



AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA
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Former Department Commander Don Buffington Dept. Commander 1986-1987

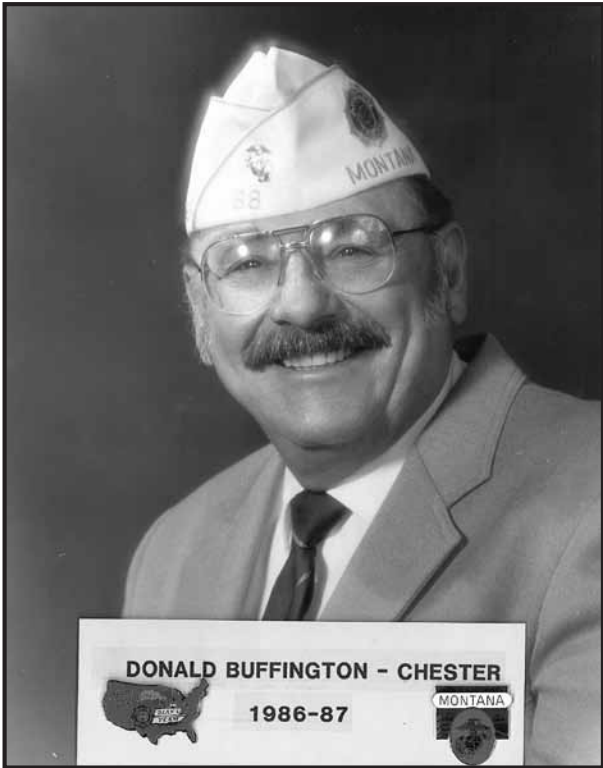
Donald J. Buffington died peacefully at the Montana Veteran's Home in Columbia Falls, December 20, 2016. He was born September 20, 1929, in Ft. Benton, Montana, the son of Q.R. (Rufe) and Alvina Schrupp Buffington. He and his brothers, Norman and Phillip, grew up on the family ranch south of Chester, where Don farmed and raised cattle for many years.

Don graduated from Chester High School in 1948 and joined the Marine Corps Reserve in Shelby, Mt., on November 20, 1949. He served with the 1st Marines in the Wonsan-Hungham-Chosin Campaign, Northern Korea in 1950 and was discharged from the Marine Corps in Sept., 1952, as a Corporal. Always a Marine, Don was a life member of both The American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He enjoyed the camaraderie of fellow veterans and felt it a duty and a privilege to participate in honor guards. He served in many positions at local and state levels, then as Department of Montana American Legion Commander from 1986-87 and as Department of Montana Adjutant 1991-1992. In 1995, he was highly honored to be chosen to represent the state of Montana at the dedication of the Korean War Memorial in Washington D.C. His fiercely patriotic love for his country, his flag, and his beloved Marine Corps has been passed on to present generations.

He will be remembered for his story-telling, his voracious love for reading, enjoying military

history, the expeditions of Lewis and Clark and the history of Montana and its people.

Don was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Phillip. He is survived by his brother, Norman and family, Phillip's children and widow, Anke. Don is also survived by his wife, Peggy, and her children, Estelle, Joe and Roy and their families; his children Marie, Douglas, Lee Ann, Sharon and Gary and their families; his former wife, Jean, and her children Marvin, Donald, Diane and Rita, whom he loved and raised as his own; and his first wife, Evelyn. Don had many grandchildren and great grandchildren, creating countless memories with them all. Don maintained enduring bonds with his cousins and extended family, always enjoying the Buffington



and Schrupp reunions.

He will be remembered by his many Legion friends and his comrades of the Chosin Few organization. Don was surely one of a kind. Semper Fi.

Don's family would like to thank everyone from the director, Helen, to each and every one of the nurses and staff at the Montana Veteran's Home in Columbia Falls, and know how much we appreciate the time, care, kindness, and love shown in so many ways during his time with them. They treated Don like family and showed deep concern and compassion for him and for us all. They are very special people.

A memorial service with scattering of ashes will be scheduled for the spring. It will take place at the family farm and we will welcome all neighbors and friends.

[Past Department Commander Donald J Buffington (1986-87), Don also served as Department Adjutant 1991-92.Cards and remembrances may be sent to Don's wife Peggy Buffington, 16 S Main St, Conrad, MT 59425]

Important Upcoming Dates

Feb 8	85% Target Date
Feb 14.....	Valentine's Day
Feb 20	President's Day
Mar 1	Eagle Scout of the Year Nomination Due to Dept. Headquarters
Mar 1	Constitutional Essays due to Education Chairman
Mar 8	90% Target Date
Mar 11.....	Department Oratory Finals-Helena
Mar 12	First District Meeting District 6, Butte
Mar 12	Daylight Savings Time Begins
Mar 15-17.....	The American Legion Birthday
Mar 17.....	St. Patrick's Day
Apr 5.....	Montana Legionnaire May/June/July issue cutoff date
Mar 21 - 24	Department Service Officer's School – Washington DC
Apr 12 ...	95% Target Date, Renewal Cutoff Date
Apr 9.....	Palm Sunday
Apr 15	Post Data Forms due to Department Headquarters
Apr 14	Good Friday
Apr 16	Easter
Apr 21 - 22.....	80th Annual National Oratory Finals – Indianapolis, IN
Apr 29.....	Last District Meeting – District 7, White Sulphur Springs
May 1.....	Certification of Post Officers due to Department Headquarters
May 10	100%Target Date
May 8-11	National Spring Meetings – Indianapolis, IN
May 14	Mother's Day
May 15.....	Peace Officers' Memorial Day
May 20.....	Armed Forces Day
May 29.....	Memorial Day (observed)

The American Legion of Montana 2017 Spring District Meetings

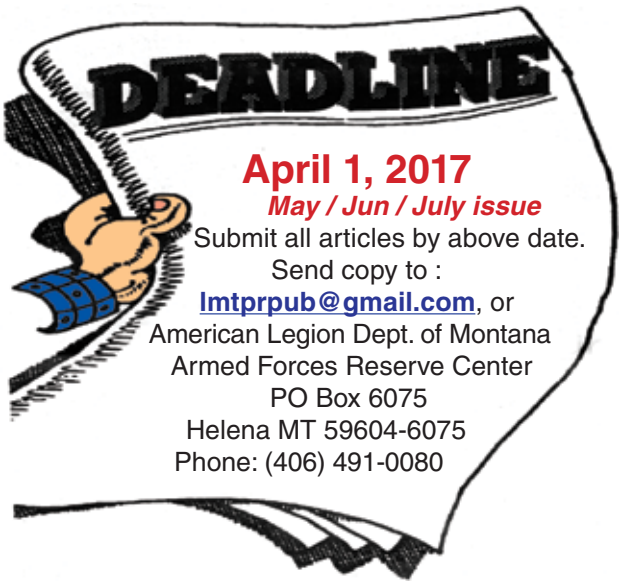
MAR 11.....	DEPT. ORATORY	HELENA
MAR 12.....	DISTRICT 6	BUTTE
MAR 18.....	DISTRICT 5	DRUMMOND
MAR 19.....	DISTRICT 4	POLSON
MAR 25	DISTRICT 10	COLSTRIP
MAR 26	DISTRICT 11.....	PARK CITY
APR 1	DISTRICT 8/3. GREAT FALLS	
APR 2	DISTRICT 9	LEWISTOWN
APR 22	DISTRICT 1	SCOBEEY
APR 23	DISTRICT 2	HAVRE
APR 29	DISTRICT 7	WSS
Monday, May 1, will be the Pre-Department Convention meeting in Billings for the officers and personnel concerned.		

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COMMANDER RICE

I cannot believe my year as Commander is half over. Time sure seems to fly by when you're busy. On Oct. 21, 2016 I attended the renaming ceremony for the Army National Guard and Reserve Center in Great Falls. It was dedicated to



Peter 'Hal' Rice
Department Commander

two soldiers, Captain John E. Moran and Captain William W. Galt. Both of them had received the Medal of Honor. Speakers included Senator Jon Tester; Senator Daines' Veterans Representative, Cari Kent; Congressman Ryan Zinke; Governor Steve Bullock; Major General Matthew Quinn; and Brigadier General Greg Mosser. It was a nice ceremony with a group of Captain Galt's family there.

Fall conference in Helena was well attended and a lot was accomplished. Our Guest Speaker, National Vice Commander Paul Espinoza honored us by attending a steak dinner in Montana City Friday evening. He also gave a nice talk at the Saturday night banquet. He said he had a great time in Montana and wants to come back.

Friday afternoon I held a *coming home party* at American Legion Post 2 in Helena. It was a fun party, great turnout. I would like to again give a special thanks to Karen Semple and Josh Clement for arranging for food and drinks and a place to have it. A lot of good memories were made. Remember Randy, my turn to lead next time.

November 4 and 5, 2016, I was in Great Falls for District 8 revitalization. We all had good days of recruiting and retention. My better half, District 8 President Monica, was also there and conducted recruiting for the Auxiliary. Michelle Steinmetz from American Legion National Headquarters had the lead on this and everything went smoothly. We worked in Vaughn, Sun River, and Great Falls area with some making calls to other towns in District 8.

On November 11, Veterans Day, I was honored to be one of two speakers at the Great Falls Veterans Memorial. Montana National Guard Brigadier General Robert Sparing gave a very moving speech. I read a poem from 1916 about our flag. I would like to thank Richard Liebert Lt. Col. (Retired USAR) Master of Ceremonies for the invitation. This was a very nice program and I was told that it was the biggest crowd they have had. Thanks all that attended.

It has been a good six months and I am looking forward to spring meetings and National Commander Charles Schmidt's visit in May. Membership has been excellent, keep it going. We are moving up and getting close to NUMBER 1. So, may you all have a safe and happy, HELL YEAH, New Year. 🍷

VICE COMMANDER DOBB

I want to address three issues in this article. Retention, Communication and Recognition. They all affect our membership. First is our non-renewal rate. This varies, but runs around 18 percent. This is nearly one in every five mem-



Larry Dobb
Department Vice Commander

bers. If these are not replaced, it would not take very long for the organization to become a small organization without any voice for veterans at the national level. That is why it is so important to get everyone we can to renew their membership. One means of increasing our renewal rate is for your Post to have an Early Bird program. I was pleased to see in the December issue of the Chief Joseph Post 135 newsletter that they have such a program. In Post 135, every member who pays dues by 15 December has their name placed into a drawing for \$100. Every Post could have such a program. The prize, or prizes, can be money or something like a gift card to a local restaurant. Use your imagination, based on what you think would work best in your Post. Such a program can help get renewals in quicker in order to be in the drawing. But every member needs to be aware your Post has such a program. This means communication with your members. If you have a Post newsletter, that's a good place to promote the Early Bird program. If you don't have a system of regular communication with your members, you could have a onetime mailing of a post card. Remember, if you do not have any form of regular communication with your members and they only hear from you when it's time to renew, that could be a big part of the problem.

