



Department Commander

Ken Simon

Thank You for Your Hospitality and Commitment

As we wrap up another successful round of district meetings, I want to take a moment to extend my deepest thanks to each and every district across the state for the incredible hospitality you've shown during my visits. From the warm welcomes to the thoughtful conversations and shared meals, your dedication to the mission of The American Legion was evident in every stop along the way.

Your efforts in planning, hosting, and participating in these meetings did not go unnoticed. The enthusiasm, pride, and commitment I witnessed in every corner of our department reassured me that our foundation is strong, and our future is bright. It's clear that our members care deeply about veterans, their families, and the communities we serve.

A special shout out goes to the American Legion Riders for their incredible presence and performance at the annual ALR meeting—you absolutely knocked it out of the park! Your passion, dedication, and energy were on full display, and it was nothing short of inspiring. An extra round of applause

is well-deserved for your efforts in launching and hosting the very first Department ALR College. What a milestone! Your commitment to leadership development and strengthening the Riders across the state shows exactly why you're such a vital part of the Legion Family. Keep the throttle down and the momentum going—we're proud to ride alongside you!



As we move forward, I encourage all members—Sons, Auxiliary, Riders, and Legionnaires—to keep up the great work. Continue fostering that sense of family, encouraging new membership, and mentoring the next generation of leaders. Growth happens when we work together, support one another, and share the pride we have in this great organization.

Let's carry the momentum from these meetings into the months ahead. Together, we are stronger. Together, we are The American Legion Family.

Department Adjutant

Duane Cunningham

Another round of Spring meetings has been completed and other than a dicey drive from Kalispell to Eureka in near blizzard conditions, the meetings were well attended, and a lot of good business was completed. I wanted to thank the District Commanders for making the meetings happen and for all the Legion family behind the scenes for the set-up, meals and organization and planning of these events. Bravo Zulu.

There is something I wanted to touch on really quick that have popped up on the radar the last few months, just as a reminder or educational moment. And, yes it is boring.....We are starting to see a handful of Posts that are running into trouble with their financials and their club managers. The department has seen issues ranging from lost revenue to a complete loss of a home Post facility because of a lack of financial oversight.

While it is important that Post's with clubs in them have good financial practices and relationships with their Club managers, these same financial practices apply to all Posts, simply because we handle money. The belief that nothing could ever happen because the person handling the funds is just a swell guy or gal is a recipe for disaster. Everyone makes mistakes, unintended or otherwise, oversight and verification must be part of the day-to-day financial routine.

Preserving charitable assets is one of the most important responsibilities of nonprofit board service. Many organizations operating in Montana experience asset losses related to thefts, embezzlements, or other diversions of assets and these trends are mirrored in charities throughout the country. The Department has found that most situations leading to charitable asset diversion are directly related to an organization's maintenance of reasonable financial records and implementation of meaningful financial controls.

Most financial losses could be easily avoided or quickly identified if organizations implemented basic financial controls, such as regular independent review of bank statements or following a proper expenditure review process. Financial controls are often referred to as internal controls. The following is a list of minimum internal controls that should be in place in any non-profit organization, regardless of size. Additional internal controls should be considered and adapted to the circumstances and operations of the nonprofit.

1. Separate financial duties. Effective internal controls limit any single individual from having control over two or more phases of a financial transaction or operation. Generally, duties should be segregated into four categories: individuals with access to assets; individuals with access to accounting systems and accounting re-

cords; individuals in management or control positions; and individuals



als exercising independent oversight, such as board directors. For example, an individual that receives cash and issues a receipt for it (access to assets) should also not record the cash deposit in the receipts journal (accounting duties).

An individual that makes accounting entries (accounting duties) should not be the same person that has check signing authority (management duties). The bank statement and cancelled checks should be received and reviewed by someone that is independent of all the steps in the above process (independent oversight). In this manner, no single individual has too much control and there is oversight for each step in the process. A similar system can be used for the expense cycle as well. Even if an organization has no staff, it can still ensure that there is adequate separation by assigning duties to board directors or volunteers.

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How do I contact my State Senator and Representative?

