



MONTANA

legionnaire

The logo for the American Legion, featuring a stylized American flag and the text "AMERICAN LEGION".

AMERICAN
LEGION

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

IRENE DICKERSON

TEN DAYS OF CONNECTION, LEARNING, AND LEGION
FAMILY

The last ten days of September were incredibly busy, but they also reminded me how strong and dedicated the American Legion family is here in Montana.

On Tuesday, we were honored to welcome The American Legion National Commander, Jay Bowen, to our great state. His visit gave us a chance to come together, share our Montana Legion spirit, and talk about the work we do for our veterans, their families, and our communities.

That evening, we held a National Commander's Reception at American Legion Post 2, and it was wonderful to see such a strong turnout. Events like this remind us that The American Legion's strength comes from our members coming together.

Early Wednesday morning, we held a Community Coffee Social at the 1889 Coffee House. It was a great opportunity to step outside the traditional Legion setting and meet people in our community. We met two potential new members, including the coffee house owner, who is also a veteran. That is exactly what membership is about – making connections, telling our story, and inviting veterans to be part of something bigger than themselves.

That evening, we held our Paint and Pint Night. There may have been a little more painting than drinking, but everyone had a great time! It was a fun way for Legionnaires and friends to socialize, laugh, and build relationships. Sometimes, creating a stronger post starts with simply creating opportunities for people to enjoy being together.

We then moved into The American Legion College, hosted by our Dean, Brian Carpenter. The college was an abounding success. Approximately 14 Legionnaires participated in the two-day class, with an outstanding group of instructors: Ken George from National Headquarters, Past Department Commander Kim Kay McCarty Martin, Brian Carpenter, and I me.

The classes were informative, interactive, and—most importantly—fun.

One of the classes taught by Ken George focused on the Constitution and Bylaws. We learned some important things that will help us as a department review and update our own Constitution and Bylaws. It is important that these governing documents work together and accurately reflect how our department operates.

American Legion Legion is more than a classroom. It is an opportunity to learn, ask questions, share ideas, and develop the leaders who will carry our organization forward. I am extremely proud of everyone who took the time to participate.

That evening, we hosted Buddy Check Friday calls. I'm pleased to say we reached out to over 150 veterans.

On Saturday, we held our Fall Conference, where I had the opportunity to hear directly from our district commanders. They shared their concerns, successes, challenges, and what is happening within their districts.

I challenged each and everyone in attendance to the "406 Connection for Montana" Challenge.

Contact 4 veterans that you haven't heard from recently and just ask them how they are doing.

o. Zero veteran in Montana feeling forgotten

6-Make 6 few contacts in your community to tell them what your post is doing and



how we can make a difference.

For me, this is one of the most important parts of leadership: Connection.

Communication cannot simply flow from the department down to the districts and posts. It has to work in both directions. Our district has to work in both directions to know that their voices are heard, and I need to understand what is happening at the local level so we can work together to find solutions.

These past ten days have been busy, but they have also demonstrated what happens when we come together—with purpose, with energy, and with a willingness to listen and learn.

From welcoming our National Commander, to connecting with veterans in our communities, to developing Legion leaders through American Legion College, to hearing directly from our district commanders, we have been doing what The American Legion does best: serving veterans, strengthening our communities, and building relationships.

I am proud to serve as your Department of Montana Commander, and I am even prouder of the Legionnaires across this great state who continue to show up, get involved, and make a difference.

PEOPLE, POSTS, PROGRAMS, PURPOSE.

That is how we move Montana forward.

EVENTS TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR

When	What and Where
October 20, 2026	Halloween coloring book order deadline – Order for Halloween delivery
October 29-31, 2026	Matt Shuman Visit: Laurel Oct 29; Helena Oct 30; Ronan Oct 31
March 20, 2027	Department Oratorical Contest – East Helena
May 14-16, 2027	Women Veterans Symposium – Lakeside – Registration Details to Follow
Weekend of June 11, 2027	Montana ROMP – Great Falls – Hosted by Golden Triangle Chapter 3
June 25-27, 2027	Department Convention – Havre – Watch for registration and lodging details
July 30-August 1, 2027	Montana Legacy Run – Route and registration info to follow
August 27- September 2, 2027	National Convention – Kansas City, Missouri



Month	Dates to Honor and Remember
October	26 th : Day of the Deployed 27 th : Navy Day
November Veterans and Military Families Month and Warrior Care Month	10 th : Marine Corps Birthday 11 th : Veterans Day
December	7 th : Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day 13 th : National Guard Birthday 19 th : Wreaths Across America Day 20 th : Space Force Birthday



Spring 2027 District Meetings

Date	District	Host Community
Saturday, April 3	1 and 7	District 1: Hinsdale District 7: Big Timber
Sunday, April 4	2 and 11	District 2: Rocky Boy District 11: Billings Post 4
Saturday, April 10	3 and 9	District 3: Sweet Grass District 9: Roundup
Sunday, April 11	8 and 10	District 8: Choteau District 10: Miles City
Saturday, April 17	4	Eureka
Sunday, April 18	5	Missoula
Saturday, April 24	6	Helena

Meeting times and street addresses will be shared with District notices.

A FEW MORE REMINDERS

National Convention registration: Montana paperwork and required payments are due by Department Convention in Havre.

Checks submitted there should be postdated July 1, 2027.

Youth programs and training: Watch for 2027 Boys State, Girls State, and the next Department Legion College announcements.

Share these dates at your Post meeting—and remember holiday Buddy Checks.

Montana Welcomes National Commander Leading Candidate Matt Shuman for Three-Day Visit!

Three communities, three town halls, and plenty of Montana hospitality! The American Legion Department of Montana is excited to welcome National Commander Leading Candidate Matt Shuman for a three-day visit, October 29–31, 2026, with stops in Laurel, Helena, and Ronan.

Each stop will provide an opportunity for Legionnaires, veterans, Legion Family members, and community residents to meet Matt, ask questions, hear his vision for The American Legion, and enjoy some good old-fashioned fellowship.

And we're adding a little fun to the schedule! From Halloween Trunk or Treat celebrations to friendly cook-off competitions, there is something for everyone.

Thursday, October 29 — Laurel Post 123

123 Riverside Park South (Highway 212), Laurel

- Trunk or Treat: 3:30–6:00 PM
- Chili Cook-Off: 5:30–7:00 PM
- Town Hall with Matt Shuman: 6:00 PM

Chili Cook-Off Registration: Contact Richard Klose at (406) 671-1814 or kloserichard@yahoo.com.

Friday, October 30 — Helena Post 2

3095 Villard Ave., Helena

- Pie Cook-Off: 5:30–7:00 PM
- Town Hall with Matt Shuman: 6:00 PM

Pie Cook-Off Registration: Contact the Helena Joe Wagner at (775) 223-4756 or marinejoe2007@gmail.com.