The third issue is recognition. The majority of every Post is made up of members who pay their dues year after year. That's where the continuous membership awards come into play. Recognize your people for their remaining members. The cost is very reasonable and even cheap when one considers 10 or 20 years of membership without having to go out and chase them down every year to renew. There are certificates, lapel/cap pins and cloth stars for wear on one's cap. They are all available in five-year increments from 5 to 75. The certificates and cloth stars run around 50-75 cents each and the pins around \$9, and are available from the Emblem Sales catalog. The Post Adjutant has rosters showing each member's years of continuous membership. Some Posts even have "Pin Nights" an annual occasion to recognize their long-term members. Membership is more than just signing up new members. It is keeping and recognizing those we already have. 🍷

From the Desk of the Adjutant

GARY WHITE

I hope everyone had a good holiday season and are ready to roll up your sleeves and get back to work.

As you no doubt know by now it is that time of the year again where the Department sends out address labels to solicit donations for American Legion programs. Although, I am sure there are



members who tire of getting solicitations through the mail, this program is the second largest source of revenue for the American Legion of Montana, without these funds it would be next to impossible to do what we do around the state. This program is also a great tool to keep our members addresses current; we probably receive more address changes through the label program than we do through Post Adjutants. We also receive numerous notices of members who are deceased. Without this program, we would have additional mailing costs to those who are deceased or who have moved. When you receive your address labels please send DONATION CARD portion with your address and member number back to Department, whether you donate or not. If you do not send this portion back and you don't donate you'll receive a second mailing, so please send it back. Additionally, if you do not want to receive certain kinds of mail, notify Department Headquarters (toll free (866) 793-1257) and we can stop the mail you do not want. **Thank you for your donations and participation in this important program.**

The next four months are when the Post Adjutants will need to get very busy, not just with membership, which is always their concern, but with all the reports and award nominations that will be coming due, such as Scouting Awards, Best Newsletter Awards, Top Recruiter, CPRs and Post Data Forms.

Post Data Reports will be mailed in February. This form is used to generate dues renewal notices. If your Post does not submit a Post Data Form, then all dues renewal notices could be wrong for the 2018 membership year (which starts 1 July 2017). The Post Data Form includes information on dues amounts, the address dues are to be sent to and other information on the Post. The Post Data Forms are due to Department Headquarters by April 14. Please ensure your Post has submitted theirs.

The Consolidated Post Reports (CPR) will be mailed in March for the 2016 - 2017 year. At first glance, the CPR may appear complicated and something you don't want to be troubled with, but perhaps it is the most important document your Post can complete and submit. This information will be combined with that of other Posts, which submit forms to be put into the report annually sent to Congress. Your Post is encouraged to send a photocopy to our own U.S. Representative, Senators and your local Legislators. This summary is "US" when the National Commander and others testify on Capitol Hill on behalf of the American Legion and all veterans. Each Post has a story to tell, and when we speak collectively, our strength is magnified...your Post needs to be a part of that *united force*. If you have volunteered or done some other service, make sure your Post Commander and Adjutant know so they can include your efforts on the CPR. Consolidated Post Reports are due to Department Headquarters by 15 May, 2017.

We are at the time of year when many of our awards and deadlines for some of our programs are due. None of these awards or programs can be complete without the involvement and input of our Post members. I would ask that the membership take an active part in the selection process for our awards. The awards are available on the Depart-

More ADJUTANT next page

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\$3.00 OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES GOES TO
MONTANA LEGIONNAIRE SUBSCRIPTION.
NOW PUBLISHED 4 TIMES PER YEAR
IN THE MONTHS OF:
FEBRUARY, MAY, AUGUST AND NOVEMBER
COPY DEADLINE IS THE 1ST DAY OF THE MONTH
PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.
COMMANDER - PETER 'HAL' RICE
VICE COMMANDER - LARRY DOBB
ADJUTANT - GARY A. WHITE

BIG K WINNERS

The Big K \$400 winner for January 2017 was American Legion Auxiliary Unit 2 of Helena. The Unit's number was drawn by Etchie Smith of Lewis & Clark Post 2 Helena.

The February \$400 drawing was not yet conducted at the time of publication.

The next \$400 drawing will be in March, as well as the \$600 Legion Birthday drawing.

Disbursements to the Districts, Posts, Units, and Squadrons will be done at the Spring District Meetings.
(Form on page 15)

Memorials

Donor	Fund	In Memory of:
ALA District 5	Endowment	Mike Susag
Merv & Patty Gunderson.....	Endowment	Mike Susag
Vickie Maurer	AL Boys State.....	Mike Susag

ADJUTANT

ment website (mtlegion.org), and in the Department publication “Post Leadership & Planning Manual, which each Post receives two copies of at Department Convention, or upon request.

Remember your recruiting awards, there are individual and Post recruiting awards which require submission – most due by May 15.

April 15 is Tax Day for many of us, and for most of our Posts as well. Remember it is a requirement that our Posts file a Form 990 to the IRS each year (date determined by your Post fiscal year). For the majority of our Posts, you can file online using the 990N which requires you to answer only six questions. Regardless of when you file and what form of the 990 form you use it is imperative that you file annually. If you fail to file, your Post will lose its nonprofit status, and it is a bureaucratic nightmare and costly to get it reinstated. Districts, also remember you must file as well. Once you have filed your IRS Form 990 make sure you complete your report to the Montana Secretary of State’s office.

As you can see the Adjutants will be very busy with numerous other endeavors besides taking minutes at meetings and processing membership, please give your Adjutants all the assistance you can, so they will be able to make all the reporting deadlines.

American Legion Boys State packets were mailed in January to the Post Chairman that the Department had on file. If your Post did not receive an American Legion Boys State packet it was sent to the high school in your community. The fee for this year has increased to \$300, the online registrations and fees are due by 15 May. Please advise any interested boys to **obtain a copy of their parent’s or grandparent’s discharge so they will have time to compete for the Samsung Scholarship.**

I believe the majority of Legionnaires take their civic duty to vote very seriously, but voting is only part of the process. Now that our voice has been heard as to who will represent us, we must ensure they know our feelings on legislation before them. The Legislature is in session and will be looking at several pieces of legislation that will affect veterans and their families. Remember, our form of government allows for our participation in the making of our laws, however if we don’t exercise that right we will get the laws we deserve. Now is the time to become informed citizens and seek out information on proposed legislation and make your feelings known. Our Legislature has made it extremely easy to stay informed through their website. Contacting your Legislators has never been easier. On the web go to <http://leg.mt.gov/css/About-the-Legislature/Lawmaking-Process/contact-legislators.asp> or call House (406) 444-4825; Senate (406) 444-4875, or by mail:

Address letters to:

Senator XXXX	Rep. XXXX
Montana Senate	Montana House of Representatives
PO Box 200500	PO Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620-0500	Helena, MT 59620-0400

The Legion has several bills that we are concerned with and want our members support on, however you are not required to follow in lock step; but make sure your voice is heard. Contact your Legislator and let them know your feelings.

The Department is accepting applications for students to attend the National American Legion College, October 28- 31, 2017 in Indianapolis, Indiana. All costs are paid by Department and National; to be eligible you must be a graduate of the American Legion Extension Institute and a veteran of Lebanon or Grenada or later (a candidate from any earlier war era may be considered based upon the Departments successful submission of a candidate with service during or after Lebanon/Grenada period). Applications are available on line or from Department Headquarters. Submission date to Department is no later than 15 June, 2017.

Don’t forget the Department Oratory finals is Saturday March 11 in Helena.

At the beginning of this article I mentioned the next four months would be busy, now you see what I mean, and I left out the District Meetings – the first Spring District Meeting starts Saturday, March 12, in Butte and the last one is Sunday April 29 in White Sulphur Springs. Please come and join your fellow Legionnaires and be involved in electing your new District Officers and meeting the candidates for Department officers and in voting on any resolutions that may come before the District. I hope to see you there. ●

Post Everlasting



Day is done
Gone the sun
From the lakes
From the hills
From the sky
All is well
Safely rest
God is nigh
Fading light
Dims the sight
And a star
Gems the sky
Gleaming bright.
From afar
Drawing nigh
Falls the night
Thanks and praise.
For our days
Neath the sun
Neath the stars
Neath the sky
As we go
This we know
God is nigh.



Oct/Nov/Dec 2016

- ☆ ACCIAVATTI, ARMANDO, 8/30/16 – WWII – US Army - 30-year member of Post 106, St. Ignatius
- ☆ KEEPERS, RALPH, 9/26/16 – Korea – US Marine - 42-year member of Post 20, Dillon
- ☆ BRAY, RICHARD, 9/7/16 – Vietnam – US Marine - 8-year member of Post 123, Laurel
- ☆ SUTTON, JAMES, 1/24/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 4-year member of Post 73, Sweet Grass, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ HAUGEBERG, LYMAN O, 6/26/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 9-year member of Post 23, Livingston, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ DAVIS, CHARLES H., 10/15/16 – Korea – US Army - 63-year member of Post 20, Dillon
- ☆ HONEY, LOWELL R, 10/18/16 – Vietnam – US Navy - 5-year member of Post 20, Dillon
- ☆ ERICKSON, GEORGE H, 11/5/16 – WWII – US Army - 36-year member of Post 26, Fort Benton, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ JOHANNSEN, JAY A, 1/8/16– WWII – US Air - 46-year member of Post 43, Sweet Grass, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ WALLS, LEONA M, 8/28/16 – Gulf – US Army - 4-year member of Post 73, Sweet Grass, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MCBRIDE, EDWARD, DOD – Vietnam – Branch - 3-year member of Post 25, White Sulphur Springs, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ MCWHIRTER, PAUL, 9/9/16 – WWII – US Army - 14-year member of Post 70, Judith Gap
- ☆ COVERDELL, RICHARD, 9/1/16 – Vietnam – US Army – 32-year member of Post 72, Columbia Falls, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ HAJENGA, LARRY, 9/24/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 14-year member of Post 70, Judith Gap, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SLAVSKY, CLIFFORD, 1/29/16 – WWII – US Army - 69-year member of Post 118, Gardiner, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ TYSON, WILLIAM, 10/13/16 – Vietnam – US Navy - 9-year member of Post 118, Gardiner
- ☆ SIGNORE, ALFONSE, 10/19/16 – WWII – US Army - 16-year member of Post 37, Conrad, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ DESHAZO, DONALD H, 11/16/16 – Korea – US Navy - 45-year member of Post 20, Dillon, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ LANEY, JOHN, 6/4/16 – Vietnam – US Navy - 10-year member of Post 88, Chester
- ☆ RIEGER, DONALD, 9/1/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 48-year member of Post 35, Baker, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ SHAW, VIRGIL, 7/27/16 – Vietnam – Unknown - 19-year member of Post 51, Augusta
- ☆ BYERS, JAMES, 2/17/16 – Korea – Unknown - 22-year member of Post 16, Lewistown
- ☆ MURRAY, HARVE, 11/5/16 – Korea – US Navy - 26-year member of Post 131, Alberton, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ KAMPS, MONTANA ‘MONTY’, 10/24/16 – WWII – US Army - 12-year member of Post 124, Frenchtown, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ BATTERSHELL, ARTHUR, 12/5/16 – Korea – US Army - 16-year member of Post 2, Helena, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ RIGLER, CHARLES, 6/6/16 – WWII – US Navy - 56-year member of Post 2, Helena
- ☆ JOHNSON, LEROY D, 11/16/16 – Korea – US Marine - 18-year member of Post 41, Glasgow
- ☆ JONES, DUANE, 4/22/16 – Korea – US Navy - 7-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ HANCHETT, ROBERT, 11/24/16 – Vietnam – unknown - 19-year member of Post 15, Harlowton
- ☆ MIKKELSEN, JAMES, 11/27/16 – Korea – US Army - 61-year member of Post 76, Hobson, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ NICHOLS, CLAUD, 12/3/16– Vietnam – US Navy - 17-year member of Post 134, Florence
- ☆ SMITH, ROBERT, 11/14/16 – Korea – Unknown - 18-year member of Post 94, Stevensville
- ☆ BAKER, DON, 11/1/16 – Korea – Unknown - 28-year member of Post 16, Lewistown,
- ☆ MEES, HERMAN, 9/13/16 – WWII – US Navy - 7-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ FINLEY, RAYMOND, 10/13/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 5-year member of Post 97, Libby, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ ASHLEY, GERALD, 12/1/2016 – Korea – US Army - 4-year member of Post 106, Saint Ignatius, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ BUFFINGTON, DONALD, 12/20/16 – Korea – US Marines - 60-year member of Post 88, Chester
- ☆ GALLAGHER, DAN, 12/26/16– Vietnam – US Army - 46-year member of Post 101, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ CLARK, JAMES, 12/13/16 – Korea – US Army – 51-year member of Post 102, Geraldine, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ JENSEN, LLOYD R, 4/6/2016 – WWII – US Navy - 35-year member of Post 22, Wolf Point
- ☆ JACOBSEN, JAMES, 12/31/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 26-year member of Post 2, Helena, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ ANDERSON, WILLARD, 12/25/16 – WWII – US Air - 10-year member of Post 2, Helena
- ☆ DODD, WALTER, 10/25/16 – WWII – US Navy - 29-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ LOVELL, JACK, 11/15/16 – WWII – US Navy - 32-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ GRATZER, GEORGE, 12/7/16 – Vietnam – US Army - 31-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors
- ☆ KARKANEN, DALE, 10/29/16 – Korea – US Army - 11-year member of Post 27, Missoula, Interred with Military Honors

DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA
MEMBERSHIP GOAL ROSTER
2017

		Year end Goal 2017	Year To Date Total	Year End 2016	percent of Goal
DISTRICT #1					
22	WOLF POINT.....	43.....	31.....	42.....	72.09%
41	GLASGOW.....	79.....	77.....	78.....	97.47%
45	HINSDALE.....	57.....	41.....	56.....	71.93%
49	HOMESTEAD.....	10.....	7.....	7.....	70.00%
55	POPLAR.....	34.....	32.....	33.....	94.12%
56	SCOBEY.....	59.....	42.....	48.....	71.19%
58	PLENTYWOOD.....	49.....	33.....	48.....	67.35%
61	BROCKTON.....	49.....	22.....	48.....	44.90%
81	CULBERTSON.....	95.....	67.....	94.....	70.53%
85	BAINVILLE.....	30.....	25.....	29.....	83.33%
104 ☆	NASHUA.....	13.....	14.....	12.....	107.69%
122	OPHEIM.....	33.....	31.....	32.....	93.94%
229	WESTBY.....	16.....	15.....	15.....	93.75%
	TOTAL.....	567.....	437.....	542.....	77.07%

11	HAVRE	129	82	128	63.57%
48	CHINOOK	46	39	45	84.78%
50	BIG SANDY	26	25	25	96.15%
57 ☆	MALTA	90	90	89	100.00%
67	ROCKY BOY	35	12	34	34.29%
79 ☆	SACO	10	11	9	110.00%
88	CHESTER	39	34	38	87.18%
109	TURNER	30	27	29	90.00%
110	FORT BELKNAP	13	10	12	76.92%
	TOTAL	418	330	409	78.95%

36	VALIER	55	52	54	94.55%
37	CONRAD	60	50	59	83.33%
40	CUT BANK	61	51	60	83.61%
43	SHELBY	54	34	53	62.96%
69	GALATA	36	26	35	72.22%
73	SWEETGRASS	73	66	72	90.41%
127	BROWNING	30	12	29	40.00%
CN20	CALGARY	46	41	45	89.13%
	TOTAL	415	332	407	80.00%

52	THOMPSON FALLS	61	53	60	86.89%
72 ☆	COLUMBIA FALLS	87	93	96	106.90%
74	EUREKA	46	40	45	86.96%
86	BIG FORK	65	51	64	78.46%
97	LIBBY	172	161	171	93.60%
106	ST IGNATIUS	80	45	79	56.25%
108	WHITEFISH	66	52	65	78.79%
112	POLSON	116	93	115	80.17%
126	CHARLO	14	12	13	85.71%
129	PARADISE	61	51	60	83.61%
137	KALISPELL	214	188	213	87.85%
138	RONAN	55	43	54	78.18%
139	TROY	20	18	22	90.00%
	TOTAL	1057	900	1057	85.15%

13	ST REGIS	58	52	57	89.66%
27	MISSOULA	357	290	356	81.23%
38	DARBY	12	11	12	91.67%
47	HAMILTON	106	99	105	93.40%
63 ☆	CONDON	44	46	43	104.55%
68	MISSOULA	35	25	34	71.43%
83 ☆	CLINTON	15	15	14	100.00%
91	CORVALLIS	118	107	117	90.68%
94	STEVENSVILLE	219	176	218	80.37%
101	MISSOULA	52	27	51	51.92%
113	ARLEE	32	23	31	71.88%
124	FRENCHTOWN	39	33	38	84.62%
125 ☆	DRUMMOND	56	56	55	100.00%
131	ALBERTON	48	33	47	68.75%
134	FLORENCE	47	44	47	93.62%
135	LOLO	141	116	140	82.27%
	TOTAL	1379	1,153	1,365	83.61%

1	BUTTE	191	148	190	77.49%
2	HELENA	739	601	738	81.33%
9 ☆	LINCOLN	53	53	53	100.00%
10	DEER LODGE	72	53	71	73.61%
20	DILLON	185	143	184	77.30%
21	ANACONDA	245	204	244	83.27%
24	WHITEHALL	102	83	101	81.37%
31 ☆	TWIN BRIDGES	42	44	41	104.76%
33	PHILIPSBURG	10	8	10	80.00%
42	TOWNSEND	116	102	115	87.93%
46 ☆	BOULDER	22	27	21	122.73%
89 ☆	SHERIDAN	62	62	61	100.00%
115	BUTTE	102	72	101	70.59%
	TOTAL	1941	1600	1930	82.43%

AT LARGE					
105	HELENA.....	174.....	152.....	188.....	87%

14	BOZEMAN	353	289	352	81.87%
19	BIG TIMBER	194	149	193	76.80%
23	LIVINGSTON	168	157	167	93.45%
25	WHITE SULPHUR	62	52	61	83.87%
30	BELGRADE	262	192	261	73.28%
65 ☆	ENNIS	29	37	28	127.59%
78	W YELLOWSTONE	38	25	27	65.79%
87	MANHATTAN	175	139	174	79.43%
93 ☆	THREE FORKS	39	40	38	102.56%
99 ☆	BIG SKY	51	51	50	100.00%
118	GARDINER	36	32	35	88.89%
	TOTAL	1407	1163	1386	82.66%

3	REAT FALLS	255	214	254	83.92%
6	CHOTEAU	101	79	100	78.22%
26	FORT BENTON	49	35	48	71.43%
51	AUGUSTA	49	36	48	73.47%
64	DUTTON	61	50	60	81.97%
80	FAIRFIELD	32	28	31	87.50%
102	GERALDINE	113	97	112	85.84%
103	POWER	31	26	30	83.87%
130	VAUGHN	47	41	46	87.23%
133 ☆	CASCADE	28	31	27	110.71%
341	MALMSTROM	153	100	152	65.36%
	TOTAL	919	737	908	80.20%

115 ☆	HARLOWTON	101	103	100	101.98%
16 ☆	LEWISTOWN	375	396	434	105.60%
18	ROUNDUP	61	55	60	90.16%
53	STANFORD	26	18	25	69.23%
62	DENTON	23	18	22	78.26%
70	JUDITH GAP	66	57	65	86.36%
76 ☆	HOBSON	46	46	45	100.00%
96 ☆	ROY	19	19	18	100.00%
120	WINIFRED	30	27	29	90.00%
	TOTAL	747	739	798	98.93%

5	MILES CITY	80	64	79	80.00%
12	SIDNEY	44	34	43	77.27%
28	GLENDIVE	122	96	121	78.69%
29	CIRCLE	17	14	16	82.35%
32	TERRY	99	89	98	89.90%
35	BAKER	136	97	135	71.32%
39	FORSYTH	95	82	94	86.32%
44	COLSTRIP	28	22	27	78.57%
60	EKALAKA	15	11	15	73.33%
77	LAME DEER	10	6	5	60.00%
114	FAIRVIEW	37	28	36	75.68%
128	BROADUS	13	9	13	69.23%
	TOTAL	696	552	682	79.31%

4	BILLINGS	503	400	502	79.52%
8	HARDIN	51	41	50	80.39%
17	RED LODGE	60	50	59	83.33%
34	COLUMBUS	62	56	61	90.32%
71	FROMBERG	23	17	22	73.91%
84	BELFRY	39	35	38	89.74%
92	HYSHAM	24	19	23	79.17%
100 ☆	PARK CITY	60	61	59	101.67%
111	CUSTER	59	51	58	86.44%
117 ☆	BILLINGS	120	125	119	104.17%
119	BILLINGS HGTS	172	151	171	87.79%
123	LAUREL	107	103	106	96.26%
	TOTAL	1280	1109	1268	86.64%

☆ Post or District has reached or surpassed its incentive Goal

2017 INCENTIVE GOAL	11,000
2017 MEMBERSHIP TO DATE	9204
2016 TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	10940
TOTAL PERCENTAGE	83.67%

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TEN LARGEST POSTS

Post	2	HELENA	597 MEMBERS
Post	4	BILLINGS	400 MEMBERS
Post	16	LEWISTOWN	387 MEMBERS
Post	27	MISSOULA	290 MEMBERS
Post	14	BOZEMAN	289 MEMBERS
Post	3	GREAT FALLS	211 MEMBERS
Post	21	ANACONDA	203 MEMBERS
Post	30	BELGRADE	192 MEMBERS
Post	137	KALISPELL	188 MEMBERS
Post	94	STEVENSVILLE	176 MEMBERS

DISTRICT STANDINGS

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE	COMMANDER
9	97.19%	Demorise Allen
11	85.31%	Richard Klose
4	85.15%	Jack Fay
5	83.54%	Bill Applegate
6	82.17%	Lori Perkio
7	82.16%	Randy Kemp
8	79.87%	Kim Kay McCarty Martin
10	79.31%	Clancee Collins
2	79.19%	Lowell Long
3	78.80%	Charlie Coutts
1	76.90%	Joe Yeoman

