEGIONNAIRE EDITOR

Montana took Milwaukee by force in August, coming from all points of the state by train, plane, and automobile. Eight of us boarded the Empire Maker train enjoying our 22-hour ride to our final destination; it was somewhat reminiscent of the way many traveled to deployment points and training in the time of WWII.

The convention was being held right downtown at the convention center encompassing many hotels, breweries, fabulous food, and many good times. There is something to be said about sunshine, beautiful 70-degree weather, and thousands of Legionnaires in a consolidated area. Montana had 37 delegates in total attending many in multiple rolls, and committees.

Arriving before things get into full swing is the way to go; get something to eat and get familiar with the area and be ready to hit the Emblem store. Get there early, there will be lines, but it is the best way to get the deals and the hot items of the convention. Many vendors, as well as other veteran activities, are set up like any conference and it's fun to see what is out there, what's going on in other avenues and available to the veteran community. This veteran bought some new insoles that saved my life as I was there with a torn Plantar Fasciitis; I suggest bringing very comfortable shoes. Many older veterans rode scooters, there was even a way to rent them at the convention.

Walking around, you can catch the drill and ceremony teams compete; some states have full concert bands who are amazing, to say the least. All this is going on in different areas but there is an app for your phone that keeps it all straight and updates can come through for changes and/or lost people. It is very easy to get turned around or lost, there is a lot going on.

A beautiful church service was held by the national chaplain, he was quite a man who ultimately drove home the point, "Go to Church!"

Convention finally underway and delegates gathered on the convention each under their respective state sign. Montanans each signed ours which made its way back Department HQ.

Business meeting carried on and awards are given out. We heard from the NASCAR race team and the success they are having on the track and off reaching thousands. Jimmie Johnson, who drives the Legion car then announced on stage he and his wife were pledging \$1.5 million to The American Legion. Did I forget to mention he did this as the newest member of the Sons of The American Legion of which he was so excited.

The legacy riders left Mobile Alabama and made their way clear to Milwaukee Wisconsin. Both the commander of the Legion, and national president of the Auxiliary and commander of the SAL were all able to make part of the run. 275 motorcycles, 325 participants over 1100 miles and \$1,374,000 raised for scholarships.

We celebrated the PACT act being signed into law and how our initiative with contacting our politicians brought in over 34,000 calls and emails to make this law a reality.

Lt Gen Walt Piatt was the honored active duty guest speaker, he spoke of his tour in Afghanistan with the 25th many years ago. He later laughed with our own Scott Miller stating, that wasn't his prepared remarks, but seeing Scott briefly before his scheduled speech had changed his whole day. You see, the General was once a LTC and Scott an E-6 and together they weathered a year with the legendary Wolfhounds, in Afghanistan. They had a rough year of it and lost good men—that brought General Piatt full circle to the "Be the one," campaign. He stressed that we must stay in touch and continue to support those

who have chewed the same dirt. He used Scott as the example, while they hadn't seen each other in 15 years they are now in touch. No matter the conflict, the country, the action, we are all veterans and must continue to support on another

National oratory and shooting sports were recognized, as well as The American Legion Boys Nation President Tamarus Darby Jr. Darby addressed the crowd, and if you were not positive of the impact this program has on young people, he convinced the room in a short five-minute speech. Boys Nation changed his perspective on what he planned for his future.

The number of banquets, luncheons, and breakfasts held varied as the Auxiliary and SAL were meeting at the same time, but they were numerous. Those who had led the way in programs and exceptional acts received the recognition they had earned and were celebrated for their accomplishments. Our own Ken Simmons receive an award for membership recruitment. Glen Sharbono also acceptance awards for the amazing Legion of Montana.

We were able to attend a Brewers game and get in some good old-fashioned baseball. Brats and Beer are a thing in Milwaukee; where just a short walk from the hotel, I took photos with a bronze Fonzie! Happy Days!!!

All too soon our convention stay was over, with many friendships made. So much was learned, and the convention as a whole was, if nothing else—a blast! I highly encourage anyone with some free time next summer to consider Charlotte, North Carolina.



Quarterly Rental Assistance

JAMES HUDSPETH, POST 99

Big Sky American Legion Post 99 started assisting their community where, so to speak, the rubber meets the road. When the need was brought to the attention of Post 99, Post members stepped up by working with the local food bank, which has been taxed more and more as people struggle with the current economy.

Two lucky names were drawn to receive \$1000 each in Quarterly Rental Assistance. Pictured are Laine Hedgness drawing the two winners on the

30th of September 2022. She was assisted by Sarah Gaither, Director of the Food Bank.

Funds for this are a consolidated effort and donated by The American Legion Post 99, plus its Son's of The American Legion, as well as, Anderson Wallace, owner of the Broken Spoke.

Next drawing will be held 31 December 2022. Everyone is invited to enter once a month at the Food Bank. Funds will be sent to the landlord of those selected.



The American Legion Shooting Sports

SUBMITTED BY ADJUTANT DUANE CUNNINGHAM

The American Legion's Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Tournament for 2022-23 is now underway. This competition provides American Legion-affiliated youth competitors an opportunity to test their marksmanship skills in competition with other junior competitors throughout the nation

The individual tournament has two phases of competition – first round is state championships, and second round is qualification for national championships. The first round and second round of the individual tournament are postal matches, whereas the national championship is an individual event

that is a shoulder-to-shoulder competition. The team tournament has two phases of competition – first round is state championships, and second round is recognition of top teams in the nation.

