



**Department of Montana  
Fall Conference  
Helena, Montana  
October 24-25, 2025  
Reports of The  
Department Executive Committee  
&  
Department Committee Chairs  
“For God and Country”**

# Preamble to the Constitution

**FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER  
FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:**

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in All Wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and goodwill on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to Posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.



## **DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **DEPARTMENT COMMANDER**

**Kim Kay McCarty Martin**

We are in our second year of our 5 Year Strategic Plan for the Department of Montana, which is to concentrate on community awareness of The MT American Legion. Due to this strategic plan, we have been engaging in the community wherever we can to be more visible. This Strategic Plan is not just for Department Officers but for all American Legion members to increase the recognition of The American Legion in all parts of Montana. At most of the district meetings, the Posts have detailed what they have been doing in their communities to be visible and vibrant. Thank you to everyone for doing your part in making our communities more aware of our programs, our support, and our purpose.

With the Strategic Plan in mind and instead of going to Fall District Meetings, where the Department Vice-Commander Irene Dickerson focused her attention, I've been out in the communities supporting our programs and being visible. I've also been and will continue to be on zoom meetings and phone calls to communicate with our Adjutant and Adjutant Assistant in Helena, Vice-CDR Dickerson in Forsyth, and our Department Executive Committee members.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2025, I went to Butte for the Post 1 Bike Show Competition at the Copper Harley Davidson Dealership. There were over 15 motorcycles in the competition, all very nice bikes. Butte Post 1 and District CDR Tony Wagner had a tent up and served free hamburgers and hotdogs to all who came by. It was well attended both days and everyone enjoyed the comradery.

With the help of local Posts, I had the privilege of giving two WWII female veterans their WWII service medal. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of July in Miles City, Post 5 had a celebration upon Bernice receiving her Medal. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, with the help of District Commander Debbie Strickland and Townsend Post 42 members, Jen Dalrymple and Linda Cousineau, Jean received her WWII Service Medal. We need to recognize all our WWII Veterans as they are leaving us to Post Everlasting at a high rate.

I went to Post 2's event in Helena's to celebrate 100 years of American Legion Baseball at Kindrick-Legion Field on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2025. I had a wonderful time watching the youth play and enjoyed the sportsmanship that was on display as it was an intense game.

at the Montana State Fair in Great Falls, I spent many hours from the 27<sup>th</sup> of July to the 1st of August at the American Legion Booth selling tickets for our programs and talking to fellow veterans about the American Legion. I met and talked also with individuals who had relatives in the military and tried to have them join our American Legion Family. It was hot the whole week but well worth interacting with those attending the fair.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of August, I was in Medicine Hat, Canada to watch the American Legion Baseball Montana Class A Youth Championships. Talking earlier about intense games, they were intense, but the sportsmanship displayed by these youths should be emulated by our professional baseball players.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2025, I went to the Choteau County Fair in Fort Benton to help with The American Legion Booth. I worked the morning shift verifying cards and handing out prizes. I even had Monica Rice play some games for me, winning me a cowboy teddy bear named "Dandy" which she had made.

I drove to Tampa Bay, FL for The American Legion National Convention that took place from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August to the 27<sup>th</sup>. The weather was hot and humid compared to MT but meeting old friends and making new acquaintances was what made the experience the best. There were classes to attend, and I was on the Legislative Committee. We didn't have any resolutions or business to discuss so it was a pretty short meeting. Our seating was near the back half of the convention hall, which because of the big monitor screen wasn't too bad. We are seated according to how our membership percentage puts us compared to the other 53 Departments and we finished 41<sup>st</sup>.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of September, I had to have my gall bladder taken out so that was unexpected. I got cleared to resume activities as normal on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October.

The Annual Great Falls Standdown took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of September, where I helped man the table for Post 341 Malmstrom. The following weekend, on the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> of September there was a booth where I helped sell raffle tickets for department at the gun show in Great Falls. Both were well attended so visibility within the community was good. I did talk to a few veterans at the gun show and told them about what the American Legion does nationally and within the local communities.

The Women Expo was in Great Falls on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2025. I talked to many vendors about our Department of MT Women's Symposium that will take place in Helena in May of 2026. A few of the vendors were interested in participating in the symposium so they are being invited there to help and inform veterans.

From the 5<sup>th</sup> of October to the 8<sup>th</sup> I was in Indianapolis, IN attending the Department Commanders and Adjutants Conference at National Headquarters. Two bills were emphasized for us to contact our state legislatures and have them pass. They are HB 1932 and SB 876 To Pay Our Military Act: during the government shutdown our military would get paid so they don't have to undergo unnecessary financial burden. The Richard Star Act was talked about also.

Mike Seavey, the National Judge Advocate, spoke with us to stay out of Post Business unless they are not adhering to Post, District, and Departments Constitution and Bylaws. If they don't follow the rules, their Charter can then, after trying to correct any irregularities, be suspended or revoked. It was emphasized that each Post, District, and Department be incorporated with their Secretary of State for their own protection. Maryland was touted as a good example for writing Constitution and Bylaws.

We heard from the Child Well Being Foundation Dennis Boland who talked about a ribbon that each post that contributes \$1 per person in the post can receive. The Form is at [scope@legion.org](mailto:scope@legion.org) Mark Avis talked about our youth programs that fall under Americanism and how important it was to our Four Pillars. It was also discussed and emphasized that Sons of The American Legion is a Program of the American Legion not its own entity.

Mike Cooke gave the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Report which incorporated 6 areas for each Post/Department to fulfill. 1. Work membership plan- renewals are valued

2. engage within the communities – be approachable and active

3. Do Buddy checks and incorporate Be The One

4. Use and promote Consolidated Post Reports (CPR) and monthly impact reports

5. 90 % retention of membership in each Post with 100% reporting of CPR's

6. Utilize incentives and tools such as the Army/Navy game challenge

Membership is everyone's responsibility and, with teamwork and vision, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Report will work.

Mary Jo Dial from Marketing talked a while on the market, the purpose of using the market to grow The American Legion through awareness and strategic relationship building. Brand visibility and purpose driven funding were covered as was The American Legion can be and should be fiscally responsible with their money.

Fund Development was covered as was the Veterans and Children's Foundation. Temporary Financial Assistance has raised its grant to \$2,500 to help out needy families from its prior \$1,500 due to the cost of living. The last government shutdown affected the TFA in 2018 and they are looking for more donations because of this shutdown, TFA's will be hard hit.

We listened to John Bowen talk about Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation where Be The One and Buddy Checks are important also. They are planning on 11 visits to various VA sites to make sure these VA's are doing their job and taking care of veteran's needs. Veteran Employment and Education (VEE) is not part of VA and R as it covers veterans' education, homelessness, and home loans.

James Grenier JR talked the subcommittees of National Security Committee. These subcommittees include Aerospace, National Guard and Reservists, POW-MIA, and quality of life of service members. The last topic covered was the 250 Challenge to all Legion members that covers the three categories 1. Community Service 2. Mental health which includes Buddy Checks, and 3. Physical Fitness.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of October, I attended my own District 8 Fall meeting where District 8 CDR Jerry Collins held a good meeting and Department Vice-CDR Irene Dickerson handed out awards. It was good to see everyone and talk about legion events. In my spare time, I have been helping our department prepare for our National American Legion Commander Dan Willey's visit to Great Falls on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of November. We are excited that National Commander Willey has chosen to come to MT and see Malmstrom Air Force Base as he was stationed there when he was in the Air Force. Let us all give him a huge Big Sky welcome!

## **DEPARTMENT VICE-COMMANDER**

### **Irene Dickerson**

During this reporting period, I had the honor of attending nine district meetings across the Department. These visits provided valuable opportunities to meet with post leaders, share department priorities, and discuss strategies for strengthening our membership. I was able to listen to the challenges each district is facing and offer guidance and encouragement to help them reach their goals.

In addition to in-person visits, I maintained regular communication with district commanders through email and phone calls. I sent reminders and updates on membership drives, renewal efforts, and the importance of engaging new Legionnaires in post activities. I encouraged district commanders to work closely with their post leadership teams, conduct Buddy Checks, and focus on personal outreach to members who have not renewed.

Membership remains one of our top priorities, and I continue to stress the importance of teamwork and consistent communication between the department, districts, and posts. Each visit reaffirmed that our organization's strength lies in our members and our shared commitment to service—both to our veterans and our communities.

I want to thank all district commanders and post officers for their hospitality and dedication. Their hard work and enthusiasm are vital to keeping the American Legion strong in Montana. Together, we can continue to grow our membership and carry out the mission of "Veterans Strengthening America."

## **ZONE COMMANDER – SOUTH CENTRAL**

### **Dan Smart.**

I had the pleasure to attend all three of the South Central Zones' fall District meetings. While all three districts are currently doing better than last year at this time, all three have room to improve.

The first district meeting I attended was District 9 that was held in Melstone. The district had a good meeting, with solutions to some of their problem posts. The district is currently sitting at 59.2% of goal in membership and 60.19% compared to last year. They currently

have four posts under 50%, with Post 76 Hobson under 5%. District 11's meeting was held at Laurel and hosted by Post 117. The meeting was very well attended and had a good business meeting. The district currently sits at 52.7% of membership goal and 53.2% compared to last year at this time. District 7's meeting was held at White Sulphur Springs. The meeting was very attended with 8 out of the 10 Posts represented. All Post commanders, or representatives, gave a brief oral report on what the Post had accomplished since the spring meeting. District 7 currently sits at 55.79% of membership goal and 56.3 compared to last year at this time.

Thank you's go out to all three District Commanders on the job they have done.

### **ZONE COMMANDER – WESTERN**

#### **Linda Cousineau**

I would like to start this report by thanking my district commanders for doing a wonderful job with their membership thus far. The Western Zone at this time is at 55.54% and in 1<sup>st</sup> place. The Western Zone Post Commanders have been working very hard trying to obtain their membership goals. We have been maintaining communication through personal contact, emails, phone and texting. I attended the 2025 National Convention where I was able to obtain some information to pass on to the Western District Commanders. I was able to attend the District 6 meeting but was unable to attend District 4 and District 5 meetings. However, the information I gathered from the National Convention was given to District 4 and District 5 Commanders to pass on to their members in my absence. While at the District 6 meeting I was able to gather, pamphlets and business cards from the VSO and American Legion pamphlets from the Department Adjutant which I distributed to passersby at the October Fall Fest in Townsend October 4<sup>th</sup> at our Legion Family membership recruiting and information booth.

### **ZONE COMMANDER – NORTH CENTRAL**

#### **Andy Rice**

Like we have for the last few years, we attended the Montana state fair in Great Falls. Although that week is pretty long, especially the last few days, we had an outstanding visible presence there and did very well selling cash calendars and Big K tickets as well as recruiting new members. We partnered again this year with MVAD which proved once again to be beneficial for being able to assist veterans. The fun of the summer didn't end there. Department partnered with 102 in Geraldine and conducted bingo at the Chouteau County Fair in Fort Benton. The day given to Department was a bit of a wash as an event was cancelled for the evening and that lead to an early end of the fair, but many were appreciative, we offered bingo, and it was rated as a success as a whole. I attended the district 2 meeting as my first of 3 meetings. District 2 had a great turnout for the meeting, and I am greatly pleased with the continued energy and effort district 2 puts forth. District 8 meeting was in Dutton and well attended. I appreciate district commander Jerry Collins for stepping up and finishing the term as well as his attitude toward getting things done in District 8.

District 3 was the last meeting I attended and although pretty normal for this district the turnout was less than expected but the meeting went well. I repeated my zone commander challenge to all three of my districts and wish the 3 district commander's luck as they compete to win it.

### **ZONE COMMANDER – EASTERN**

#### **Bill Dolatta**

Zones 1 and 10 were appointed following the Department Convention. I attended the District Meeting in Baker, Montana. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the District 1 Meeting. I will also be unable to attend the Fall Conference due to work commitments.

### **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN (N.E.C.)**

#### **Glen Sharbono**

August 21<sup>st</sup> -29<sup>th</sup> I went to the National Convention in Tampa Bay, Florida. There were several days of 98° and 98% humidity! I went to the NFL game at Raymond James Stadium and watched the Tampa Bay Bucs vs Buffalo Bills. It cost me \$100.00 to get back to the motel!

I sat in at the Finance meeting, although it was brief the main take away was that DMS new members were coming in at the same rate we were losing members to their passing. Our biggest failure was Reinstatement.

I was able to visit all the District meetings, except for District #2 in Havre as I had to fly out to Indy.

The price of lunch is steadily rising, \$25.00 is a bit much for a pulled pork sandwich or a bowl of soup. If you are as a host Post needing to recoup some of the expenses, try doing 50/50 raffles and have at least 3 items for a silent auction this can help keep the registration fees at a more reasonable rate. You may even consider pot lucking the lunch as opposed to having it catered. These were some of the best! I don't know if anyone realizes the cost associated with travel to the District meetings to disseminate information. I have driven 3,842 miles, paid \$75.00 in registration fees, \$1,395.00 in rooms, and over \$1,000.00 in food and gas, all on a \$1,500.00 budget!

Travel is expensive. We still have the Spring meetings coming up. Travel takes commitment and sacrifice to ensure that our membership who can't afford to attend a Department level Convention can receive the information they need. The worst part is that a couple of times there were more of us at the meeting than Post members in attendance. National Commander Dan K. Wiley has stated in his travels that he is told too often there is a lack of communication of dissemination of information to the "Blue Hats" the life blood of this organization.

I have seen some well-run meetings, but there are also some District Commanders who struggle and need a little polish and training on how to run a meeting. Don't be afraid to ask for help and guidance. Have your meeting and banquet scripts handy and review them prior to the meeting. At nearly every meeting no banquet script was adhered to, failing to recognize not only the visitors but the District and host Post members. Do not be afraid to



ask for help! That is why we are here!

## **NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

As NEC I was assigned to the National Finance Committee. These are just a few of the highlights from that meeting.

- There are currently 257 active employees the goal is to reduce that number to 215.
- Pay Our Troops Act to include the Coast Guard.
- The cost of DMS solicitations once took 3-5 years to recoup costs now taking 1 and ¼ years.
- Online setup costs will dissolve over next couple of years.
- Use of AI to assist in Archive comparisons of New & Old resolutions. AI will be monitored by Human Interaction.
- Personify contract ends in 2027 after an increase of 3% annually.
- Goggle Academy - working on contracts like the one with Samsung.
- Budget is balanced and approved.

It is costing National \$1.1 Million for card fees for renewals online, not including emblem sales and other venues that use card charges. Discussion about billing the cost back to Departments, however prior to this National is going to negotiate with card companies with recommendations subject from subcommittee by the Washington Conference.

Legion Magazine \$97,000.00 off budget. Looking at 1,3,5-year program to transition to digital, possibly only print 6 issues per year is another option. It is costing \$5 million just for postage.

The NEC and ALT NEC of West Virginia were involved in a rollover accident driving through Ohio. NEC William Kile suffered a broken hip and has had surgery, though not at fault the driver ALT NEC William Combs suffered broken ribs. It could have gone horribly wrong, and this is a good reason for when traveling for The American Legion to have LIT insurance.

## **COMMANDER, ADJUTANT, AND NEC MEETING IN INDIANAPOLIS.**

Lots of great training on the responsibilities of the National Executive Committee! There were 30 resolutions presented and voted on. The results are as follows. I will only list the name of the resolutions and the outcome. The complete resolutions can be reviewed at [archive.legion.org](http://archive.legion.org) or The American Legion of Montana Facebook page.