Saturday, October 31 — Ronan Post 138

44027 North Foothills Dr., Ronan

- Trunk or Treat: 3:30–6:00 PM
- Pie Cook-Off: 5:30–7:00 PM
- Town Hall with Matt Shuman: 6:00 PM

Pie Cook-Off Registration: Contact Glen Sharbono at (406) 210-2607.

All cook-off competitions welcome entries from American Legion Posts, Legion Family members, veterans, and community members. Advance registration is encouraged, and participants should contact their local event coordinator for entry information.

Whether you're bringing your award-winning recipe, decorating a trunk, bringing the family for Halloween treats, or joining the conversation about the future of The American Legion, we hope you'll come out and be part of this special Montana visit.

You don't have to be a Legion member to attend. Everyone is welcome! Help us spread the word, invite a veteran, bring a friend, and show Matt Shuman what Montana's Legion Family and communities are all about.

People • Posts • Programs • Purpose
Service Today. Stronger Tomorrows.

AMERICAN
LEGION



Montana
WELCOMES

OCTOBER
29-31
★ 2026 ★

Meet.
Ask.
Listen.
Be Part.

MATT SHUMAN

★ NATIONAL COMMANDER
LEADING CANDIDATE ★

*Three Stops.
Three Communities.
A Stronger Tomorrow.*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

★ **LAUREL**

AMERICAN LEGION POST 123
123 Riverside Park South (Hwy 212)
Laurel, MT 59044



TRUNK OR TREAT
3:30 – 6:00 PM



CHILI COOK-OFF
5:30 – 7:00 PM



TOWN HALL
6:00 PM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

★ **HELENA**

AMERICAN LEGION POST 2
3095 Villard Ave.
Helena, MT



PIE COOK-OFF
5:30 – 7:00 PM



TOWN HALL
6:00 PM

GOOD PEOPLE
GREAT CONVERSATIONS
STRONGER MONTANA.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

★ **RONAN**

AMERICAN LEGION POST 138
44027 North Foothills Dr.
Ronan, MT 59864



TRUNK OR TREAT
3:30 – 6:00 PM



PIE COOK-OFF
5:30 – 7:00 PM



TOWN HALL
6:00 PM



VETERANS



FAMILIES



COMMUNITY

*Service Today.
Stronger Tomorrows.*



PEOPLE



POSTS



PROGRAMS



PURPOSE

The Challenge Has Been Issued. Now Montana, It's Your Move!

406 Connection Challenge | Connected for Montana: People • Posts • Programs • Purpose

What started as a vision from Department Commander Irene Dickerson is now a challenge being carried across Montana. With the official launch of Connected for Montana, Commander Dickerson has called on the entire Montana American Legion Family to do something that doesn't require a budget, a committee or even a meeting. Simply get connected. Her message is clear: Montana may be a big state, but our Legion Family should never feel that far apart. And now, Department Vice Commander Brian Carpenter has officially accepted her 406 Connection Challenge, passing that challenge on to Montana's District and Zone Commanders. The question is no longer what is Connected for Montana? The question is: What are YOU going to do to get connected?

4 o. 6. Three Numbers. One Powerful Purpose.

4 — REACH OUT.

Connect with four members you haven't heard from lately. Not to ask about dues. Not to fill a committee vacancy. Not because you need someone to attend a meeting. Call because they matter. Ask how they're doing. Invite them for coffee. Stop by for a visit. Sometimes the most meaningful connection starts with someone simply taking the time to listen.

o — FORGET NONE.

Our goal is zero Montana veterans or Legionnaires feeling forgotten. We know we cannot solve every problem, but we can make sure we're paying attention. When a familiar face hasn't been seen around the Post, when a veteran is going through a difficult time or when someone simply needs a friend, we can choose to be the one who reaches out. It's a natural extension of the American Legion's Be the One mission. Connection can be the first step toward making sure someone knows they are not alone.

6 — BUILD NEW CONNECTIONS.

Make six new connections in your community this year. Maybe it's a local business willing to support Boys State. A school that would welcome an American Legion program. A veteran who has never walked through the doors of a Post. A community organization looking for a partner. Or a family who doesn't yet know what the Legion Family has to offer. Every new relationship is an opportunity to strengthen our Posts, expand our programs and remind Montana why the American Legion matters.

Leadership Has Accepted. Who's Next?

Vice Commander Carpenter didn't hesitate to answer Commander Dickerson's call. With his acceptance, he challenged Montana's District and Zone Commanders to carry the initiative into their areas and encourage the Posts they serve to participate. That's where this challenge becomes something bigger than a Department initiative. It becomes a statewide effort built one conversation, one Post and one community at a time. Imagine what could happen if every Post in Montana reached out to four members who haven't been heard from lately. Imagine the difference if every Post made six new community connections. And imagine what our Legion Family could accomplish if we made checking on one another part of our everyday culture. That's the Montana we want to build.

We Want to Hear Your Stories!

Connected for Montana isn't intended to be another reporting requirement or another award competition. It's about recognizing the people, Posts, programs and acts of service that keep our Legion Family strong. In the coming months, we'll be sharing Connected for Montana Spotlights, featuring the people and Posts putting this challenge into action. And we need your help finding those stories. Did someone in your Post reconnect with a longtime member? Has your Squadron, Auxiliary Unit or Riders Chapter built a new community partnership? Did a simple Buddy Check lead to something meaningful?

Montana, Let's Keep This Moving!

Commander Dickerson has issued the challenge. Vice Commander Carpenter has accepted it. District and Zone Commanders have been challenged to carry it forward. Now it's time for our Posts, our Legion Family and every individual member to take the next step. Pick up the phone. Make the visit. Invite someone to the table. Introduce a veteran to the Legion Family. And when you make that connection, challenge someone else to do the same. Because the strength of the American Legion isn't measured only by the number of members on our rolls. It's measured by the relationships we build, the veterans we support, the communities we strengthen and the people who know they belong. 406. Eleven Districts. One Legion Family. People. Posts. Programs. Purpose. Let's get Connected for Montana!

Duane Cunningham

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

Fall Conference Advances Legion Business and Ratifies Convention Resolutions



The American Legion's annual Fall Meetings in Indianapolis, October 5–8, 2026, brought national leadership together to advance the organization's work for veterans, servicemembers and their families. Commissions and committees met October 5–6, followed by the National Executive Committee meeting October 7–8 at National Headquarters to review reports and act on resolutions. A significant part of the Fall NEC's business was ratification of the resolutions approved at the 107th National Convention in Louisville. Those actions established positions on veterans' benefits, healthcare, education, military recognition and Legion Family membership.

The convention approved 16 resolutions, including an Auxiliary eligibility amendment. The other 15 called for:

- Burial eligibility for National Guard and Reserve members.
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal recognition for Cold War service along the German/Czech frontier.
- Valid identification for federal voting, with protections against financial barriers.
- Adequate VA staffing to correct Veterans Benefits Management System errors.
- Evaluation of medical evidence for credibility and accuracy.
- Fewer bureaucratic barriers to emerging mental-health and traumatic-brain-injury treatments.
- Opposition to unaccredited or for-profit claims vendors charging veterans.
- Cancer awareness and regular screenings.
- Congressional Gold Medal recognition for World War II nurses.
- C&P examination notices specifying date, time, location and conditions examined.
- A permanent Washington-area building for the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.
- Earlier claim or appeal effective dates when prior written correspondence supports them.
- Military-culture training for VA clinicians and contracted examiners.
- Partnerships with accredited organizations raising and training service dogs for PTSD and TBI.
- Post-9/11 GI Bill housing payments during academic breaks of 30 days or less for students enrolled across terms.