In Montana, we have a large population who is very interested in firearms this is an excellent opportunity to get involved and support our area youth.

Visit legion.org/jssp-club-registration to register. Registration ends Dec. 15.

More information on how to participate in the postal tournament is online at legion.org/shooting/postal-match.





NATIONAL CONVENTION 2022



—the boys downtown



John Meacham (standing) and Hal Rice (seated)



Montana Delegate on the convention floor 2022



Morning startup



ANAVICUS (Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada United States)



Lt Gen Piatt & Scott Miller—Wolfhounds



Glen Sharbono, Jeff Nelson, Larry Dobb



Richard Klose at the Harley Museum



Auxiliary members Yvonne Kostecky, Karen Susag, and Kathy Long.



Jeff Nelson
Dept. of MT Past President



Scott Miller, Ken Simmons, and Ray Reed (seated behind)



—girls out on the town



Ken Simon receives Membership Recruitment award



NASCAR Race team, Jimmie Johnson, center right.



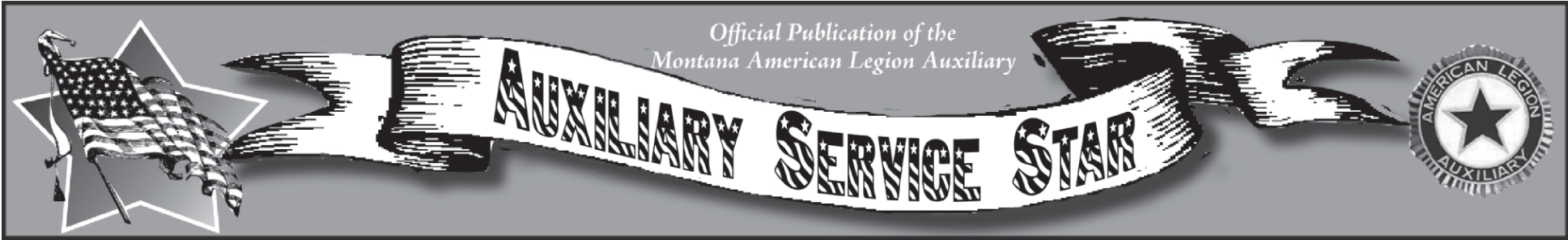
AL Boys Nation President Tamarus Darby Jr.



MOH CSM Robert Patterson & Commander Dillard



Firefighter of the year



President

YVONNE KOSTELECKY



*Happy Fall
Everyone!*

I must tell you all, I felt thoroughly blessed to go to The American Legion National Convention in Milwaukee WI and represent Montana as your President. Being able to see Past National ALA President Nicole Clapp, meeting the ALA National President Kathy Daudistel, and the newly installed ALA National President Vickie Koutz was such a wonderful honor. We were given such wonderful information to bring back and the memories are priceless.

With my theme being, *Hand in Hand Together, Taking Care of Veterans and Their Families*, I am encouraging everyone to make sure they are working with and helping their Posts with the Veterans, fundraisers, memorial services, Veteran's Day, parades, etc.

I am hoping Units can set up a Facebook page, possibly with their Posts and share pictures of what they are doing in their communities. And if you have already set up pages, please share them with me. This will possibly encourage nonmembers to join our organization if they see what we are doing to help Veterans and their families, helping our youth, and our communities. I've been given access to the Department Facebook page so that I can share what is going on across Montana in all the Units and Districts. Ladies and gentlemen—please do a Buddy check on members. Winter and cold weather can be a very lonely time for people. Give them a call, if they accept visitors go have a cup of coffee with them or send them a card that you are thinking of them.

I've enjoyed coming see everyone at their District meetings. We had to move District 2 at Rocky Boy from September 11th to October 16th, and we had to cancel District 4 because of Covid, we also canceled District 10. I will plan on going to see Districts 4 & 10 this Spring.

Membership notices have just been sent out so we are hoping that this year we can get closer to 100%.

May God watch over all of you and keep you safe! 🌟

God Bless you & God Bless America

Around the Department

**Veterans
Christmas Store**

SUBMITTED BY MICHELLE KANDEL, SERVICE STAR EDITOR

With holidays coming up, the Christmas Stores in Butte, Columbia Falls, Miles City, and Fort Harrison in Helena are getting ready to spread that Christmas cheer. Each store does something different, but the outcome is the same; Supporting the Veteran. At Fort Harrison they shop for not just the Veteran, but to gift to their families also. If you have any questions about Fort Harrison, please email Sandra Runkel runkelsandy41@gmail.com



As with any donating, there are forms you need to submit. Please email your Department Secretary, Renee Loehr at ala.mt.sec@gmail.com to ask for the forms. If you are wishing to give financially, please send your donation to the Department Treasurer.

CHRISTMAS STORE ITEMS:

- * Bath Kits
- * Boxes of Christmas Candy
- * Bubba Cups with Straws
- * Card/Board Games
- * Cookie or Popcorn Tins
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- * Flannel Shirts
- * Flashlights
- * Gloves
- * Insulated Coffee Cups
- * Jewelry/Watches
- * Kitchen Towels
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- * Men's Bodywash and Cologne
- * Men's Shaving Kits
- * PJ pants/lounge pants
- * Puzzles
- * Slippers
- * Tee Shirts
- * Women's Lotions and perfumes
- * Women's Soap gift packs

Thank you for your support!