No.: 1

Title: Support for NATO Expansion

Origin: National Security Commission

**Passed**

No.: 2

Title: Medal of Honor for Michael Ollis

Origin: Resolution No. 35 (NY) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 3

Title: Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for Service in Honduras

Origin: Resolution No. 21 (IA) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 4

Title: Expanding Access to Capital for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses

Origin: Veterans Employment & Education Commission

**Passed**

No.: 5

Title: Ensure Equal Care Under the Department of Veterans Affairs Foreign Medical Program

Origin: Resolution No. 23 (FR) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 6

Title: Department of Veterans Affairs Foreign Medical Program Protection and Enhancements

Origin: Resolution No. 1 (LT) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.:7

Title: Implementation of the Care Coordination and Integrated Case Management Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs

Origin: Resolution No. 13 (CA) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 8

Title: Implementation of the Assessing Circumstances and offering Resources for Needs Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs

Origin: Resolution No. 14 (CA) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 9

Title: Notice of Benefits of Descendants from the Correction of Military Records

Origin: Resolution No. 12 (CA) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 10

Title: Name All Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veterans' Rooms and Clinics After Woman Veterans

Origin: Resolution No. 15 (CA) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 11

Title: Oversight of Medical Disability Examination Office Contract Providers

Origin: Resolution No. 28 (DE) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 12

Title: Increase the Number of Judgeships for the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

Origin: Resolution No. 29 (DE) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 13

Title Opioid Treatment Research

Origin: Resolution No. 4 (MT) (Post 426 Lakeside) 2025 National Convention

**Referred back to VA&R for further study. VA&R reviewed it that night they added two additional Whereas Clauses and the next morning the resolution was Passed by the NEC without discussion**

No.: 14

Title: Expand the Presumptive Period for Veterans Who Served on the Korean Demilitarized Zone

Origin: Resolution No. 9 (MN) 2025 National Convention

**Passed**

No.: 15

Title: United States Census to Include Veterans Information

Origin: Register Resolution No. 2872 (IL) Department Convention

**Passed**

No.: 16

Title: Increase Maximum Coverage Under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance Program

Origin: Register Resolution No. 2874 (IL) Department Convention

**Passed**

No.: 17

Title: Environmental Exposure

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Referred back to VA&R of further study**

No.: 18

Title: Comprehensive End-of-Life Supports for Veterans' Survivors

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Passed**

No.: 19

Title: Ensuring Parity for Survivor Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Passed**

No.: 20

Title: Improved Oversight, Accountability and Transparency of the Department of Veterans Affairs

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Passed as Amended to remove 3<sup>rd</sup> Resolved clause**

No.: 21

Title: Improving Department of Veterans Affairs Fiduciary Oversight and Protections

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Passed**

No.: 22

Title: Department of Veterans Affairs Executive Bonus Accountability

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Passed**

No.: 23

Title: American Legion Members Volunteer at National and State Veterans Cemeteries

Origin: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

**Passed**

No.: 24

Title: Appreciation to Host City

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

**Passed**

No.: 25

Title: Authorize Issuance of a Temporary Charter to a Foreign Post

Origin: Membership and Post Activities Committee

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

**Passed**

No.: 26

Title: Rescinding of Internal Affairs Resolutions

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

**Passed (43 resolutions rescinded that were either Accomplished or Obsolete)**

No.: 27

Title: Sons of The American Legion Veterans & Children's Fund Donation

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

**Passed**

No.: 28  
Title: Membership Study Committee  
Origin: Internal Affairs Commission  
**Passed**

No.: 29  
Title: Reinstatement of the Charter of The American Legion Department of Colorado  
Origin: Subcommittee of Resolutions  
**Passed**

No.: 30  
Title: Definition of Americanism  
Origin: Americanism Commission  
**Passed (superseded and rescinded)**

The National Commander is also asking for us to give to the Veterans & Children's Foundation.

Log into [legion.org/action](http://legion.org/action) daily and make your congressmen aware of how you stand on the issues like Pay our Troops including the Coast Guard and the Richard Star Act. It only takes a few seconds and the letter to your state officials has already been written to you!

### **ALTERNATE NATIONAL COMMITTEEMAN (N.E.C.)**

#### **Lowell Long**

Thank you for the trust you all placed in me by electing me to represent you in this position. My goal is to assist the NEC and help bring information back to our Department. I also want to be able to take your ideas up as well.

As the ANEC, I was able to attend the fall meetings of the NEC in Indianapolis on October 6-9 along with NEC Glen Sharbono, Commander Kim Kay McCarty Martin, and Adjutant Duane Cunningham. I began my week there attending the Americanism Commission meeting and the Committee on Children and Youth. As a member of the Committee on Children and Youth, we met to discuss several resolutions and hear from the various programs that fall under this committee. We had three resolutions that were rejected. Resolution 3, Remove the Assigned Topics from the Oratorical Contest was rejected as it was determined that this was a vital part of the program. Resolution 32, National Flag Convention was rejected because it would be impossible to do in one year. Resolution 34, Communication Standards for National Youth Programs was rejected because it asked for multiple issues. Each resolved clause asked for something different and was impossible to implement.

Two resolutions were held for further study. Resolution 2, Coast Guard Eligibility for American Legion Grants and Benefits was held to clarify issues with the resolution. Resolution 2877, Amend Grading Criteria for Samsung American Legion Scholarship was held for clarification issues with the resolution. Both these needed more work than could be done in the committee and will be worked and brought back in the spring.

One resolution was received and recorded. Resolution 2866, English Language to be Declared as the Official United States Language was received and recorded because there is already another resolution on this on the books.

During the NEC meeting, we heard the reports from all the committees that met during the first few days and considered all the resolutions that were brought forth for the NEC to consider. There were 30 resolutions that were voted on. The first day, 28 of them passed and 2 were returned to the committee or commission for further consideration. Resolution 13, Opioid Treatment Research (MT) and Resolution 17, Environmental Exposure (Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission) were sent back to the VA&R Commission. I have copies of all the resolutions that were presented if any would like to read them.

Day 2 began with the two resolutions that were sent back the day before being brought up again. The VA&R Commission met and corrected the issues with both resolutions, and they both passed. Resolution 13 had an additional resolved clause added to address the intent of this resolution making it clear that it was looking for funding to study alternate methods to treat other than using opioids. Resolution 17 had a few words added to clarify what they were asking.

As your ANEC, I attended 9 of the 11 district meetings that were held this fall. I was unable to attend Districts 4 and 5 due to a commitment with my home post that weekend. I supported our NEC during these meetings and presented the NEC information to District 2 in the absence of the NEC who was preparing to travel to the NEC Fall Meetings in Indianapolis.

I am looking forward to continuing to get out and meet everyone in our great Department while in my roll as ANEC. I am eager to learn how we can help you better as we move forward.

## **PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER**

### **Ken Simon**

In July I travelled to Miles City to support the Department Commander Kim Kay and Vice Commander Irene Dickerson with presentation of an Award to a female WWII Veteran. Four other Legionnaires were also present, three from Miles City and one from Gr Falls. This Award had not been presented during her active service. While I was there, I presented my Commanders coin to her and also to four other veterans at the Veterans Home.

At the end of August, my wife and I flew to Tampa, Florida to attend the National American Legion Convention from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup>. As you may have already heard, the Legionnaires from Montana were in for a treat or not. You see, it rained four days of the five we were there and we were not close to the Convention Center. They did however run a bus for us which picked us up along with others and let us off at the bus stop next to the Convention Center. Along with this there was a street trolley located about a block from our motel, which made stops along the way, one being across from the Convention Center. Now, it may sound like that was okay, but with the drenching rain one could get pretty wet by the time you got inside, even from the buses because the rain pouring off the roof could soak you in nothing flat! The contingent of Montana Legionnaires enjoyed the Convention. We also met with the

Incoming Commanders entourage, during our department caucus, who briefed us about the new Commander, Daniel K Wiley. The trailing candidate Jay Bowen from Colorado also visited the Montana contingent. During our Western Region Caucus, both Candidates got up and said a few words to the group. There is a lot that goes on at the National Convention besides the main Convention auditorium there are vendors and classes as well people one meets from convention to convention. I would encourage you if you have not attended to save up and attend one. Next years will be in Louisville, Ky and the following year is in Kansas City, Ks!

Fall District Meetings started in September.

My wife and I journeyed to Melstone for District 9 Fall Meeting on Sept 6<sup>th</sup>. From Melstone we headed to Laurel for the District 11 Fall Meeting. While we were there, we went to a Legion picnic at the pond located just east of the interstate in Laurel.

September 13<sup>th</sup>, I attended District 10 Fall meeting in Baker.

From Baker we drove home and then ventured to Poplar for the District 1 Fall Meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Following the first four District Meetings I attended the following: District 7 in White Sulphur Springs; District 66 in Townsend; District 4 in Kalispell; District 5 in Missoula, District 2 in Havre, District 8 in Dutton, and District 3 in Conrad.

At All of the Fall District Meetings, Certificates of Recognition were presented to several individuals for their work and participation in the Multi District Revitalization in the Department of Montana American Legion. The Certificates were presented by the Department Commander Kim Kay and Vice Commander Irene Dickerson and were signed by the National Commander James A LaCoursiere, JR and National Adjutant Rodney Roland.

As I was not able to Thank each one of you Legionnaires, I want to take this time to Extend my Personal Heartfelt Thank You and Gratitude for stepping up. Your Dedication, Service, and Diligence demonstrated that "Team Montana" resolve can accomplish any task. Your devotion of service to your fellow veterans was shown by your willing and spirit of service in assisting the Department of Montana in setting the example of what "Team Work" can accomplish.

Last but not Least, I want to say Thank You to our Department Adjutant Duane Cunningham and Adjutant's Assistant Erin Carpenter for the hard work, support, and co-ordination in putting this plan into action. If it had not been for your planning and untiring efforts the Multi District Revitalization would never have been as successful as it was. As the Immediate Past Department Commander, I greatly appreciated all you did supporting the Department, Legionnaires and myself as the Department Commander.

A heartfelt Thank You and deep gratitude to ALL of you in the Department of Montana for your support and a successful year.

God Bless You ALL, God Bless our American Legion, and our Great Country

## **HISTORIAN**

### **Ray Read**

106th Montana Department Convention is in the book. The gathering in our capital city was eventful and rewarding. As the Re-Elected Department Historian, I would like to emphasize the following.

I was not able to travel to the National Convention in Tampa Florida due to a scheduling conflict. Reviews of the Convention are elsewhere in the various Department reports. I have been able to travel to only three of the eleven Districts for their Fall. I was able to present materials to all the districts through the distribution by the Department Adjutant. I am reviewing that with you. Please make sure your Posts receive this information.

**\*\*During the 2023 Department Convention a resolution was submitted and approved at the Convention for Montana Department for The American Legion, to participate and assist in the celebration of America's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Declaration of Independence. The National program is known as the America 250 Semi-quincentennial. The State of Montana established a State Commission, and the Department resolution was our announcement and intent to participate in the events surrounding the Birthday. The Montana Commission can be reached at [www.america250mt.org](http://www.america250mt.org).**

Since the passage of Montana Department's Resolution, little has been said about the Legion's program and in fact there is no current plan on the books. I, as the Department Historian, have begun to research back to the Nation's 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday and Montana's participation in that program to find out how it was done.

**\*\*On May 25<sup>th</sup> the National executive Committee approved and published the following Executive Resolution that now gives clear guidance 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Action at Department level The Resolves are provided for your planning at Post level with the regard of moving forward with a program of celebration that will culminate on July 4, 2026.**

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN LEGION May 7-8, 2025. Indianapolis, Indiana Resolution No. 5: Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the United States Origin: Internal Affairs Commission Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission –**

now, therefore, be it RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 7-8, 2025, That The American Legion is hereby authorized to work with the U.S. Semi-quincentennial Commission, the congressional caucus, the advisory councils and individual staff to enhance the celebration of America 250; and, (Complete Resolution available on Legion.org)



be it further RESOLVED That departments are encouraged to actively participate in their state 250 commissions to enhance state and local efforts to celebrate America 250; and,

be it finally RESOLVED That The American Legion, comprised of members whose selfless service to this great nation and its founding principles are criteria for membership, be historically referenced as a civil society leader which ensured that 250 years of a constitutional republic was justly and successfully celebrated.

#### **American Legion National History Contest Program:**

In 2025 and beyond, as approved in [Resolution No. 20](#), the national contest for posts will become a showcase. Department will be able to submit:

- 1 one-year **digital** Department history for contest (these entries will be judged and showcased on the online exhibit)
- 1 one-year **hard-copy** Post history for showcase (these entries will be showcased at National Convention)
- 1 one-year **digital** Post history for showcase (these entries will be showcased on the online exhibit)

Entries in the department digital contest should consist of one PDF file not to exceed 100MB and should be submitted digitally no later than Aug. 1, 2025. Submission details, including the website for submission, will be provided directly to Department Adjutants via communication from the national historian. Post submissions for the national showcase (digital and hard copy) need to be received by the national library no later than . Submission details, including the website for digital submissions, will be provided to the Department.

For 2026, the digital department history contest will be judged in August. Departments may also submit one digital and one hard-copy post history for a best-practice showcase. These will not be judged at the national level contest, but digital submissions will be posted on the [Omeka platform](#), and hard-copy submissions are planned to be displayed at the national convention. Although post-level histories will no longer be judged on the national level, departments are encouraged to conduct their own contests in whatever way they choose.

Finally, across the country and around the world, U.S. war, military and veterans memorials stand to honor those who served in uniform and the battles they fought to protect our nation's freedoms. The American Legion is now establishing a database to identify the locations, document histories and share photographs of our nation's monuments and memorials to those who have served.

To upload text or photos, simply click on "Add a Memorial" and follow the instructions.

Key points for each submission include:

- A photo or photos (required), easily taken with a smart phone (no persons shall be in the photos)
- Location of the memorial, mapped if possible
- Purpose of the memorial, such as who it honors and why, in just a sentence or two

- Date of the memorial's installation and who originally installed it
- A brief assessment of its condition today

## **LEGION RIDERS**

### **Brian Carpenter**

The American Legion Riders of Montana continue to make steady progress in strengthening organization, communication, and program development across the Department.

We continue to hold monthly Zoom meetings, which have proven invaluable in maintaining contact with chapters spread across the state. These meetings allow us to share updates, discuss challenges, and coordinate department-level initiatives.

Over the past several months, significant work has gone into refining the Department Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to ensure they reflect current needs, align with National guidelines, and provide a clear operational framework for chapters. Updates include adjustments to officer roles, supporter guidelines, and expectations for reporting and communications.

Additionally, efforts have continued to finalize the design and production of our Department ALR patches, established by resolution at the Department Convention in June. These patches represent not only our Montana Riders' identity but also our commitment to operating under one unified banner across the state.

Currently, we have 13 chartered chapters within the Department. Of these, 10 are active and in good standing, while two remain inactive due to lack of compliance with the SOP and minimal communication with Department leadership. We are optimistic about future growth, as there are at least two additional locations exploring the possibility of forming new chapters within the next six to nine months.

Building on last year's success, we are in the planning stages for our second annual ALR College, scheduled for the spring. This event will once again focus on leadership, safety, and strengthening the connection between chapters and the Department. We are planning to bring back National ALR Vice Chairman Ken Nadeau and are also exploring the possibility of hosting both the National Chairman and the National ALR Liaison. Their continued support and presence have been instrumental in reinforcing the importance of consistency, communication, and collaboration within our Montana program.

In August, Chapter 119 out of Billings hosted a R.O.M.P. event, which took 25 bikes and 27 members on a memorable trek through South Dakota's Needles Highway. This ride provided an opportunity for camaraderie and showcased the unity and spirit of the Montana ALR family.