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
January 9 2017

SQUADRON	GOAL 2017	TO DATE
WOLF POINT 22	10	0
☆GLASGOW 41	10	14
PLENTYWOOD 58	10	0
CULBERTSON 81	23	13
NASHUA 104	10	8
HAVRE 11	16	10
CHINOOK 48	19	11
☆MALTA 57	10	15
GALATA 69	42	40
THOMPSON FLS 52	10	0
LIBBY 97	10	6
POLSON 112	10	3
MISSOULA 27	17	1
HAMILTON 47	10	5
CONDON 63	10	0
☆CORVALLIS 91	10	19
STEVENSVILLE 94	21	19
LOLO 135	34	16
BUTTE 1	29	0
☆HELENA 2	76	89
ANACONDA 21	33	12
TOWNSEND 42	18	16
BUTTE 115	19	3
BOZEMAN 14	51	48
BIG TIMBER 19	22	0
BELGRADE 30	64	32
☆LIVINGSTON 23	10	10
☆MANHATTAN 87	27	29
☆BIG SKY 99	12	19
☆GREAT FALLS 3	16	16
☆CHOTEAU 6	16	20
FORT BENTON 26	10	0
GERALDINE 102	53	45
VAUGHN 130	17	16
HARLOWTON 15	22	16
LEWISTOWN 16	128	64
MILES CITY 5	11	4
BAKER 35	34	31
☆FORSYTH 39	45	50
BILLINGS 4	27	9
BELFRY 84	23	17
CUSTER 111	11	9
HQS POST 9999	0	0
TOTALS	1046	735
☆ SQUADRON GOAL MET		



Service Officer



SERVICE OFFICER KELLY ACKERMAN

Cross-Servicing Program:
Beginning as early as December 20, 2016, VHA will begin using the Department of the Treasury’s Cross-Servicing program to collect unpaid debt on any first party copayments for non-service connected care. VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) will have 30 days to comply with the technical enhancements required to roll-out the program in their facilities. Communication about the program began last year to encourage Veterans to satisfy their first party delinquent copayment debt before they are referred to Treasury for collection.

VHA’s current process provides Veterans with three monthly billing statements in increments of 30, 60 and 90 days in an attempt to collect first party copayments. Under the new Cross-Servicing program, first party debts that are not paid after 90 days will automatically transfer to VA’s Debt Management Center (DMC) for offset of VBA benefits (if available). If VBA benefits are not available, Veterans will have an additional 30 days to make payment arrangements to satisfy the debt. If arrangements to pay the debt are not made, VHA will automatically refer it at 120 days to the Treasury Cross-Servicing program who issues official notification letters to Veterans. If the letters go unanswered, Treasury will use the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) collect delinquent debt. The Treasury Offset Program (TOP) is used to offset any federal payments to include federal tax refunds, Social Security benefits, military pay, retirement pay, and other federal payments that are not exempt by law.

Beginning in May 2017, Treasury will also employ the following collection methods as part of the Cross-Servicing Program:
Administrative Wage Garnishment (AWG) – Treasury issues a wage garnishment order to the employer to deduct up to 15 percent of the Veteran’s disposable income until the debt is paid in full.

Private Collection Agency (PCA) – Accounts are referred to a contracted PCA to attempt to collect the debt. Treasury provides significant oversight to ensure Veterans are well protected and treated properly in their interaction with PCAs.

If there are any questions regarding Cross Servicing at Fort Harrison, please contact the Facility Revenue Department at (406) 447-7844.

VHA Medication Co-Payments:
VA has a final rule, RIN 2900–AP35, Tiered Pharmacy Copayments for Medications that was published in the Federal Register on December 12, 2016. This rulemaking replaces those rates and establishes three classes of medications for copayment purposes, identified as Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. These tiers are defined further in the rulemaking and are distinguished in part based on whether the medications are available from multiple sources or a single source, with some exceptions. Copayment amounts are fixed and would vary depending on the class of medication. The following medication copayment amounts are applicable on the effective date of this final rule: \$5 for a 30-day or less supply of a Tier 1 medication, \$8 for a 30-day or less supply of a Tier 2 medication, and \$11 for a 30-day or less supply of a Tier 3 medication. For nonexempt veterans, these copayment amounts will result in lower out-of-pocket costs, thereby encouraging greater adherence to taking prescribed medications and reducing the risk of fragmented care that results when veterans use non-VA pharmacies to fill their prescriptions.

According to VA, 88 percent of all billable prescriptions are Tier 1 or Tier 2. 94 percent or 2.54 million copay eligible veterans will experience no cost increase and 87 percent or 2.33 million veterans will receive savings of \$1 - \$4 per 30-day supply equivalent.

VA plans to implement these new medication copay rates effective February 27, 2017. Service Organizations have expressed concerns about the short time lag from now to VA’s proposed implementation date and requested VHA to provide their plan for communicating this information to veterans.

The goal of our 10 Montana Veterans Affairs Service Offices staffed with accredited Veterans Service Officers is to assist all veterans and their dependants with their VA benefits. Please contact us for more information.

- MVAD/AL offices throughout the state:
- Belgrade (406) 388-4601
 - Billings(406) 248-8579
 - Butte(406) 533-0910
 - Great Falls(406) 452-2265
 - Havre (406) 265-4225
 - Helena (406) 495-2080/2081/2082
 - Kalispell (406) 755-3795
 - Lewistown.....(406) 538-3174
 - Miles City.....(406) 232-1203
 - Missoula.....(406) 542-2501

Thank you for your service to our great Country!

Historian



Montana’s Contributions are Important to the Legion Centennial 1919-2019

RAYMOND K. READ, DEPT. HISTORIAN | MYFUN51@MSN.COM

Since the Montana Department of The American Legion’s Fall Conference, plans have been in development for the remainder of this membership year and the next two years leading up to the American Legion’s Centennial Celebration. As the Department Historian, I feel that I need to reemphasize the guidance I have received from the National Historian concerning upcoming Historical activities. The following is provided as guidance for the Posts, Districts and Department to successfully conclude the American Legion History program. Commanders need to stress to their Post history committee the importance of the following:

SUBJECT: The Montana Department, The American Legion, Centennial Celebration 1919-2019; the Department 100th Anniversary Committee; and Post One Year narrative and Post One Year yearbook (pictorial) history Program.

- Reference is made to:
1. Letter, dated July 31, 2015, from the American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee announcing the updated 5-year plan for the American Legion Centennial 1919-2019.
 2. The American Legion’s Centennial Celebration Workbook;
 3. The American Legion’s Legacy Vision brochure;
 4. The American Legion’s Post 9/11 Veterans Booklet
 5. Resolution No. 31, Spring 2011, National Executive Committee
 6. The American Legion 2015 Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremonies

The Department of Montana, The American Legion Executive Committee, has established a Department Centennial Committee in accordance with the request of the 100th Anniversary Observance Committee

And the Department Historian has been designated the Department Centennial Chairman.

In addition, the Department authorized a three-person 100th Centennial Committee. At this time the members are Joyce Babcock (Custer Post 5), Michael Shepard (Post 72, Columbia Falls) Lowell Long, (Blaine Post 48, Chinook). The Committee’s task is to engage the Department of Montana American Legion Posts in meaningful participation concerning The American Legion Centennial.

I encourage all American Legion Posts to implement The American Legion’s Legacy Vision for The American Legion Centennial 1919-2019. Resolution No. 31, states,

“The American Legion wishes to call to the attention of the American People the record of achievements that have been accomplished by The American Legion during the 100 years since its founding, to emphasize the impact the organization has had upon the American society, and the extent of its contributions in national security and the welfare of military veterans, their families and their communities...
The American Legion wishes to set forth the objectives and the aims that will motivate its programs and activities during the years ahead and to illustrate the contribution made to the future of country as intended by these programs.”

Some initial ideas for this very important program for Montana Legionnaires to review and implement.

1. All documents referenced above are available on the National American Legion website. Go to www.legion.org/centennial and follow the prompts. If your Post/Auxiliary/Sons of the American Legion have access to the internet you can accomplish the American Legion Centennial Challenge. Remember, look to your strengths and leverage them. Also, look to your local community for ideas and support.
2. I am asking all Montana Department American Posts to establish their Local Legacy-Your Post’s History. National Headquarters has developed a webpage that will allow each participating Post its own place online where photos, text and videos can be posted and shared. So, whether your Post was established in 1919 or just few years ago, you have the opportunity to tell your story in your community and throughout The American Legion.

I emphasize again that the all aspects of The American Legion Centennial Program are available on the National website www.legion.org/centennial.

In less than 600 days the American Legion will celebrate its 100th National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and in less than 800 days the American Legion will celebrate its 100th Birthday, March 15-17, 2019. The culmination of Centennial events will occur at Indianapolis, Indiana during the 100th National Convention, August 2019. Montana’s contributions to The American Legion deserves to be placed on the official record.

It is a goal of the Montana Department to update its historical record by incorporating the current written record of the soon to be 100 years in creating an American Legion Centennial History for Montana. With your cooperation and participation that can happen.
Annual One Year Narrative and one year yearbook (pictorial) history Contests



SAM BIRKY, DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN

From the scriptures, we read of Joshua, the leader of the children of Israel, instructing the 12 tribal leaders

to carry stones from the middle of the Jordan river bed and place them in the camp where the citizens of the young nation were to spend the night. The instructions from Joshua to the leaders was when people asked “what do these stones mean?” the leaders were to respond by telling them of the miracle of the waters of the Jordan river being stopped, which allowed the refugees to cross the river. “These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.” Joshua 4:4-7

The word Memorial means “something, especially a structure, established to remind people of a person or event.” Oxford dictionary. As Legionnaires, we have a memorial from WWII, which is to remind us of our history and our legacy. This February is the 77th anniversary of the memorial remembering the tragic events of 3 Feb 1943 and the heroic actions of “Four Chaplains.”

The following is a summary of articles found in the National American Legion Newsletter and the Four Chaplains Chapel website.

The Bravery of Four Chaplains

By Matt Grills | The American Legion | Feb 04, 2013



Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic).

Around 12:55 a.m., a German U-boat fired a torpedo that struck Dorchester’s starboard side, below the water line and near the engine room. The explosion instantly killed 100 men and knocked out power and radio communication with Dorchester’s three escort ships. Within 20 minutes, the transport sank and more than 670 men died.

As soldiers rushed to lifeboats, the four chaplains spread out, comforting the wounded and directing others to safety. One survivor, Private William Bednar, later said, “I could hear men crying, pleading, praying. I could also hear the chaplains’ preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going.”

Another survivor, John Ladd, watched the chaplains’ distribute life jackets, and when they ran out, they removed theirs and gave them to four young men. “It was the finest thing I have seen, or hope to see, this side of heaven,” he recalled.

As Dorchester sank, the chaplains were seen linked arm in arm, praying.

Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington were posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart, and in 1948, Congress declared Feb. 3 to be Four Chaplains Day. The four chaplains were also honored with a U.S. postage stamp that year.

Because of the Medal of Honor’s strict requirements of heroism under fire, Congress authorized a one-time Chaplain’s Medal for Heroism on July 14, 1960. The award was presented to the chaplains’ next of kin Jan. 18, 1961.



On Feb. 3, 1951, President Truman dedicated a chapel in the chaplains’ honor at Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia. When the building was sold, the chapel fell into disrepair, and the foundation overseeing the chapel moved it to the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in 2001. The chapel was repaired in 2004 and given the name Chapel of the Four Chaplains.