Chaplain

KARI HOULD

The month of September is behind us, and I hope everyone took the opportunity to honor the Gold Star Mothers in their community. This article could easily be the same story of all Gold Star Mothers, there is always a story of the lives of others if we listen or look. Here is just one-story worth sharing.

**A Gold Star
Family Is
More Than
Family**



**America's
Gold Star
Families**

Honor • Hope • Healing

Gold Star Mother (GSM), Mellissa Sandvick, became a GSM on Oct. 8, 2006, when her son, LCpl. Jeremy Sandvick-Monroe, died from wounds sustained while conducting combat operations against enemy forces, in Anbar, Iraq. Mellissa is the sole GSM in Phillips County.

The last Sunday in September each year is designated as Gold Star Mother Recognition Day. Mellissa was asked how she wanted to observe the day, her choice was with friends and family with treats at the local DQ.

Sunday, Mellissa was joined by those in her life. Past Commander of the VFW, Jim Layton, gave a talk about the importance of mothers in our lives. Mothers are our support system and play a role in our lives that no one else can fill. Mellissa shared her thoughts on the day, what an honor it is – in that the Gold Star Mothers – though they share a bond, would rather have had their son or daughter come home. At least they are not forgotten, since WWII when the Gold Star Mother and Gold Star Family recognition started.

Mellissa's twin children, Darryl and Jordanne Southwick, share a history of not only military family, but they also share Gold Star history. Paul Southwick is the son of Jay and Marda, and father of the twins. Jay's grandmother, Rosine Holmquist became a Gold Star Mother with the death of her son, Willard, in France in 1944. Darryl and Jordanne are the great-great grandchildren of Rosine. Rosine's mother, Rosa Wheeler, was also a Gold Star Mother, and they are her great-great-great grandchildren. Her son, Frank, died in 1945 in Holland during WWII.

While it is a title no one ever wants, at least it isn't something that is overlooked or forgotten. The years tick away as if timeless, yet, if asked, every Gold Star Mother could tell you the hour of the day, day of the week and year when they became a GSM. If you're so inclined, pull up a song on the internet by the Statler Brothers, "More Than a Name on the Wall." It will leave you with a better understanding of what some of the families of our military have faced.

It will more than likely make you a little more appreciative of the true meaning of the colors... red, white, and blue. It will be a gentle reminder of true value, importance, cost, and price paid when a family is handed a folded flag.

Pray for all Gold Star Mothers. Pray for all our servicemen. Pray for America.



**MT Presidents
attend Auxiliary
Presidents
Banquet at
National
Convention 2022**

(l-r) Maureen Watt, Kathy Long,
Chris Nelson (seated),
Yvonne Kostelecky, and
Karen Susag.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CHRIS NELSON, 21-22 DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT.

Laurel American Legion celebrates Poppy Poster contest winners in May 2022

By TORREY ANDERSON | THE LAUREL OUTLOOK
SUBMITTED BY ROXANNE ROBERTS | LAUREL UNIT 123

Memorial Day brings bittersweet remembrances of a time when the best, brightest, and bravest men and women put their lives on hold to rise against a looming threat. Some of those individuals paid the ultimate price, investing their sacrifice for the benefit of freedom and peace for future generations. Today, we honor our fallen war heroes in many ways, but none are so visible as the red poppies that can be found every Memorial Day. Members of The American Legion Auxiliary volunteer their time to distribute the poppies, in exchange for monetary donations in any amount. Donated funds are used to help veterans and active-duty military families who are experiencing medical or financial issues.

According to www.legion.org, poppies began springing up in Europe after World War I. “Scientists attributed the growth to soils in France and Belgium becoming enriched with lime from the rubble left by the war. From the dirt and mud grew a beautiful red poppy. The red poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following the publication of the wartime poem “In Flanders Fields.” The poem was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. while serving on the



Jordan Hodges with his trophy and winning poster submission.

front lines.” In September of 1920, the American legion adopted the flower as an official symbol of the soldiers who fought and died in the war. The poppy program kicked off in 1924, and American Legion members have been distributing the flowers around Memorial Day ever since.

As part of the Legion’s commitment to continuing the poppy tradition, a national poster contest was created to bring awareness and education to school-age children in grades 2-12. Laurel’s American Legion Auxiliary Unit 123 was responsible for organizing the contest for local 3rd and 4th grade students. The Auxiliary provided the poster board, and contestants were given a poppy coloring book containing information about the meaning behind the poppy. Prizes are awarded within several divisions based on the grade level of the contestants.



AL Auxiliary members Nancy Conter, Opal Gomer, and Roxanne Roberts present Sophia Sorkness with a trophy for her winning poster submission.

The winners this year were Sophia Sorkness, who won first place in the Class VII division both locally and at the state level. Jordan Hodges took first place in the Class II division locally and won the 3rd place prize at the State level. Both contestants received trophies for their winning submissions. Graff Elementary’s STEAM teacher Lisa Pickens helped organize the project.

