

Montana Legionnaire

March



Department Commander

KIM KAY C MCCARTY
MARTIN



Hello everyone! Hope everyone is doing well and stay warm as we get hit with colder, wintery weather in the next couple of weeks. I just found out we just missed our 90% target date. We are at 87.78% in membership as of today, 12 March. Thank you to everyone who did their best to try and get us to 90%. Let's work hard this next month to get to 95% by 8 April. I appreciate everyone for doing a good job!

I had a wonderful opportunity to go with fellow American Legion and Auxiliary members from Montana to go to Washington DC for American Legion Washington Conference on the 2nd through the 4th of March. Members of our party were Duane Cunningham, AL Adjutant, Roger Hagan, Legislator Chairman, Clara "PD" Santopietro, Jason Moore-Brown, Cassie Johnson, American Auxiliary, and myself. We met up with our own Todd Dunlap, Senator Sheehy's representative while in DC. On Monday we each went to different breakout sessions. Clara and myself went to Veterans Employment and Education Commission that touched on other benefits and Homelessness.

We learned that arts is a way for veterans to heal from Anxiety, PTSD, or depression as it gives the veterans something to focus on, a way to express what they are feeling in a positive way. The Chicago Compassionate Arts group talked with us that acting and how that allows a

veteran to speak out without having to identify themselves is a way of healing. Healing comes from many different arts, it doesn't have to be acting, it could be pottery, or even coloring.

Something a person can enjoy that allows them to relax, calm their thoughts, and just be.

We heard from Mr. Rick from the innovation Capability and modernization Office. He talked about influencing veterans and students to work for the defense force in America. Currently they have 41 workforce projects that can use skilled training and technical training individuals. His office works closely with Department of Labor where there are jobs available for veterans.

Apprenticeship programs are available for veterans and you can use your GI Bill to pay for your program. We heard from Director Loach about VA Loans. When purchasing your home, the VA will appraise the home for value and check for minimum resources. Training videos are available at [vimeo.com/channels/American Legion](https://vimeo.com/channels/AmericanLegion) or on U-tube.

On Tuesday we met separately with Senator Daines, Senator Sheehy and Representative Zinke where we discussed legislative points that are pertinent to veterans and in particular pertinent to veterans in Montana.

Some of the topics we discussed were the Major Richard Star Act, Balanced community care, fund evidence based mental health treatment, housing for the homeless and MT VA. We then found out that Rep Zinke was not seeking reelection. On Wednesday we met for Montana Coffee with our congressional delegates and everyone in DC from MT at that time. We talked to people we had never met before and made a few new friends. After a picture opportunity with the delegates, we then got in our seats for National Commander Wiley's address to Joint Veterans Affairs Committee. He made a resounding speech that should have impacted the committee. When Commander Wiley finished his speech, we met with Representative Downing. We talked to Rep. Downing about the same topics as mentioned earlier. It was a couple of long days but the experience was awesome. I came home more inspired and motivated to get things done!



Department Adjutant

Duane Cunningham



The month of March marks the beginning of spring, but it also signals one of the busiest times of the year for the Legion. Starting with the Washington, D.C. Conference and then directly into Spring Meetings and elections, the Women Veterans Symposium, National Spring Meetings, American Legion Boys State and ALA Girls State, and ultimately Department Convention in June – “silly season” is officially upon us. Since we will be discussing many of these topics at upcoming District meetings, I want to provide an update on the Department of Colorado and its journey toward charter reinstatement. Why is this important? In recent months, I’ve seen some resistance to changes that are not truly negotiable. Change is never easy, and that’s understandable. However, the reality is that the world has changed and so have the rules governing how we operate. Requirements such as liability insurance, background checks, rifle inventories and parental signoffs in accordance with child protection laws are now standard practice in today’s society. The American Legion has had to adapt to these evolving expectations, and over the past five years especially, we have seen significant adjustments.

So why should this matter to us? Because the consequences of non-compliance can be serious. It is a steep and slippery slope, and as Montana Legionnaires, we must ensure we never find ourselves facing the challenges the Department of Colorado experienced with the loss of its Department Charter.

On to Colorado. First test question: How long ago was it that Colorado’s Charter was suspended? Answer: 10 June 2023, almost 3 years ago.

At the October National Fall meetings, the following resolution was passed:

Resolution No. 29: Reinstatement of the Charter of The American Legion Department of Colorado Origin: Subcommittee on Resolutions

WHEREAS, The charter of the American Legion Department of Colorado was suspended on June 10, 2023; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of Colorado has worked diligently to remedy the deficiencies and violations which caused the suspension; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 8-9, 2025, That the charter of the American Legion Department of Colorado shall be reinstated on December 1, 2025; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Department of Colorado shall remain in a probationary status until such time as a department adjutant is hired and trained, and such other benchmarks, as identified in a memorandum of understanding are met, and after review and approval of same from the national judge advocate, the national commander, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said memorandum and the national adjutant, be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to same; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That such probation is also contingent on the promulgation and acceptance of a separate memorandum of understanding regarding the disposition of the department headquarters building, and after review and approval of same from the national judge advocate, the national commander, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute said memorandum and the national adjutant, be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest to same; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That such full reinstatement will be subject to a separate loan administration agreement which shall cover the total amount of its indebtedness to The American Legion as determined as of December 1, 2025, at the applicable federal rate published by the Internal Revenue Service for long term obligations; and, be it further



RESOLVED, That the terms of the indebtedness shall be reported to the National Executive Committee at its next regular meeting; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That National Executive Committee Resolution No. 2, "Suspension of Department of Colorado Charter," approved in special meeting on June 10, 2023, is hereby superseded and rescinded.

So in a nutshell, the Charter is reinstated, however, they are still on probation, have to liquidate their Department Headquarters and pay back National for all the time, travel and work that was done by National staff to get them up and going again. Yikes.

At the Fall Conference in Indianapolis in October, Past National Commander David Reibein succinctly spoke about the hazards and consequences of not following guidelines.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: May I approach the podium, sir?

NATIONAL COMMANDER WILEY: Absolutely, sir.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER REHBEIN: "I've asked for a couple of minutes of personal privilege here. You've heard me report several times on the work of the Department Advisory Committee. We are seeing a transition point today. Resolution No. 29 that you passed is marking the close of what has been a very difficult period in the history of The American Legion, with two departments under suspension." (Washington was the other).

"I want to thank some people for the work that they've done to help put those departments back on their feet as chartered departments. First with Washington, Past Commander Tom Bock, Past Commander Charlie Schmidt. Secondly with Colorado, Past Commander Paul Dillard and Past Commander Jimmie Foster. But mostly, I want to thank the members of those two departments that stood up to help get their departments back, that helped recognize their problems and helped solve those problems."

"But here's a warning. Those problems can be traced back directly to violations of their department's constitution and by-laws. So, what you heard the judge advocate say this morning about constitution and by-laws, take it seriously. Go home and look at the way your department is conducting your business and make sure you're staying within those constitution and by-laws. Little violations get bigger. But that's where it starts, with little violations. And then they get bigger, and then they get bigger, and then one day your department charter gets suspended."