In 2006, at The American Legion’s 88th National Convention in Salt Lake City, the National Executive Committee passed a resolution that supported awarding the Medal of Honor to Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington.

Every year, American Legion Posts nationwide remember Four Chaplains Day with memorial services. To request information on how to conduct a Four Chaplains Memorial Service, contact the Americanism and Children & Youth Division at (317) 630-1212.

You are encouraged to remember this historic event by conducting a memorial service in February, by reading this tribute at your Post meeting and by sharing with others this memorial for the purpose of inspiration and education.



FEATURED IN THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE FEB. 1, 2015 BY MATT GRILLS

Built in 1942, the old chapel at the former Philadelphia Naval Shipyard is a fitting place to honor the memory – and promote the legacy – of four of the nation’s most revered brothers in arms.

Entering the building, visitors’ eyes are immediately drawn to its original stained glass murals, which depict divine guidance at sea. Next, they notice a menorah flanked by a Protestant cross and a Catholic crucifix.

Finally, looking around, they see portraits of the chapel’s namesakes. To the left of the wooden pews are the Rev. George Fox, Methodist, and Rabbi Alexander Goode, Jewish. To the right are Father John Washington, Roman Catholic, and the Rev. Clark Poling, Reformed Church.

HISTORIAN

continued from pg. 5

By utilizing the National Program of Post one-year Narrative and Yearbooks (Pictorial) history the efforts to produce the Post Web based Legacy History will support the collection of Post history and the Centennial program. For your information, there are four (4) annual contests conducted on the National level. The contests involve the Post “First Place” winners in the Montana Department for a one-year narrative and yearbook contests. As well as entries for a one-year Department Narrative and Yearbook. I will forward a first-place winner in each Post category to the National Historian by September 15, 2017. The Judging will be accomplished in October 2017. **Post entries are due at the Montana Department Convention, Billings, Montana at the end of June 2017.**

The American Legion Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremonies contain much information about the history contest. Also in that section of the *Guide* are “Capsule History of the American Legion” and “Helpful Hints for District/County Historians.” Please notify your Posts in your District of this readily available material. This information will also be sent out through electronic means via the Montana American Legion website www.mtlegion.org or by mail as necessary. All entries will be judged and the first-place winners in either category (narrative or yearbook) will be certified and I will forward them to National Historian for entry in the announced contest for that category. Keep in mind the requirements that must be met for the National Contest. And I refer you to the most current edition of the Officers Guide (March 2017) as the official rules of the 2016-2017 Legion year, or at the Legion website www.legion.org.

Thank you...

Post 23 would like to thank everyone for their support of our raffle fundraiser held on Veterans Day. Winners were:

- 10-22 Rugger - Teresa Lehman
- 22-250 Ruger w/scope - Robin Melis
- Handmade Quilt - Dan Melson
- \$100 Rib & Chop House Gift Certificate - Marilyn Eike
- \$50 Sinclair Gas Card - Michelle Kandel

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HE IS BACK!!!

National Executive Committeeman (NEC) Merv Gunderson returned home October 25. He was greeted by some of the fellow Legionaries at the airport. They followed him to his new home west of Bozeman and got settled in very quickly. He is looking forward to doing some work in a limited capacity. His only thought was “*being in the hospital really stinks.*” What is really neat, he still has a positive spirit. WELCOME HOME BUDDY.



THANK YOU

Patty and I want to thank all of you for your thoughts, prayers and generous donations after my accident and now while I continue to recover. Words cannot express how grateful we are and how much those healing words meant.

Merv Gunderson

Welcome to 100 Cities / 100 Memorials A National Matching Grant Challenge To Preserve WWI Memorials

[HTTP://WWW.WORLDWAR1CENTENNIAL.ORG/100-CITIES-100-MEMORIALS-HOME.HTML](http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/100-cities-100-memorials-home.html)
It is in the spirit of these words—“Lest We Forget”—that the World War I Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum & Library jointly launch the 100 Cities/100 Memorials initiative as its first sponsors, with support from The American Legion.

In observance of the upcoming centennial of World War I, 100 matching grants of up to \$2,000 apiece will be awarded for the restoration of 100 World War I Memorials across the United States. Any municipal government, individual, or organization may apply. Likewise, any individual, organization or company can become a sponsor of this effort, as the more we can raise toward this program, the greater the amount of the matching grant to the winning memorials.

A century ago, the founders of the American Legion wrote in their charter,
“The sacred purpose of [T]he American Legion is to preserve the memories and incidents of their associations in the Great War.”

FOUNDERS: [THE] AMERICAN LEGION

This sentiment mirrors the commitment of the World War One Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum & Library to encourage the restoration and maintenance of World War I monuments across the country.

By restoring these monuments and memorials, many of which bear the names of those members of the community who served and fell in the Great War, the sponsors of the 100 Cities/100 Memorials initiative hope not only to honor the names of those who served, but to raise awareness of this momentous event in our nation’s history, and increase each and every communities’ understanding of their towns’ and cities’ place in military history.

It is our great hope that the 100 Cities/100 Memorials initiative will help unite the nation in a collective celebration of our victory in World War I and in proper recognition of the contributions of those who served and those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of liberty and freedom.

KENNETH CLARKE, PRES. & CEO | PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY
DANIEL DAYTON, EXEC. DIR. | U.S. WORLD WAR I CENTENNIAL COMMISSION



I’m the Guy!

I’m the guy who asked to join your organization.
I’m the guy who paid his dues to join.
I’m the guy who stood up in front of you and promised to be faithful and loyal to the organization.
I’m the guy who came to your meetings and no one paid any attention to me.
I’m the guy who tried several times to be a friend.
But they all had their own buddies to talk to and sit next to.
I’m the guy who came several times, but no one paid any attention to me.
I’m the guy who was left out when I volunteered to help on projects and membership recruitment.
I’m the guy who missed a few meetings because I was sick, but at the next meeting no one asked where I had been.
I guess it didn’t matter very much to others whether I was there or not.
I’m the guy who decided to stay home and watch TV one meeting night.
The following meeting I attended, no one asked me where I had been.
You might say that I’m a good guy, a good family man who holds a responsible job, loves his family, community, and country.
You want to know who else I am?

I’m the guy who never came back!

It amuses me how the officers of the organization and other members discuss why the organization is losing members.

It amuses me to think that they spend so much time looking for new members when I was there all the time.

All they needed to do was make me feel needed, wanted and welcome.

~AUTHOR UNKNOWN~

If You’re a Member In Good Standing With Your Department of The American Legion...



Endorsed by
Your Department of
The American Legion

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The American Legion.

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MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE YOUR DATE OF BIRTH		
DATE _____		

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Complete details of the coverage are contained in accident only Master Policy MZ0933569H0000A/0001A underwritten by Transamerica Premier Life Insurance Company Cedar Rapids, IA. This plan is not available in all states.

*For Purposes of the Legionnaire Insurance Trust, a member of The American Legion, with current year’s dues paid, could be eligible for the \$5,000 Accidental Death benefit if he/she is traveling to, attending, or returning from an official function at which the Legionnaire represents his/her Post, District, Department, or National Organization in an official capacity.

Cut it out



Department Photo Gallery



American Legion Department of Montana

Convention 2017

June 22nd—25th
Hosted by Andrew Pearson Post 117

Name(s) _____ ☐ Legion ☐ ALA ☐ SAL

☐ Legion ☐ ALA ☐ SAL

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Registration \$20 X _____ = \$ _____

40 & 8 BBQ \$18 X _____ = \$ _____

Past Dept. Commander's Breakfast \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Children & Youth Luncheon \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Auxiliary Banquet \$23 X _____ = \$ _____

Past Dept. President's Luncheon \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Incoming President's Luncheon \$17 X _____ = \$ _____

Joint Banquet \$27 X _____ = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Convention Hotel

Red Lion Inn Hotel & Convention Center
1223 Muldowney Lane
Billings, MT 59101 (406)248-7151
Room Rate \$92

Everyone who rents a room at the convention hotel will be entered into a drawing for \$500 CASH and a gift package worth over \$500! (One name per paying guest / per room rented)

Questions

George Blackard
C# 406-855-6781
geoblackard@yahoo.com

Send Registration Form & Payment To

Post 117 Convention
PO Box 866
Billings, MT 59103



The American Legion Family

WREATHS OVER AMERICA – Yellowstone National Cemetery



On 16 Dec 2016, the heaviest single-day snowfall in 20 years, along with blizzard winds and dangerous wind chills, delayed laying of wreaths at Yellowstone National Cemetery, Laurel, Montana, for the national Wreaths Over America program.

Favorable weather finally came, and on Friday, 23 December, volunteers gathered at the national cemetery for a poignant ceremony prior to placing the wreaths. Deep drifts covered most of the cemetery, and volunteers struggled to place the wreaths.

They never gave up, even when that meant digging out the drifts.

The ten-acre Yellowstone National Cemetery, the first operational national cemetery under the Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration's Rural Veterans Burial Initiative, is one mile north of Laurel, Yellowstone County, Montana, on Buffalo Trail Road (state highway 532).

Photos for the 2016 Wreaths Over America at Yellowstone National Cemetery are found on Flickr at (click on link): <https://flic.kr/s/aHskKqr1K6>



ALL PHOTOS BY ED SAUNDERS, LAUREL, MONTANA



Fort Owen Post 94 Christmas Wreaths for Veteran's Graves



Commander Chuck Burgmeier with arm loads of wreaths at Maplewood cemetery.

Members of Stevensville, Fort Owen Post 94 along with parents and members of Boy Scout Troop 1117 (sponsored by Post 94), as well as, other community citizens placed Christmas wreaths on veterans' graves in Riverside, Maplewood and Sunnyside cemeteries on December 24, 2016. The "Wreaths Across America" activity was originally scheduled for December 17, but was cancelled due to the arctic weather conditions on that date.

Crysta Wortman and her family supply the wreaths and actively participate in the activity.



President

February is Americanism month so let's get into the schools and let them know what we have to offer the students who write about this great subject. Show our involvement by handing out our great flag with some information on etiquette.



Janette Bossen

Know the proper handling of the flag like what to do and what not to do. Set up a flag disposal ceremony with the local Boy Scouts and Girl Scout troops. Show your fellow Americans what it is like to honor our great flag in this ceremony.

March is American Legions Birthday so plan to have cake and/or cookies plus a drink at your Post meeting to honor the Legion on its day. It is also Community Service month so get out there and help with a Community project or get together and do one of your own. It doesn't take much to help within your community. Help a Veteran do something around his/her home and make sure you put out a sign saying who is helping this Veteran and their family. Let it be known who and what we are and what we do for

our Veterans and our communities. Enjoy what you do and make it fun for all.

March is also starting of the Spring District meetings. Be sure and invite everyone within your District so when we come to visit it is worth our time and money spent to get there to give out the information that is important to each and every one of the Auxiliary members. We like seeing all your bright smiling faces and helping you to achieve your goals.

April is Children & Youth month. Get into the schools to read books or just to help with any little project that might be coming about. Do little things to help out the children of your community and always remember your Veterans children. Set up a time at the school for the older kids to show them all the scholarships that we have to offer to help them further their education. Anything you do with children is a wonderful thing and very inspirational to all who are involved.