Looking ahead, planning is well underway for the 1st Annual Montana Legacy Run, to be hosted out of Corvallis on August 14–16, 2026. This inaugural event, under the leadership of

Chairman Donald Goodnight, promises to be a major milestone for the Department ALR. The Legacy Run will bring Riders together from across Montana and neighboring states to ride with purpose—supporting the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund and promoting the values of service, remembrance, and patriotism.

Since the adoption of the Department SOP in Glasgow, the American Legion Riders of Montana have continued to move forward under one umbrella, fostering a more cohesive and professional structure. While some growing pains and challenges remain, particularly in aligning all chapters with uniform standards, the overall response has been overwhelmingly positive. New leadership continues to emerge, and the dedication to continual improvement is evident across the program.

As we transition from one riding season to the next, Riders continue to demonstrate commitment not just on the road, but in supporting the mission of The American Legion—veterans serving veterans. Whether through fundraising, community events, or simply showing up to support local Posts, the Montana ALR remains an active and visible representation of what it means to ride for a cause.

The focus for the coming year will be on maintaining momentum, ensuring accountability through communication and compliance, and continuing to build a strong, sustainable foundation for the future. The Department ALR program has come a long way in a short time, and with continued teamwork and support from all levels of The American Legion family, the road ahead looks bright.

## **DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT**

**Duane Cunningham**

### **Recent Activities and Events**

The past few months have been eventful, marked by the National Convention, preparations for the Department Fall Conference, the upcoming 2025/2026 National Commander's visit, implementing changes from the recent passing of our Constitution and By-laws, updating existing guidance manuals and attending 11 District meetings and the National Fall Conference held in Indianapolis.

### **Highlights from the National Convention**

The National Convention took place in Tampa Bay in late August, with 32 representatives from the Montana American Legion attending. Throughout the week, significant American Legion business was conducted, culminating in the installation of a new National Commander, Daniel J. Wiley of Kansas, as the 107th National Commander. Commander Wiley's primary initiative is the "Be the One" campaign, which aims to bring veteran suicide awareness to the forefront of veteran issues. This campaign encourages everyone to take

action to help save the lives of veterans at risk, highlighting the need to address the high rate of veteran suicides.

### Resolutions and Legislative Actions

In an unusual year, resolutions saw an increase in referrals back to committee for review during the 106th National Convention. Although numerous resolutions, including two from Montana, were presented, most were referred for further study. A total of 30 Resolutions were adopted at the 2025 Convention and Fall Conference. A few of the resolutions that caught my attention were:

Resolution No. 11: "Oversight of Medical Disability Examination Office Contract Providers," originated from Delaware that The American Legion urges Congress to increase its oversight of the Medical Disability Examination Office to ensure more efficient, cost-effective management of VA-contracted vendors that will substantially increase the quality of Compensation and Pension Examinations for America's veterans and dependents.

Resolution No. 13: "Opioid Treatment Research", originated from Post 426 in Montana; "That The American Legion urges the National Association of Attorneys General to support the use of opioid abatement funds to further research on the safety and efficacy of emerging therapies, which should include psilocybin, ibogaine root, lysergic acid diethylamide, 5MeO-DMT, cannabis and MDMA to treat opioid use disorder & other addictions, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury and pain management in veterans and their partners.

Resolution No. 14: "Expand the Presumptive Period for Veterans Who Served on the Korean Demilitarized Zone." Originated from Minnesota. That The American Legion urges the United States Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs to expand the presumptive exposure for veterans who served on the Korean DMZ to include those who served until August 31, 2001, due to the ongoing risk of exposure to soil contamination from Agent Orange; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That The American Legion calls for appropriate funding and research to assess the impact of Agent Orange exposure on veterans who served in this region and to provide them with the medical care, benefits and recognition they are entitled to under the law.

Resolution No. 15: "United States Census to Include Veterans Information". Originated from Illinois that the American Legion strongly support any legislation that mandates the U. S. Census Bureau modify its Title 13, United States Code requirements to include veteran, National Guard and reservist data on any further census."

Resolution No. 17: Environmental Exposure. That The American Legion's comprehensive policy on environmental exposures be an all-inclusive policy recognizing the traditions of previous advocacy on behalf of veterans exposed to environmental hazards; and, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge the Department of Defense (DoD) to provide a full disclosure of all wartime and non-wartime locations to the Department of Veterans

Affairs (VA) where hazardous environmental exposures exist and that armed forces members were exposed through testing, transportation, storage, disposal and environmental contamination.

And, be it further RESOLVED, That the Department of Defense ensure that current and former members of the armed forces and their next of kin, as well as family members who may have been exposed, have timely access to any records or documentation related to their potential exposure upon request; and, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge Congress to enact legislation requiring the VA to establish a national center for the research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of individuals exposed to toxic substances during service in the armed forces and establish an advisory board, responsible for advising the national center, determining health conditions that result from toxic exposure and to study and evaluate cases of exposure;

And, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge the VA to expeditiously conduct peer reviews and scientific investigations through the National Academy of Sciences within the Institute of Medicine on all locations provided by the DoD; and, be it further RESOLVED, That veterans and their family members reporting to VA medical care facilities claiming exposure to such environmental hazards be provided examinations and treatment which are thorough and appropriate, and that VA physicians demonstrate compassion in responding to the medical needs of these patients; and, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion vigorously advocate for the expansion of eligibility requirements relating to the evaluation of studies involving exposure to any environmental hazard and that all necessary action be taken by the federal government, both administratively and legislatively as appropriate, to ensure that veterans are properly compensated for diseases and other disabilities scientifically associated with a particular exposure.

And, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion continue to closely monitor the development of all ongoing research on the long-term effects of all environmental exposures and point out to the proper officials any perceived deficiencies or discrepancies in these projects, and to ensure that government committees charged with review of such research are composed of impartial members of the medical and scientific community; and, be it further RESOLVED, That The American Legion will continue to consult with medical experts in order to ensure the effectiveness of its advocacy; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That 1992 National Convention Resolution No. 228, "Agent Orange Coordinating Council"; National Executive Committee, October 1994, Resolution No. 4, "Environmental Health Studies Funding"; 2016 National Convention Resolution No. 35, "Agent Orange"; 2016 National Convention Resolution No. 118, "Environmental Exposures"; 2017 National Convention Resolution No. 8 "Expand the Presumptive Period for Veterans Who Served in South Korea" are hereby superseded and rescinded.

Resolution No. 19: "Ensuring Parity for Survivor Dependency and Indemnity Compensation", That The American Legion urges Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to

review and/or amend its current eligibility criteria for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, including supplemental payments, to provide equitable access to earned benefits; and, be it further RESOLVED, That Congress seeks parity between VA survivors' programs and other federal survivors' programs, to ensure survivors may obtain the same level of support and benefits enjoyed by other federal services; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That 1978 National Convention Resolution No. 224, "Urge Legislation to Improve the Dependency and Indemnity Program for Dependent Parents"; 2016 National Convention Resolution No. 255, "Reducing Eligibility for Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Payments for 100% Disabled Veterans from 10 Years to 5 Years"; and 2018 National Convention Resolution No. 48, "Dependency and Indemnity Compensation For Surviving Spouses" are hereby superseded and rescinded.

Resolution No 20: "Improved Oversight, Accountability and Transparency of the Department of Veterans Affairs". That Congress should ensure proper oversight and accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), including but not limited to ensuring that the VA can hold any employee or contractor swiftly accountable for misdeeds and wrongdoing; and, be it further RESOLVED, That VA's Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection should function fully independently of the rest of the VA to help Congress, veterans service organizations and other stakeholders in providing proper transparency and oversight; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That May 2022 National Executive Committee Resolution No. 16, "Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protections" is hereby superseded and rescinded.

Resolutions in there entirety can be viewed at [Fall Meetings resolutions available to view | The American Legion](#)

#### Department Fall District Meetings

This year's Fall District meetings were organized differently from last, with the Department Adjutant attending all District meetings with the exception of the weekend that Fall Meetings in Indianapolis occurred. Feedback from the meetings indicated that there continues to be too many Department officials at the meetings wanting speaking time. The District Commanders for the most part would like more ability to limit outside the district speakers that drag the meeting out longer than needed. Department will look at reducing the footprint of the Department at District meetings in the future. We also need to start looking at non-participating Posts who do not attend meetings or participate in American Legion programs to determine if they are viable Posts or if there membership should be merged with a nearby functioning Post and there Charter suspended.

#### Nutter Shore Trophy Hall and Building Concerns

The Nutter Shore Trophy Hall, located on the third floor of the Veteran's and Pioneers Building in Helena, is scheduled to reopen in the fall of 2025. The Montana Historical Society's grand opening is set for October 2025. We are waiting for information and guidance

on moving our materials back into the trophy hall. There are ongoing concerns regarding the administration's efforts to diminish the historical significance and purpose of the building and the sacrifices made by the veterans who constructed it. The Montana Historical Society continues to reduce the presence of Veteran Service Organizations in a building that bears their name and is not in the best interest in the American Legion.

#### National Fall Conference in Indianapolis

Recently, the Fall Conference in Indianapolis was attended by Montana's representatives, including the Department Commander, NEC, Adjutant and Alternate NEC. The National Headquarters are hoping for a break-even budget for the first time in several years. National has continued to reduce staffing and shift responsibilities to the Department level. This trend is concerning as Departments are already overburdened with additional tasks and reporting requirements previously managed by National staff.

#### Importance of Supporting Legion Programs

Amidst all these developments, it is essential to emphasize the value of American Legion programs and their impact on communities. Members are encouraged to support Legion fundraisers such as the Cash Calendar, Big K programs, Department fundraisers and initiatives that are vital to sustaining the organization's programs.

### CHAPLAIN

#### Terry Roemich

During this reporting period, the following activities were completed:

- Mailed two (2) sympathy cards – one of which was sent via email.
- Mailed two (2) get well cards.
- Attended the District 8 meeting in my capacity as District 8 Chaplain.
- Mailed one (1) sympathy card on behalf of the organization for Past ALA President Kris West.

### SERVICE OFFICER/ VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

#### Eric Beal

#### June 11, 2025

-H.R. 984: To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide timely equitable relief to an individual who suffers a loss based on an administrative error by the Secretary, and for other purposes

*To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide timely equitable relief to an individual who suffers a loss based on an administrative error by the Secretary, and for other purposes* **(The American Legion Supports this act as written)**

H.R. 1663: Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion (VSAFE) Act

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion Officer, and for other purposes. (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

H.R. 3185: Personnel Integrity in Veterans Affairs Act

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to require a notation in the personnel record file of certain employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who resign from Government employment under certain conditions, and for other purposes. (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

H.R. 3455: Veterans Affairs Distributed Ledger Innovation Act

*-To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a comprehensive study on the use of distributed ledger technology in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. (The American Legion holds no position on this act)*

H.R. 3482: Veterans Community Care Scheduling Improvement Act

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an online program through which an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs may schedule an appointment for a covered veteran with a non-Department health care provider under the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

H.R. 3483: Forcing Real Accountability for Unlawful Distributions (FRAUD) Act

*-To amend title 38, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to use an information technology system to detect fraud, waste, and abuse regarding claims for payment submitted to the Secretary under the Veterans Community Care Program. (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

H.R. 3494: VA Hospital Inventory Management System Authorization Act

*-To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out an information technology system and prioritize certain requirements to manage supply chains for medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

*-DRAFT: To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to modernize the electronic health record system of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes*

*-To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a program to modernize the electronic health record system of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes (The American Legion supports the draft legislation as currently written)*

*DRAFT: To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the collection of a health care copayment by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from a veteran after a two-year period if the delay in collection is attributable to a failure of an employee, official, or information system of the Department of Veterans Affairs to process certain information within applicable timeliness standards established by the Secretary.*

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the collection of a health care copayment by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from a veteran after a two-year period if the*



*delay in collection is attributable to a failure of an employee, official, or information system of the Department of Veterans Affairs to process certain information within applicable timeliness standards established by the Secretary. (The American Legion supports the draft legislation as currently written.)*

**June 24, 2025**

H.R. 3123: Ernest Peltz Accrued Veterans Benefits Act

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to laws relating to the payment of certain benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes (The American Legion Supports this with amendments)*

H.R. 3627, Justice for America's Veterans and Survivors Act

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veteran Affairs to submit an annual report that contains data and information on the causes of deaths among veterans, and for other purposes. (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

H.R. 3835, Veterans Appeals Efficiency Act

*-To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the efficiency of adjudications and appeals of claims for benefits under laws administered by Secretary of Veteran Affairs, and for other purposes. (The American Legion Supports this with amendments)*

H.R. 3854, Modernizing All Veterans and Survivors Claims Processing Act

*-To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit a plan to expand the use of certain automation tools in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. (The American Legion Supports this act as written)*

**PARLIAMENTARIAN**

**VACANT**

**FINANCE OFFICER**

**Bill Cummins**

The department is still in the process of switching over to fund accounting, which will make it easier for budgeting and for anyone looking at the budget to understand it. The Fund accounting will be very helpful to me and the finance committee when we make recommendations and decisions on the budget. By switching to fund accounting, it is also easier on our bookkeeper and auditor to track actual expenditures and compile our annual taxes for the IRS. Most non-profits operate by way of fund accounting, so we are happy to be switching over.

So far this year we seem to be behind on our fundraising with our Raffles such as Big K, cash calendars, and the Brawl of the Wild raffle. This is why we are trying new ideas to bring in additional funds such as our Legion beer sales and the upcoming Legion bourbon from Willie's Distillery in Ennis. As far as the Department's fundraising, the department does need

the help from the Posts and individual officers to participate in the fundraising for the Department. I know that most posts have their own fundraisers, but if the posts want to participate in the Legion programs, the department needs funds to carry out these programs and have the ability to support the Posts. If anyone has new ideas on fundraising, please bring them forward to me or the finance committee for consideration.

In the past couple of years, the department has had trouble meeting the budget needs without using our investments to help balance a budget. The economy has drastically changed and costs for everything have skyrocketed. Fundraising has not generated the income we had hoped for, and it has become clear to me, and I am recommending that we raise our department's dues. Department dues have not been raised or adjusted since 2016 and that was only a 50-cent increase, there has not been a substantial increase in over 15 years. The cost of doing business has gone up and unfortunately a dues increase is necessary.

I would like to welcome the new members to the finance committee, who are Eddy White and Jerry Collins. They both should be very good additions to the finance committee, and I am very confident they will bring some new ideas and be very helpful.

## **JUDGE ADVOCATE**

**Tim Fox**

Greetings to all my Legionnaire friends and colleagues. I am unable to attend our Fall Conference due to a scheduling conflict.

### **FALLOUT FROM THE SUMMER MEETING**

I've spent a considerable amount of time responding to issues that came up at our summer meeting concerning a member who voted on some of the elections for officers but who was not an authorized voting delegate. In August, I reviewed a draft letter from the Department Commander to this member. Those issues persist because the member continues to send me text messages and emails. I have asked the member to desist, but he continues to send messages to me. I will give some thought to how to address this member's ill-advised communications and will work with the Commander and others to come up with a remedy.

### **LEGION BASEBALL**

I assisted Montana Legion baseball with connecting with the Governor's office to see about having the Governor throw out the first pitch at the Legion's September baseball tournament.

### **BUDDY CHECKS**

Periodically, I reach out to my fellow Legionnaires to check in and see how they are doing. Others have done that for me. Those calls are priceless. I will resolve to do more of them, and I hope that you will too.