"Don't let that happen to you. We have reorganized the Department Advisory Committee; we've got good people on it. It's bigger than it was, and I hope they have nothing to do for the next five years. But that's only up to you. It's up to you whether or not they have anything to do in it for the next five years. Mr. Commander, thank you for the time. I appreciate it. (Applause)"

I bring this this issue up, not because Montana has a problem, but to remind everyone the importance of Montana's Department Constitution and Bylaws and all the additional rules that go along with running the amazing programs that the American Legion has. We are all responsible to know the rules and follow them. At last year's Department Convention in Helena, we passed an updated Department Constitution and By-laws. How many of you have seen it and read it? How many Posts and Districts have updated their Constitution and Bylaws to ensure compliance with both Department and National guidelines? How many Posts even know where their Constitution and Bylaws are? Did you know that if a Post does not know where or cannot locate the Post Constitution and By-Laws, that the Post is then by rule under the Department Constitution and By-Laws, and that can really make meetings, elections and day to day business difficult and often impossible.

I have had a few Posts' reach out to Department for assistance, and I am happy to help, but I cannot do it alone for 115 Posts. Post and District leadership, I cannot stress enough the importance of your Constitution and By-Laws, and ensuring you are following them. As wonderful as Colorado may be, we do not want to travel that road. Get to updating.

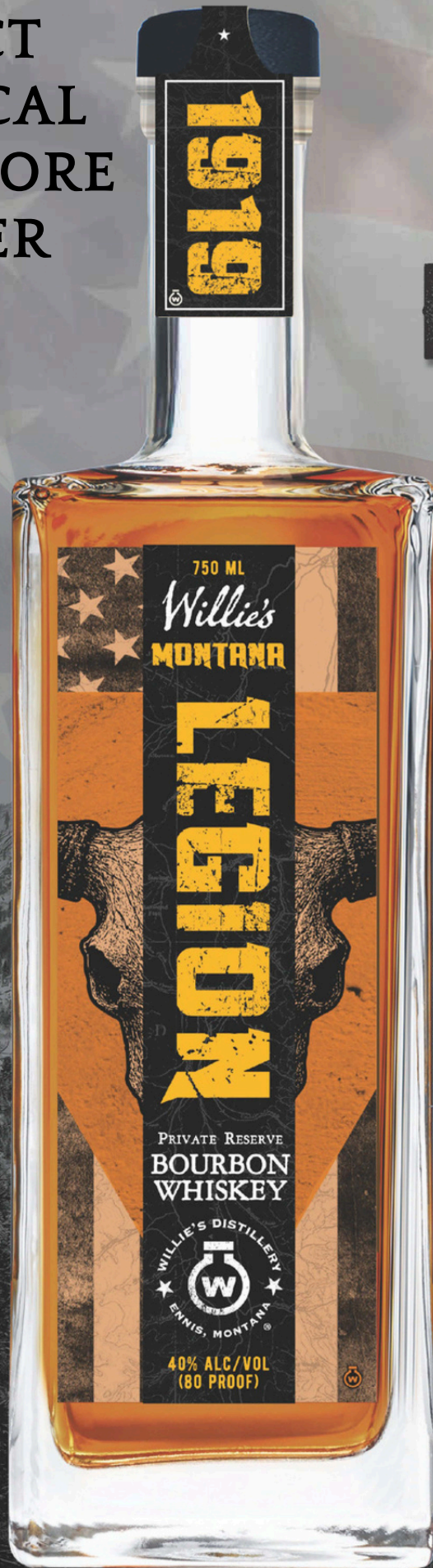


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NABCA 160-9901175-75

Montana Medal of Honor: Staff Sergeant Travis Atkins

Born in Great Falls, Montana, on December 9, 1975, Travis W. Atkins enlisted in the U.S. Army on November 9, 2000. He attended basic infantry training at Fort Benning, Georgia. Travis's first assignment was to Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. In March 2003, he was an infantry fire team leader, deployed with the unit to Kuwait. His unit participated in the invasion of Iraq. By December 2003, Atkins had been honorably discharged from the Army and was attending the University of Montana in Missoula. He decided to reenlist in 2005. He was assigned to Delta Company within the same Battalion he had served with in 2003. He deployed to Iraq in August 2005 with the 10th Mountain Division. Staff Sergeant Travis Atkins was conducting route security with his squad in the town of Abu Samak, Iraq. As the squad was securing the route, they noticed two insurgents crossing the road. SSG Atkins directed his vehicle towards the two insurgents. Dismounting with the intent to search and interrogate the men, one of the insurgents began a fight with SSG Atkins. The insurgents were able to reach their suicide vests during the hand-to-hand combat. Reacting quickly, SSG Atkins threw himself on top of the suicide bomber. His selfless act saved the lives of his team but mortally wounded Atkins. During the Medal of Honor Ceremony in 2019, President Trump noted that Atkins rose to the highest calling. He laid down his life to save the lives of his fellow warriors. His son, Trevor Oliver, accepted the award on his father's behalf. In the audience were fifty members of the 10th Mountain Division, his father's unit.

Do you have a story to share? I'd love to hear from you. Your story is important, whether a personal experience or a tribute to a loved one. at rosebudveteranscorner@gmail.com or call me at 406-351-9775. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Irene Dickerson has a doctorate in Business Administration and is a retired Army Colonel living her best life in Big Sky Country.



Service Officer

Eric Beal

H.R. 1004, Love Lives On Act of 2025

-To amend titles 10 and 38, United States Code, to improve benefits and services for surviving spouses, and for other purposes. Prevent Gold Star Spouses Loss of Benefits, The American Legion has resolved to protect Gold Star Spouses from losing their benefits
The American Legion supports H.R. 1004 as currently written.

H.R. 1685, Justice for ALS Veterans Act of 2025

-To amend title 38, United States Code, to extend increased dependency and indemnity compensation paid to surviving spouses of veterans who die from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, regardless of how long the veterans had such disease prior to death.
Through Resolution No. 19: Ensuring Parity for Survivor Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, The American Legion supports the reevaluation of eligibility for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation to ensure equitable access of supplemental payments for all survivors who have earned them through their sacrifice
The American Legion supports H.R. 1685 as currently written.

H.R. 2164, Dayton National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2025

-To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into an agreement with the Montgomery County Land Bank for the transfer of certain land near Dayton National Cemetery to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
The American Legion has no position on H.R. 2164 as currently written.

H.R. 4469, PRESUME Act

-To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from requiring evidence of a certain dose of radiation to determine that a veteran is a radiation exposed veteran, and for other purposes.
This position is supported by American Legion Resolution No. 130: Radiation Exposure, which requires the removal of all radiation dose estimate requirements, as they are an unreasonable burden of proof for our veterans.
The American Legion supports H.R. 4469 with recommended changes.

H.R.5339, Susan E. Lukas 9/11 Servicemember Fairness Act

-To establish a presumption of service connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to certain toxins at the Pentagon Reservation during certain period beginning on September 11, 2001.
Through Resolution No. 17: Environmental Exposure, The American Legion supports evidence based presumptive service connection for toxic exposure
The American Legion supports H.R. 5339 as currently written.