Reports are due to Terry Kemp by April 15th and also one to the appropriate Chairman. Please send one report to Terry and one to the Chairman so as to make it easier on everyone involved in putting these reports together for National. Make one then just make a copy it will be greatly appreciated. ⚡

For God and Country

Membership

I cannot believe it is time for Christmas to be over and time for us to be centering in on our programs because we have sent in our dues. I know this is not true for everyone but as I was looking at our membership totals, I was impressed with the number of Units that were over 65 percent. In fact, several Units are either at 100 percent or more than that.



Kathy Long

Since so many of us have our membership in we now can turn to *RAISE WHAT YOU PRAISE*. With this in mind, National has several awards that you can hand out to any and all members by recognizing what they do in your Unit by the award you can give to them each month.



In February, a member can be recognized for how they have shown their love to a veteran and/or the ALA. In March, did an Auxiliary member help with putting on the American Legion's Birthday? If so, give them an award to show your appreciation for their hard work. In April, Earth Day has come upon us. Did one of your members help in any way with the activities in your community? Give them an award for helping.

Each award I just mentioned is on the National website (alaforveterans.org). If you cannot find them shoot me an e-mail and I will forward them to you. My e-mail is 24bluejay@gmail.com.

While I was on the website I found a survey that you can hand out to members to possible help your unit. I will send that out to the District Presidents so they can send it out to you. And remember to always continue to **Raise what you Praise**. ⚡

Secretary

Happy New Year!

I'm one of those fools who LOVES the New Year. It's a fresh start for everything and I find a renewed spirit through wide-opened eyes. I hope you share some of the enthusiasm with me.



Jamie DeBates

Getting right down to business, I have great news to report from our national headquarters. During the Department Secretary's Conference in late November we were informed that they aren't going to be raising the dues for the coming year. That means the Department dues increase we voted for at the convention last June will be all ours for at least a year. Thank you for supporting this necessary increase and it was our hope at the time that we'd have at least a year to get more financially stable between the raffle and the dues increase. Job well done ladies. NHQ reminded us that they will be raising – just not in the next year. Don't get too comfortable!

You will want to vote at the Unit level to raise your dues as well - unless your treasury can withstand the increase. Department's treasury will not be able to carry Units who don't remit the proper amount. In fairness to all Units, the transmittals will need to be returned to you for proper payment if you don't send in the correct

amount. That also means it's time to clean house. Please dispose of all the old forms you have. I provide you with a packet at convention time that will literally allow you to run your office for the next year. Because of the changes to rates etc., it will be a good time to clear out the old supply and inventory what you'll need for your new membership year when it arrives. These actions alone lay a nice foundation for the next membership year and your new officers. The forms requesting that new officer information will come out in February or March. In order for all your materials to print correctly we need to abide by the deadlines NHQ sets for us. It's never too early to recruit officers or begin the training process for future leaders. It's also the perfect time to review your Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules reflecting the changes in your dues rates if applicable. Upon confirmation be sure to send a copy to the Department C&B Chairman.

Where are you with your 990 filing? Joyce Babcock gave a tremendous workshop at Fall Conference and everyone came away with the confidence and directions to file for your units. Please do not ignore this very important piece of compliance. It is NOT hard to do. It literally takes longer to brew a pot of coffee than it does to submit your 990. I just did mine for my Unit. You can too.

I don't intend to travel to Spring district meetings but as always, if you need something let me know and we'll make it work. ⚡

Department Raffle

1st prize is \$1,000

2nd prize is \$500

3rd prize Red-White-Blue Golf Bag

Tickets:

\$5/ea. or 6/\$25

The raffle is open to EVERYONE. Sell to friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.

Even one ticket per month helps the Auxiliary, plus increases your chances of winning.

Tickets can be mailed or e-mailed to you by contacting Jamie DeBates. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask.



PHOTO BY LEILA SEYFERT, GOLF BAG MODELED BY JENNIFER HERMAN

Drawing at 2017 Department Convention in Billings.

Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS)

— FORT HARRISON REPORT BY SANDY RUNKEL

The 2016 Christmas season was off to a wonderful start at the Fort Harrison VA Hospital. Thanks to our members who donated gifts and cash, to those who worked setting up and helping our Veterans select gifts for their family members. Our 10 volunteers gave 64.25 hours for the two days of the shop. There were 71 Veterans and family members shopping. Twenty boxes were mailed at a cost of \$170.81. The value of cash donations and gift items received was \$7,836.

A special word of appreciation for the Volunteer Coordinator Terrie Casey and her staff. The week prior to the shop posters were placed around the hospital. She was there to help us get set up before the shop on Sunday. Thanks to Terrie and her helpers, Kerry Patton, Bill White and Lois Schmidt.



Getting all the gifts sorted and laid out for the gift shop at Fort Harrison. Photo by Sandy Runkel

Although we do not have knowledge of the year of the first Gift Shop, we think it has been well over 55 years ago; what a great project that has been for all those years. Thanks to all our Units who keep supporting the shop at Fort Harrison; may it continue into the future.

Good wishes to all our members and their families for a wonderful year ahead in 2017



Veterans and their families taking the time to shop in the Gift Shop at Fort Harrison. Photo by Sandy Runkel

Unit 100, Park City

JEAN BOSSEN



Department President Jeanette Bossen presented 7th-grader Katie Hess with her Second Place trophy for her 6th-grade Poppy Poster during the Veterans Day celebration at Park City Schools.

District 11 Adjunct Joyce Babcock was guest speaker at Park City Schools Veterans Day celebration with 15 Park City area veterans attending.





Big Sky Gas is pleased to announce a new partnership with the American Legion to provide exciting new benefits for their members

Big Sky Gas will donate one cent per therm of total membership usage to the American Legion

Make the BIG SWITCH!
You could save hundreds of dollars a year.

Log on to
bigskygas.com/amlegion



bigskygas.com 855.322.9939

ANACONDA VIETNAM VETERAN RECEIVES LONG OVERDUE BRONZE STAR

BY BARRY DeCHaine



ANACONDA LEADER, PHOTO BY KATHIE MILLER.

On the very chilly, windy night of December 19, 2016, at the Fred Moodry Intermediate School in Anaconda, over 400 friends, Vets and family members observed a dual ceremony. First, a remembrance ceremony was conducted for the eight Anaconda warriors who were killed in Vietnam (Patrick J. Fleming, USMC; John E. Laipple, USA; Raymond G. Kriskovich, USA; David A. Anderson, USA; Ronald J. Moe, USA; Wayland D. Stembridge, USA; Robert J. Thomas, USA and Eugene F. McNally, USN) followed by the pinning of the Army Commendation and Bronze Star Medals for Michael A. Nazer. Nazer served in the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam from 1968-1969. He was never presented the awards until 47 years later. Teryn Green, 2nd Lieutenant, Montana Army National Guard, pinned officers while Col., MTANG Ret. Don Clark read the citations. Honor Guard provided by Anaconda American Legion Post 21.

Fort Owen Post 94 Stevensville Conducts Funeral Honors

JERRY ESMAY, FORT OWEN POST 94, STEVENSVILLE

Members of Fort Owen Post 94, Stevensville, conducted funeral honors for one of its long time and highly respected members, Robert (Big Bob) Smith on December 3, 2016.

Bob served his country in the United States Navy during the Korean War. Bob and his wife Ruby moved to Stevensville following his retirement from the Portland Oregon fire department.

The funeral was generally conducted in accordance with The American Legion Manual of Ceremonies. Jerry Esmay was in charge of the ceremony supported by Chaplain Rick Harrison and Commander Chuck Burgmeier who gave the Eulogy. Bob's ability to make friends with anyone and everyone was highly stressed. The funeral was concluded with not only military honors, but also firefighter honors and a final Naval "piping."

The military honors were performed by Commander Chuck Burgmeier with Bill Lyon, Brad Smith, and Paul Sokolowski on rifles, Earl McMonaha on the bugle, and Brian Potton and RonToomer folding and presenting the flag.



The firefighter honors were led by Hamilton firefighter Tom Pitzsinger who provided a verbal description of the honors followed by the "Last Call" ringing of the bell. Tom was supported by Stevensville firefighters as well as two representatives from Bob's old department in Portland. A very special touch to the funeral was provided by the Stevensville firefighters bringing a ladder truck which was parked at the entrance to Post 94 with a ladder extended from which the American flag and one of Bob's old helmets were hanging.

The funeral ended with a final Navy tribute provided by one of Bob's firefighter friends from Portland, Mark Searls, who gave a last call with his Bosons Mate whistle

Three generations in Post 50 Color Guard

Big Sandy Post 50 Memorial Day Color Guard features three generations, Ed Allderdice, Ted Allderdice, and Michell Allderdice Sabo.



Burrell honored by
Thompson Falls Post 52



Don Burrell, Thompson Falls Post 52, was awarded a plaque of Certificate of Appreciation at the Post October 20, 2015 meeting. Commander Charlotte Beaudry commended Burrell’s outstanding civic commitment to the community of Thompson Falls. Don has been a Legion member for 11 years, has been the Vice Commander and held the Sergeant-at-Arms position. Burrell drives the DAV van and also drives for the Council on Aging. He has been a Grange member since 1966 and has worked for the Concessionaire Group (Sanders County Fair) for eight years. The Christian Men’s Prayer Group, of which he is also active, can count on him to assist in their annual chicken barbeque. Additionally, Don cuts firewood to help those who are unable to do it for themselves.

Legion Cap Etiquette

KAREN SEMPLE, MEMBER HELENA POST 2



As a member of The American Legion, I take great pride in wearing my Legion “uniform” – the Legion Cap is a very visible symbol of my military service and membership in The American Legion.

At fall conference, some members were apparently unaware there are guidelines (published in the Emblem Sales Catalog) that help us be uniform, not an embarrassment to our fellow members or our great organization when we wear our caps. Commanders, please do your new members a service by ensuring they receive a copy of *Cap Etiquette* before they start adorning their cap with pins, ribbons and medals. It may help to review it with them in case they won’t read it.

1. The left side (emblem side) of the cap is reserved only for the Legion emblem, city, county, district or state lettering.
2. If desired, the following items must be placed on the right side of the cap:
 - A. additional lettering, restricted to either the name of a Post, or to an officer title (such as “Past Commander”),
 - B. cap insignias or badges (for Past or Present officers),
 - C. consecutive membership insignia, membership stars and/or authorized Legion or military services decorations.
3. Names or nicknames of individual members cannot be used on caps.
4. The Legion Uniform Cap should be worn by its members only when in attendance at official Legion meetings or ceremonies, or as official guests at patriotic or other civil functions, or by individuals when officially representing The American Legion on public occasions.
5. The cap should be worn in a place of worship only by the Guard of Honor, Color Guard and Commander of same while marching order or standing guard. When returned to and seated in pews, the cap should be removed.