Auxiliary member Roxy Roberts would like to thank all of the 3rd and 4th grade students who participated in the Poppy Poster contest. Roberts hopes to build more interest in the contest so that more students and different grade levels can participate in future competitions.

District 8 Auxiliary

Yvonne Kostelecky, Linda Atkinson, Jersey Somerfeld, Leona Somerfeld, Kathy Long, and Barb Callendor [9/17/2022]



Ila Prellwitz awarded Unit 73 Member of the Year

SUBMITTED BY STACY BEAR, BORDER SWEETGRASS UNIT 73

Ila Prellwitz, 93, received the Department of Montana's Unit Member of the Year award. Ila was presented with a certificate, as well as a cake in congratulation of her award. This giving member was busy as she made 14 afghans that Stacy delivered to Glendive's Eastern MT Veterans Home.

Members pictured below: Ila Prellwitz - VP, Nancy Simmes - Historian, Page Nagy, Faye Hart, Joyce Ryan, Past President Delia Atkinson, Past President Janice Baldwin, and Peggy Hartwell, Dist 3 Sec Treasurer .



Raffle Winners

Griddle Grill Package

Dave Bennett, Post 138, Ronan

\$250 Cash

Rebecca Vasilica, Bagdad, AZ

\$150 Walmart Gift Card

Katie Vogel, Unit 135, Lolo

Thank you everyone who supported our ALA Fundraiser & Congratulations to the winners!

Greetings to the Membership of the American Legion Auxiliary,

It is again time to do some housekeeping when it comes to submitting photos for publication. We want & need your photos; however, I need your help with submitting information **with** your photo submissions. Please...when emailing photos **send as e-mail attachments** in JPG format—PLEASE! When you are shooting with your cell phone/tablet please check your resolution. Set the Resolution higher as it helps with the quality when it comes to printing.

When sending your photos **DO** add captions to your photos as follows:

- Submitted by Name, Unit & City
- Photo# with caption, etc.

Most times, I do not know what is going on in your photo, but you do, and the more details the better.

- Don't spend time setting up photos and captions in a Word document, each time a photo is copied/pasted to edit it loses integrity. Send photos as e-mail **attachments**
- Do Not embed (insert) photos in the body of an e-mail—see above (if embedded in an email the photo must be copied/pasted into Word, then copied/pasted into photo editor)

By simply **attaching** your photos to the email **with caption and submitter** information you make the job of your editor much easier.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Thank you, Michelle Kandel
Public Relations Chairman, Service Star Editor

District 3 Auxiliary meets in Cutbank



Renee Loehr, Dept. Secretary; Kathy Long, Education Chair; Stacy Bear, Dist. President; Peggy Hartwell, Dist. Secretary; Yvonne Kostelecky, Dept. President.

We Salute Our Servicemen & Women

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Service Officer

CANDY HERING, DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER



Candy Hering, Service Officer

Greetings Legionnaires!
I would like to thank you all for your service in the armed forces and for your membership in The American Legion!

My name is Candy Hering, and I am the new Department Service Officer for the state of Montana. I served overseas in the Marine Corps from 2002 to 2007, and I have been a Veteran's Service Officer with the Montana Veteran's Affairs Division in the Great Falls field office for eight and a half years. I am very thankful for everything these two organizations have done for our veterans, and I thank you all for allowing me to represent you all and our great state!

This year has been pivotal to our veterans with the signing of the largest VA benefit expansion ever, the PACT (Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins) ACT of 2022. There is a comprehensive list of newly added presumptive conditions, service locations and dates, and healthcare eligibilities that can be found at the VA.GOV website. In short, here are a few of the highlights:

If you served in VIETNAM, THAILAND, LOAS, CAMBODIA, GUAM, AMERICAN SAMOA, or JOHNSON ATOLL (during specified dates listed on the website) you are now PRESUMED to be exposed to AGENT ORANGE and now qualify for the presumptive conditions associated with that toxin to now include HYPERTENSION and MONOCLONAL GAMMOPATHY OF UNDETERMINED SIGNIFICANCE. All the previous AO presumptive conditions remain.

If you participated in the cleanup of ENEWETAK ATOLL, or B-52 bombers carrying nuclear weapons near PALOMARES SPAIN and THULE AFB GREENLAND, you are presumed exposed to radiation.

If you served in the Gulf War (Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, United Arab Emirates, or the airspace above these locations) or Post 9/11 (AFGHANISTAN, DJBOUTI, EGYPT, JORDAN, LEBANON, SYRIA, UZBEKISTAN, YEMEN or the airspace above) and have any form of BRAIN CANCER, GASTROINTESTINAL CANCER, GLIOBLASTOMA, HEAD CANCER, KIDNEY CANCER, LYMPHATIC CANCER, LYMPHOMA, MELANOMA, NECK CANCER, PANCREATIC CANCER, REPRODUCTIVE CANCER OR RESPIRATORY CANCER, you are now in the presumptive category for service connection.

If you have served in the Gulf War or Post 9/11 and been diagnosed with ASTHMA (diagnosed after service), CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, COPD, CHRONIC RHINITIS, CHRONIC SINUSITIS, CONSTRICTIVE BRONCHIOLITIS or OBLITERATIVE BRONCHITIS, EMPHYSEMA, GRANULOMATOUS DISEASE, INTERSTITIAL LUNG DISEASE, PLEURITIS, PULMONARY FIBROSIS or SARCOIDOSIS, your illness is now presumptive.