### **UNIFORM CODE OF CONVENTION PROCEDURES**

In August, I reviewed revisions to the Uniform Code of Convention Procedures.

## LEASE AGREEMENT

In September, I reviewed a commercial lease agreement between a Post and a private party. While the Department Judge Advocate does not give legal advice to Posts, I did note some inconsistencies in the lease and notified the Department staff so they could notify the Post.

## NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION

Also in September, I reviewed and commented on information from TAL national that the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) was recently sued for allegedly violating the rights of members for sharing their confidential personal information with political operatives without the members' permission. NSSF and TAL work together on disseminating kits with materials related to safe storage, suicide prevention and the Be the One initiative. TAL assured its members that no private information about Legionnaires was released by NSSF.

## SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

### Bob Brewer

During the Spring Convention there were quite a few violations during the meeting. I able to collect twenty-five dollars in fines. However, several members had their phone ring or ding and I was not able to figure out who they were. In my opinion I think several of those interruptions are probably members who can't hear their phones.

I recommend that a stronger message be put forth at the start of the meeting either by the commander, assistant commander, or myself the SA.

Members departed the meeting during the vote tallying when they were instructed to stay. I had guards posted at three locations and they were told I have to use restroom which was understandable considering the length of the vote counting took. I was told that some members just never returned. I do not have names to share. If this did happen then it was inappropriate and should be addressed.

I recommend that in the future members the Department use some sort of check-out and back-in procedures. Maybe something as simple as card they receive when leaving and turn back when they return.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

### Jeff Holmes

Congratulations to all of the following winners within their respective divisions. I would also like to thank all of the posts for sponsoring these contests as part of their post objectives. It is a great way to promote the constitution and government to our youth. They were all great entries. My cap goes off to you for all that you do. Thank You!

### 2025 Winners!

#### High School Essay – 6 submitted

1<sup>st</sup> Iris Foster @ Corvallis HS

Corvallis Post #91

2<sup>nd</sup> Thea Jackson @ Hamilton HS  
3<sup>rd</sup> Cody Bradford @ Stevensville HS

Ravalli Post #47, Hamilton  
Fort Owen Post #94

**Junior High School Essay – 7 submitted**

1<sup>st</sup> Brooklyn Cary @ Home School  
2<sup>nd</sup> Mikki Norman @ Huntley Project JH  
3<sup>rd</sup> Paige Maddox @ Twin Bridges JH

Ravalli Post #47, Hamilton  
Andrew Pearson Post # 117  
Dan Brockman Post #31

**Government Survey for Junior High 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – 3 submitted**

1<sup>st</sup> Merrick Hunter @ Twin Bridges MS  
2<sup>nd</sup> Cooper Catlin @ Dutton/Brady MS  
3<sup>rd</sup> Ava Krebs @ Huntley Project JH

78% Dan Brockman Post #31  
68% Dutton Post # 64  
63% Andrew Pearson Post # 117

**Government Survey for Junior High 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – 8 submitted**

1<sup>st</sup> Reese Harmon @ Twin Bridges JH  
2<sup>nd</sup> Dylan Skryja @ North Star JH  
3<sup>rd</sup> Dax Dietrich @ Sheridan MS

92% Dan Brockman Post #31  
90% Liberty County Post #88  
90% Anderson-Simpson Post #89

**Government Survey for High School Seniors – 8 submitted**

1<sup>st</sup> Benjamin Wagland @ Twin Bridges HS  
2<sup>nd</sup> Amelia Watson @ Corvallis HS  
3<sup>rd</sup> Aidan Reeve @ Dutton/Brady HS

77% Dan Brockman Post #31  
73% Corvallis Post # 91  
71% Dutton Post # 64

Posts that competed in the Survey contest were: 2, 25, 31, 64, 88, 89, 91, and 117

Posts that competed in the Essay contest were: 23, 31, 47, 83, 89, 91, 94, 117, and 137.

All of our winning scores in the essay contest were higher than last year!  
Keep up the work with our students and schools. What you do matters!

**For 2026, Essays are due no later than March 15<sup>th</sup> while the Surveys are due no later than April 15<sup>th</sup>.**

I work for you, so please let me know what I can do to make your job easier. Congrats to all the winners!

**DISTRICT COMMANDERS**

**DISTRICT 1 - COMMANDER**

**Joe Yeoman**

In July, I delivered packets to our posts, traveling approximately 400 miles.

In August, I made the same trip and attended the Plentywood meeting.

In September, I once again traveled the same route to deliver a video featuring American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Boys and Girls State interviews with students from Glasgow and Hinsdale. Copies of the video were provided to the following schools: Hinsdale, Glasgow, Nashua, Culbertson, Froid, Medicine Lake, Plentywood, and Scobey. I hope to continue this effort in October.

During my travels, I also stopped in Terry and spoke with their history teacher, who expressed interest in becoming a Boys State counselor.

The most challenging post to engage with remains Poplar Post 140, as communication with the tribe has been difficult. This post was originally established with limited input from local veterans, with most of the focus placed on rifles rather than membership involvement.

Despite these challenges, I remain committed to strengthening our District 1 posts and expanding participation in American Legion Boys State.

## **DISTRICT 2 - COMMANDER**

### **Jed Damson**

After Department Convention of 2025, time to roll up sleeves and get to work for the next year. Fall meetings take a little to get moving — connecting with nine posts, working on new membership renewal for 2026 and convincing post that renewal that are for 2024 — why do we have such an emphasis so soon when 2025 membership is still valid.

Events participated in: 9-11 event in Havre Post #11, October Bingo Night fundraiser for Havre Post #11.

District meeting: Had a good turnout of posts but always look forward to time all nine posts in District #2 would be presented. Some Day!

Awards were given by Department and District #2 had a few awards to give out.

District #2 may be one the bottom for memberships, but look at it, have to let others shine for a while.

## **DISTRICT 3 - COMMANDER**

### **Randy Flammond**

I was installed as District 3 Commander and have remained actively engaged in representing our organization. I attended the American Legion State A Baseball Tournament, participated in the Veteran Stand Down event in Great Falls, attended the opening ceremony for the new Veterans Clinic in Browning, and assisted with the installation of several highway fatality markers.

## **DISTRICT 4 - COMMANDER**

### **Dorothy Goodwin**

After the Department Convention in June, I found different ways to get all packets delivered to all posts in District 4, made a couple of round trips from Polson around posts and back to Polson. I started my visitations with Columbia Falls Post 72 with installation of new officers on July 14<sup>th</sup>. Went back up to Columbia Falls during Heritage Days and helped the post with their first information booth setup while they were also doing hamburgers and hot dogs for the car show on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July. In the process of helping with the information booth, a new member was acquired.

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, I went up to Lincoln County to visit and enjoyed a meeting in Eureka at Post 74. Saw members that I have known for years and met some new members. Stayed the night in Trego after the meeting where I grew up.

Next visitation was on August 25<sup>th</sup> with Kalispell Post 137 and Past Department Commander Jeff Nelson went with me as the New Department Zone Commander for the Sons of the Legion. I then went back up to Kalispell for a meeting on District 4 Fall meeting which was being held at 1200 on August 27<sup>th</sup>. At this Wednesday meeting I was to VA Representative from the Kalispell Job Service James Graham who I am now getting community information concerning veterans to pass along to all veterans in District 4.

I am hoping to visit several posts in November depending on the weather.

Hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and new year which is just around the corner.

## **DISTRICT 5 - COMMANDER**

### **Deb Strickland**

District #5 is comprised of twelve Posts with a combined membership goal of 1,163 veterans.

I'm proud to say that as of this date District 5 is in 4<sup>th</sup> place achieving their membership goal. I proposed a challenge to all posts at my first meeting – the 1<sup>st</sup> post to reach goal will get an award of \$250, 2<sup>nd</sup> post \$150 & 3<sup>rd</sup> post \$100.

District 5 meets monthly, the central location being in Missoula. These meetings provide a forum for the exchange of information, projects and ideas, allows for open discussion; and gives me the opportunity to provide or direct support. In light of Resolution writing skills, I challenged each post to start a "Suggestion Box" that will come to the district meeting in Dec to be reviewed by District Resolution writing persons.

District 5 has been honored to have post veterans receiving Gov. Gianforte's Veteran Award. There has been one WWII Female award to a 103 yr. veteran. These types of awards are extremely important for recognition of our living veterans.

We have Posts offering breakfasts for their community, participating in community events, honor guard ceremonies, fatality marker program, along with providing information to veterans on programs available. This list is endless and very impressive.

Personally, I'm pleased to support the 1<sup>st</sup> Bitterroot Valley Veterans Day Dinner at the Ravalli Co. Fairgrounds on 11 Nov 25. Post 91, 47 & 94 have been instrumental in getting this started with hopes of reaching all area veterans & becoming an annual event.

It's truly an honor and privilege to serve as the Commander of District 5.

## **DISTRICT 6 - COMMANDER**

### **Tony Wagner**

**Membership:** To date, we are striving to gain membership, and especially to keep membership. Our numbers are currently right in the middle of all the district percentages. We had membership drives, mentioned below, and have invited the American Legion from Bozeman and Belgrade to join us at the Marine Corps League membership drive on November 8<sup>th</sup> at the Wildcat Stadium. Where we will be serving Free Tri Tip sandwiches and Ribs for up to 300 veterans. You guys are welcome to come!

**District activities:** On June 28<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with ALR Post 2 and ALR Post 10 members from Post 1 held a Motorcycle Show/membership drive at the Copper Canyon Harley Davidson Dealership. Kim Kay and Duane Cunningham were there. We provided free burgers and dogs for all who stopped by. We put out a donation jar, and we did make a little money after paying for the food.

Most of District 6 posts participated in some way, in the statewide revitalization project.

District 6 held our district meeting at Post 42 on Sunday September 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Posts visited:** I've visited Posts 1 Butte, Post 2 Helena, 10 Deer lodge, 20 Dillon, 31 Twin Bridges, and of course Post 42 Townsend so far. All are unique and have a great group of people. I presented the best consolidated post report award to Post 20.

I also dropped off the Auxiliary awards for those who didn't make it to the District 6 meeting with Sarah Rodriquez, the District 6 Auxiliary President.

**ALR activities:** I began writing motorcycle safety information for the Post 2 newsletter. I also sent a copy to the Department ALR Director, to use as he sees fit. I've been riding pretty much continuously for 56 years with only one incident, which I might write a lessons learned for.

Post 2 and Post 42 ALR members are doing a coat drive to ensure that no children go without a coat this winter.

**Post activities:** District 6 posts are responding well to Department's requests, such as rifle inventories, and contact information. We will continue to ensure that these necessary requests are attended to.

Post 1 Led in the afore-mentioned motorcycle show and regularly staffs a table for new membership at the farmer's market.

Post 2 Helena Held the 100th year American Legion baseball celebration and annual post picnic. The Department commander and, Mayor of Helena and many members celebrated baseball and the legion.

Post 9 Lincoln Will be holding a Santa's Workshop. They will put together around 100 small projects for elementary students to assemble and give away as Christmas gifts This year's Santa's workshop is December 6.

Post 10 Deer lodge completed and dedicated the Veteran Honor Wall The people of Deer Lodge had raised thousands of dollars over the last 4-5 years to make this happen.

Post 20 Dillon has a Veterans Day breakfast for the whole community and has a large medical equipment loan program.

Post 31 Twin Bridges hosted their annual children's fishing derby and will be hosting a Christmas dinner.

Post 42 Townsend's big activity this year is a footprint at the Townsend fall fest, they sold food and had a table for membership. Post 42 also has a medical equipment loan program.

### **DISTRICT 7 - COMMANDER**

**Don Carlson**

Post 14 Bozeman, no report

Post 19 Big Timber

Several fund raisers in the spring, Prime Rib and Lobster

Honor guards for funerals and Memorial Day Ceremony that included burgers and dogs after

Sponsored \$1000 Scholarship to graduating senior

Working on comprising an email list of our membership to make better contact and grow membership

(events covering the fall- Veterans day prime rib, Thanksgiving day dinner that served over 200

Post 23 Livingston

Highway cleanup

Memorial Day ceremonies at cemeteries and at the Veterans Memorial, also placed flags on veterans graves.

Livingston Round-up parade and military appreciation night at the rodeo color guard

Wilsall rodeo and Old Settlers Day parades color guard

Several honor guards for funerals



Steel Horse Stampede and Poker run

9/11 remembrance ceremony with local first responders

Providing schools with teacher requested supplies

Replaced 70 highway crosses within the county

Had a booth at the local Farmers Market

Post 25 White Sulphur Springs

Community Expo

Visit from Northwest Regional Commander (member appreciation)

Visit from Gov Gianforte to present Montana Governor's Veterans Commendation

Flag retirement and a funeral service

Highway cleanup

Led the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade

Red Ants Pants presentation of Flags to open the festival

Participated in a fund raiser at Red Ants Pants in conjunction with the Auxiliary

Set a new flagpole for the library

Presented backpacks to 1<sup>st</sup> grade students

3 funeral honors since spring meeting

Post 30 Belgrade

Our Stan Milesnick Scholarship Fund provided three \$2500 scholarships at MSU. Two scholarships to Veterans and one to a Dependent.

Our post conducted numerous Color Guards and Honor Guards.

We supported our Belgrade Bandits that unfortunately did not make the playoffs.

We installed 2 fatality markers.

We supported and continued to support the Veterans Alliance of SW Montana and the building and opening of the SW Montana Veterans Cemetery.

We ran a successful raffle for a Bison hunt at the Buffalo Wallow Ranch.

We assisted several Veterans financially.

The Post 30 Legion Riders conducted a successful Poker Run, additionally they had a successful BINGO Night with American Legion Post 87 in Manhattan. The Riders also participated in the Bozeman Memorial Day Parade and the Belgrade Fall Festival Parade. They also supported the Annual Find the Cure Cancer event in Bozeman.

We supported our Cub Scout Pack.

We conducted our annual flag retirement ceremony with the Post 30 Sons of the American Legion.

We participated in the Bozeman Memorial Day Parade and the Belgrade Fall Festival with color guards.

Post 87 Manhattan

Several honor guards

Assisted 3 needy veterans

Deliver Meals on Wheels to 2 veterans

Helped at Potato Fest

Held benefit bingo

Easter egg hunt

Headwater area food bank

Legion upgrades (electrical? Cleanup?)

American Red Cross blood drive

2 college scholarships

Legion baseball-team went to state?

Columbarium funerals at the Veterans Cemetery

Oratory contest

1 girls state

9/11 ceremony with Bozeman

Tow Truck Memorial at the Three Forks rest stop

Post 99 Big Sky-maybe emailed?

Post 118 Gardiner

Researched and wrote a book about the Gardiner Cemetery

Cemetery maintenance

Roadside cleanup with the community

Collected flags throughout the community for flag ceremony with local Boy Scouts for flag retirement ceremony

Some maintenance of roadside markers

## **DISTRICT 8 - COMMANDER**

### **Jerry Collins**

Greetings from district 8! I assumed the position of district commander following the departure of sitting district commander Mike Allison. The district was in a bit of disarray following the departure.

We held the District 8 Fall Conference on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at Freeborn Post 64 in Dutton. Lanny Christman (Adj) and the entire American Legion Family did an outstanding job hosting the district meeting. Guests at the district meeting were North Central Zone Commander Andy Rice, Department Adjutant Duane Cunningham, NEC Glen Sharbono, Alt NEC Lowell Long, Immediate Past Department Commander Ken Simon, Department Vice Commander Irene Dickerson and the Department Commander Kim Kay McCarty Martin. Along with the District 8 leadership we had representatives from posts 3, 6, 26, 64, 102, 103, 130, 341 and the director of the newly formed Golden Triangle American Legion Riders. We conducted oral post reports, and some posts submitted their written post reports during the regular business meeting. Our regular business meeting was concluded prior to the luncheon so we were able to utilize that time to hear all of the Department briefs and speakers before we went to recess for the Luncheon. During the Luncheon we heard from the Department Vice Commander Irene Dickerson.