Resolution No. 19 expanded American Legion Auxiliary eligibility by replacing gender-specific family categories with grandparents, parents, siblings, children and grandchildren. Spouses and women eligible through their own military service remain included under the applicable eligibility requirements. National Headquarters reported that this change took effect immediately upon adoption

September 2. Posts and Units should review their membership materials and outreach to reflect the expanded eligibility.

The Department of Montana submitted 4 resolutions to Convention,

Resolution No. 15: SET MINIMUM NATIONAL DEFENSE BUDGET AT FIVE PERCENT OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT – Referred for further study

Resolution No. 16: NOVEL THERAPEUTICS FOR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS AND TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY – Passed

Resolution No. 17: INTERMENT OF MILITARY WORKING DOGS IN NATIONAL AND STATE CEMETERIES – Rejected

Resolution No. 19: OPPOSE CHARGES FOR CLAIMS FILING BY UNACCREDITED OR FOR-PROFIT PARTIES – Combined and Approved.

National Commander Jay Bowen's opening remarks reinforced the need to turn policy into action. He presented five tasks: contact Congress, support service members, encourage voting, recruit members and be part of the solution. He highlighted the Take Care of America's Veterans Act, GI Bill Parity Act and SHIPS for America Act, urging members to communicate with Congress through the Grassroots Action Center.

Commander Bowen also emphasized military housing, food and childcare needs, encouraged nonpartisan participation in the November 3 election, and connected his "Be Part of the Solution" theme with the Be the One suicide-prevention mission. Legionnaires who recruit two qualifying new members for the 2027 membership year can earn his membership incentive pin.

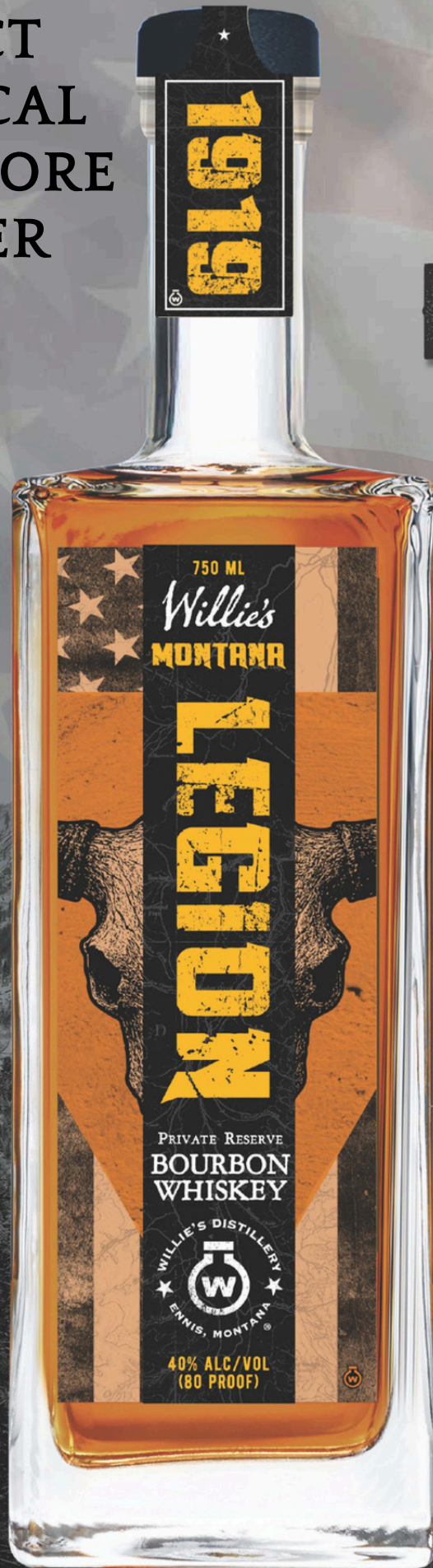
For the Department of Montana, the resolutions provide direction for continued advocacy. Opposition to claim sharks supports our work to protect veterans seeking benefits. Guard and Reserve burial eligibility, accurate claims decisions, effective examinations and education benefits are issues our members can bring to congressional discussions. Posts can also act locally through cancer-awareness efforts, service-dog partnerships and expanded Legion Family outreach. The work completed in Indianapolis reaches far beyond the meeting room. Montana Posts, Districts and individual members give these national priorities practical meaning through informed advocacy, community partnerships and direct service to veterans.

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Department Vice Commander

Brian Carpenter

Montana is Moving- Let's Keep Our Foot on the Gas



If you left Department College fired up about the future of The American Legion in Montana, you weren't alone. I did, too.

Our October 1-2 College at Fort Harrison brought together people willing to learn, ask questions, share ideas, and get to work. That is how we build stronger Posts and stronger leaders. We give people the tools, help them gain confidence, and then put that training into action.

Commander and Adjutant Boot Camp and MyLegion training tackled the practical responsibilities that keep our Posts moving. The Constitution and Bylaws workshop helped leaders better understand the foundation of their organizations, with Ken George bringing valuable knowledge to the discussion. Servant Leadership, "Meetings People Don't Dread," resolutions training, and the Conflict Lab challenged us to think about how we lead, how we work through disagreements, and how we make participation worthwhile.

Let's be honest: if we want people to show up, we need to give them a reason to come back. A productive meeting, a welcoming atmosphere, and a clear purpose go a long way.

The success of this College will carry forward through what happens next. Take something you learned and use it. Help a new officer understand their responsibilities. Improve a meeting. Review your bylaws. Share a tool with another Post. Training should keep moving through our Department long after the certificates are handed out.

And we already have something worth celebrating: Montana has reached its 55% membership target ahead of the target date.

That took work. Thank you to everyone processing renewals, reaching out to members, welcoming new veterans, and keeping membership moving. Every Post contributing to that effort deserves credit.

Now let's keep our foot on the gas.

Recruiting starts with a conversation. Ask a veteran to join you for a service project, a community event, or coffee. Explain what your Post does and give them a place to contribute. When someone joins, introduce them around, learn what interests them, and follow up. A membership card opens the door; the relationships we build give people a reason to stay.

We can get creative. Pair a new member with someone who will personally invite them to the next activity. Reach out to members whose memberships have expired and ask what would help them reconnect. Try an informal gathering where veterans can meet without walking straight into a business meeting. Make room for ideas from people who haven't held an office or spent twenty years in the organization.

And pick up the phone.

One of the strongest moments of Department College was our October 1 Be the One and Buddy Check call night. We took what we had been discussing and put it into practice. Legion Family members reached out, checked in, and asked a simple question: "How are you doing?"