Montana American Legion Boys State & Auxiliary Girls State

Investing in the Leaders of Tomorrow

For generations, the American Legion Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State programs have played a vital role in shaping Montana's future leaders. These respected, week-long civic leadership programs give high school juniors an opportunity to experience government not just by learning about it — but by living it.

Held annually on the campus of Carroll College in Helena, Montana Boys State and Girls State bring together students from communities across the state for an immersive experience in leadership, citizenship, and public service.

During the week-long session, delegates: form and operate mock city, county, and state governments; campaign for office and participate in elections; draft, debate, and vote on legislation; learn about the judicial system, law enforcement, and public service; develop confidence in public speaking, teamwork, and leadership

Students leave with a deeper understanding of how government works, a stronger sense of civic responsibility, and skills that will benefit them for a lifetime.

Why Boys State & Girls State Matter

These programs are more than a summer activity — they are an investment in Montana's future. Alumni often go on to become community leaders, business owners, educators, service members, and elected officials. Colleges and employers recognize Boys State and Girls State as marks of leadership, initiative, and dedication to service.

Most importantly, these programs teach young people that their voices matter and that active citizenship strengthens our communities.

Cost, Sponsorship & the Need for Support

The cost to send one student to Boys State or Girls State is approximately \$300 per delegate. Thanks to the generosity of American Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units, and community sponsors, students attend at little or no cost to their families.

Who Can Attend

Students who have completed their junior year of high school; young men attend Boys State; young women attend Girls State; delegates are selected based on leadership potential, character, and interest in government and community involvement

How Students Can Apply

Students or parents interested in Boys State or Girls State should: Speak with their high school counselor or principal; contact their local American Legion Post or Auxiliary Unit; reach out to the Department of Montana American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary for program details and deadlines

Building Montana's Future Together

Boys State and Girls State continue the American Legion's proud tradition of service by preparing young people to lead with integrity, responsibility, and respect for democracy. With your help, we can keep these programs thriving and ensure that Montana's next generation is ready to serve.

Your support today shapes Montana's leadership tomorrow.

To Find Their Brothers

The Trek of Two Montana Nurses in War

By Edward E. "Ed" Saunders

LtCol, U.S. Army (ret)

Billings, MT

In France the guns of war stopped, 11:00 a.m., 11 November 1918. The Great War ended. Its carnage hellish. Millions died, including eight million horses. The stench of rotting flesh the only smell. Explosions scarred the earth; rain and tears filled the craters. Stunned birds flew endlessly looking in the emptiness for a tree, any tree, that remained upright with branches. It was as if God himself had collapsed in exhaustion pleading for His creation to stop.

Into this wretched desolation, two weary Montana women labored through mud and blood-soaked fields to find their brothers. The two were nurses, still in their twenties, but aged beyond measure. Battle weary from tending thousands of men torn by lethal lead and razor-edged shards of steel. Their hands worn from service; their souls scarred from death.

Eula Bernice Butzerin was born in Wisconsin, 1891, and moved to Missoula, Montana, as a girl. Her father, Albert, was a railroad engineer and Montana state senator. Eula, an honor student, graduated from Missoula High School, and Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing, Chicago. She taught at present Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

In 1918 the Kansas City Red Cross Nurses Association selected Eula as chief nurse. She joined Base Hospital 28 in Kansas City. In 1918 BH28 sailed for war in France, and began operations in Limoges.

Eula's brother, Leroy "Roy", a student at the University of Montana in Missoula, enlisted in the Army, May 1917. Roy was a sergeant in the 4th Engineers on the front lines. Lethal war gas killed him, 26 Sep 1918. History does not record when Eula got the news. After the war and still in France, Eula began nearly a 300-mile trek to find her brother—roads destroyed, railroads wrecked, destruction everywhere. She hired a French guide and together

they labored northeast through battlefield after terrible battlefield. Eula found a supply sergeant in Roy's unit. The sergeant apparently told Eula the general location of Roy's grave. Eula and the guide pressed on, mile after mile; asking directions from anyone in the area.

In time they found Roy's grave, marked with a stick and his dog tags hanging from it. Eula's thoughts are not known when she found her brother's grave. But they were united once more. Eula never gave up on her brother. Roy is buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, France. A white cross shows his home state of Montana.

Eula returned to America and received degrees from Columbia University, New York City. She was director of public health at the University of Minnesota, and professor of nursing education at the University of Chicago. Eula was later the national director of American Red Cross nursing projects, and international nursing liaison with the American Red Cross.

She never married or had children. Eula died 27 July 1978 in a retirement home near Seattle, Washington. Eula was cremated; her ashes scattered in the redwood forests of northern California. Apparently Eula does not have a memorial marker or veterans headstone anywhere.



Eula B. Butzerin
(U of Chicago)



Siblings Frank and Susie Welborn
(The Welborn Family)

Susie Lee Welborn was born in Somerset, Kentucky, 6 May 1894, or 16 May 1893; records vary. As a girl she moved west with her parents to Belgrade, Montana. Her father, Ulysses, was a farmer and rancher. Susie was the eldest of nine children. Her brother, Harvey Franklin “Frank” Welborn, was the next oldest. In 1917 Susie graduated from Scott-White Memorial Hospital School of Nursing, Temple, Texas. Susie returned to Montana and began a decades-long nursing career. In May 1918 she entered the Army Nurse Corps from the rough-and-tumble, bronco busting cow town of Miles City, in eastern Montana. She served at Base Hospital 53 at Langres, France, south of the human caldron of Verdun.

BH53 saw most of the war casualties from northeast France. Unrelenting rain fell. Mud everywhere, the kind of mud holding with devilish grip, never letting go. The wounded kept coming. In unheated tents using oil lamps at night, the nurses soldiered on. Medicines and bandages were in short supply. In October hundreds of war gas casualties came. No letup. Homesickness and exhaustion were unseen enemies.

Susie’s father then moved to the vast remote prairies of eastern Montana, near the Smokey Buttes in Garfield County, west of the small settlement of Jordon. Frank lived in Trouble, Montana, and enlisted in the Army in Glendive, Montana, May 1918. He served with

the 47th Infantry Division in France. On 10 August 1918, Frank was killed-in-action during the Second Battle of the Marne. The Army notified Ulysses of his son’s death.

In time Susie learned of her brother’s death. She, too, began a journey of body, soul, and resolve, to find Frank. She toiled northwest to the center-of-hell at Chateau-Thierry, the site of unimaginable and desperate combat a few months before. Welborn family archives have Susie’s photographs of war destruction along the path of her unyielding journey.

Susie’s soulful trek ended at the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery northeast of Chateau-Thierry. Welborn family archives show a photograph of the temporary white crosses in perfect alignment. She found Frank buried there; his headstone would soon read “Montana.”

Susie returned to America, and in Miles City she was honorably discharged from the Army Nurse Corps, August 1919. She continued her nursing career throughout Montana well into her eighties. Susie married once for four years, but she said, “It didn’t take.” She had no children.

Susie retired in Billings, Montana, where she died 17 August 1996. At her death she was thought the last surviving member of the Army Nurse Corps of World War I. Susie is buried in Sunset Gardens, Billings, with a veteran’s headstone.