Overall, district 8 is in good shape. The membership standings of our district is just shy of 1% of where we were at during this time last year. The year-to-date membership is at 389 members at the time of this report. Our year-end total for 2025 is 638 total members. There are 2 posts in the district that have struggled to meet the defined membership goals, however. These are due to the post's executive committees replacing officers. Post 6 was struggling with membership due to a new adjutant and the learning curve. The newly elected adjutant was also the city and rural fire chief for Choteau Volunteer Fire Department. We identified a new member that was qualified and offered to assume the duties of the post adjutant. Post 133 has been behind in meeting membership goals for a few years; however I have spoken to Josh, and he is working on catching up. Post 133 has had trouble getting people involved in post business for a while, so the commander is doing the job of the adjutant and treasurer on top of his duties as commander.

Overall, the posts of district 8 have been active throughout their respective communities. Post 3 has been active in Great Falls by presenting awards to schools and ROTC awards, presenting the Colors during summer concerts, placed flags on Central Avenue, manned a table at the Veterans Stand Down, and has donated to numerous activities and organizations in the Great Falls area. Post 6 has placed 5 white cross markers on Montana highways, conducted maintenance on 3 and replaced 2. Annually,

Post 6 conducts a Memorial Day Service at the Choteau Cemetery. Flags are placed at every veteran grave in Choteau as well as neighboring communities' cemeteries. Roger Kelly was on the flag detail for the American Legion Baseball Tournament in Conrad MT. Post 6 also held their annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July NRA rodeo and Independence Day Celebrations throughout the town of Choteau and hosted a "Fall-Fest" at the club with vendors, had live music to raise money for the post's donations. Post 26 participated in the summer celebration and hosted the USS Montana crew luncheon. Members of Post 26 did a 50/50 at the county fair as well as a bingo night. Post 64 assisted the VFW with a few funerals and plans for a flag retirement on Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>. I spoke with the commander and adjutant of Post 51 prior to the district meeting, and they stated that they have been in the community, but their main event and recruitment tool is the annual Augusta Rodeo. Post 64 was the host for the 2025 district 8 fall conference and has identified 3 participants for American Legion Boys State. They have improved the baseball diamond outside of the post so they can host children's baseball in Dutton. Post 64 also hosts 3 blood donations per year. Post 102 hosted a Memorial Day service, Assisted post 6 with the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Rodo, and hosted bingo at the Chouteau County Fair. Post 102 also leads the Homecoming parade. Post 103 is the newest post to start a white cross program in district 8! They placed their 1<sup>st</sup> white cross this summer for a young community member that was killed on the highway. They hosted a veterans day celebration, a community coloring contest for the children, and annual fun night in Power, and they present the Colors utilizing their post's flag detail for the Power Harvest Fest. The post in Power also continues the Adopt a Highway program locally. POST 130

Malmstrom Post 341 has been involved in the community. Post 341 did an American Legion Birthday celebration and poppy drive. During Memorial Day the post placed 250 flags on 3 local cemeteries and also did a flag retirement ceremony with the scout troops. Members of post 341 were at the American Legion table at the state fair and also had a float in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade in Great Falls. 3 members attended the Department Convention in Helena and also the American Legion National Convention in Tampa Florida. They continue to host a "Coffee with the Vets" at a local nursing home.

The newly formed Golden Triangle American Legion Riders have participated in numerous rides throughout the state to include rides in Havre, Great Falls, Helena and the American Legion Riders ROMP (Ride on Military Pride) that toured the Needles Highway in South Dakota.

It has been an honor to serve with the outstanding individuals throughout the Department of Montana as well as district 8. Those in leadership roles are not only tasked to lead, but more importantly to serve the general membership of the American Legion and veterans as a whole.

## **DISTRICT 9 - COMMANDER**

### **Frank Kelly**

As the District 9 Commander I have made exceptional progress in visiting and engaging with all Posts within the district. Through dedicated travel and personal commitment, I have met with every Post except Hobson—ironically, the only Post in the district that has not yet met its membership target. Efforts continue to establish contact and provide assistance to that Post in hopes of improving both communication and participation.

Throughout my travels, I have provided much-needed encouragement to several Posts that had grown stagnant. The visits have helped reenergize local leadership, sparking new

discussions on community involvement, member engagement, and Post revitalization. This renewed sense of purpose is beginning to show results across much of the district.

In the course of these visits, several challenges have been identified within individual Posts. While none require immediate intervention, many could resolve naturally as Posts focus on updating their bylaws, improving communication, and recruiting or training new leaders. Continued oversight and guidance will be important to ensure that progress continues.

A particular area of concern remains with Roy Post 96. There is significant tension between current and past leadership, which has contributed to a decline in membership, with some members transferring out or cancelling membership. Additionally, there are ongoing issues related to building contracts and local community dynamics that have created further strain. This Post will need close monitoring and possible departmental support if conditions do not improve in the coming months.

Overall, District 9 is showing steady improvement thanks to the proactive leadership and willingness to travel, listen, and support. With continued attention to the few remaining problem areas, the district is well positioned to strengthen its foundation for the future.

#### **DISTRICT 10 - COMMANDER**

##### **Doug Byron**

The 2025 Spring District 10 meeting was held March 8<sup>th</sup> at Post 28 in Glendive. Post packets were give out to Post commanders in attendance and the rest were mailed. At State convention District Commander Dickerson was elected as state Vice Commander.

District 10 Vice commander Byron was confirmed as District 10 Commander. Commander Byron contacted every Post in District 10 and introduced himself. Fall district meeting was held in Baker at post 35.I worked with all post with getting them to do their membership done on American legion online. This is still a work in progress.

I have been in contact with the Zone commander and state officers on different issues.

#### **DISTRICT 11 - COMMANDER**

##### **Trevor Barnhart**

I took over District 11 in June 2025 and promptly went to work visiting posts, assisting with various issues, and thinking outside the box to find creative solutions.

Red Lodge has been facing challenges getting access to local schools regarding Boys and Girls State participation. We are currently working with the school counselor to resolve this issue. Like many posts, Red Lodge's membership continues to age, and unfortunately, they are losing more members to death than they are gaining through new recruits.

My home post, Post 119, continues to grow—largely through the success of the American Legion Riders program. The post remains active in the community, regularly participating in flag presentations and Fourth of July parades, which help maintain strong community visibility and engagement.

Post 4 is currently working through financial challenges and exploring ways to increase participation and traffic in their facility. They are experimenting with bar specials and merchandise sales. However, one concern is that the same few members who organize these efforts are also the primary customers.

We held our District Fall Conference in September, with Vice Commander Dickerson and six Department Officers in attendance. Regular business was conducted, followed by a group discussion on the duties and activities of the American Legion Riders. Lunch was provided, featuring remarks from Vice Commander Dickerson.

## **DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

### **AMERICANISM**

#### **Lowell Long**

Our Americanism programs are the backbone of all the programs we do as the American Legion. These are our most visible programs that we have. Programs like American Legion Boys State, the Oratorical Scholarship Program, essays, government surveys, Scouting BSA, American Legion Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports, and other programs teaching about our way of life. Teaching about our Constitution and our flag make us visible in our communities.

Get out in your communities and share what your post can do to help make a difference in your towns and cities. Our participating in these programs help raise awareness of who we are as Americans and citizens. They are about who we are and why we stood and took the oath to defend the United States of America and our Constitution. By supporting our Americanism programs, we can continue to give back to our communities, our youth, and ourselves.

### **BASEBALL**

#### **Ron Edwards**

The 2025 season was celebrated as the Centennial season across the country. The AA Region 7 tournament was back in Billings for the last time. National played a 4-team tournament in Millbank, South Dakota where American Legion began in 1925 to commemorate the centennial season. Both of our State Tournament hosts Conrad, MT for Class A, and Medicine Hat, AB for Class AA did an outstanding job this year.

### **2025 MONTANA/ALBERTA TEAMS**

Montana team registration. This season we had: 9 Class AA teams, 31 A teams, and 24 B teams for a total of 64 teams. This was down 3 teams from our 2024 registration. Anaconda and Richland County registered to play but later decided to not field a team. We had 3 new B teams this year: Butte Motormen, Laurel Dodgers B, and Tri-County Cardinals B.

| CLASS AA                    |
|-----------------------------|
| Billings Royals             |
| Billings Scarlets           |
| Bozeman Bucks               |
| Great Falls Chargers        |
| Helena Senators             |
| Kalispell Lakers            |
| Lethbridge Elks             |
| Medicine Hat Moose Monarchs |
| Missoula Mavericks          |

| CLASS A                    |
|----------------------------|
| Anaconda A's               |
| Belgrade Bandits           |
| Belgrade Bandits B Team    |
| Billings Blue Jays         |
| Billings Cardinals         |
| Bitterroot Bucs            |
| Bitterroot Red Sox Post 47 |
| Bozeman Bucks A            |
| Butte Post #1 Miners       |
| Cranbrook Bandits Post 24  |
| Dillon Post 20 Cubs        |
| Fort MacLeod Royals        |
| Glacier Twins A            |
| Glasgow Reds               |

| CLASS A                   |
|---------------------------|
| Glendive Blue Devils      |
| Great Falls Chargers A    |
| Havre Northstars          |
| Helena Reps               |
| Kalispell Lakers A        |
| Laurel Dodgers            |
| Lethbridge Miners         |
| Lewistown Redbirds        |
| Libby Loggers             |
| Lockwood Razerbacks       |
| Medicine Hat Knights      |
| Miles City Mavericks      |
| Mission Valley Mariners A |
| Missoula Mavericks A      |
| Richland County Patriots  |
| Tri-County Cardinals      |
| Vauxhall Spurs            |

| CLASS B                            |
|------------------------------------|
| Billings Post 4 Blue (JR)          |
| Billings Post 4 Red (JR)           |
| Bitterroot Red Sox B (JR)          |
| Bozeman Bucks B (JR)               |
| <u>Butte Post #1 Motormen (JR)</u> |

| CLASS B                              |
|--------------------------------------|
| Butte Post #1 Muckers (JR)           |
| Cranbrook Bandits B Post 24 (JR)     |
| Dillon Post 20 Cubs B Team (JR)      |
| Gallatin Valley Posse (JR)           |
| Glasgow Reds B (JR)                  |
| Great Falls Post 341 Chargers B (JR) |
| Havre Northstars B (JR)              |
| Helena Post 2 Independents (JR)      |
| Kalispell Lakers Red (JR)            |
| Kalispell Lakers Gold (JR)           |
| <u>Laurel Dodgers Post 123 (JR)</u>  |
| Lewistown Redbirds "B" (JR)          |
| Lone Peak Post #99 (SR)              |
| Miles City Colts (JR)                |
| Missoula Post 27 Mavericks B (JR)    |
| Mission Valley Mariners B (JR)       |
| South Valley Screwballs (JR)         |
| <u>Tri-County Cardinals B (JR)</u>   |
| Vauxhall Jr Spurs (JR)               |

## 2025 DISTRICT AND STATE TOURNAMENT RESULTS

| Tournament       | Host                         | Champion                     | Runner-up                     |
|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| North A District | Lewistown Redbirds           | Vauxhall Spurs [ 5 ]         | Lethbridge Miners [ 4 ]       |
| South A District | Dillon Cubs                  | Bozeman Bucks A [ 9 ]        | Gallatin Valley Outlaws [ 3 ] |
| East A District  | Laurel Dodgers               | Laurel Dodgers [ 10 ]        | Miles City Mavericks [ 0 ]    |
| West A District  | Whitefish- Glacier Twins     | Bitterroot Red Sox [ 6 ]     | Bitterroot Bucs [ 3 ]         |
| State A          | Conrad- Tri-County Cardinals | Bozeman Bucks A [ 2 ]        | Bitterroot Red Sox [ 1 ]      |
| State AA         | Medicine Hat Monarchs        | Missoula Mavericks AA [ 10 ] | Billings Scarlets [ 0 ]       |

## 2025 CLASS A STATE TOURNAMENT

The Class A State Tournament was hosted by the Tri-County Cardinals in Conrad MT which was their first time hosting a state tournament. The **BOZEMAN BUCKS A** beat the **BITTERROOT REDSOX** in a very exciting 2-1 game to win. It was Bozeman's first time ever qualifying their A team to go to a State A tournament, and the first time in their history to win it. Both teams went on to represent Montana at the Northwest Class A Regional

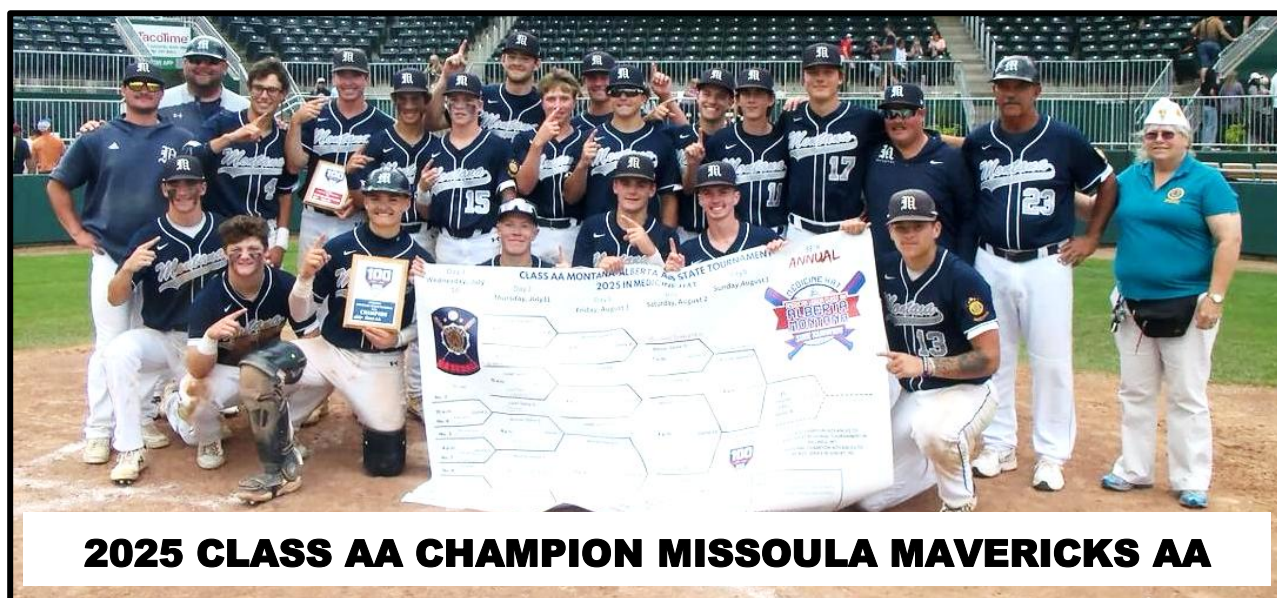




Tournament (NWCART) which was hosted by Burley, Idaho.