That successful evening showed what we can accomplish when we make connection a priority. We need to carry that effort into our Posts and make it part of how we operate.

Be the One matters deeply to me because taking care of our fellow veterans is at the heart of why we are here. Behind every name on a roster is a person. Someone who served. Someone with a family, a history, and challenges we may know nothing about. Someone who deserves to know that their Legion family





Department Vice Commander

Brian Carpenter

Montana is Moving – Let's Keep Our Foot on the Gas



cares whether they are doing okay.

We cannot assume someone is fine because they haven't asked for help. We have to be willing to reach out, listen, and stay connected. When someone needs more support, we help them connect with people equipped to provide it.

That is why I want Be the One to have a strong, lasting place in our Department. It belongs in our training, our conversations, and our regular Post activities. A veteran should not have to wonder whether anyone will notice they have been missing.

Keep your Buddy Check calls focused on the person. Ask how they are doing. Listen to the answer. Follow up when you say you will. A renewal conversation and a caring check-in each have a purpose, and our members deserve time and attention beyond a reminder about dues.

Department College gave us tools. Reaching 55% early shows we have momentum. Our call night showed us what happens when we put our commitment to veterans into action.

Now it is our turn to carry that forward.

Keep learning. Keep recruiting. Give our members reasons to stay involved. Make the call you have been putting off, welcome the veteran standing at the door, and help the next leader get ready.

Montana is moving. Let's keep showing up for each other and keep building a Department our veterans are proud to call home.

Fire Up the Grill, Take a Chance, and Wear Your Support: Montana Fundraisers Are Underway

The American Legion Department of Montana has three ways for members, families, and friends to get involved in our fundraising efforts. Whether you're hoping to bring home a Blackstone grill, interested in the Springfield 1911 raffle, or ready to add a little red to your Friday wardrobe, here's how to participate.

Claim Your Square for the Blackstone Grill

Who's ready to fire up a new Blackstone? Our 100-square raffle offers a chance to bring one home while supporting the Department's fundraising efforts.

With just 100 squares on the board, reach out to reserve yours and find out which squares are available. Contact Department Headquarters at amlegmtsec@gmail.com for squares and details.

Get Your Springfield 1911 Raffle Tickets

The Springfield 1911 raffle is another opportunity to take part. Members interested in purchasing tickets can mail \$50 to PO Box 155 Fort Harrison MT 59636 with Pistol Raffle on the Memo for tickets.

Help spread the word at your next Post meeting and let interested friends and fellow members know whom to contact.

Wear Your Support with the New Red Shirt Friday Online Store

Our new Red Shirt Friday online store gives you another way to participate—and a reason to make red part of your Friday routine.

RED stands for Remember Everyone Deployed. Wearing red on Fridays is a simple, visible reminder that our deployed service members and their families remain in our thoughts.

Visit the store, check out the available shirts, and help spread the tradition throughout the Montana Legion Family.

Shop here: <https://everyonedeployed.itemorder.com/shop/home/>

Every square purchased, raffle ticket sold, shirt ordered, and announcement shared helps these efforts move forward. Please share these opportunities with your Post, Unit, Squadron, and Riders chapter. Together, we can keep the momentum going across Montana!

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National Convention and Fall Meeting Resolutions

A complete 2026 update for the Montana Legionnaire

Montana brought two successful resolutions to The American Legion's 107th National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, helping shape national positions on emerging treatments for veterans and protection against unauthorized claims fees. Both adopted resolutions identify Montana as their origin, giving our members and department an achievement worth recognizing.

Delegates adopted 16 resolutions during the September 1–3 convention sessions. The National Executive Committee then approved 14 more at the October 7–8 Fall Meetings in Indianapolis. Together, these 30 actions address veterans' care and benefits, Legion Family membership, patriotic programs and organizational business.

Some resolutions authorize changes within the Legion, while others establish positions the organization will pursue with Congress, VA or other agencies. Adoption of an advocacy resolution does not itself change federal law, create a benefit or guarantee immediate implementation. The summaries below explain each adopted action; resolution numbers restart for each meeting.

National Convention resolutions

Louisville Kentucky • September 1–3 2026

Resolution No. 3 — Guard and Reserve burial eligibility. Calls for expanded national cemetery interment and burial benefits for honorably serving National Guard and Reserve members who meet service requirements substantially equivalent to those for active-duty members. It also urges acceptance of cumulative or mobilization orders and National Guard Form 22 as qualifying documentation when a DD214 was not issued for the relevant service period.

Resolution No. 4 — Recognition for Cold War border service. Supports a Defense Department and congressional review of Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal eligibility, or other appropriate recognition, for qualifying personnel who served along the Inner German Border and Czechoslovak Frontier. It seeks recognition of the Cold War border mission through legislation, administrative action or military review.

Resolution No. 9 — Identification for federal elections. Supports proof of identity and United States citizenship when registering or voting in federal elections, with safeguards against unlawfully restricting eligible citizens' voting rights. It calls for free, timely access to necessary documents and accessible procedures to obtain or correct them before Election Day.

Resolution No. 10 — Correcting errors in veterans' electronic claims records. Urges VA to require employees and contractors using the Veterans Benefits Management System to immediately report incorrect, misfiled, mislabeled or corrupted information. It calls for standardized reporting procedures and enough staff and resources to review, correct and resolve reported record errors within 30 days.

Resolution No. 12 — Qualified review of medical evidence. Calls for medical evidence from a licensed physician to be evaluated by another licensed physician with similar expertise and similar or greater experience. It also seeks compliance with professional scope-of-practice standards and clear identification of non-physician examiners whose reports challenge or diminish a physician's submitted opinion.

Resolution No. 16 — Montana — Emerging treatments for mental health conditions and brain injuries. Originating in Montana, this resolution urges Congress to establish a VA Office of Novel Therapeutics and Centers of Excellence, with funding to reduce administrative barriers to clinically effective emerging treatments. It seeks a 90-day report from the VA secretary on delays between FDA authorization and VA implementation, and accelerated access through available interim pathways while full FDA licensing processes continue.

Resolution No. 19 — Montana — Protecting veterans from unauthorized claims fees. Also originating in Montana, this resolution opposes unaccredited or for-profit vendors charging veterans for help filing VA disability claims. It urges Congress and VA to strengthen enforcement against unauthorized claims assistance, increase penalties for violations and improve outreach about free, accredited assistance. This gives Montana credit for a second convention action focused directly on veterans' needs.

Resolution No. 27 — Broadening Auxiliary family eligibility. Amends Article XIII, Section 2 of the Legion's National Constitution to use gender-neutral family categories for Auxiliary eligibility, including grandparents, parents, siblings, spouses, and direct or adopted descendants within two degrees of relationship. The change includes qualifying male relatives such as fathers, brothers, sons and grandsons. It retains the qualifying service and family-relationship conditions and the provision for women eligible for Legion membership in their own right.