Sources:

American Battle Monuments Commission.
Saunders, Edward E. Knapsacks and Roses,
Montana’s Women Veterans of World War I.

Saunders: Laurel, MT, 2018.

The Butzerin Family
The Welborn Family.



(Ed Saunders)

BRIAN CARPENTER

For Vice Commander

I am honored to announce my candidacy for Department Vice Commander for the 2026–2027 membership year. My years of service within our posts, programs, and communities have deepened my belief in the mission of the American Legion: to serve veterans, strengthen our communities, and protect the legacy of those who wore the uniform.

As Department Vice Commander, I will focus on three core priorities:

- ✓ **Strengthening Membership and Engagement**
Supporting posts across Montana with tools, outreach strategies, and personal connections to help them grow and retain members.
- ✓ **Championing Communication and Unity**
Ensuring every post, district, Rider chapter, and Legion Family member feels heard, valued, and supported as part of one united department.
- ✓ **Supporting Veteran Advocacy and Community Impact**

Backing the programs that matter most—support for veterans in crisis, youth programs, Americanism, and local community projects.

I believe leadership is service, not position. Together, we can continue building a strong, connected, and forward-moving Montana American Legion.

I respectfully ask for your support.

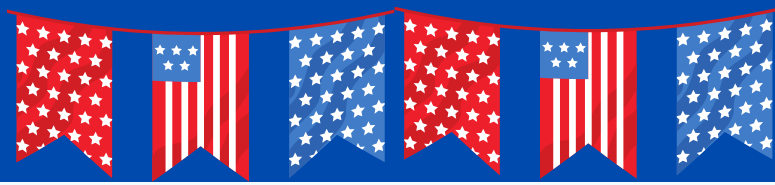


Andy Rice; Department Vice Commander

I am running for Department Vice Commander once again this year. I am 40 years old and served for 8 years in the US Army and Army National Guard. During that time I was deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom 5-7 and have been a member for the American Legion for 22 years. During my time in the American Legion, I have served in many different positions, including but not limited to; District 8 Commander, Zone Commander, Detachment Commander for the SAL and Squadron 102 Commander.

My reasoning behind wanting to run for Department Vice Commander, is that there have been many talks about the need to infuse more youth into the organization, and I find myself in a unique position that I can relate to our existing membership in many ways but also understand the mentality of the younger veterans across the state.





Verification of Servicemember Data is Critical

A reminder to all members and prospective members: The American Legion requires verified proof of honorable active-duty service for all new memberships. Please ensure that a DD-214 or other approved service-verification document is submitted with every application. This protects the integrity of our post and honors the service of all who have worn the uniform.

Why is it important for posts to verify a member is eligible for American Legion membership? Verification ensures the individual is eligible for membership based on their military service. Verifying service helps the posts to maintain the integrity and credibility of The American Legion as a Veteran's organization. Verification also helps the American Legion Auxiliary. National guidance requires that all new members provide proof of honorable active-duty service before membership can be approved. The primary and most recognized document for verification is the DD-214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). When a DD-214 is not available, The American Legion recognizes several alternate documents that can verify honorable service.

Examples include:

DD-13 Statement of Service

DD-217 Discharge Certificate

DD-256 series Honorable Discharge certificates

DD-257A General Discharge Certificate

DA-1569 Transcript of Military Record

DD-2 (Active or Retired_ Uniformed Services ID Card.

Membership Eligibility in the American Legion is based on honorable service with the U.S. Armed Forces between:

(April 6, 1917 - November 11, 1918) World War I

(December 7, 1941 - December 31, 1946) World War II

(June 25, 1950 - January 31, 1955) Korean War

(February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975) Vietnam War

(August 24, 1982 - July 31, 1984) Lebanon/Grenada

(December 20, 1989 - January 31, 1990) Operation Just Cause

(August 2, 1990 - Today)* Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm

Because eligibility dates remain open, all members of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible to join The American Legion at this time, until the date of the end of hostilities as determined by the government of the United States.

Must have served at least one day of active military duty during one of the dates below, and honorably discharged or still serving honorably.

If you have questions about your eligibility or someone else's eligibility, you can visit the following website. <https://www.legion.org/faq>.

Remember, your post adjutant needs your help to get the complete applicant's information.



AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS



A Historic Year to Ride With Purpose

Brian "Carp" Carpenter

Montana is already hearing the unmistakable sound of motorcycles returning to the road. With unseasonably warm weather arriving early, many Riders are taking advantage of the chance to begin the riding season ahead of schedule.

2026 is a historic year for the American Legion Family as our nation approaches its 250th anniversary. Across the country, American Legion Riders are preparing to participate in initiatives that combine riding, fundraising, wellness, and community service.

USA 250 Challenge

The USA 250 Challenge encourages members of the American Legion Family to participate in activities centered on physical fitness, mental wellness, and community service. As well as fundraising for the Veterans & Children Foundation; Riders can participate individually or as chapters by logging miles, organizing rides, supporting community service efforts, and engaging local communities in meaningful ways.

Chapters may consider goals such as:

- Riding 250 miles (or multiples of 250)
- Completing 250 service hours collectively
- Hosting community outreach events
- Organizing fundraising rides or patriotic observances

Montana Riders have always stepped forward when called.

Let's ensure our state remains visible and active in this national celebration.

Montana ALR College & Annual Meeting – Lewistown

The Montana American Legion Riders will gather in Lewistown for an important weekend of learning, leadership, and fellowship on May 2–3 at American Legion Post 16.

The Department ALR College will take place on Saturday, May 2, beginning at 8:00 a.m. and running through approximately 5:00 p.m. This year's college will feature a newly developed curriculum designed to strengthen

chapters, improve leadership skills, and provide practical tools Riders can take back to their Posts. Participants will learn from respected instructors including Ken "Lucky" Nadeau, Ken George, along with members of the Montana ALR leadership team serving as instructors. The day is designed to be interactive, informative, and valuable for Riders at every level of involvement.

Hotel accommodations are available at the Calvert Hotel, and meals will be included in the registration cost for those attending the college.

The weekend continues on Sunday, May 3, with the Montana ALR Annual Meeting. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m., followed by the meeting where Riders from across the state will gather to discuss the future of the program, share ideas, and strengthen the Montana Riders community.

We are also honored that Ben Headon will be joining us for the weekend, providing Riders the opportunity to hear directly from national leadership and share in the continued growth of the program.

All events throughout the weekend will be hosted at American Legion Post 16. Riders are encouraged to make plans now to attend what promises to be an outstanding weekend dedicated to building stronger Riders chapters across Montana.

National Legacy Run 2026

The Legacy Run continues to unite American Legion Riders nationwide in support of the Veterans & Children Foundation, which provides vital assistance to veterans, military families, and children facing financial hardship.

First Annual Montana American Legion Riders Legacy Run

Montana's ride will take place August 14–16 and will showcase some of the most scenic highways in the country while bringing Riders together in support of a meaningful cause. Participants will gather in Missoula before departing on a three-day Western Montana

loop, traveling through mountain passes, river valleys, and historic communities that highlight the beauty and spirit of Big Sky Country.

But the true purpose of the ride goes far beyond the miles traveled.