## 2025 CLASS AA STATE TOURNAMENT

The Class AA Tournament was hosted by the Medicine Hat Monarchs at Athletic Park in Medicine Hat, Alberta. The **MISSOULA MAVERICKS** defeated the **BILLINGS SCARLETS** 10-0 in game 14 to go 5-0 for their second consecutive state title, and their 14<sup>th</sup> State AA title

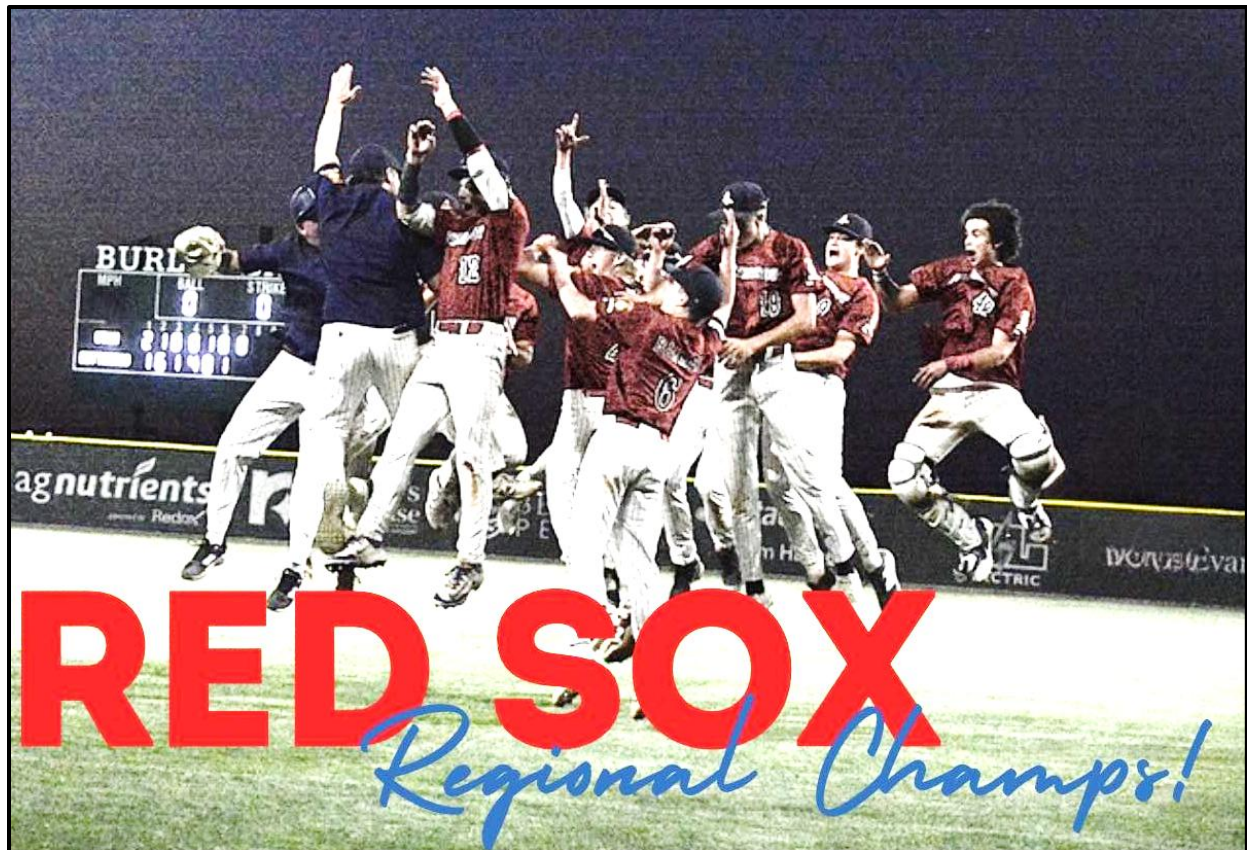




overall. They are now tied with the Billings Scarlets with 14 state AA titles, second place to the Billings Royals who have 30 titles. Missoula went on to play in the AA Region 7 tournament in Billings. The Billings Royals also advanced as the regional tournament team as the Region 7 host. A big thank you Commander Kim Kay McCarty Martin for attending and helping us hand out awards.

### **2025 NORTHWEST CLASS A REGIONAL TOURNAMENT (NWCART)**

The Bozeman Bucks A and Bitterroot Red Sox advanced to play in the 41<sup>st</sup> NWCART tournament hosted by the Burley Idaho Green Sox. Bozeman beat Prairie Idaho 9-6 on day 1, and on day 2 lost a close game to Klamath Falls, OR 10-9. On day 3 the host team, Burley beat the Bucks in another 1-run game 8-7, ending their season. The Red Sox beat Wasilla Alaska 11-0 on day 1, Lovell Wyoming 22-4 on day 2, Klamath Falls 10-0 on day 3, Cache Utah 13-4 on day 4 and then Klamath Falls 7-0 in the Championship game to go undefeated. They scored 63 runs and gave up 8 runs in 5 games. The Red Sox are the first team in the 41-year history of the NWCART to win it 4 times. Congratulations to the Red Sox and Post 47.



### **2025 CLASS AA REGIONAL TOURNAMENT**

The Missoula Mavericks beat the Fort Collins, CO 9-0 in game 3 on day 1, Missoula lost a close one in game 7 on day 2 to Gillette, WY 4-3, and then were eliminated by Portland, OR 10-1 in game 9 on day 3. Idaho Falls, ID beat the Royals 10-0 in game 4 on day 1, and then lost to

Portland, OR 14-11 in game 6 on day 2. The Portland Barbers beat the Idaho Falls Bandits to win the regional and advanced to the World Series in Shelby, NC.

## 2025 AMERICAN LEGION WORLD SERIES TOURNAMENT

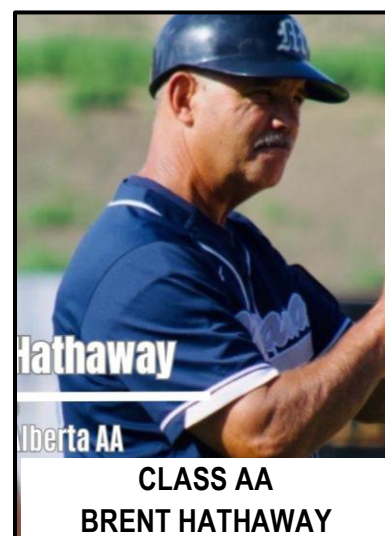
Chesapeake Post 28, Virginia won the 2025 American Legion World Series beating time League City, Texas 5-0. It was Virginia's second world series title, the first one in 1985. It was League City's 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year playing in the world series.

## 2025 SCHOLARSHIP AND COACH OF THE YEAR WINNERS

Congrats to our Class A scholarship winner, **Clark Reimer** from the **Cranbrook Bandits**. There were no AA scholarship applicants this year.



And to our coaches of the year, **Johnny Graham** in his first season with the Class A **Bozeman Bucks A** team; and our AA coach of the year **Brent Hathaway** from the **Missoula Mavericks AA**. Coach Hathaway has won this award 9 times over his career and leads all AA coaches. Congrats to him and the Missoula Mavericks.



Thanks to Carl Hennell our AA Chairman, Jeremy Olson our A Chairman, and District Chairmen Jeff Brabant (East), Todd Knouse (North), Kyle Scarr (South) and Bryan Larson (West). I also want to thank **Commander Kim Kay McCarty Martin** for supporting our American Legion Baseball program.

For more baseball news and information please visit [www.montanalegionbaseball.org](http://www.montanalegionbaseball.org).

## **SCOUTS BSA**

### **Conrad Heimbigner**

The American Legion continues its strong partnership with Scouts BSA, a relationship that dates back to 1919. Nationally, the Legion sponsors more than 2,000 Scouting units, providing vital mentorship, facilities, and leadership opportunities for youth across the country.

At the national level, the Scouting program continues to adapt, with emphasis on inclusivity and strengthening community-based sponsorships. The American Legion remains recognized as one of the largest civic partners supporting Scouts BSA, reinforcing our shared commitment to developing character, citizenship, and service among young people.

Here in Montana, one of our current challenges is obtaining an accurate count of which Posts are actively sponsoring Scout troops or packs. Many Posts continue to provide outstanding support to Scouting but are not formally reporting those efforts at the Department or National level. This gap impacts recognition, data accuracy, and the visibility of the Legion's impact in youth programs.

To address this, we are working on improved tracking through direct Post outreach and cooperation with local Scouting councils. A standardized sponsorship report form is being developed to help Posts record their involvement, ensuring Montana's contributions are accurately reflected in national reporting.

Our goal is to strengthen our partnership with Scouts BSA while ensuring every Post that supports a troop receives the recognition it deserves.

## **AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE/AUXILIARY GIRLS STATE**

### **Lowell Long**

The 2026 program for the American Legion Boys State and Auxiliary Girls State Program will be held on June 14-20, 2026 at Carroll College in Helena. Last year we had a successful program with around 140 delegates attending. We have been slowly increasing the number of students that have been attending our program and are hoping to have this continue this year. Our program is running jointly with the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Program. We have been combined for several years now and it has been working well for us.

This program is a life changing event for our youth. They gain valuable knowledge on how our government works by actually participating in it. They also learn leadership skills that will help them

throughout life. This makes them more informed citizens of our Nation. Our delegates run for offices at the city, county, and state level. They run campaigns and present their platform to get elected. They also participate in trials at the Supreme Court and Justice court. They write bills and work to get them adopted in the House of Representatives and the Senate. They also participate in events that help them develop their leadership skills and foster working together to accomplish their goals.

We are gearing up for the 2026 session. I attended 9 of the 11 District meeting this fall discussing the 2026 program. I secured the names of the representatives from each district that will serve on the American Legion Boys State Committee. These Legionnaires will assist in planning for the program and helping put it on. Your American Legion Boys State Committee is

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Boys State Chairman:  | Lowell Long       |
| Girls State Chairman: | Yvonne Kostelecky |
| Director:             | Jen Dalrymple     |
| Registrar:            | Duane Cunningham  |
| District 1:           | Joe Yeoman        |
| District 2:           | Jed Damson        |
| District 3:           | Keith Stark       |
| District 4:           | Tom Leafy         |
| District 5:           | Tim Garrison      |
| District 6:           | Dave Haulman      |
| District 7:           | Melody Mount      |
| District 8:           | Jerry Collins     |
| District 9:           | Frank Kelly       |
| District 10:          | Carol George      |
| District 11:          | Shaun Brooks      |

These Legionnaires will be assisting us to put forth a quality program and will bring back information to assist you to promote the program in your communities.

We are also beginning our fundraising efforts for our program. We will be writing grants to help fund our program as well as holding raffles and other events throughout the year. We have a raffle on two tickets to the Cat/Griz game in November. Tickets are 1 for \$50.00 or 3 for \$100.00. Members of the Finance Committee and the Department Adjutant have tickets available for sale. We are also looking at the dinner like we did last year. We raised over \$8,500.00 with it last year. More information will be coming out soon on this.

Our income for the 2025 session was \$83,565.75. Our expenses were \$79,085.08. This left us with a balance of \$4,571.67. This will be carried forward to helping us start the program for this year. Each year, our costs continue to go up. Housing, food, transportation, etc. are climbing. With that said, your help with our fundraising events is crucial for our success.

We need your help to make our program successful this year. Please get out the word on our dates to your schools, church groups, youth groups, the County Superintendent of Schools, parents, and anyone you can think of in your community that works with our youth. We need to have more students sign up and participate in our program. Have every student that is interested in attending fill out an application even if you don't have the money to sponsor them. You pay for those you can and we will find help to sponsor the rest. Also, don't forget your other civic groups in your community



like the Eagles, the Elks, the VFW, and any other groups you might have. You also have local business that are willing to help sponsor students as well. You only have to ask as they are there ready to assist you and the youth. While signing up students, don't forget that you can also encourage girls to sign up as well in the Girls State Program.

Thank you to all who helped with our program last year. I would especially like to thank our past chairs Duane Cunningham on the boys side and Kathy Long on the girls side for their dedication to the program. Their efforts helped to make our program as successful as it was last year. I would also like to express my thanks to Jen Dalrymple for stepping up late in the year to serve as our director. She put together a great program for our youth and will continue to do so this year. We had a great dedicated staff, many of whom will be returning, who helped make it successful from our counselors, committee members, office staff, medical staff and other volunteers. Thank you for a job well done.

If any of you have any ideas that would help our program, share them with your representative on the committee or to me directly so that we can look at them. I can be contacted at [crazymarinevet@outlook.com](mailto:crazymarinevet@outlook.com) or (406) 945-4209. Remember, we can't have a successful program without your help and support.

On October 15, 2025, the joint committee for American Legion Boys State and Auxiliary Girls State met for the first planning meeting. The following Boys State committee members were present: Jed Damson, Melody Mount, Keith Stark, Joe Yeoman, Tim Garrison, Kim Kay McCarty Martin, and Lowell Long. The following Girls State Committee members present were Leona Somerfield, Kathy Long, Gwen Marshall, Stacy Bear, and Jackie. The following guests were present: Erin Carpenter and Ken Simon.

The new American Legion Auxiliary Chairman was introduced at the meeting. Gwen Marshall was named to replace Yvonne Kostecky who had resigned due to living in Wyoming. Gwen is a former Girls Stater and served as a counselor for the program last year.

To date, we have 7 delegates registered for our program. Discussion was held on getting out in our communities and getting the students to sign up. Registration is completely being run online this year. Discussion was held on if we could allow students from other states to attend our program. We are able to let them come but they wouldn't be able to run for the Governor, Lt Governor, or Senators at National.

Fundraisers was discussed. We have two so far planned. The first is tickets for a raffle on two tickets for the Cat/Griz Game. The drawing will be held on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available now from any finance committee member, committee member, and department officers. Tickets will be available at Fall Conference. The second is a continuation of the dinner we started last year. It will be held in Helena the same weekend as the Department Oratorical Contest on March 28<sup>th</sup>. There will be a silent auction and entertainment. More information will be coming soon.

We will also be writing grants to help fund our program again this year.

We began discussions on what day would be best for our monthly meeting. Lowell will send out an email to all members asking for what day would work best.

Joe Yeoman asked if there was a possibility that we could meet in person at Fall Conference. We could make it work if we can find a time everyone can meet.

## **CHILDREN & YOUTH**

### **Jed Damson**

Before Fall Conference not a lot to report. Still looking at a way to promote scholarship for \$1000.00. Hope at meeting time we will have that in order. So far there have been no TFA applications. Please give this to anyone that may need help and qualify for this assistance.

Any help would be appreciated. There will be a meeting after this report so will update my report before 2026 Convention.

## **CONSTITUTION & INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

### **Richard Klose**

As C&BL chairman, the C&BL committee meet several times via zoom to review and update the American Legion department of Montana C&BL. After updates and changes were made and voted on by the committee members the draft was sent to the National American Legion for review. The National sent back some suggested changes, which were made, and another committee vote was taken to approve the changes.

This new proposed Dept C&BL was presented at the 2025 Dept convention that was held in Helena, June 20-23, 2025. The convention attendees voted to approve the new Dept C&BL.

The new C&BL has been sent to all the posts so that they can review and make any changes to their post C&BL. THE posts have been encouraged to update their C&BL and sent a copy to the Dept to be put on file.

## **CONVENTION 2026**

### **Duane Cunningham**

The 2026 Department Convention will be held in Helena, Montana, chosen as the most suitable location to ensure a well-organized and successful event for all attendees. The Helena Civic Center will host the Department's activities, while the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) will hold its sessions at the Comfort Inn.

Planning for the 2026 convention is underway, with all arrangements being made well in advance to ensure a seamless experience. Hosting the convention in Helena provides consistency, strong logistical support, and an opportunity to build on the successes of previous years.

The American Legion Family looks forward to engaging with the Helena community, strengthening relationships, and promoting the values and mission of our organization. This convention will offer a meaningful opportunity for camaraderie, collaboration, and continued growth within the Department of Montana.