*If you think you may be eligible, please contact the below field office nearest you right away.

*Even if you have filed a claim or tried to enroll in VA healthcare before and were denied, the law has changed now, and you may be eligible.

Please reach out to your local accredited Veteran Service Officer should you have any questions or concerns about your claim. Listed below are the Montana Veterans Affairs Division American Legion accredited offices throughout the state:

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

Again, thank you to all who have served and are reading this newsletter. Your commitment to our country and fellow servicemen and woman is forever honored. On behalf of all of us at the MVAD, we are looking forward to helping you all to get those well-deserved VA benefits!

President Signs Honoring Our PACT Act,

American Legion Commander Praises 'Patriotic Advocates'

WASHINGTON (AUGUST 10, 2022) – The American Legion National Commander Paul E. Dillard praised President Biden and the bipartisan majority of congressional members who supported the most comprehensive veterans' health-care legislation in decades.

Dillard, who attended the bill-signing ceremony at the White House this morning, pointed to the law's overwhelming support. "The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act is now the Honoring Our PACT law," Dillard said. "We thank President Biden for signing this legislation. Millions of veterans and their families can take comfort in knowing that their government truly appreciates their service and sacrifice. This comprehensive health care law is the result of hard work and bipartisanship by patriotic advocates, members of Congress and American Legion Family members worldwide. It was a privilege to represent all of our allies at the White House today. I encourage all veterans who have been exposed to toxic substances while serving in the military to contact their American Legion service officers for free assistance in accessing the benefits that they have earned. The claims process can be complicated, and American Legion service officers are happy to help."

The PACT Act will provide health care for millions of post-9/11 veterans who were exposed to contaminants emanating from open-air burn pits. It establishes presumptions of service connection for 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers linked to burn pits and other hazards, including Agent Orange and atomic radiation for veterans whose exposure was previously unrecognized for VA health-care services and disability benefits. It will also provide additional resources and staff to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Enactment of the PACT Act was a major legislative priority for The American Legion in this session of Congress.

The American Legion is dedicated to the motto of "Veterans Strengthening America." Chartered by Congress in 1919, The American Legion is committed to mentoring youth and sponsoring wholesome community programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security and continued devotion to servicemembers and veterans. Legionnaires in more than 12,500 Posts across the nation and regions overseas serve their communities with a devotion to mutual helpfulness.

REMEMBER...

Nominations for

***2023 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year**

***2023 Firefighter of the Year**

Dept. level deadline Jan. 15

Forms can be found online at
mtlegion.org/cerificates_forms.html

Post 30 Legion Riders Ride at Belgrade Fall Festival

SUBMITTED BY KEN McMILLON, AT LARGE, POST 30

On Saturday, September 17, Belgrade held its "Fall Festival" weekend. It was a busy day, with festivities going on all over town; breakfast at the Senior Center, 5K race, arts and crafts show and a parade.

The Gallatin Valley Legion Riders were invited to be a part of the parade right behind Post 30 Colors. This year our older members rode in the jeeps of the Antique Vehicle Club in Bozeman. The turnout was VERY large this year and fun was had by all.





Big Sky Post 99 cleans up Community Gun Range

SUBMITTED BY: JAMES HUDSPETH

Saturday 10 Sept 2022 The American Legion Post 99, Son's of the Legion Squadron 99, Friends of Red Cliff Gun Range along with other concerned citizens held a Fall cleanup along with a BBQ following. Kyle Wisniewski with the Gun Range provided the lumber for target backing. Roxy's donated the food for the BBQ with Doug Suppes and Mark Fisher provided the cooking and equipment for the BBQ. Brett Slehofer and Seth Grigg-Ryan got other equipment to support the cleanup and reinstallation of the target supports. We appreciate all who participated and look forward to more volunteers for our Spring cleanup in May. It's asked that all using the gun range to help keep it clean by taking your trash with you after usage.

Legion Members - Let's Get Involved!

BY: ROGER A. HAGAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

MT Department American Legion members, it is important for you to get involved with our Congressional Members and express your thoughts on our Legion efforts. How do you do that? The National Legion has made this so simple, and we can make a difference. I have included an excerpt from the national office explaining the importance of your participation and how you can make that happen through VoterVoice.

The American Legion is now tracking responses by state for our participation. Montana is sadly at the bottom of this measurement; we can do better. In a recent email from the national legislative team, Montana's response to calls for congressional communications was .7% of our membership, which put us 9th worst in the nation. Please read the below information provided by our National American Legion explaining how you can become a part of the Legion efforts.

When you go to the link (votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home), you will see on the right side of the page the option "Sign Up for Alerts" and it will walk you through the process to enroll for notifications from VoterVoice.

Please consider becoming a part of this effort. Thank you for your support.

The American Legion's Legislative Division uses VoterVoice as its grassroots advocacy platform for connecting American Legion members and advocates with their members of Congress. VoterVoice allows The American Legion to contact every member of Congress on large, national campaigns as well as target specific members on key committees that pertain to The American Legion's legislative priorities.

In 2020, The American Legion conducted five action alert campaigns that resulted in nearly 10,000 emails sent to Congress by Legionnaires and advocates.

The American Legion's goal for 2022 is to send 25,000 messages to Congress – an accomplishment only achieved with your help.