Funds raised during the Montana Legacy Run will support the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation, which provides critical emergency financial assistance to veteran families and supports the work of accredited American Legion service officers who help veterans access the benefits they have earned.

This ride also represents a historic opportunity for Montana. At the conclusion of the event, Montana's Riders will have the chance to make their first-ever donation to the National Commander on behalf of the Montana American Legion Riders program. That moment will represent far more than a dollar amount it will represent the dedication, generosity, and service of Riders across the state.

It is an opportunity for Montana's representatives to proudly demonstrate what the Montana ALR program is all about: service to veterans, commitment to families, and being an active part of one of the fastest-growing programs in the American Legion Family.

From the open highways of western Montana to the national stage, this ride will show that even in a state known for its wide-open spaces, Montana Riders stand united in purpose. Additional details, including registration and fundraising information, will be released soon. Riders are encouraged to mark their calendars and prepare to take part in what promises to become the beginning of a new Montana tradition.

Increase Visibility

- Wear reflective or high-visibility gear
- Use headlights at all times
- Maintain safe following distances

Group Riding Practices: conduct a pre-ride briefing; review routes and hand signals;

maintain staggered formation; communicate road hazards clearly.

Montana Riders – Looking Ahead

As riding season ramps up, chapters are encouraged to:

- Participate in the USA 250 Challenge
- Plan service and fundraising rides
- Prepare for upcoming state ride events
- Emphasize rider safety throughout the season

2nd Annual Montana ALR R.O.M.P.

Ride on Military Pride

June 12–14, 2026

Hosted by ALR Chapter 16 – Fergus Post 16, Lewistown

Montana Riders will gather this June in Lewistown, located in the geographic center of the state, for the second annual

R.O.M.P. (Ride on Military Pride).

All rides will begin and end at Fergus Post 16 American Legion Club, creating a central gathering place for fellowship and camaraderie throughout the weekend. Riders will experience a variety of Montana scenery, including mountain passes, river valleys, and historic landscapes connected to the World War II B-17 training program once located in Lewistown.

The weekend concludes on Sunday, June 14 — Flag Day, when Riders will return in time to participate in the Fergus Post 16 Annual Flag Retirement Ceremony, providing a meaningful close to the event.

Lodging and camping options are available in the Lewistown area for those planning to attend the full weekend.

Additional event details will be shared in upcoming communications.

The American Legion Riders continue to represent dedication, patriotism, and service in communities across Montana.

As the engines start and the miles begin to add up, remember:

We ride for veterans.

We ride for families.

We ride for purpose.

Ride safe. Ride proud. Ride together.

BE
THE
ONE

Save The Date

First Annual Montana American Legion Riders Legacy Run

Get ready for three unforgettable days on the open road as the Montana American Legion Riders proudly launch the First Annual Montana American Legion Riders Legacy Run. Mark August 14–16, 2026 on your calendars — this will be a ride filled with stunning Montana landscapes, fellowship, and a powerful purpose.

The Legacy Run begins in Missoula; riders will gather for camaraderie, final prep, and the excitement of a journey that will take them through some of the most scenic corridors in the state.

Day 1 — Missoula to Ennis (via Sula, Wisdom & Bannack)

The ride starts south through the winding Bitterroot Valley toward Sula, where forests and mountain shadows line the road. From there, riders cross sweeping ranchlands into Wisdom, a wide-open prairie surrounded by mountain vistas.

We will pass through Bannack, Montana's best-preserved ghost town and former territorial capital.

The day ends in Ennis, a classic Montana town along the Madison River.

Day 2 — Ennis to Kalispell (through Helena & Lincoln)

Day two brings riders north toward Helena, with its historic skyline set against rugged mountain ridges. As the route continues toward Lincoln, riders will travel the Blackfoot River Valley.

That evening concludes in Kalispell, the heart of Glacier Country and a hub surrounded by towering peaks and wide glacial plains.

Day 3 — Kalispell Back to Corvallis (via Plains & St. Regis)

The final day loops westward through Plains, following quiet valleys and scenic river bends. Riders will continue to St. Regis, where forested mountain passes and open stretches create the perfect final push before returning to Missoula for the closing gathering.

This Legacy Run continues a tradition inspired by the national American Legion Legacy Run, which supports the Veterans & Children Foundation. Funds raised will directly support programs that assist veterans, military families, and children facing financial hardship due to service-related challenges.

Your participation helps:

- Provide emergency financial aid to military and veteran families
- Support training for accredited American Legion service officers
- Strengthen assistance programs so veterans never face difficulties alone

More details — including registration, route maps, and fundraising information — will be released in the February 2026 issue.

Save the date and prepare for an unforgettable ride!

Political Silly Season

It's that time of the year.....election season is only 8 months away. Please remember that the American Legion is, by its very nature, a political organization—but it is not a partisan one. Since its founding in 1919, the Legion has been an advocate for veterans, servicemembers, their families, and the principles of a strong national defense.

Advocacy requires engagement in the political process; however, that engagement must always remain nonpartisan. The American Legion does not endorse candidates for public office or align itself with any political party. Its loyalty is to the Constitution and to veterans' issues—not to party platforms or campaign slogans.

To be political means to engage in the process of government, public policy, and civic decision-making. The American Legion fulfills this role by advocating for legislation, public policy, and programs that support veterans, servicemembers, their families, and a strong national defense. However, to be partisan means to show bias or strong support for one political party, faction, or candidate over another. That is something the Legion does not do.

Especially during political “silly season,” it is critical that Posts remain disciplined and fair. If one candidate or party is invited to speak or participate in an event, the same opportunity must be extended to all viable candidates. Inviting one party while excluding another undermines the Legion's credibility and compromises its standing as a respected, neutral voice for veterans. The American Legion's focus is singular: advancing legislation and policies that benefit veterans and strengthen our nation. By avoiding favoritism and maintaining strict nonpartisanship, the organization preserves its integrity, protects its nonprofit status, and ensures that it remains a trusted advocate for those who have worn the uniform.

Women Veterans History Month

March is Women Veterans History Month—a time to recognize the courage, leadership, and lasting impact of the more than two million women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Their contributions span every major conflict in American history, yet their stories have often gone untold. The tradition of honoring women's contributions in March began with National Women's History Week in 1980 and expanded to a full month in 1987. Veteran organizations use this month to highlight women's military service specifically, acknowledging their role in sustaining the all-volunteer force and defending the nation.

Why This Month Matters

Women have served as pilots, medics, intelligence specialists, commanders, engineers, and in countless other roles that shape national security. Today, women are the fastest-growing veteran population in the country, projected to make up nearly 18% of all veterans by 2040. Despite this growth, many still face unique challenges in visibility, recognition, and access to veteran services.