We look forward to welcoming all attendees to Helena for the 2026 Department Convention and are committed to making it a memorable and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

## **CONVENTION 2027**

### **Bob Brewer**

The 2027 Department Convention will take place in Havre, Montana, marking an exciting new chapter as we bring the event to this vibrant community. The planning team is enthusiastic about collaborating closely with the Department to ensure that the 2027 convention will be one of the best yet, offering a seamless blend of traditional activities and fresh experiences for attendees.

Havre offers a unique setting that embodies the spirit of the American Legion, with a strong local community eager to welcome members from across the state. The planning committee is already working hard to arrange a program that maintains the high standards of previous conventions while also incorporating elements that highlight the character and hospitality of Havre.

The 2027 convention planning team is committed to making the event a memorable and impactful experience for all participants. Through early preparation and close coordination with the Department, the goal is to deliver a well-organized event that honors tradition while introducing innovative ideas to enhance the convention. Every effort will be made to accommodate a diverse range of activities, ensuring there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Hosting the convention in Havre presents a fantastic opportunity to grow the American Legion Family's presence in the area and engage with the local community. The convention will focus on promoting our mission and creating lasting connections while providing members with the chance to come together in celebration of our shared values and goals.

We look forward to seeing everyone in Havre in 2027 and are dedicated to making it an exceptional convention experience that brings our Legion Family closer together.

## **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**

### **Glen Sharbono**

The Department of Montana is honored and excited to welcome National Commander Wiley for an inspiring and engaging visit to our state this November. This visit represents a tremendous opportunity for Montana Legionnaires, veterans, and community partners to connect directly with our National leadership, share our successes, and showcase the outstanding commitment of our members to “Be the One” for veterans across Big Sky Country.

Friday, November 7 – Arrival and Welcome to Great Falls

National Commander Wiley and his party will arrive in Great Falls on the afternoon of November 7<sup>th</sup>.

His first official duty will be a special tour of Malmstrom Air Force Base, a key moment to connect with active-duty personnel and recognize the ongoing bond between our nation's military and The American Legion.

That evening at 6:30 p.m., a small group dinner will be held with Service Officers and VA Representatives, offering an excellent opportunity for meaningful dialogue about veterans' care and ongoing outreach efforts in Montana.

#### Saturday, November 8 – Veterans Engagement Day

The day will begin with a Veterans Event at Great Falls High School from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This event will bring together veterans, students, and community members to celebrate service, encourage camaraderie, and strengthen awareness of veteran programs.

A media visit is tentatively scheduled for 11:00 a.m., giving the National Commander a platform to share The American Legion's message statewide.

At 1:00 p.m., Commander Wiley will meet with local ROTC cadets, reinforcing the Legion's dedication to leadership, service, and patriotism among the next generation.

Following an afternoon of rest and preparation, a formal banquet will be held at 6:00 p.m. at the Heritage Inn. Guests will include members from Malmstrom AFB as well as invited dignitaries. This banquet will be the highlight of the visit, showcasing Montana's pride, hospitality, and commitment to serving our veterans. There are 50 seats available for Legion family, if you are interested in attending please reach out to Department HQ at [deptmtadjutant@gmail.com](mailto:deptmtadjutant@gmail.com) or [amlegmtsec@gmail.com](mailto:amlegmtsec@gmail.com)

#### Sunday, November 9 – All of these events are limited to the Host Post Guest list

The morning will begin with a breakfast hosted by Post 341, with members Clark and Louies welcoming the Commander and his team.

At 9:45 a.m., the group will depart for Lewistown, where Post 16 will host a luncheon at 12:00 p.m. (meal served at 12:30). Following the luncheon, the Commander will visit Durl Gibbs, a valued Legionnaire and community member.

At 3:00 p.m., the delegation will travel to Choteau, where Post 6 will host a small dinner gathering at 6:00 p.m. with local members. The day will conclude with a return to Great Falls around 8:30 p.m.

#### Monday, November 10 – Departure

The Commander's visit will conclude with an early departure as he heads to his next visit, marking the end of a productive and inspiring tour across Montana.

This visit by National Commander Wiley underscores The American Legion's continued commitment to strengthening communities, honoring service, and empowering veterans. Montana's Legion Family is proud to showcase our dedication, hospitality, and spirit of service during this important visit.



## **FINANCE CHAIRMAN**

### **Jed Damson**

Sad to say we as the American Legion Legionnaires are falling short of our fundraisers, least to say we need to step up and work these fundraisers — these fundraisers are the monies that is used to fund all of our programs. Look at this this way. We are doing a disservice to our youth!!! I know each post has their own raffle to do BUT if there are no monies for these programs they may have to be dropped, so a little extra effort on these fundraisers can do WONDERS

There is a resolution to be brought before the body of a \$10.00 dues increase. Now this put out of a two-fold, membership renewals are not fully completed for all members assigned to each post. Reach out to all members in post brings them back into compliance with new year. Do what has been put out like a Buddy Check. Care a little about each member!!!

## **HIGHWAY FATALITY MARKER**

### **Michael Emett**

I apologize for missing yet another conference, but I leave for Europe on 21 October.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

I had a system in place that was working where I contacted all posts on a bi-weekly basis. That fell apart when the DOJ.MT.GOV website changed dramatically. Rather than posting daily incident reports with a 10-day review available, the new program SmartWEB displays incidents sporadically throughout the day with no ability to check back on previous day's activities. Consequently, I was able to contact SGT Tammy Perkins, MHP Helena, who helped me through a couple of months. I am wholly dissatisfied with the DOJ program as it does not maintain a complete day's activities for an entire day. I, therefore, have been contacting districts every two weeks with an update only when something is related to district. Currently, I have 66 posts on my data base, all 11 districts represented by at least one post. In addition, I have obtained the current district commanders' information, and they are alerted when I contact a post about a potential fatality project.

I recently requested information for the six months' activity from each post. Only 30 of 66 posts responded, and the information that I will relate later is a compilation of only 31 posts. I perceive that of the missing 35 posts, many have not had much to report so they have simply "blown me off". I would request that at this meeting, it be mentioned to the district commanders that I really need this information, regardless of a "negative report".

This last reporting period I have had fewer request from Helena's Adjutant Assistant but have received far more direct communications from individuals requesting a white cross. I try to answer all requests, some have fallen by the wayside as I am doing a lot of travelling, but I endeavor to answer all requests. If I find enough information to locate at post or district level I pass the information on to the district commander and a potential post. Certainly, I

am not infallible, but I do the best I can. Often the requests are ancient history, 30-50 years old. Many do not exist on the master listing that was passed down to me from Jim Kelly. Again, I do the best I can. I know from experience that the posts do the best they can as well. I have had some negative feedback when I don't respond or for other reasons that I cannot fully explain. I try to explain to many of these folks the nature of the program; it's a safety program to warn people of dangerous driving conditions and not a memorial. Sometimes that sets them off. Recently a girl was killed on a motorcycle, and I placed a white cross at the site of the accident. The father went ahead and built a separate memorial. This made the Billings Gazette two days as he created a shrine nearby. It was a source of contention with DOT, but, at least, I was not drawn into the controversy as our marker was legit.

As mentioned last time, I have been in contact with another individual, Scott Stagg (his email forwarded to you), several times. I disagree with 90% of his ideas, but I, also, have been wondering about how we might do something to further point out the hazard. We have had such a problem with dead motorcyclists this past year. I wish there might be some way to distinguish a motorcycle versus an automobile. The Montana helmet law is part of our problem. DUI is another. Most recently, 40% of fatal accidents were potentially from people with Marijuana in their systems. I just don't know, but it might be something to talk about.

I did a Zoom meeting with the Reserve St. Working Group out of Missoula. More of a Q and A, but I think it went pretty well. My main recommendation was that they contact the local post and work from there.

I'm going to forward another email to you, this one from Greg Harbac, district 7, Bozeman. He has seen some ideas that may keep people happier and not upset the DOT. By the way, Greg and his group are amazing and deserve acknowledgement from the state American Legion.

In addition, Greg Harbac received an award from the state of Montana and had a chat with the Governor. He addressed my concerns about the website we use and, hopefully, this will change.

## ISSUE TO ADDRESS

As stated in my last report, there are those who might question whether this program should be abandoned. What might be asked is whether a marker meets the stipulations of the program. Has the death occurred due to unsafe road conditions? I have asked myself a few times about the cross I am installing. I grieve along with those who have lost a loved one, but did the accident occur because someone did something stupid. This last year I placed a marker at a spot that has had a number of fatalities over the year. Later I found out that the motorcyclist was speeding AND reaching across his body to close a flapping saddle bag. Did this warrant a marker? I'm only saying that maybe we need to address what actually constitutes a need for a marker. I'm probably preaching to the choir, but it wouldn't be the first time.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

Between 16 May 25 and 10 Oct 25 there have been 77 fatal accidents (this is based on my somewhat erratic SmartWEB database). I believe the number to be higher. Posts from District 2 and District 8 did not submit reports. To my knowledge, most, if not all posts continue to do maintenance and cleanup on their respective markers. Of the 31 posts responding, the following is provided: 46 new posts installed; 50 post replaced; 13 posts lost or removed. I cannot express my gratitude to all the American Legion members who provide excellent service to our community, let alone the money spent, mileage, and hours of service.

## INSURANCE DIRECTOR

### Duane Cunningham

I often get asked what Legion Insurance (LIT) is—or worse yet, I run into Legionnaires and members of our Legion Family who have never even heard of it. So, I thought this would be a good time to share some updated information about what LIT is, who's eligible, and why it's an important benefit for all of us.

First off, ALL American Legion Family members—including the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion—are eligible to sign up for Legion Insurance. If you're not including LIT when you talk to potential members about why they should join, you're leaving out one of our best benefits.

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) was formed in 1966 with two primary goals:

1. To provide Legion Family members with affordable insurance protection.
2. To provide a source of revenue to participating Legion Departments.

The Trust has been remarkably successful for more than 50 years. Today, over 2 million Legionnaires across 48 participating Departments are enrolled in this unique program. Over that time, hundreds of millions of dollars in benefits have been paid to members and their families, and more than \$52 million has been distributed to Departments nationwide.

The first plan offered was the Hospital Income Protection Plan, which provided payments for hospital confinement. Since then, LIT has expanded to include a variety of insurance options, such as:

- Cancer, Accidental Death, and Travel Accident coverage
- Critical Illness and Disability Income plans
- Long-Term Care, Medicare Supplement, and Medicare Advantage plans
- Emergency Assistance, Dental, and Whole Life insurance
- Auto, Homeowners, Identity Theft, and Home Health Care coverage

Since its creation, AGIA has worked closely with the Trust to design plans specifically for Legion members and their families. One of the most popular offerings is the No-Cost Accidental Death Insurance Plan. This plan provides:

- \$5,000 to your beneficiary if you suffer a fatal covered accident while traveling to, from, or participating in an official Legion event.
- \$1,000 for all other fatal covered accidents.

You pay nothing for this coverage—it's provided simply because you are part of The American Legion Family.

In addition to the no-cost plan, LIT also offers affordable options for supplemental protection, including Emergency Assistance, Cancer Care, Long-Term Care, Dental and Health Insurance, and Identity Theft Monitoring—making LIT a one-stop resource for Legionnaires and their families.

With the new location of our Department Headquarters in Belgrade, we're excited to share that we'll now have a local LIT representative available to participate in more of our events. This will make it easier for members across Montana to learn about available coverage and sign up for the benefits they've earned.

For more information or to register for your coverage, please see the Department Adjutant or visit with our LIT representative at upcoming Department events.

## **LEGISLATIVE**

### **Roger Hagan**

Your Legislative Committee has continued to represent the Department in a variety of venues since the State Convention. However, things have been much slower since the end of the 2025 State Legislative Session this past Spring.

So, now we are preparing for the next legislative session and addressing the national issues with our Congressional members and staff. Your Legislative Liaisons who serve on the National Legislative Committee are Richard Klose, liaison to Senator Daines; Duane Cunningham, liaison to Senator Sheehy, Ryan McMillon, liaison to Representative Zinke; and Lowell Long, liaison to Representative Downing. Please communicate with these members if you want to find out the latest news on your American Legion congressional efforts.

I was unable to attend the American Legion Convention in Tampa Bay in August due to a work requirement but have been getting positive feedback and information about the Legislative Committee meetings. With the government shutdown due to the lack of a budget or continuing resolution (CR), the focus on many of our issues has been redirected to getting a budget or CR passed.

Although Congress is in some disarray now, that doesn't mean American Legion members should fail to share your opinion on our key legislative issues. And, you guessed it, I will repeat in this report, and will continue to harp on in the future, the need for more members of the Montana Department to participate in our Congressional Outreach program. It is important that all our members subscribe to the national program called VoterVOICE. You can click on the link ([votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home](http://votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home)) and "Sign up for Alerts". Montana is still near the bottom of the list of states contacting their congressional members concerning our national issues.

Again, I ask you to become/remain engaged in the political process. Get to know who your state legislators are and contact them early and often. A lot of legislators or candidates have already started their campaign for election or reelection. Talk with them about military and veteran issues and find out where they stand on those issues. Then, let your Montana Department know of the results of your engagement. Grassroots is the lifeblood of legislative efforts, both on the state and national level.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Irene Dickerson**

As of the most recent reporting date, Department membership stands at 56.19% of goal. At this time last year, we were ahead of that mark, indicating a department-wide decrease compared to last year's benchmark.

Of our eleven districts, only District 10 has surpassed the 60% threshold, currently reporting 62.66%. All other districts remain below that level, with most ranging between 52% and 59% of their established targets.

While progress has been steady, we remain approximately 3–5 percentage points behind last year's performance at this stage in the membership cycle. Continued focus on recruitment and retention will be essential to meet our department goals by year's end.

#### **District Overview (as of October 8, 2025)**

##### **District % of Goal**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1 | 48.96% |
| 2 | 39.60% |
| 3 | 54.37% |
| 4 | 58.07% |
| 5 | 57.89% |

#### District % of Goal

|    |        |
|----|--------|
| 6  | 55.26% |
| 7  | 55.79% |
| 8  | 59.94% |
| 9  | 59.20% |
| 10 | 62.66% |
| 11 | 52.63% |

#### Recruitment Initiatives

During each district meeting, a variety of recruitment and engagement strategies have been discussed. Zone and District Commanders are encouraged to coordinate outreach efforts at high-visibility public events, including:

- County fairs and community festivals
- Gun shows and sporting events
- Veteran appreciation days and local parades

These venues provide valuable opportunities to engage with prospective members face-to-face and share the mission, benefits, and camaraderie of The American Legion.

#### Retention Strategies

Membership success depends equally on retention as it does on recruitment. To strengthen member engagement and renewals:

- Personally contact members who have not yet renewed.
- Invite members to participate in post meetings, service projects, and local events.
- Publicly recognize member contributions to reinforce their value to the organization.
- Use newsletters, email, and social media to maintain consistent communication.

Active and personal engagement helps ensure members feel connected to our mission and proud to belong.

We have a strong foundation and dedicated leadership at every level. With continued communication, visible community involvement, and persistent follow-up, I am confident we can close the current gap and achieve—or surpass—our annual membership goal.

## **NATIONAL SECURITY**

**Ken Simon**

The number one issue could be any number of things going on right now in the world where the United States is involved in some aspect. Our troops are scattered around the world and of course here at home. Along with our armed forces of every branch, there is another group of men and women who are in harms way. Those are the folks who keep our borders secure in the Customs and Border Protection Border Patrol, Customs and Border Protection Officers at Ports of Entry and Sea Ports around the United States, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Officers, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

All are there for one reason, to Keep our Nation Safe and Secure! But we also have a part in that, in that we as Veterans support those who are still in uniform and those who serve the people of our country. National Security is everyone's job!