Resolution No. 32 — Cancer awareness and research. Commits the Legion to promoting cancer awareness and regular VA screenings among veterans. It also supports advocacy and research to prevent, treat and cure illnesses associated with toxic exposure, including cancers presumed to be service connected, and encourages VA leadership in this work.

Resolution No. 33 — Honoring World War II nurses. Urges Congress to award the Congressional Gold Medal to recognize the service and sacrifice of nurses who served during World War II. The resolution establishes the Legion's support for that recognition; Congress would need to act to award the medal.

Resolution No. 36 — Clearer compensation and pension examination notices. Urges VA to require private contractors' compensation and pension examination letters to include the appointment's date, time, location and the conditions being examined. The requested information would help veterans understand what an upcoming examination covers and prepare for it.

Resolution No. 41 — A permanent home for the veterans claims court. Supports legislation funding a permanent building dedicated to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims in the greater Washington, D.C., area. The action concerns the court's facilities and does not change veterans' appeal rights or procedures.

Resolution No. 42 — Earlier effective dates for qualifying claims and appeals. Supports legislation allowing VA to recognize an earlier written communication when it clearly identifies a claimant and an intent to seek benefits, and the later required filing results in an award. The proposed change could preserve an earlier effective date. The resolution specifies that an implementing law would take effect on its enactment date.

Resolution No. 44 — Military culture training for examiners. Calls for recurring training on the experiences and culture of military service for VA physicians, other VA medical personnel and contracted compensation and pension examiners. The goal is to improve their understanding of the veterans they evaluate and serve.

Resolution No. 48 — Supporting accredited service dog organizations. Encourages departments, districts and posts to work with accredited service dog training organizations. Members can assist with raising, socializing and supporting service dogs for veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries.

Resolution No. 49 — Housing continuity during short school breaks. Urges Congress and VA to protect housing continuity during academic breaks of 30 days or less for student veterans enrolled full-time across consecutive terms. It calls for safeguards including registration for the next term and satisfactory academic progress, with a targeted policy that does not expand existing GI Bill benefits.

Montana's two convention resolutions show how members can bring veterans' concerns into national policy. Credit belongs to the Montana Legionnaires who developed and advanced these proposals. Their work on treatment access and claims protection deserves recognition across our department.



Fall Meeting Resolutions

Indianapolis Indiana • October 7–8 2026

Resolution No. 1 — Increasing visibility of 988. Encourages every marked emergency vehicle to display a 988 shield decal on both sides, increasing public visibility of the number. This is an encouragement to emergency agencies rather than a mandate. The adopted resolution traces its origin to a Michigan proposal submitted at National Convention.

Resolution No. 2 — Protecting VA borrowers facing foreclosure. Calls for an administrative pause in foreclosure proceedings for delinquent VA-backed borrowers until a compliant mortgage-assistance program is restored. It also seeks documented reviews of assistance options before foreclosure sales or evictions, congressional oversight, completion of an inspector general investigation, and restoration of effective programs to help veterans retain their homes.

Resolution No. 3 — Restoring GI Bill eligibility affected by COVID-19. Urges Congress and VA to retroactively extend Post-9/11 GI Bill eligibility for veterans whose benefits expired on or after March 1, 2020, because of the COVID-19 national emergency. It calls for automatic, streamlined reinstatement without cost to veterans and a solution similar to the Forever GI Bill framework.

Resolution No. 4 — Thanking the convention hosts. Formally recognizes the Department of Kentucky, state and Louisville leaders, public safety officials and Louisville Tourism for supporting the 2026 National Convention. Although adopted at Fall Meetings in Indianapolis, this resolution thanks the Louisville convention hosts. It also rescinds the previous host-city appreciation resolution as completed.

Resolution No. 5 — Transferring Thailand Post TH02. Approves Thailand Post TH02's transfer from the Department of France to the Department of the Philippines. The resolution cites regional coordination, communication, access to training and veterans' services, and arrangements for handling membership information under applicable data-protection requirements.

Resolution No. 6 — Authorizing a temporary charter in Italy. Authorizes the national adjutant to issue a temporary charter to Vicenza Italy Post IT02 in Vicenza, Italy. The post will be affiliated with the Department of France, which will supervise it within the Legion's overseas structure.

Resolution No. 7 — Authorizing a temporary charter in Panama. Authorizes a temporary charter for Panama Canal Post PC03 in Boquete, Panama, affiliated with the Department of Latin America. This is a separate charter action from the new Italy post and supports an additional Legion presence serving veterans abroad.

Resolution No. 8 — Recognizing a veteran's chosen support person. Calls for VA facilities to let veterans designate a trusted person, including a friend or battle buddy, to accompany them into assessment and treatment areas. It seeks a standardized electronic-record designation, notice of this choice at intake and privacy releases for additional information sharing. Restrictions would need legitimate clinical, safety or privacy justification.

Resolution No. 9 — Expanding access to therapeutic creative arts. Supports VA creative arts programs and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, with funding, staffing and access particularly important for rural and underserved veterans. It encourages posts to connect veterans with local VA competitions and recognize participants, working with the Legion Family and respecting the Auxiliary's established partnership with VA.

Resolution No. 10 — Planning a Legion esports and video gaming club. Authorizes the national commander to appoint an ad hoc committee to develop a club concept, mission, structure, activities, governance and implementation recommendations. This is a planning action rather than the launch of a finished national program. Its focus is recreational, competitive and social video gaming, excluding gambling and wagering.



Resolution No. 11 — Developing the Stars and Stripes Relay. Supports a national American flag relay culminating on Flag Day, June 14, 2027, the flag's 250th anniversary. Participation is open to willing Legion Family members, with routes and operating procedures to be developed. Participants, organizations, donations and sponsorships must cover expenses without creating a financial obligation for National.

Resolution No. 12 — Preparing for the Sons' centennial. Establishes a committee under the Sons of The American Legion Internal Affairs Commission to plan and coordinate the organization's 100th anniversary in 2032. The committee will meet virtually and continue through the 2032 SAL National Convention, then conclude its work with a final report.

Resolution No. 13 — Recognizing exceptional national SAL service. Establishes the PNC JR Stillwell National Legacy Award for sustained national leadership and measurable contributions to the Sons of The American Legion. Written nominations must document the service; self-nominations are prohibited. No more than one recipient may be selected annually, and an award is not required every year. Posthumous recognition is permitted.

Resolution No. 14 — Securing paper for the national magazine. Authorizes negotiation of a paper-supply contract with Lindenmeyr Central for The American Legion Magazine. The agreement may run up to three years beginning November 1, 2026, with an optional two-year extension or renewal. It seeks competitive pricing and stability, subject to review and approval of contract terms by the national judge advocate. For Montana posts, these actions offer practical work to consider: connecting veterans with free accredited claims assistance, encouraging participation in VA programs, supporting accredited service dog organizations and staying informed as new national activities take shape. Members can read the complete adopted wording in the American Legion Digital Archive at archive.legion.org.