6. Legion Posts marching in formation into a place of worship should uncover, at the door, hold the cap with the right hand over the heart until the arrival in the pews and commanded to take seats, remaining uncovered during the entire service. At the close of the service, upon command, the Post shall arise, the members holding the cap with the right hand over the heart will march out of the place of worship and recover after marching through the door.
7. Legion members not in formation will uncover upon entering the place of worship and remain uncovered during the entire service, and will recover after leaving the place of worship.
8. When at a funeral, the cap should be held over the heart as one approaches the casket, and is not at any time worn in a place of worship (except by the Guard of Honor, Color Guard or Commander of same while in marching order or standing guard.) At the graveside, the cap should be held in the right hand over the heart during the entire service. In cold and inclement weather, the cap should not be worn.
9. In Legion meetings, the cap should be worn except during movements of the Pledge of Allegiance, POW/MIA flag placement, prayer, and when standing in silent reverence in memory of departed comrades, when the cap should be held with the right hand over the heart.
10. Female members of the Legion should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for female personnel of the armed services.

Out of respect for those who have worn the Legion cap and gone on before us, if after reading these guidelines, you’ve learned you need to clean up your cap in some way by removing all pins on the left side or removing unauthorized pins, please do so as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Crossword by PuzzleChoice

Solution on page 14

ACROSS

1. Stringed instrument

5. Young child
8. Fuss

12. Obviate

14. Be indebted to

15. Fragment

DOWN

16. Water barrier

17. Single

18. South American animal
19. Restless

21. Brass instrument

23. Japanese currency

24. Scorch

25. Weep

28. Small stream

30. Ploy

35. Harvest

37. Amphibian

39. Very slow tempo

40. Hawaiian island

41. Overhang

43. Musical composition for one

44. Contempt

46. Sate

47. Carbon black

48. Purloined

50. Zeal

52. Solfa syllable

53. Parch

55. Label

57. Part of a set of bagpipes

61. Female inheritor

65. Country life

66. Regret

68. Visual part of TV

69. Animated

70. Lout

71. Church officer

72. Manufactured

73. Moist

74. Musical instrument of ancient Greece

DOWN

1. One of two equal parts

2. Assert

3. Wander

4. Righteousness

5. Implement

6. Possess

7. Fangs

8. Movie

9. Type of year

10. Highest attainable level

11. Type of fuel

13. Postpone

15. Denotes more than one

20. Combine

22. Music with syncopated melody

24. Stringed instrument with keyboard

25. Traverse

26. Respond

27. Cheerful sounding search engine

29. Loiter

31. Musical setting for a religious ceremony

32. Sulk

33. Ice hut
34. Part of a comb

36. Knitting stitch

38. Small wooded hollow

42. Roofing material

45. Cuddle

49. Indicating maiden name

51. Callow

54. Pointer

56. Kind of restaurant

57. Pack to capacity

58. Polynesian dance

59. Desiccated

60. Part of a church

61. Lift with difficulty

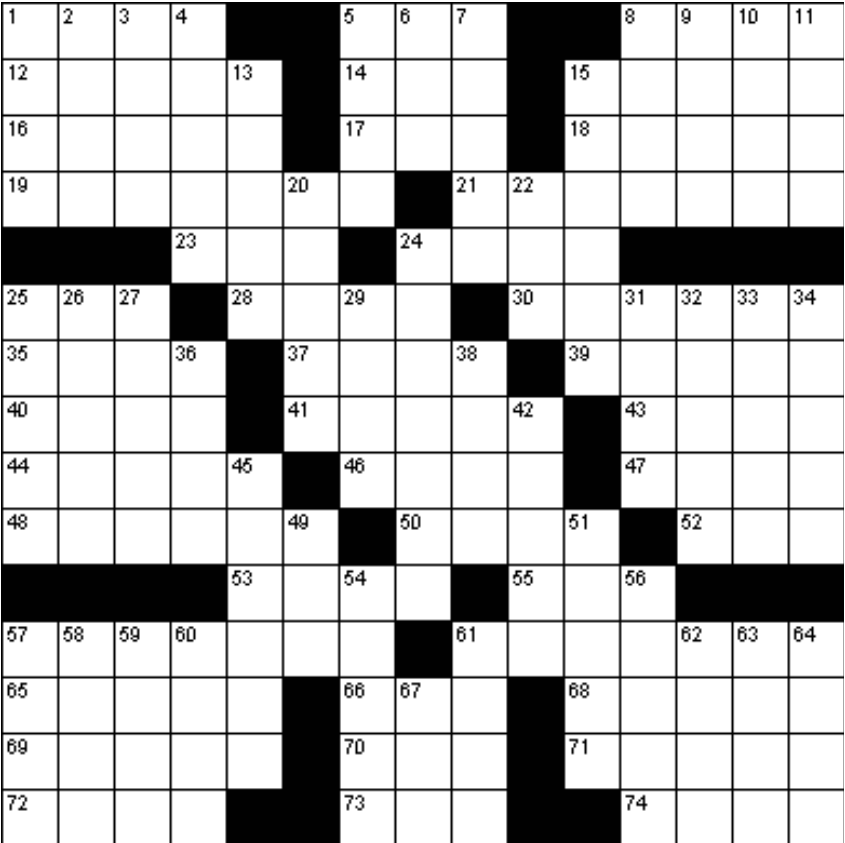
62. Miniture whirlpool

63. Soothsayer

64. Painful

67. Arab federation, initially

Puzzle Choice Standard Crossword- usp005



2017 AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION
RENO, NEVADA
AUGUST 18 – 24, 2017
GRAND SIERRA RESORT & CASINO
2500 East Second St

National Convention Reservation form for Legion, SAL & Auxiliary

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

Please reserve the following accommodations for _____ persons. I will be sharing a room with _____.

Enclosed is a check to cover one night’s room deposit, plus others as noted.

_____ King (1 or 2 persons) \$129.95 (this includes tax of 13%)	\$ _____
_____ Double (1 or 2 persons) \$129.95 (this includes tax of 13%)	\$ _____
_____ Commanders Banquet @ \$46.00 each	\$ _____
_____ Parking Rate – Free	\$ _____
_____ Hospitality Room - \$16.00	\$ _____
_____ Registration (nondelegates only; delegates are paid) \$25.00 ea	\$ _____
_____ Parade Transportation (if not needed will be refunded) \$19.00	\$ _____

(Note: ALL Convention attendees must be registered and have a Convention badge to ride busses, attend convention functions and enter the convention hall) If you are attending Commander’s Banquet please advise Department by 25 February, 2017.

TOTAL \$ _____

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

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

LEGION ONLY – I would like to be a delegate and would serve on the following Committee, (official delegates must be nominated and elected at the Department Convention in Billings, June 23 – 25, 2017).

1st Choice _____

2nd Choice _____

ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS: JULY 1, 2017, early receipt will guarantee staying with the Montana Delegation

Please send check payable to the American Legion of Montana and this form to:

Department Adjutant
PO Box 6075
Helena, MT 59604-6075

2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION
TRANSPORTATION

If there is enough interest the Department will provide transportation for all American Legion Family members to the 2017 National Convention in Reno, Nevada. The Convention runs from August 18 through August 24; the coach would depart from Helena on Thursday August 17 at 6:00 PM and arrive in Reno approximately 8:00 PM on Friday August 18. If needed the coach could also pickup passengers in Butte and Dillon.

We need a minimum of 30 passengers, the coach can seat up to 42 passengers. The cost would be:

For 30 passengers - \$165
For 35 passengers - \$135
For 40 passengers - \$125

The cost is for round trip.

If we have enough to take the coach, then the parade transportation fee on the National Convention Registration form would be waived.

Anyone desiring to ride the coach to Reno needs to fill out the form below and submit a refundable deposit of \$100 per passenger prior to March 1, 2017. This is an absolute drop dead date as I will have to procure additional rooms on our hotel contract.

If you have questions, contact Department Headquarters at (406) 324-3989 or toll free (866) 793-1257.

NAME: _____

Number of Passengers: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

Make check payable to The American Legion of Montana Convention Fund and mail to PO Box 6075, Helena, MT 59604.

Columbia Falls Post 72



Commander Shepard, new member Virginia Becker and sponsor Coleen Ross.

Columbia Falls Post 72 Commander Michel Shepard presented a membership card to a brand new American Legion member at the Montana Veterans Home in Columbia Falls. Virginia Becker of Libby served our country during WW2 in the Coast Guard, and is thus eligible to become a member. All Veterans are welcomed, from all eras, and is proof it is never too late.

TECHNOLOGY

Stay vigilant against these 4 cyberscams

CONTENT PROVIDED COURTESY OF USAA|LEGION.ORG

Online fraud rates increased by 30 percent last holiday season, and military personnel are a favorite target of scammers. So, protect yourself and your money by staying on the lookout for these common scams.

Phishing: No, phishing isn’t new, but it’s always evolving. Criminals create legit-looking emails, texts or social media posts requesting personal financial information. If you respond, they drain your bank account or run up debt in your name.

Card Cracking: Thieves can pose as an online buddy who asks for credit card information or a bank PIN. Then they deposit fraudu-

lent checks and withdraw money, leaving you with an empty account and potential fraud charges.

Job-Search Fraud: Watch out for online job postings that promise special consideration to military and then request that you provide personal financial information, such as checking or savings account details. Criminals can use those to clean out your accounts.

Imposter Scams: A con artist claims to be a friend or family member in distress and requests money or personal information. Investigate before responding to make sure you’re exchanging messages with the real person.



BIG 1,000 CLUB

Would you like six opportunities to win \$400, one to win \$600 and one to win \$2,000? Join the Big K (1000) Club and be one of the 1000 members eligible to win. Membership is just \$25 a year and is open to all Legion, Auxiliary and SAL members over 18 years of age.

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

If you are interested in joining contact your Post Adjutant or Department Headquarters. Membership closes December 31st with the first of 6 monthly drawings for \$400 beginning January 2017, \$600 on the Legion Birthday and \$2,000 at Department Convention.



BIG 1,000 CLUB

Submit completed form with \$25 Membership Fee! TO DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

Name: _____

Post/Unit/Squadron: _____

ID Number: _____

Phone Number: _____

Helena couple survived Pearl Harbor in 1941

Gt Falls Tribune Reporter Phil Drake | Dec. 6, 2016 | <http://www.greatfallstribune.com/story/news/local/2016/12/06/helena-couple-survived-pearl-harbor/95066748/>

HELENA — Andy Kim, then 15, a self-proclaimed “rascal,” and some of his buddies were having their usual Sunday morning fun in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, when he noticed a tiny black speck in the sky.

The Navy had been out on maneuvers a few days earlier, most of the Navy ships had returned to the port and U.S. military planes had been flying drills so no one was suspicious when that small dot appeared above.

Soon, the small speck got closer and passed the boys as they were standing on a railroad trestle.

It was a Japanese fighter with what Kim calls “a goose egg” on the side.

The pilot flew by with the canopy pulled back and wiggled his wings as if waving, or perhaps going to shoot the teens, Kim recalls.

“He flew so low and so slow,” the 89-year-old Kim remembered three-quarters of a century later. “He was waiting for the other planes to catch up. He was sightseeing.”

Shortly thereafter one of his friends said the Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor.

“It was unbelievable,” Kim said. “Who would think of doing that?”

The teens raced to the naval base but could not get in. He said he watched the battleship Arizona as it burned for three days and saw flatbed trucks piled high with bodies.

He volunteered to help carry the dead and wounded.

Kim, now 89, said an anger boiled up inside his soul and he wanted to enlist.

“I’ll be darned if I’ll let it happen here,” he said.