·Honoring Their Legacy

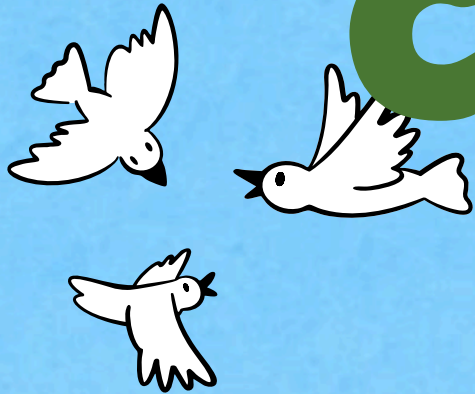
·This month encourages communities to:

- Highlight the achievements and service of women veterans
- Share personal stories that deepen understanding of their experiences
- Support programs that address women veterans' health, employment, and transition needs
- Celebrate trailblazers who opened doors for future generations

How You Can Participate

Attend local events, listen to women veterans' stories, amplify their voices, and connect them with resources that honor their service. Recognition is powerful—and long overdue.

KIDS ART CORNER APRIL



We're inviting Montana's kids to help brighten the next edition of The Montana Legionnaire!

Young creators are encouraged to send in artwork, poems, short stories, or even coloring pages that celebrate winter traditions, holiday cheer, or appreciation for our veterans.

Please email a photo or scan of your child's creation to lmtpub@gmail.com by April 10, 2026.

Be sure to include the artist's first name, age, and hometown.

We can't wait to showcase the imagination and talent of our young Montana artists and storytellers!



SPRING





THE AUXILIARY SERVICE STAR



Department of MT President Leona Somerfeld

We have had a couple of personnel changes; Jamie DeBates, mtjme2013@yahoo.com, is our new Department Treasurer, continue sending money with the donation sheet to the Department Secretary, Leila Seyfert, ala.mt.sec@gmail.com, Box 897 Glasgow, MT 59230. Kathryn Long was gracious enough to become our new Department Chaplain, contact her at 24bluejay@gmail.com. 2nd Vice President, Tricia McKinney, has a new email, ala.triciamc@yahoo.com.

ALBAGS (American Legion Boys and Girls State) application can be found on our website, there is a flyer with a QR code for delegates to access. June 14-20th are the dates to remember, if you can offer your help as a counselor or worker please contact ALBAGS Directo Jen Dalrymple, dymples43@gmail.com. The ALBAGS Committee is encouraging each Unit, Post, Squadron and Riders to support this program by pledging at least \$300.00 per year. Our goal is to get as many delegates as possible, so if you plan for one delegate and you have more and need funds to pay for the extras, the committee is hard at work writing grants and finding business sponsors. Remember the donations are tax deductible. Gwen Marshall, the Girls State Chairman, is working diligently to grow this program, contact her at cody8mt@yahoo.com.

What have your Units or members decided on for the 250th Birthday challenge? You have until July 4th to complete the challenge, but I would like your reports in the Community Service Impact Reports and

sent to our Public Relations Chairman Candice Gehring at, mtala.candice@gmail.com.

Please get the word out to your school guidance counselor and encourage the seniors to apply for the Scholarships available. There are two \$500 department scholarships to be awarded. For more information contact Education Chairman, Fran Allen ozfarms@hotmail.com or call 406-374-2398. We have many other scholarships available, which you can find on our website.

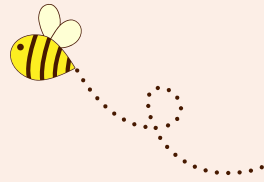
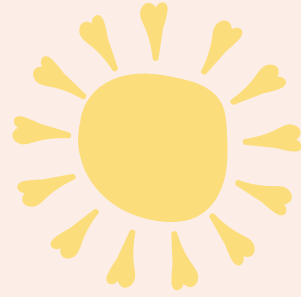
Spring District Meetings will begin March 7th and finish up on April 25th.

March 15th is the Legion's Birthday; it is suggested doing "Buddy Checks" to connect with Veterans. The Auxiliary's Birthday is November 10th.

April will be here before we know it. April is the month of the Military Child. April 15th is PurpleUp! Day for Military kids to recognize children who also sacrifice when their parent(s) are serving. One Unit is giving purple suckers to all the students in the school with an explanation of what it means.

The Department Convention is in Helena at the Doubletree by Hilton Helena Downtown, June 25-28th. Registration form is in the Legionnaire. The 107th National Convention is on Aug 28th-Sept 3rd in Lexington, KY. Get your plans made soon, the registration form is in the Legionnaire.

For God and Country
Montana Treasures-Copper, Silver,
Gold and Veterans
Leona Somerfeld, Dept of MT president

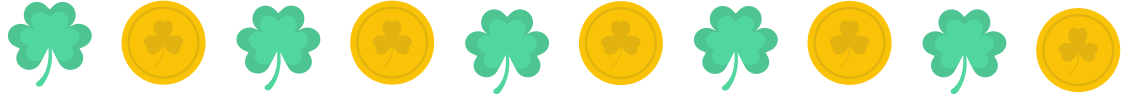




THE AUXILIARY SERVICE STAR



Constitution and Bylaws Karen Susag, Chr



Having a C/B is essential for an organization to establish a formal structure, ensure legal compliance and maintain orderly operations. While the Constitution outlines the fundamental principles and purpose of the organization the Bylaws provide the specific, actionable rules for how it functions day-to-day/

Standing Rules are rules that can be changed - like amount of the dues and time and place of meeting, A sample of the Unit Constitution & Bylaws can be obtained in the current Unit Handbook. available at National Headquarters,

Times change and so should the unit's C/B be brought up to date. For example, have they reflected the inclusion of the spouse of women veterans? Has the unit changed the amount of their dues or the place and time of the monthly meetings?

There are several units in the Department that have not placed an updated C/B with the Department Chairperson, this is a precaution in case the unit misplaced their copy.

Reminder: Any changes to the Department Constitution & Bylaws must be at least 4 weeks prior to the Department Convention. The proposed changes must be distributed to the Units 20 days before the Convention.





SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION



Jason Keeling Havre SAL Commander

On February 12th, 2026, the Havre SAL Squadron joined with Havre American Legion Post 11, the American Legion Riders, and the American Legion Auxiliary to host a heartfelt community fundraiser at Triple Dog Brewery in support of seven-year-old Evan Glines. Evan, a local boy known for his fearless spirit, recently lost his right hand in an unfortunate accident.

Evan was initially treated at the Havre Hospital before being flown to Billings for specialized care. He was later transferred to Shriners Hospital, where he has begun the long road of healing and adapting to his new challenges. Despite everything he has endured, Evan hasn't slowed down. He continues to approach life with the determination of a tough young wrestler who refuses to be held back.

For the fundraiser, the SAL, along with a team of volunteers, organized a silent auction filled with donations from community members, local businesses, and members of the American Legion Family. Triple Dog Brewery generously contributed \$1.00 from every pint sold during the event. The outpouring of support made the evening both successful and moving, as volunteers, families, and neighbors packed the brewery to rally around Evan and his family.

In addition to being a Shriners kid for life, Evan is now proudly one of our own, an official Squadron 11 SAL member. The Legion Family is honored to welcome such a resilient and courageous young man into our ranks. Thanks to the generosity of the community, more than \$3,600 was presented to Evan and his family to assist with medical and travel expenses as he continues his recovery.