 **AMERICAN
LEGION**
DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

PEOPLE.
POSTS.
PROGRAMS.
PURPOSE.

*A Stronger
Montana
Together.*

MONTANA
VETERANS.
MONTANA
COMMUNITIES.
MONTANA STRONG.

406 CONNECTION Challenge

*Connected
for Montana*

IT'S SIMPLE. IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Take the 406 Connection Challenge and help ensure no Montana veteran or Legionnaire feels forgotten.

4 

REACH OUT

Connect with four members you haven't heard from lately.

*Call. Visit. Message.
Invite them for coffee.
Ask how they're doing —
and listen.*

0 

FORGET NONE

Our goal is zero veterans in our Montana communities feeling forgotten.

*Check in. Be present.
Make sure everyone
knows they still matter.*

6 

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Create six new connections in your community this year.

*A veteran, a family,
a school, an organization,
a business or someone who
doesn't know yet what the
American Legion does.*

SMALL ACTIONS. A STRONGER MONTANA.

PEOPLE ★ POSTS ★ PROGRAMS ★ PURPOSE

A CALL TO GIVE: MONTANA POSTS ENCOURAGED TO ORGANIZE BLOOD DRIVES



The American Legion Department of Montana is encouraging every Post to organize or support a community blood drive in the coming months through The American Legion's Blood Donor Program.

The importance of this effort has recently been brought close to home. Behind every need for blood is someone's loved one—a mother preparing for a difficult delivery, a veteran undergoing surgery, or a neighbor facing an unexpected emergency.

Giving blood is one way we can help ensure support is available when those families need it most.

Posts are encouraged to contact the American Red Cross or their local blood collection organization to arrange a drive. Posts unable to host can partner with neighboring Posts, support an existing community drive, or organize members to donate together. Everyone can contribute by donating, recruiting donors, promoting appointments, or volunteering.

Please share your scheduled drives with Department Headquarters so we can help promote them, and remember to include your efforts in your Consolidated Post Report.

This is Connected for Montana in action: People, Posts, Programs, and Purpose coming together to help save lives.

“Super Chappy” : Andrew Noel Makes Sure People Know They Matter

A prayer before a meeting. A blessing before a ride. A birthday remembered. A family comforted during a loss. For Andrew Noel, each is an opportunity to make sure someone knows they matter. Known affectionately as “Super Chappy,” Andrew serves as chaplain for American Legion Post 11, Sons of The American Legion Squadron 11, District 2, the Montana SAL Detachment, and American Legion Riders Chapter 11. Brian Carpenter gave him the nickname—and helped start his journey into chaplain service. During the December 2025 Chapter 11 meeting, Brian asked Andrew whether he could nominate him for chaplain. The request “blew me sideways,” Andrew recalled. “I never thought of the position and humbly accepted.” By June 2026, Andrew had also been nominated to chaplain positions with Squadron 11, Post 11, and the Montana Detachment. What began with one person recognizing his potential became an opportunity to care for members throughout the Legion Family. But ask Andrew what the responsibility means, and he talks about people. “Being present to those in need in whatever capacity is required,” he said. Sometimes that means a simple “How are you?” or “You’re doing fantastic.” Other times, it means asking, “How can I move a mountain to show you that your worth as a brother or sister is more than the pain you’re going through?” “It is something I have hoped someone would do for me,” he added, “and some have.”

Names That Ride With Him

Some of the most personal reminders of Andrew’s purpose are written on his motorcycles. They are the names of people lost to suicide, added by loved ones or at their request. For Andrew, carrying those names is a way to honor lives and let grieving families know their loved ones are remembered.

“Knowing someone cares so much they will ride with them forever is hopefully an example we all need to move forward and stop suicide,” he said. Andrew also speaks openly about having experienced suicidal struggles himself. That experience helps explain why he takes personal contact so seriously. He knows the importance of feeling valued as a person, beyond the work someone does or the service they provide.

A birthday greeting, a condolence message, or an invitation to spend time together can carry that message: you belong here, and someone cares about you. That commitment gives a personal face to The American Legion’s Be the One mission. Andrew wants members to feel comfortable reaching out—and he is willing to reach toward them, too.

Giving Someone Another Chance

His commitment to caring also extends to blood donation. Andrew began donating in 2005, when he became eligible as a high school junior. He saw an opportunity to help someone whose life might depend on a donation from a stranger.

“They’ll never know where that supply came from, other than that it was there when it mattered, from someone who loved them without question,” he said. The importance of that gift became deeply personal when his own family needed it. “Knowing someone gave their blood so my wife could live after our third child has given me even more depth of why these blood drives have a purpose.”

As Montana’s American Legion Family encourages posts to host and support blood drives, Andrew’s experience brings the need close to home. Behind every drive is the possibility of helping a family have more time together.

Available for the Good Days, Too

Andrew wants members to know that contacting their chaplain does not require a crisis. “Chaplains should be available on your best day or your worst,” he said. Whether someone needs a prayer, spiritual guidance, time on two wheels, or a little relief after a heated meeting, he wants to be available. Celebrations deserve company just as difficult days deserve support. His service reflects Connected for Montana: People • Posts • Programs. Those connections take shape when someone remembers a birthday, notices an absence, listens without rushing, or offers help. “Super Chappy” may have started as Brian’s nickname for a man taking on several chaplain responsibilities. Andrew gives it meaning through the care he brings to each one. His message to the Legion Family is simple: happy or sad, anxious or celebrating, you can reach out.

Contact Chaplain Andrew Noel

Call or text: (701) 339-1974

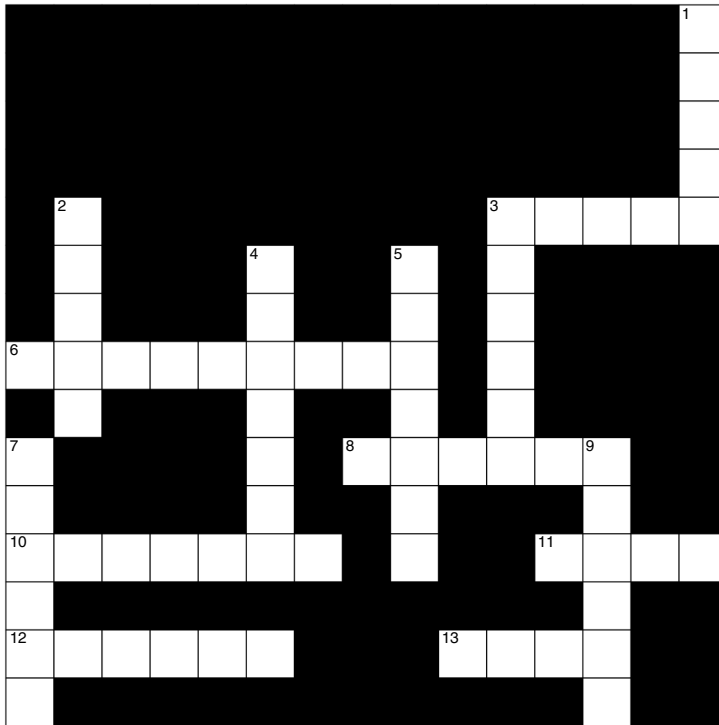
Mail: Andrew Noel, PO Box 32, Rudyard, MT 59540

BE THE ONE

The Post Puzzle Page

1 LEGION FAMILY CROSSWORD

Fourteen familiar words from around the post.