Andy and Dolores Kim, now Helena residents and married for 69 years, both lived

at Pearl Harbor during the Dec. 7, 1941, attack by the Japanese that propelled the United States into World War II.

Dolores, who was 11 at the time and known as Dolores Perry, said she was in church. The priest stopped the service and told the people who worked at the Hickam Field Air Force base that they needed to report there.

“It was scary,” she remembers.

He soon dismissed the others.



Andrew Kim, who was a 15-year-old boy living in Pearl Harbor during the attack, sits at his kitchen table wearing his veteran cap and ribbons from his military career. (PHOTO: TRIBUNE PHOTO/JULIA MOSS)



Andrew Kim, who was a 15-year-old boy living in Pearl Harbor during the attack, recalls his experience in his Helena home. “I was right outside the gate trying to get in. There were explosions. I watched USS Arizona burn for three days and three nights. USS Oklahoma was capsized; they tried to get the crew out by cutting a hold in the hull, day and night,” he said. (PHOTO: TRIBUNE PHOTO/JULIA MOSS)

Dolores was heading home with a friend when she saw a Japanese plane strafing the street and heading toward them with an American pilot hot on its tail.

The next several days were terrifying, she said. There were rumors the Japanese had landed on the island. People painted the windows of their homes black to avoid detection from above.

Andy Kim had a long-simmering hatred of the Japanese.

His father had died when he was younger and his mother moved the family back to their native Korea, which Japan had occupied.

He was forced to take a Japanese name and to this day can recite the prayer he would say daily to Emperor Hirohito.

After three years, his mother was able to get the family out of Korea. They returned to Pearl Harbor.

“When I saw the Japanese bomb (Pearl Harbor) it changed the course of my whole life,” he said. “I said ‘I’m not going to let this happen in my country.’”

He joined the Navy on July 3, 1944, when he was 17. But he needed his mother’s consent.

“My mom did not want to sign,” Kim recalled. “I said ‘I have to do my job.’”

Kim’s son-in-law, Ed Reed, is surprised he waited.

“I bet he would have joined at 15 if they would have let him,” he said.

Kim said there was no basic training or boot camp, the sailors were immediately placed aboard a ship. He was aboard the destroyer the USS Nicholas, which escorted the USS Missouri when the Japanese signed the terms of surrender on Sept. 2, 1945.

The Kims’ daughter, Debbie, said her father didn’t talk much about Pearl Harbor to her sister or two brothers when she was a child.

“But now that he is older he is talking about it,” she said.

“It kind of what shaped his whole life,” Debbie said, “and consequently it shaped us.”

In terms of observing Pearl Harbor, the Kims, who also have seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, had no plans as of late last week.

“I have nothing planned but bugging my wife and him,” Kim said as he pointed at his son-in-law.

Kim remained in the Navy until 1969 and served in Korea and Vietnam. He also joined in sweeping for mines around Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis. He retired as a chief boat-swain’s mate.

He was at Eniwetok Atoll in the 1950s when the U.S. did nuclear testing and was five miles from the testing site for two tests.

“I was never so scared in my life after the blast,” he said.

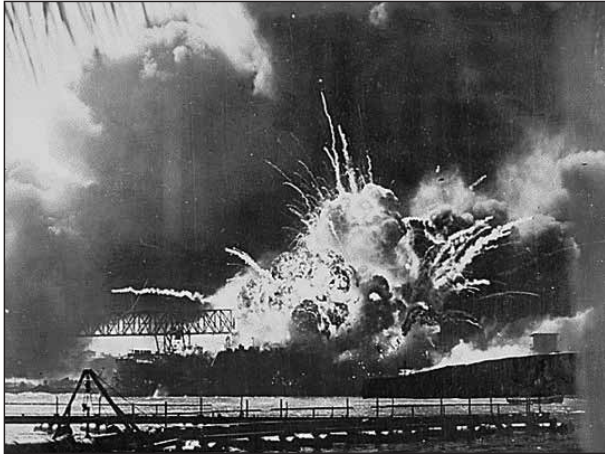
And when water seeped into one of the craters he decided to take a swim in ground zero, not knowing of the dangers of radiation poisoning.

He spent three days in the hospital and said he could not stop perspiring.

The Kims have lived in Montana for three years with their daughter and son-in-law. They said it is one of the most patriotic places they have lived, adding restaurant patrons sometimes pick up their tab when they go out to dinner and Andy Kim is wearing his veteran’s baseball cap.

“At least Montana gives us a little recognition,” he said.

In October 2015, Kim was honored by Sen. Steve Daines, R-Mont., for being among the first Montanans who told their story to the Veterans History Project, which Congress created in 2000. It’s part of the American Folklife Center at the Library Congress, where the stories of wartime veterans are stored. Since then, nearly 100,000 veterans have shared their stories.



The destroyer USS Shaw’s magazine exploded after being bombed by Japanese aircraft in the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. (PHOTO: COURTESY/NATIONAL ARCHIVES/MCT)

Kim continues to lead by example, Daines said.

“His selfless service and bravery is true testament to the heart of all Montanans who put country first,” he said.

A couple of years ago Kim and his son, Wayne, who is also a veteran, were on the Montana Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. He visited the war memorials and shook hands with elected officials.

Ed Reed said last summer he got a camping trailer and last summer took the family to Mount Rushmore.

Kim, who now uses a hearing aid and carries an oxygen tank to deal with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which impacts the lungs, said he is hurt when he sees others disrespect or burn the flag.

“It’s tough to watch,” he said, adding he hopes his story will let the younger generation see what others went through to protect the freedoms of the United States.

“I fought for them then and I’ll fight for them again,” he said. “I’m not in the condition to do it, but I am willing.”

[Andy Kim is a member of Helena Post 2]

Solution - usp005 to Puzzle on page 12

H	A	R	P			T	O	T			F	L	A	P
A	V	O	I	D		O	W	E		P	I	E	C	E
L	E	V	E	E		O	N	E		L	L	A	M	A
F	R	E	T	F	U	L		T	R	U	M	P	E	T
			Y	E	N		C	H	A	R				
C	R	Y		R	I	L	L		G	A	M	B	I	T
R	E	A	P		T	O	A	D		L	A	R	G	O
O	A	H	U		E	A	V	E	S		S	O	L	O
S	C	O	R	N		F	I	L	L		S	O	O	T
S	T	O	L	E	N		E	L	A	N		D	O	H
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C	H	A	N	T	E	R		H	E	I	R	E	S	S
R	U	R	A	L		R	U	E		V	I	D	E	O
A	L	I	V	E		O	A	F		E	L	D	E	R
M	A	D	E			W	E	T			L	Y	R	E

Puzzle Choice Standard Crossword- usp005

Polson Post 112 Elk Hunt Report

JEFF NELSON, HARDWICK POST 112, POLSON



I wanted to give a report on the Elk Hunt Raffle that was given out at the Department Convention in Bozeman last June. I started out the hunt leaving Polson on November 7, 2016, and staying at the Yogo Inn in Lewistown that night. Arriving at the ranch the next morning, my guide, Shawn, was waiting to take me to the area that would be the best for cow elk.

We visited with one of the ranch personnel that morning and he told us about an outlying valley that he had spotted close to a 100 head of elk the night before. We headed towards this valley just as the sunrise was coming up over the horizon. Coming from the west side of the mountains, we do not get sunrises of this grandeur, it was awesome. Sharing hunting stories on the 10-mile trip to the valley made the hunt all that more memorable. When you get two hunters that have experienced a few hunts, the stories never end. We arrived at a timbered area and parked the ranch truck where we glassed across the valley. It appeared there were elk everywhere on an open hillside about 1000 yards away. We got out of the truck and I put a round in the chamber of my 300 Win Mag and started to follow Shawn down a hillside in the direction of the elk. We hadn't gone a quarter of a mile when Shawn motioned that there was a cow standing on the trail about 100 yards away. I got the cow in my sights and fired. She walked a few yards away and fell.

As they say, "the easy part is over and now the work begins." In this case luck was on our side as we could pull up right beside the cow with the pickup. We quartered her up and put the meat in game bags and were back at the ranch by 9:00 that morning. Shawn suggested a processing business not too far outside of Grass Range, called Stahl's Processing. I left the meat to be cut and wrapped while I tried to find a mule deer buck over by the Musselshell River. I ended up getting a decent 5x5 muley on the 10th and headed back to Stahl's to pick up my elk, and head home.

I would like to thank the Lewistown American Legion Post for arranging this hunt. I found out while I was there that the following week eight wounded warrior veterans were scheduled to arrive for cow elk hunts also. I would also like to thank the N-Bar ranch for opening their doors and allowing these special hunts to take place on their property. The folks I met at the ranch were so friendly and gracious. It would be great if this opportunity would continue down the road with the help of the Lewistown American Legion Post.

Thanks again, Jeff Nelson

The mentorship of American Legion leadership

BY JEFF STOFFER | DIGITAL DISPATCH
JAN 20, 2017 | THE AMERICAN LEGION

EDITOR'S NOTE: In March 2016, I interviewed American Legion National Executive Committee member Merv Gunderson, a Vietnam War veteran and former Montana State University Police officer, alongside Helena, Mont., Post 2 Commander Josh Clement, an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran and full-time active Army National Guard reservist. In April, Gunderson was severely injured in a motorcycle accident and spent several months receiving medical care in Seattle. He recently returned to his home in Belgrade, Mont., where he holds offices in The American Legion at the local, state and national levels, as does Clement, who Gunderson has mentored along the way.

An American Legion member since 2003, Clement got to know Gunderson through a revitalization effort at Post 46 in Boulder, Mont. A change of National Guard duty stations later sent Clement to Gunderson's Post 30



Laurel Post 123

Laurel American Legion Post 123 providing color guard at the Pearl Harbor ceremony at the Yellowstone National Cemetery. Ray Southworth, Norm Popiel, Terry Fox, and Phil Decke.



Post/Unit 14 Bozeman, Children's Christmas Party



How do I submit an article or photo?

Deadline: January 1, 2017

Preferences:

Text – No formatting such as, **multiple space and multiple tabs to line up text**

- Set one tab (publisher will format to line up paragraphs and columns) PLEASE do not use multiple spaces as *All formatting has to be removed before placing into paper.*
- Modern formatting is single-space between sentences (after the period)
- Provide Post City as well as Post/Unit number
- Post, Unit & Department are capitalized
- It is better if articles/stories are written in third person – unless you're talking about quotes from actual people, of course. There really should never be any "we did this" or "I/we think that" written in the body of a good news story – imagine someone else is telling your story at all times, as though the journalist is telling the reader about someone or something else.
- **Acronyms.** Always keep new members informed and familiar with programs. For example: *Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS)*. The first time an acronym is used in an article use full title followed with acronym in parenthesis, then following first use, use the acronym.
- Please keep articles to approximately 600 words per article.
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- DO NOT submit articles in PDF format.
- If you want credit for an article or photo(s), please make sure you let us know.

Photos – send as e-mail attachments – **PLEASE!!**

JPG format, as an attachment

- Default setting on a digital camera is usually set very high. Set to 1200 x 1725 pixels which is ideal for printing 4x6 with desired output resolution of 300 dpi.

Cell phone photos are many times too poor quality so take your time taking the photo.

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