The Havre SAL extends its sincere gratitude to every volunteer, donor, Legion Family member, and community supporter who helped make this event possible. Havre showed once again what it means to stand together. Anyone who still wishes to donate or support Evan's family may contact myself, SAL Commander Jason Keeling at 406.301.1318



American Legion Oratorical Contest: Inspiring Montana's Young Voices

The American Legion Oratorical Contest is an annual scholarship competition designed to challenge high school students to explore and articulate their understanding of the U.S. Constitution while building leadership, critical thinking, and public speaking skills. Since its inception in 1938, this “constitutional speech contest” has introduced generations of students to the principles of American citizenship and provided some of the most generous scholarship opportunities available to young speakers.

The contest invites high school students under the age of 20 to prepare and deliver a speech on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, emphasizing the duties and obligations of citizens to their government. Contestants present an 8-to-10-minute prepared oration, and a 3-to-5-minute assigned topic speech, showcasing both deep understanding and the ability to think on their feet.

Local American Legion Posts host the first round of competitions, with winners advancing to district and then department (state) contests. The state champion earns a place at the national finals, where students from across the country compete for substantial additional scholarships.

Montana Department Oratorical Contest – March 28, 2026

The Department of Montana Oratorical Contest will be held on March 28, 2026, in **East Helena, Montana**. This event brings together the top high school speakers from across the state to compete for scholarship awards and the honor of representing Montana at the national level.

According to the American Legion of Montana, all contestants advancing to the Department contest receive \$175 upon registration. Scholarship awards for the state-level competition are:

- 1st Place – \$5,000
- 2nd Place – \$1,500
- 3rd Place – \$500
- 4th Place – \$500

These awards support the educational goals of Montana's promising young leaders and are paid directly to participants at the conclusion of the contest.

Why It Matters

The Oratorical Contest is more than a scholarship opportunity. It encourages students to think deeply about the Constitution, cultivate effective communication skills, and prepare for active participation in civic life. Participants gain confidence, poise, and a stronger understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship – benefits that stay with them long after the competition ends.

Join Us in Louisville for the 107th American Legion National Convention

The American Legion Family will once again gather for our largest annual event – the 107th American Legion National Convention, taking place **August 28 – September 3, 2026**, in Louisville, Kentucky. This week-long gathering brings together thousands of Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, Sons of The American Legion, and American Legion Riders from across the nation to conduct the business of the organization, celebrate our shared mission, and strengthen connections with fellow veterans and supporters.

At the National Convention, delegates will approve updates to the Legion's constitution and bylaws, set membership dues, and elect the National Commander and Vice Commanders who will lead the organization for the coming year. Beyond the official sessions, attendees enjoy workshops, committee meetings, award presentations, and special events that highlight the best of what The American Legion has to offer. In addition to the business agenda, the convention is also an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, forge new partnerships, and engage in the broader mission of service to veterans, military families, and communities. Whether this is your first convention or your fiftieth, Louisville offers a welcoming backdrop filled with Southern hospitality and plenty to explore between sessions.

Complete your registration today and make plans to be part of this meaningful and memorable event in Louisville, Kentucky. We look forward to seeing you there!

AMERICAN LEGION OF MONTANA

107TH DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

HELENA, MONTANA

JUNE 25-28, 2026 REGISTRATION

NAME OF REGISTRANT(S):

CIRCLE ONE:

LEGION ALA SAL

LEGION ALA SAL

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

EMAIL

CELL PHONE

PLEASE NOTE ANY SPECIAL DIETARY RESTRICTIONS!

ACTIVITY	COST PER PERSON	TOTAL
REGISTRATION FEE	___ X \$40.00	
LEGION FAMILY NIGHT 6/25/26	___ X \$20.00	
PAST DEPT COMMANDER, INCOMING PRESIDENT & PAST PRESIDENT BREAKFAST 6/26/26	___ X \$25.00	
AMERICANISM LUNCH 6/26/26	___ X \$35.00	
LEGION FAMILY BBQ 6/26/26	___ X \$20.00	
MEMBERSHIP BREAKFAST 6/27/26	___ X \$25.00	
JOINT BANQUET 6/27/26	___ X \$45.00	

CONVENTION HOTELS

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HELENA DOWNTOWN

22 N LAST CHANCE GULCH, HELENA, MT 59601

EMAIL: John.Lytle@Hilton.com

406-443-2200

BEST WESTERN CAPITAL \$132+tax

1714 11TH AVE

CALL: 406-442-1770

CONTACTS

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

DUANE CUNNINGHAM deptmtadjutant@gmail.com 406-465-1451

ERIN CARPENTER amlegmtsec@gmail.com 406-324-3990

COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORMS

MAIL PAYMENTS AND FORMS TO:

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

PO BOX 155

FORT HARRISON, MT 59636



Montana

Boys and Girls State

Support democracy in action.

Support better citizens and leaders.

Invest in educated youth.



**For more than 80 years,
American Legion Boys and
Auxiliary Girls State has
been a premier civics
program, immersing high
school juniors in a week-
long, hand-on experience of
democratic government.**



Sponsored by The American Legion Department of Montana

Dear Posts, Units, and Squadrons,

Each year, Montana American Legion Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State provide young leaders from every corner of our state the opportunity to experience hands-on government, develop leadership skills, and build lifelong confidence in civic engagement. These programs continue to stand among the most impactful youth leadership experiences offered in Montana—but they are only possible because of the unwavering support of our Posts, Units, and Squadrons.

As we look ahead to the 2026 sessions, we have set an ambitious and important goal: to host at a minimum, 100 Boys State delegates and 100 Girls State delegates. Achieving this benchmark will strengthen our programs, broaden statewide participation, and ensure we continue shaping the next generation of Montana leaders. To make this possible, we remain committed to keeping the program fee as low as \$300 per delegate and, most importantly, ensuring that no family is ever asked to pay out of pocket.

Your sponsorship is what allows us to uphold this mission. Every \$300 sponsorship directly covers housing, meals, materials, campus services, and instructional programming that would otherwise place a far greater financial burden on the students and their families. By stepping up to sponsor a delegate (or several), your Post, Unit, or Squadron helps guarantee that a student's opportunity to attend is never determined by their family's financial situation only by their willingness to learn and lead.

Enclosed is the 2026 Boys State & Girls State Sponsorship Form for your Post, Unit, or Squadron. We respectfully ask that you review it, determine how many delegates you can sponsor this year, and return the form with payment no later than May 1, 2026.

Your continued support ensures that Montana youth, whether from our largest cities or our most rural communities, have access to this life-changing experience. Thank you for helping us reach 100 and 100, and for investing in the future of our state through the power of leadership, service, and civic education.

MONTANA AMERICAN LEGION
Boys State & Auxiliary Girls State Sponsorship Form
For Posts, Units, and Squadrons Only

Post / Unit / Squadron Number: _____

Name of Post/Unit/Squadron Commander or Adjutant: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Number of Delegates Being Sponsored:

Delegates: _____ × \$300 = \$ _____

Total Sponsorship Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Payment Information

Please remit payment with this form.

Checks payable to:

The American Legion of Montana

PO Box 155

Fort Harrison, MT 59636

Deadline: May 1, 2026

American Legion Department of Montana Announces 2026 Woman Veterans Symposium

The American Legion Department of Montana is proud to host the 2026 Woman Veterans Symposium, a statewide gathering dedicated to connection, learning, and empowerment. The event will take place May 1–3, 2026, in Lewistown, Montana, bringing women veterans from every era and branch of service together for a weekend designed specifically for them.