ACROSS

3. Red remembrance flower. (5)
6. Someone who gives time to help, without pay. (9)
8. Legion motorcyclists. (6)
10. The Treasure State. (7)
11. The Stars and Stripes. (4)
12. Our organization, The American _____. (6)
13. A local American Legion unit. (4)

DOWN

1. A pal who has your back. (5)
2. To show deep respect for. (5)
3. A procession with marchers and floats. (6)
4. Someone who served in the armed forces. (7)
5. Helping others; a core part of our mission. (7)
7. Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and Riders together. (6)
9. A formal gesture of respect. (6)

2 AT THE POST WORD JUMBLE

Unscramble these Legion-life words.

1. **TEEMGIN** _____
2. **REETNULOV** _____
3. **TANODION** _____
4. **HSIRFNEPID** _____
5. **YOCMTMUNI** _____

3 SIX BY SIX SUDOKU

Use 1-6 once in each row, column and outlined 2-by-3 box.

					6
4	5				
				6	1
5					
3					2
				4	

4 CRACK THE CODE

Each letter stands for another. Hint: Q = A, Z = T.

Q LZKQFUTK OL PXLZ Q YKOTFR NGX IQCTF'Z DTZ NTZ.



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TOWING



A Fall Benefits Checkup: Help You've Earned, Support You Can Trust

As Montana heads into colder weather and the holiday season approaches, October offers a good opportunity to check on something that can make a lasting difference for veterans and their families: access to the benefits they have earned.

The American Legion recently reported that its accredited service officers helped veterans obtain a record \$25.8 billion in benefits during fiscal year 2026. Those awards included disability compensation, pensions and certain survivor benefits. American Legion claims assistance is provided at no charge.

Behind that national total are individual veterans and families navigating questions, paperwork and decisions that can affect their financial security. For someone unsure where to begin, a conversation with an accredited service officer can be an important first step.

Here in Montana, every post can help make that connection. This month, we encourage posts to confirm their referral contact for accredited benefits assistance and make that information easy to find. Put it on the bulletin board, include it in post communications and share it during meetings.

When reaching out to a veteran or surviving family member, ask whether they have benefits questions or need help finding the right person.

A post service officer can be a valuable local connection. When claims representation is needed, help veterans reach an appropriately accredited representative. The American Legion's service officer directory is available at legion.org/serviceofficers.

An Insurance Update Worth Checking

Veterans who carry Veterans' Group Life Insurance, commonly called VGLI, should also know about an upcoming premium holiday. VA has announced that eligible policyholders will receive premium relief for November 1, 2026, through January 31, 2027, while their coverage continues under existing policy terms.

For policyholders with active coverage on November 1, the holiday applies automatically. However, overdue balances remain payable, and newly effective policies have first-payment requirements. This relief applies specifically to VGLI; other VA life insurance programs are not included. Veterans should review their account and VA's guidance before changing payments. Questions can be directed to the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance at 800-419-1473.

Training Strengthens the Help Veterans Receive

Keeping benefits assistance current takes continued education. The American Legion has scheduled its third annual Department Service Officer Symposium for October 25–30, 2026, in Washington, D.C. The advanced program is designed for accredited American Legion service officers and covers the lifecycle of VA disability claims through expert instruction and practical exercises.

That investment in training supports the people veterans depend on to help them navigate complex claims and appeals.

This October, let's make benefits outreach part of how we care for one another. A phone call, a shared contact or an offer to help someone arrange an appointment can open the door to assistance they have been putting off.

Veterans should know where to turn—and our posts can help them get there.

AMERICAN LEGION



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BE THE ONE



AMERICAN LEGION OF MONTANA

★ 2027 ★ CASH CALENDAR

Every Day is a Chance to Win!

\$10,965 IN CASH PRIZES

	New Years Day	- \$250
	American Legion Birthday	- \$75
	Memorial Day	- \$250
	Independence Day	- \$500
	POW/MIA Day	- \$250
	Veterans Day	- \$500
	Thanksgiving	- \$500
	Christmas	- \$500
	6 Branch Birthdays	- \$100

253 \$20 DRAWINGS

50 \$50 DRAWINGS



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THE AMERICAN LEGION
SERVE VETERANS,
MILITARY, AND THEIR FAMILIES
ACROSS MONTANA.**



**PROUDLY SUPPORTING THOSE
WHO SERVED AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.**



BUY YOUR 2027 CASH CALENDAR TODAY!





HONORING THOSE WHO CARE FOR MONTANA'S VETERANS

Montana American Legion presents 2026 VA awards during National Commander's visit

Service to veterans takes many forms. For those working within the VA, it means carrying forward our nation's promise to care for the men and women who served.

During National Commander Jay Bowen's recent visit, The American Legion Department of Montana recognized three individuals with its 2026 VA awards. National Commander Bowen, Department Commander Irene Dickerson, and Department Vice Commander Brian Carpenter presented the awards, joining together to express the Montana Legion Family's appreciation for those serving our veterans.

The 2026 recipients are:

VA Employee of the Year — Carda Taylor

VA Provider of the Year — Kayla Scoffield Baur, RN

VA Physician of the Year — Dr. Brande Harris

These awards put names and faces to a mission that matters deeply to The American Legion. Behind every appointment, treatment plan, and interaction is a veteran whose health, independence, and quality of life matter. Recognizing the people who support that mission is an important part of advocating for veterans.

For veterans and their families, care is personal. Being heard, finding help, and being treated with dignity can shape their entire experience. The Department's recognition offers an opportunity to say thank you—and to remind those working in veterans' care that their service matters to the people and communities around them.

Having Commander Bowen participate alongside Commander Dickerson and Vice Commander Carpenter made the presentations a special part of his Montana visit. Together, they delivered a message of appreciation on behalf of Legionnaires who understand the importance of keeping veterans at the center of the mission.

The American Legion Department of Montana proudly congratulates Carda Taylor, Kayla Scoffield Baur, RN, and Dr. Brande Harris on their 2026 awards. We thank each of them for serving Montana's veterans and helping carry forward the promise made to those who wore our nation's uniform.





AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS



Department ALR Director Don Goodnight

Thank you to everyone who attended the Department Fall Conference. Following a vote during the session, three amendments have been approved for the ALR SOP by the DEC. Please review the highlighted red text below for the specific changes:

Change 1

Page 3 under Department Organization and Structure, third paragraph The MTALRAC Standing Committee shall consist of the Department Legion Riders Director, the Assistant Director, if one is appointed, the Immediate Past Director, and all duly elected and confirmed directors from chapters across the state. Rest of paragraph stays the same.