Contact your congressional representatives

You can contact your representative through our campaigns located on our Legislative Action Center, votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home. Be sure to share The American Legion's legislative priorities using the Legislative Agenda when you contact their office. While you are there be sure to sign up for our legislative alerts so you can stay up to date on all of The American Legion's legislative campaigns.

PLENTYWOOD POST 58

Sheridan County Veteran's Memorial completes Phase 4

By RUSS SAMUELSON, POST 58 PLENTYWOOD

Nearly two years ago, American Legion Post 58 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4018 in Plentywood began fundraising for a Veterans Memorial in Town Square in Plentywood. The Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce graciously provided an easement for the Memorial. It was estimated that fundraising would take three to five years; however, by the Fall of 2021, there was enough money to begin Phase 1 and 2 consisting of the concrete base and flag poles. This was completed by Gary Brekke and his crew with the concrete from Kanning Concrete of Plentywood.



PHOTO BY PAUL MCKAY

Phases 3 and 4 were completed on June 21, 2022, when Cowboy Crane of Sidney MT unloaded the 10,500-pound black granite monument purchased from Montana Granite of Great Falls. The monument was installed by technicians from Montana Granite. The base is an approximate three ft. tapered square three feet high. The upper portion is a tapered hexagon approximately six feet tall with the five seals of the Armed Forces and the POW/MIA emblem engraved in the six surfaces. Phase 4 was completed by sculptor Fred Hoppie of Hoppie Studios; Columbus NE installed the bronze eagle on the top. Fundraising for Phases 5 and 6 is continuing for signage recognizing the Gold Star Service members from Sheridan County and a donor recognition board.



PHOTO BY HAL BABB

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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Young member makes a difference

SUBMITTED BY: LEONA SOMERFELD

Let me take just a minute of your time and introduce you to an amazing young member of the auxiliary who has worked continuously to support not only the Auxiliary, but Legion Post 103 in Dutton. Jersey is always willing to help, she has been our “legs” at many meetings for many years.

Jersey Somerfeld has been making quilts for the Grace Home in Great Falls and recently done lap robes and Quilts of Valor for the SW Veteran’s Home in Butte. She took her quilt to the Teton County 4-H Fair, then to Department Convention to be labeled and gifted.

Jersey is a member of MillsPaulus Unit 103, which selected her to go to Girls State. She participated and then hurried to Missoula to participate in the remainder of the convention.

Jersey was the Department of Montana Honorary Jr. President and was presented with a certificate and a Past Honorary Jr. President pin from Department President Chris Nelson for moving from Junior to Senior membership.

Jersey was just elected 2nd Vice President for Three Rivers District 8. Her mentors have been



Jersey Somerfeld receives certificate from Chris Nelson, Auxiliary Past President upon moving from Junior to Senior membership..



Jersey Somerfeld & Jen Dalrymple of Girls State Joyce Babcock, Diana Reilly, and her Gram [Leona Somerfeld].

Jersey is a busy young lady, but the Auxiliary and Legion are not the only demands on her time; she is active in her community starting with 4-H , Challenging Champs 4-H Club president, Teton County 4-H Ambassador and 4-H Camp Counselor, FCCLA District Secretary, Power High School Student Council Treasurer, and a Red Cross Blood Donor.

She plays a mean game of Volleyball and Basketball and has been on the varsity squads since 8th grade.

For the past two years Jersey has been saddling up and leading the Harvest Fest/Homecoming Parade, representing The American Legion Post carrying the American Flag. She is immensely proud to carry the flag and represent The American Legion family.

She continues to collect money, which began in 2008, for the Coordinated Children & Youth Fund, going from table to table at joint Auxiliary and Legion District meetings and the Department Conventions; there is no real tally on the dollar amount, but it is easily in the thousands.

Big Sky Post 99 at Soldiers Chapel

The Lone Peak Boys Varsity Soccer Team assisted by the Big Sky American Legion Post 99 took down, folded and stored the Flags that lined the entrance to The Soldiers Chapel. Coach JJ Harder and Tony Coppola, both members of The Sons of the American Legion Squadron 99, led their team in this effort. The team of 17 split up into four groups and learned how to properly fold the American Flag. The Flags and poles will be stored in the Chapel until Spring. Commander Kenny (Cuz) Alley, as well as, Julie Grimm-Lisk, manager of the Chapel, thanked the team for their help.



Soldiers Chapel Legion Blue Book

Soldiers Chapel is a non-denominational Christian memorial chapel, located on U.S. Highway 191, near Big Sky Montana. Pastors from many denominations provide services at the church.

Soldiers Chapel was designed by Nelson Story III, who was a former



member of the 163rd Infantry, along with his son Nelson Story IV. They are descended from one of Montana’s original pioneers Nelson Story.

The 163rd Infantry Regiment was sent to New Guinea in early 1942 to help prevent the Japanese from invading Australia. One of the regiment's major combat actions was the Battle of Buna Gona. The younger Nelson lost his life at age 22 in battle in New Guinea.

In addition to deaths and wounds from combat, diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, scrub typhus, and black-water fever were a major concern.

Virtually every member of the unit eventually caught a jungle disease, was wounded, or died.

Construction of Soldiers Chapel began in 1955, by Nelson Story, and was dedicated on October 2, 1955. The chapel is dedicated to the members of the 163rd and his son Nelson.