This symposium reflects a growing commitment to ensure that women who served—whether recently separated or long retired—have opportunities to build community, access resources, and celebrate their shared experiences. Any woman who has served in the U.S. Armed Forces is eligible and welcome to attend.

A Weekend of Connection and Purpose

The heart of the symposium is simple: bringing women veterans together. Attendees will have the chance to meet others who understand the unique challenges and triumphs of military service. The weekend will include: Networking opportunities; Social gatherings; Peer support and shared storytelling; Informal meet-ups and community-building activities

Whether someone is looking to reconnect with fellow veterans, make new friends, or simply enjoy time with others who “get it,” the symposium offers a welcoming space.

Educational Sessions and VA Resources

On Saturday, May 2, representatives from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will lead a series of classes and informational sessions. These sessions will cover a range of topics relevant to women veterans, including: VA benefits and enrollment; Health care resources; Mental health and wellness programs; Claims assistance; Women-specific services and support

These sessions are designed to ensure that every attendee leaves with practical knowledge, updated information, and direct access to experts who can answer questions and provide guidance.

Why This Symposium Matters

Women are the fastest-growing segment of the veteran population, yet many still report feeling overlooked or disconnected from traditional veteran spaces. The Woman Veterans Symposium aims to change that by creating a dedicated environment where women veterans can:

Feel seen, heard, and valued

Build supportive networks

Learn about benefits and services tailored to their needs

Strengthen their connection to the veteran community

Montana’s women veterans have served with distinction across generations. This event honors that service while helping ensure they have the tools and community they deserve.

Open Invitation

The American Legion Department of Montana extends an open invitation to all women veterans, regardless of age, service era, or membership status. Whether you served two years or twenty, whether you deployed or served stateside, this symposium is for you.

To register, go to the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeAmc8xOfioyQ-XTCXXvjQlZY6cLpPmevvy-40lfRfErzfHcw/viewform?usp=header>

WOMEN VETERAN'S

Symposium

Let's celebrate trailblazing women veterans and leaders sharing their stories.

Registration: \$20
Registration with Meals: \$60



MAY 1-3,
2026

WHAT WE WILL DISCUSS:

- Leadership Development
- Career Advancement
- Wellness
- Navigating Benefits

**1-3 MAY
2026**

CALVERT HOTEL

216th 7th Ave, Lewistown, MT

CONNECT WITH WOMEN WHO'VE SERVED ACROSS GENERATIONS AND BRANCHES

VA Benefits Guidance, Mental Health Resources, and Local Veteran Programs

WHO'S INVITED

- WOMEN VETERANS
- ACTIVE-DUTY, GUARD AND RESERVE WOMEN



AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS



Montana American Legion Riders

ALR College & Annual Meeting

May 2–3, 2026 — Lewistown, MT

Ride. Learn. Lead.

Join Riders from across Montana for a day of training, camaraderie, and mission-focused energy. Whether you're new to the ALR or a long-time leader, this event will sharpen your skills and strengthen our statewide program.

ALR College – May 2

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Lewistown, MT

Featuring a new 2026 curriculum with guest instructors:

- Ken "Lucky" Nadeau
- Ken George
- Brian "Carp" Carpenter

Registration Fees:

College with no meals: \$25

College and meeting: \$60

Sunday meal and registration: \$25

Lodging: Rooms available at The Calvert Hotel

Register at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1jTSP-yETXMFf8zlpGhPcOKJGlcDfOaCgxxfREqcRN aM/edit>

Why Attend?

- ✓ Strengthen your leadership skills
- ✓ Connect with Riders statewide
- ✓ Prepare for a historic year of riding and service
- ✓ Help shape the future of ALR in Montana

ALR Annual Meeting – May 3

Start the morning with a **Rider breakfast**, followed by the business meeting, updates for 2026, and statewide planning.



American Legion of Montana Launches 2026 Rifle Raffle

The American Legion of Montana is proud to announce the kickoff of the 2026 Rifle Raffle, an exciting opportunity for Montanans to support veterans' programs while entering to win a premier firearm.

This year's grand prize is a Ruger American Gen 2 chambered in 6.5 Creedmoor—a rifle known for its precision, reliability, and quality craftsmanship. Whether you're a hunter, sports shooter, or collector, this firearm is sure to be a prized addition.

Raffle Details:

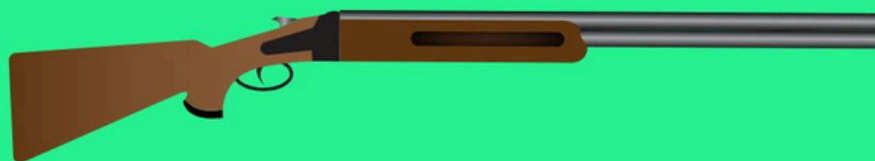
- Tickets: \$20 each or 6 for \$100
- Limited Availability: Only 1,500 tickets will be sold
- Drawing Date: June 28, 2026
- Eligibility: Must be 18 years or older to purchase
- Winner: Need not be present to win
- Prize Pickup: The winner must claim the prize at Mitchell Supply in Great Falls

The American Legion extends its gratitude to Mitchell Supply for generously donating the prize and for their continued support of veterans and their families.

Why It Matters

Every ticket purchased goes beyond the excitement of winning—it fuels the American Legion's mission to support Montana veterans, their families, and local communities. From youth programs to veteran services, raffle proceeds help strengthen the foundation of service that defines the American Legion. Don't miss your chance to win a top-quality rifle while giving back to those who served. Tickets are going fast, and with only 1,500 available, they won't last long!

For ticket information, contact your local American Legion Post or visit the Department of Montana office.





Big K Cash Raffle: Supporting Montana Veterans in 2026

The American Legion of Montana is excited to announce the launch of the 2026 Big K Cash Raffle, a long-standing tradition that not only brings excitement to our members and supporters but also provides vital funding for the programs that serve Montana's veterans, their families, and our communities.

As the name suggests, only 1,000 tickets are available, making this a limited and highly sought-after opportunity. Each ticket—known as a “Big K”—is just \$25.00, and with that purchase, participants are entered into nine drawings throughout the year.

The raffle kicks off in January with a \$100 New Year Drawing, followed by six \$400 monthly drawings held from January through June. In March, in honor of the American Legion's Birthday, there will be an additional \$500 drawing. The excitement culminates at the Department Convention with the final drawing of \$1,800, a grand prize that brings the year of fundraising to a close.

Beyond the thrill of winning, every ticket purchased helps fund essential Legion programs that support Montana veterans and their families, from advocacy and assistance to community engagement and youth programs. This is more than just a raffle—it's a chance to give back while enjoying the fun and camaraderie that comes with being part of the Legion Family.

Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and they sell out quickly each year. Those wishing to participate are encouraged to send in the entry form along with payment as soon as possible to secure their spot in the drawings. By purchasing a Big K, you're not only entering to win cash prizes—you're making a direct investment in the strength of our programs and the well-being of veterans across Montana.

For more information or to get your ticket, contact the American Legion of Montana today.