Change 2

Page 5 first paragraph, Road Captain. The MTALRAC Road Captain shall be responsible for planning, coordinating, and ensuring the safe execution of all Department-level sanctioned rides by working alongside local Chapter Road Captains. The Road Captains review ride routes, assess safety concerns, and ensure that all riders are briefed on group riding protocols and safety procedures prior to departure. The road Captain shall be versed in all Montana Laws and regulations as they pertain to motorcycle safety.

Change 3

Page 8 under Eligibility and Membership. We have added 5 bullets directly under bullet that says Member must be endorsed, licensed, and insured for operation of motorcycle.

- Eligible members of the American Legion Family may apply for membership in any American

Legion Riders Chapter, subject to the approval of that Chapter and the sponsoring Post, in accordance with National American Legion Riders guidelines.

- Acceptance into a Chapter is not automatic. Membership applications shall be considered fairly and consistently using standards established by the Chapter, this Standard Operating Procedure, and the governing documents of the sponsoring Post.

- A Chapter may deny any application only for legitimate reasons consistent with the mission, safety, welfare, and the best interest of the Chapter, sponsoring post, and the American Legion. Such reasons may include failure to meet eligibility requirements, failure to provide required documentation, failure to comply with Chapter or Department safety requirements, or documented conduct that would adversely affect the Chapter or sponsoring Post.

- Membership shall not be denied arbitrarily, capriciously, unlawfully, or solely because of personal disagreements unrelated to the purposes and objectives of the American Legion Riders.

- Any Chapter denying an application shall document its action in the Chapter meeting minutes. The sponsoring Post Executive Committee may review any denial upon written request of the applicant or Chapter if a dispute arises.

Upcoming Department ALR events.

May 1st, 2027, Department ALR Annual Meeting

June 11th. – 13th R.O.M.P. ride in Great Falls

July 30th. – August 2nd. Department Legacy Ride



THE AUXILIARY SERVICE STAR



HOMESTYLE BEEF CHILI

A Hearty, Crowd-Pleasing Classic for Cool Days

Warm, comforting and full of flavor, this classic beef chili is an easy one-pot meal perfect for family dinners, game days or sharing with friends. Serve it with cornbread or crackers for a satisfying meal.

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 cup beef broth
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat, cook the ground beef until browned, breaking it into crumbles. Drain excess grease if needed.
2. Add the onion and bell pepper. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes, until softened. Stir in the garlic and cook for 30 seconds.
3. Add the kidney beans, crushed tomatoes, tomato sauce and beef broth. Stir in the chili powder, cumin, paprika, salt, black pepper and optional cayenne pepper.
4. Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat to low. Simmer uncovered for 30 to 40 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the chili thickens and the flavors blend.
5. Taste and adjust the seasonings as desired. Ladle into bowls and serve hot.

SERVING SUGGESTION: Top with shredded cheddar cheese, sour cream, sliced green onions or fresh cilantro. Pair with warm cornbread for a classic comfort-food meal.

COOK'S TIP: Chili tastes even better the next day. Refrigerate leftovers promptly and reheat thoroughly before serving.





THE AUXILIARY SERVICE STAR



CLASSIC HOMESTYLE APPLE PIE

A Taste of Autumn in Every Slice

Nothing says fall quite like the aroma of apples and cinnamon baking in the oven. This traditional apple pie features tender, spiced apples tucked inside a golden crust, making it a welcome addition to any autumn gathering or family dinner.

Prep time: 25 minutes

Bake time: 50–60 minutes

Servings: 8

INGREDIENTS

2 refrigerated 9-inch pie crusts, softened according to package directions

6 cups peeled, cored and thinly sliced apples (about 6 medium apples)

3/4 cup granulated sugar

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 tablespoon lemon juice

2 tablespoons butter, cut into small pieces

1 egg, beaten (optional, for brushing the crust)

1 teaspoon coarse sugar (optional, for sprinkling)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Fit one pie crust into a 9-inch pie plate.

In a large bowl, combine the sliced apples, sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and lemon juice. Toss until the apples are evenly coated.

Pour the apple mixture into the prepared pie crust. Dot the filling with the butter pieces.

Place the second crust over the filling. Trim and crimp the edges to seal. Cut several small slits in the top crust to allow steam to escape. If desired, brush the crust with beaten egg and sprinkle with coarse sugar.

Bake for 15 minutes at 425 degrees F. Reduce the oven temperature to 350 degrees F and bake for another 35 to 45 minutes, until the crust is golden brown and the filling is bubbling. If the edges brown too quickly, cover them loosely with foil.

Cool for at least 2 hours before slicing to allow the filling to set.

BAKER'S TIP: Firm apples, such as Granny Smith or Honeycrisp, work well in this recipe. For extra fall flavor, serve each slice slightly warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

A LITTLE FALL TRADITION: Whether served after Sunday dinner, shared at a harvest gathering or enjoyed with a cup of coffee on a chilly afternoon, homemade apple pie is a timeless way to celebrate the season.



Why Accidental Death Insurance Matters for Our Members in 2026 and Beyond

Life moves fast, and none of us expect an accident to change everything in a single moment—but it happens. Across all ages, accidental deaths remain one of the leading causes of loss in the United States, with car crashes consistently among the top contributors. When the unexpected happens, families are often left juggling urgent financial needs like daily living expenses, funeral costs, and the challenges of suddenly losing income.

That's exactly why accidental death insurance continues to be such an important—and practical—option for our Legion Family in 2026 and beyond.

Reliable Protection When Families Need It Most

Accidental death insurance through The Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) provides cash benefits directly to your beneficiaries, regardless of any other insurance you may have. These benefits are designed to help families stay steady during a truly difficult time.

Better yet, this coverage is built with accessibility in mind:

- Guaranteed acceptance for all Legion Family members
- No medical exams or health questions
- 24/7 protection—at home, at work, in your car, or on vacation
- Cash benefits paid directly to your beneficiary

It's a simple way to add an important layer of financial security without jumping through hoops.

Your Coverage Helps Support Veterans, Too

Every time a member enrolls in an LIT program, it does more than protect their family—it strengthens ours. LIT generates valuable non-dues revenue that helps fund critical Department programs and services for veterans. In other words, choosing LIT coverage isn't just a smart personal decision; it directly supports the mission we all care about.

April Spotlight: Accidental Death Insurance

As we highlight this program in April, it's worth taking a moment to review what makes it so impactful:

What It Covers

- Cash benefits paid if a covered accident results in your death
- Guaranteed acceptance for all Legion Family members
- No medical underwriting
- Benefits paid even if you have other insurance

Why It Matters

This is one of the simplest, most flexible ways to strengthen your family's financial safety net. No exams. No complicated applications. Just straightforward, needed protection.

How to Enroll

1. Choose the amount of coverage that fits your family's needs.
2. Enroll easily—no medical questions required.
3. Enjoy quick activation: coverage begins the first day of the month after enrollment and first premium payment.
4. Risk-free review: if you decide within 30 days that the coverage isn't right for you, you can cancel for a full refund (as long as no claims have been made).