A memorial plaque near the front door lists all the members of the regiment who died in the war. The plaque cites "Those immortal soldiers of the 163rd Infantry who, with courage and devotion, died in pain defending their country and the cause of freedom for all men."

In a 1955 letter about the chapel, Colonel Story wrote: “Splinter sects, itinerant prophets, hillbilly Bible-thumpers and the self-anointed” were to be avoided and that “Groups which harbor conscientious objectors or refuse to salute the flag” should be excluded because giving them access “would be a grave affront to the memory of those to whom the chapel will be dedicated.”

This chapel is worth the drive my fellow Legionnaires. Take an hour and find some peace for this place is hallowed ground.

Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame

BY SCOTT MILLER, POST 71

October 1, 2022, the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame asked Post 71 of the Clarks Fork Valley to be a part of their yearly banquet and present the colors.

At 1800 hours the Detail stepped off from opposite sides of the of the hall and resolutely marched to the center to become a single Detail and approach the front of the room.

They performed a facing movement and the MC for the night had everyone rise and render honors as the Anthem was sung; the entire thing was completed with precision. The Committee



ensured that the Detail was seated in an honorable spot, and also requested a Missing Man table and included all the POW/MIA from Montana.

There is no more honorable place to be a veteran than in Montana. After the dinner, we were asked by two more organizations to come to their events and present colors for them.

This is possibly the best outreach we have as an organization. The exposure we get to a wide range of people allows us to spread the message of service before self and to give to one’s community. We as Posts need to make sure we are out there on the football fields, and ball courts—

speaking to folks and getting the Legion message out there.



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Denton Post 62 changes name Honoring Post’s Last WWII veteran

SUBMITTED BY ROB MILLER, COMMANDER POST 62

Denton American Legion Post 62 has officially changed its name to Marion M. Wambach Post 62 to honor its last WWII veteran.

Marion passed away in February of this year, 2022. He was a 37-year member of the Legion and served in various officer positions. He was also a much-loved pillar of the Denton Community.

Marion served with the 563rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery(AAA) Automatic Weapons Battalion during WWII as a Gunnery Sergeant on a squad mounted 50 cal Half-Track and saw action at the Battle of the Bulge, The Remagen Bridge head, and later as a MP in a German Village. Marion attended every Post meeting and was a great inspiration for us all.

Post 14 Honors those Deploying

SUBMITTED BY: RANDY KEMP

The American Legion Gallatin Post 14 was requested by the 163 ARC to perform a flag ceremony on August 19, 2022. The 163 ARC was deploying overseas, departing from the Belgrade Airport.

The ceremony was conducted on the football field at Belgrade High School and was attended by Governor Greg Gianforte.



l-r: Dave Dunn, Gabriel Martin, Steve Holland, and John Ross. Behind the color guard were Bud Sievert and Len Albright.

Letters Home from Montanans at War A Reader’s Theater



November 10, 2022, 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Montana Historical Society
225 N. Roberts, Helena

A Veterans Day Program cosponsored by the Montana Historical Society and the American Legion of Montana.

Learn about the Montanans who fought in conflicts from the Civil War to Iraqi Freedom in their own words as you listen to the letters they sent home to their brothers, sisters, parents, girlfriends, and wives.



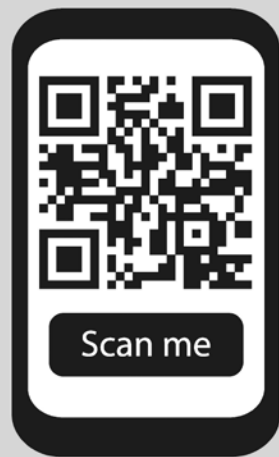
LIEAP & Energy Share Can Help

Cold weather is coming and heating bills can pile up fast. Do you know someone who is worried about how they’re going to pay those bills? If so, call one of the numbers below to see what’s available for help, either for your friend or for you. In Montana, it’s about neighbors helping neighbors. That can be as simple as going with a friend to complete an application. Call now to find the office nearest you that handles both LIEAP and Energy Share applications:

Montana LIEAP office at 1-833-317-1080
Energy Share of Montana at 1-888-779-7589
You can also find information at www.energysharemt.com and <https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/energyassistance>.

Yes, Your Heat CAN Be Turned Off In The Winter!

Many people think the utility company cannot shut a person off in the winter. However, under certain circumstances that can happen. There are special rules in the winter time though. From November 1 to April 1 a regulated utility may not shut off gas, underground propane, or electric service without prior approval from the Public Service Commission (PSC – the state agency that regulates some utility companies such as NorthWestern Energy, Energy West and Montana-Dakota Utilities). The PSC does not approve winter shutoffs if the customer is unable to pay (as demonstrated by being a recipient of a public assistance program) or if a member of the customer’s household is either at least 62 years old or handicapped. **Remember, it is the customer’s responsibility to inform the utility if one or more of these circumstances exist in the household.** For more information visit the website of the Public Service Commission, <http://psc.mt.gov/consumers/energy/pdf/UtilityRules03012001.pdf> or call them at 406-444-6199 or 1-800-646-6150.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone’s camera to visit the lieap.mt.gov website and apply today!