**BORDER SECURITY:** We all know that over the past few years, our southern border has become a source of an influx of people from all over the world. However, that doesn't mean they all enter at a Port of Entry, whether it be on land, sea, or air. All of us are aware of the problem at our southern border and the past four years have seen a very large number of illegal aliens enter by crossing the border between Ports of Entry, by sea, and by air unfortunately! The biggest problem is that as a result of this incursion of illegals not being vetted, we have no idea who they are, where they came from, or their status. By that I mean are they coming here to escape what's happening in their home country or do they have an ulterior motive. We have all seen or heard about the numbers of people and the news has talked about the crossings and the trouble that comes with it. Drugs, criminals of every type, separated families, and of course the terrorists!

Since President Trump was re-elected however, the move to secure the Southern and Northern Border became the number one effort regarding National Security. He has ordered more Border Patrol and other assets to secure the borders as well as to begin the round up of illegal aliens across the nation. Of course, this has caused consternation with certain states and cities as those particular areas are resisting President Trumps orders to find, arrest, and remove those folks who are here Illegally! With the Presidents support of this effort and the hard work and diligence of the Border Patrol and ICE officers, this effort is beginning to pay off. In conjunction with this move, the President indicated that illegal aliens can avoid removal or deportation if they "deport themselves willingly" at Border Crossings. Since this was instituted, there have been approximately two (2) million removed by the Border Patrol and ICE and one point six (1.6) million have self-deported while another four hundred thousand have been deported! For four months straight United States Border Patrol has released Zero illegal aliens into the United States. That is a 97% reduction in illegal aliens heading into the United States from Central America. Several thousand decided it was not worth the effort to travel to the Southern Border only to be turned around, so they returned to their home country. They have apparently felt that they had Zero Chance of entering the country or would be refused entry. The Department of Homeland Security has made it clear that the era of an Open Border is over!

While the numbers is only a drop in the bucket, we must realize that illegal entry has gone on for four or more years with little or no consequences, so it will take patience and time to remove as many as can be found, arrested, and removed from the United States. Anyone who crosses without entering

and processing through a Port of Entry whether it be by land, sea, or air has committed a crime. Those who cross, are apprehended and deported three times have committed a Felony, and those that were apprehended and released by both President Obama and Biden's administration were issued Notices to Appear before a judge. If they did not appear, that is a crime just like if you were arrested and issued a Notice to Appear and did not!

CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS: What or why are they considered in National Security? Well, this has been in the news a lot over the past two or more years and there have been a number of people who were found to have documents that were classified from FOUO - For Official Use Only, Confidential, Secret, Top Secret, and Compartmentalized! And in most cases or instances the documents were not stored in a secured manner! And there have been instances within the past year where classified documents have been removed by individuals who possessed a clearance and have access or got access to documents that were classified. A recent incident resulted in a State Department employee with access removed classified documents and met with Chinese officials! This individual began this several years ago, the most recent episode occurred in 2023 involving over a thousand documents marked "Top Secret" or "Secret!" A warrant was issued to search the individual's home, where a search of the residence resulted in the discovery of the documents. There were multiple documents printed on September 12 and the 25<sup>th</sup> "concerning military aircraft capabilities!" This individual worked as a contractor with the Office of Net Assessment at the Department of Defense and had met with Chinese government officials over the past several years.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth learned of another incident in July of 2025 from the website "Pro Publica", that Microsoft was using Chinese based engineers to maintain sensitive Defense Department computer systems. This was being accomplished by having U.S. citizens cleared to be "so-called digital escorts" to monitor, receive, and input information sent to them from the engineers. The problem was these digital escorts did not have the technical knowledge to understand what was being done! Hegseth learned that the program was put in place under President Obama and continued through Biden's administration and term of office. After learning about the practice, Secretary Hegseth terminated the program. Microsoft was confronted and agreed to go through the Defense Department's computers to ensure that there was no malicious software in place to provide the Chinese the means to corrupt or steal any sensitive information. They also agreed that this was to be accomplished and completed at not cost to the taxpayers!

In conclusion, this is but one of many instances where classified and sensitive documents have been copied and or removed by people with the clearances and access! There is no telling or evidence how much has been compromised by the breaches of Security, but it can be disastrous to our National Security and the detriment of our Armed Forces.

## **ORATORICAL**

**Jeff Holmes**

The results of the department oratorical held at the East Helena High School on Saturday March 30<sup>th</sup> as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Carmen Katzenberger a junior from Harlowton and District #9
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Gabriel Stordahl a junior of Bozeman and District #7
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Kaylee Hampton a senior in Kalispell and District #4



- 4<sup>th</sup> Madison Clement a sophomore from Helena and District #6  
5<sup>th</sup> Claire Van a sophomore from Corvallis and District #5

I would like to thank all posts, districts, and participants for continuing the education of our constitution. Obviously, I would also like to encourage more posts to push the oratorical contest in their area. We are amazed to hear the orations but would love to hear more and give away more money to kids. This is the third year Carmen has competed in the department oratorical contest which just proves the point that the younger we can recruit our contestants the better. It takes a while to these kids to develop their voice and confidence.

Secondly, a huge shout out to Erin, East Helena High School, Lowell, Duane, and the rest of the members and judges who helped out behind the scenes. The continued success of the Department Oratorical Contest is truly a team effort. We did miss the efforts and presence of our good friend Bill White. Rest in peace and God Bless.

**Next year's Department Oratorical Contest is scheduled to also be held in Helena on Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026.** Erin has got us the use of East Helena High School which works really well at no cost, and she is starting to create quite the list of available judges between the local lawyers and politicians.

I work for you and try to make your job easier. As always, let me know what I can do to help. We are all in this together.

### **SON OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (S.A.L.) ADVISOR**

#### **John Meacham**

At this time, I have no updates to report on Detachment business. Despite repeated attempts over the past several weeks, I have been unable to make contact with any member of the Detachment leadership by phone, text, or email. Messages have gone unanswered, and no current information or activity reports have been shared from their side. Until communication improves, I am unable to provide any meaningful update on the status or direction of the Detachment.

### **SHOOTING SPORTS**

#### **Clara Santopietro**

As I begin to write this report, I'm realizing just how much I don't know about Shooting Sports for youth. I volunteered for Shooting Sports because it sounded interesting and fun. So far, it has been just that.

At American Legion National Convention this past August 22-28 in Tampa, FL, there was an air rifle exhibit in the Exhibition Hall. I learned about the basic pneumatic air rifle (charged by hand pump) and had the opportunity to fire it. Having my own hunting rifles, I was shocked to learn that these rifles are loaded with one BB or pellet, fired, and loaded, fired... repeating throughout practices and matches. I found out that the number one reason for this action is SAFETY. Target

shooting has been recorded as the safest rifle sport because everyone involved has learned and practices rifle safety.

I emailed the American Legion National Shooting Sports Chair, Kim Schriver, requesting anything and everything that she had on this subject. I received a wealth of information. Highlights include:

National Championship Timeline at a Glance:

2025 – 2026: American Legion Junior Three Position Air Rifle National Championships

September 1, 2025: First round postal match competition target sales and registration opens.

December 15, 2025: First round postal match competition target set sales and registration closes.

February 2, 2026: Targets due to the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) - must be postmarked on or before February 2, 2026, to be eligible for scoring.

February 16, 2026: Second round postal match competition targets mailed out by the CMP.

April 1, 2026: Second round postal match competition ends. Targets due to the CMP - must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2026, to be eligible for scoring.

July 21 - 25, 2026: American Legion National Championship (Individual Tournament).

There is still plenty of time for Posts throughout Montana to find and sponsor a youth shooting club/ team in your area. Check your local 4-H, FFA, JROTC, gun clubs, shooting ranges, etc... I can help you get started since everything that you need, as a sponsor, is online. If you already sponsor an individual or team, please let me know as I would love to come watch and learn more about what you do. My contact information is [pdsantopietro@gmail.com](mailto:pdsantopietro@gmail.com) or (406) 799-9355.

## **VETERANS ECONOMICS/Homeless Veterans Coordinator**

**Dan Smart**

### **Veteran Homelessness & National Prevention Efforts — 2025 Report**

Veteran homelessness across the United States continues to decline due to the combined efforts of federal, state, and community organizations. Between January 2023 and January 2024, the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness dropped from 35,574 to 32,882 — a 7.5% decrease. The number of unsheltered Veterans declined even more sharply, from 15,507 to 13,851, marking a 10.7% reduction. These figures represent the lowest levels of Veteran homelessness since tracking began in 2009, with an overall decline of more than 55% since 2010.

This progress has been achieved through collaboration among the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and local community partners. These agencies have continued to refine their approach, focusing not only on housing Veterans but also on preventing homelessness before it occurs.

## National Prevention Framework

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness continues to lead national coordination efforts under its prevention strategy titled *Ending Homelessness Before It Starts: A Federal Prevention Framework*. This initiative emphasizes early intervention and proactive measures to keep individuals and families housed. The framework promotes programs such as rental assistance, eviction prevention, mediation, legal support, and coordinated crisis response services.

By focusing on prevention, this approach helps communities reduce the number of people who fall into homelessness and limits the cycle of recurring housing instability that affects many at-risk Veterans and families.

## VA Budget and Resource Allocation — Fiscal Year 2026

For fiscal year 2026, the Department of Veterans Affairs has allocated approximately **\$3.2 billion** toward programs aimed at ending Veteran homelessness. This represents a significant investment designed to serve roughly 300,000 Veterans nationwide.

The VA's funding supports six primary categories of service:

1. **Permanent Housing Supportive Services** – Provides access to affordable housing and intensive case management to help Veterans remain stably housed.
2. **Prevention Services** – Works to prevent Veterans from becoming homeless through financial assistance and eviction prevention programs.
3. **Transitional Housing** – Offers temporary housing while Veterans transition to permanent housing solutions.
4. **Treatment and Rehabilitation** – Delivers comprehensive healthcare, mental health support, and residential rehabilitation services.
5. **Employment and Job Training** – Helps Veterans secure meaningful employment and achieve long-term financial stability.
6. **Administrative and Research Costs** – Supports program management, data collection, and the evaluation of effectiveness.

A general breakdown of spending shows that the majority of funds go directly toward local patient care and operational costs, followed by grants and contracts for direct services. A small percentage supports administrative functions and national coordination.

Additionally, in 2025, the VA awarded \$42 million in grants to nonprofit and legal organizations that assist Veterans with eviction defense, landlord-tenant disputes, and benefits claims—further strengthening national homelessness prevention efforts.

## National Outcomes — Fiscal Year 2025

In fiscal year 2025, the VA set a goal of placing 41,000 Veterans in permanent housing. That goal was exceeded, with nearly 48,000 Veterans successfully housed. Of those,

approximately 96% remained stably housed during the year, demonstrating the long-term effectiveness of VA housing programs.

Since 2022, the VA has permanently housed about 134,000 Veterans. As of early 2025, 85 communities and three states have reached the benchmark of “effectively ending Veteran homelessness,” meaning that any Veteran experiencing homelessness can be quickly identified and provided housing and support.

### **Montana-Specific Efforts**

In Montana, progress continues to mirror national trends. For fiscal year 2024, the Montana VA aimed to assist 230 Veterans and ultimately exceeded that goal by housing 249 Veterans. This success was achieved through collaboration among local communities, housing authorities, and VA partners across the state.

With a growing emphasis on rural outreach and coordination among service providers, Montana continues to strengthen its ability to identify and assist Veterans at risk of homelessness.

### **Conclusion**

While significant progress has been made, challenges remain. Many Veterans continue to face complex barriers such as limited affordable housing, health issues, and employment instability. However, the ongoing national commitment—combined with targeted local initiatives—continues to move the nation closer to the ultimate goal: ensuring that every Veteran has a safe, stable place to call home.

## **VA HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER REPRESENTATIVES**

### **Cindy Tusler**

#### **Action Items:**

1. Continue to work with Mary Kittson and Anne Petterson into conversation to develop an action plan for a campaign to support recruiting volunteers at VA facilities in eastern Montana. This might include:
  - a. getting info in church newsletters and to other adult social groups
  - b. provide support for potential volunteers when they are completing their Federal volunteer forms
2. Campaign would initially focus on needs of the Ben Steele Va Clinic, and the Dr. Joeseeph Medicine Crow Clinic in Billings, and, the Community Living Center in Miles City. With hopes that lessons learned could be applied to the CBOCs in other eastern Montana communities.
3. Work to find posts or other groups who can assist to purchase items for the Veterans in the long-term care facility

**Discussion:** I was asked and agreed to serve as the VA Hospital Rep for eastern Montana facilities, however, I was not given any points of contact. Attempting to contact the coordinators at the facilities via the Federal phone system is almost next to impossible. As a

result I've spent my time and physical trips to Billings trying to make contacts. On 9 October 2025, I was able to visit with Mary Kittson who coordinates volunteers for both the Ben Steele Va Clinic (specialty clinics) and the Dr. Joeseeph Medicine Crow Clinic (Primary Care Clinic). I have made email contact with Anne Peterson, Recreation Therapist, at the VA Community Living Center in Miles City. We have yet to have a face-to-face conversation. I have not made contact with the CBOCs located in Glasgow, Glendive, Miles City or Plentywood. In conversations with the state owned living center in Glendive, I was informed they have a foundation supporting them and probably don't need assistance.

**Billings VA facilities:** During the initial part of my conversation with Mary Kittson, she was thinking I was inquiring more about providing things for the facility, like coffee in the waiting room, Cards (refrigerator art) for Veterans visiting the facilities, etc. And informed me the local Posts or groups like Girl Scouts (respectively) usually helped with such things. I believe this is also what the Glendive facility may have been thinking when they commented they had a foundation for such items.

Mary and I did some brainstorming and came up with an idea the way the Department might be able to help is to do a campaign to get the word out on the need for volunteers. She likes to have volunteers 1) in the greater positions at both facilities, 2) to shuttle wheelchairs between facilities and 3) to roam through the facilities visiting with Veterans while the wait (to be able to do this without leaving the grater position vacant). Some of her volunteers also end up driving the DAV vans so it's nice to have additional volunteers to cover the other positions listed above. Mary also mentioned getting a volunteer on board is a very, long drawn-out process (similar to getting hired for a Federal position) and she loses some potential volunteers as they get frustrated with the process. The process was also a reason Mary thought it best to not look at high school aged volunteers, though colleges in Billings and Miles City may work.

**Miles City Va Longterm Care Facility:** Mary Peterson sent an email to let me know of the immediate needs for the Veterans in the long-term care facility. They are: larger bottles of shampoo/conditioner as the VA no longer provides it, long-sleeved, plaid shirts with snaps in size 2XL and 3X, bird seed and peanuts in the shell for the feeders outside their room windows, and bird houses. They are also looking for subscriptions to classic car magazines or western/outdoor magazines. A Post 32 member has purchased the shampoo/conditioner. I will work with the other posts to see who can assist with the additional items.

## **WOMEN'S VETERANS COORDINATOR**

### **Irene Dickerson**

During the 9 district meetings, I've informed of upcoming women veterans symposium occurring 1-3 May 2026. Will continue to actively promote the event.

Reviewing speakers for May 1-3, 2026, event

Coordinating with department on location of next symposium

Recruiting women veterans to attend and participate

Reviewed existing vendor lists and explored opportunities to bring in new vendors

Promoted the Trivia Night at The Windbag on October 13, 2025