Additionally, electric cooperatives and propane vendors are not regulated by the PSC; each one has their own rules so be sure to check with your energy provider on what those are.

LIHEAP



Low Income HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



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: _____

District 3

SUBMITTED BY: CHRISTINE MILLER,
MT LEGIONNAIRE EDITOR

Cutbank—no kidding, there is a sign that says left turn Canada, (Jim Grosset we know where you jump the border) it’s up there folks, you don’t just accidentally wind up in Cutbank MT. District 3 met on September 24, 2022, hosted by Post 40, at the Elks for business purposes.

District Commander Dustin Bailey convened his meeting on time, and due to the small gathering it ran pretty quickly. Department officers Ray Reed and Adjutant Duane Cunningham both spoke in their respective areas. There was a veterans service officer present who shared information on other benefits available for low-income veterans



just behind us, and oh the smells of French Dip sandwiches were blowing right out to all our growling stomachs. Lunch was wonderful, the Auxiliary joined us to eat, and the fellowship was lovely. The expression “eat and run” is rude in most places, but when you have to leave Cutbank and make an eight-hour drive home, no one is offended if you make your good-byes and scoot!

District 7

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE MILLER,
PR AND PUBS

Big Timber Post 19 has been working hard on their Post and it is looking amazing and is a place to hold an event as well, if you need a place in the area. There is a nice bar downstairs, and the coffee was hot at 0830. The Auxiliary ladies may outnumber the Post here and we’re working the sign-in and raffle table. Commander Dan Smart called the meeting to order right on track and conducted business, then opened the floor to the individual Post reports to share what is and isn’t working in their Posts. It was a good opportunity to get new ideas about making things work—if you



attend on, it is worth it. She challenged Posts to find the female veterans in their areas before they are contacted to perform funerals; these ladies are veterans and can contribute a lot! Commander Long presented his membership awards and coins to Posts who met the standard set last year. We ended the day joining the Auxiliary downstairs for an AMAZING prime rib lunch!

District 8

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE MILLER, PR AND PUBS

You have to get up pretty early to make your way to Dutton MT for 0800 registration and to get the good donuts, and coffee. Post 64, what a beautiful Post they have, and when they say you can’t miss it, look for the jet. They mean, a no kidding jet mounted like it is at the gate to an airfield! Inside is a walk-through history of the Post in the middle of big farm ground. Nice displays of those who have left home and given the ultimate sacrifice, remembered always in the halls of Post 64.



oh yeah, the National commander sitting in the front row with none other than his Dad, Hal Rice. Department Commander Long presented awards for past membership accomplishments with his coin as promised last year and spoke briefly to keep up the good work. Other department officers Duane Cunningham, and Ray Reed, each spoke respectively on their department positions. I shared on traveling and the need to get involved and try a national convention. Todd Dunlap of the Ft. Harrison VA put it all out there—



Legion.org photo.



the good and the ugly about what is happening within the VA and that he was here to ensure the veteran gets the care they earned.

The kitchen crew did an outstanding job with the meal, changed it up and had French Dip sandwiches—very good. We enjoyed the hospitality of our Legionnaire’s to the North.

to include internet and heat assistance with winter approaching. The American Legion Boys State was discussed along with changes to the program, and what some of the plans are for the way ahead to continue to grow the program as a whole.

While we were sitting in the meeting the cooks were cooking

take the ideas back to your Post. Great Idea Commander! Department Adjutant Cunningham spoke, as did Ray Reed the Department Historian. Christine Miller spoke on her first-time national convention attendance and encouraged everyone to take a chance and

District 10

SUBMITTED BY A GROUP EFFORT OF LEGIONNAIRES

Driving home from District 7 meeting we received a call that another veteran we all know had passed. Department Adjutant Cunningham was tasked with notifying those who needed to know. With their District meeting coming up the next, this meant the meeting wouldn’t be happening. Obviously, we would gather but it would be for other reasons. Legionnaires, and other veterans from across the state joined in one place to pay honor to a brother gone too soon.



District 10 Color Guard setting up for Glendive Post 28 Commander Hewitt burial. [see page 2]

Ray Reed commented that at his age he had never experienced this; for the meal following a funeral to be provided by not a church or family, but the Glendive VFW had prepared the meal in support of The American Legion who mourned their Commander. A young man gone too soon. Recently becoming active, he had so much to give to the Legion that we must continue to honor and carry on. So, until we meet on Fiddlers Green, save a spot for all of us.

DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 6

SUBMITTED BY CHAYA SEMPLE

District 6 meeting was held in Butte hosted by Post 1 where a nice group had gathered. The big news out of District 6 is that it was moved and passed for District 6 to sponsor a young man for The American Legion Boys State; first qualified app to come gets the sponsorship. The excitement is there for AL Boys State to really take hold and gain some traction this year with the new format.



Western Zone Commander Dottie Goodwin spoke on their latest fundraiser of selling Shotgun Shells at \$5 ea. Now that I have your attention let me share the recipe: Manicotti shells boiled and then stuffed with Italian sausage sauce and wrap each individual shell in bacon, smother in cheese and bake.

Contact your own Cardiologist...

Post 1 reported that the Harley Raffle they had held netted them just at \$4900. Fundraising is obviously going well in District 6.

District Oratory to be held 11 February 2023, location TBD. Spring meeting to be held in Helena.