See below links to communicate with your Legislators

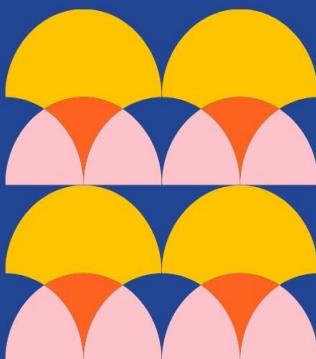
•Participate Montana Legislature Site – [Participate – Montana Legislature](#)
You will need to establish an account in "Participate" to email your legislator

•Who Is My Legislator? – [Districts – Montana Legislature](#)

Click magnifying glass in upper right corner of map, then enter address

•Or, leave a message: 406.444.4800

Roger A. Hagan (Legislative Committee Chairman, MT Department of the American Legion)
117 Gerber Road, Great Falls, MT 59405, Cell (406) 459-0773



Join Us in Tampa Bay for the 106th National Convention

The American Legion's 106th National Convention will take place from August 22–28, 2025, in sunny Tampa, Florida. This annual event is an incredible opportunity for members to engage in the business of The American Legion, connect with fellow Legionnaires from across the country, and celebrate our shared mission of service to veterans, their families, and our communities.

Montana delegates will stay at the Hyatt Place Downtown Tampa, located at 325 N. Florida Ave., just 13 blocks from the Tampa Convention Center. Shuttle services will be available between the hotel and the convention venue for your convenience. Delegates are required to stay at the designated convention hotel. Room rates start at \$131 per night for double occupancy, with additional charges for triple and quad occupancies. Please note that valet parking is \$29 per day, with no self-parking options available.

Members interested in attending must request registration forms from Department Headquarters by emailing amlegmtsec@gmail.com. Completed forms must be submitted at the Department Convention in Helena, scheduled for June 20–22, 2025. All convention registrations are due prior to the Department Convention, with deposits required by July 1.

If you plan to attend the prestigious National Commander's Banquet, make sure to submit your \$70 payment by March 20, 2025. This non-refundable payment ensures your seat at one of the convention's highlight events. Banquet tickets are only non-refundable, so we encourage early reservations to secure your attendance. Details about the entertainment for the banquet will be announced soon. The National Convention promises to be an exciting and memorable experience for all attendees. Don't miss this opportunity to represent Montana and contribute to the important work of The American Legion.

For more information, contact Department Headquarters or visit the American Legion's National Convention website.

Montana Boys & Girls State: Shaping Future Leaders

June 8–14, 2025 | Carroll College, Helena, MT

The American Legion's Boys State and the American Legion Auxiliary's Girls State programs are among the most prestigious civic education experiences available to high school juniors. This year, from June 8–14, 2025, at Carroll College, selected students will take part in a hands-on, immersive study of government by forming and operating their own mock state governments.

Why Boys & Girls State Matters

In today's world, civic engagement is more important than ever. These programs help students:

- Understand how government works through practical experience.
- Develop leadership, critical thinking, and teamwork skills.
- Gain confidence in public speaking and decision-making.
- Network with peers and leaders across the state.

How to Get Involved

Students: If you are a high school junior interested in government, leadership, or making a difference in your community, talk to your school counselor or local American Legion Post to apply.

Schools and Communities: Help identify and encourage students to apply. Teachers, counselors, and community leaders can play a key role in ensuring young people take advantage of this opportunity.

Support the Program: Consider making a donation to sponsor a student's participation. Your support ensures that financial barriers do not prevent a future leader from attending.

Montana Boys & Girls State is a life-changing experience that shapes responsible, engaged citizens. Let's work together to support and strengthen the future of our democracy.

For more information, visit mtlegion.org or contact your local American Legion Post.



Vice Commander

Kim Kay

Greetings Everyone! I hope you're all doing well. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all your hard work and effort on working towards our 100% goal. Numerous posts have made that goal, with several closely behind them. Our April 9th membership roster shows department as a whole at 87.50% of our goal, so 100% is well within our reach. Again, thank you.

The Vice-CDR challenge I have put out is happily costing me money... lol. The first Post in each District that gets to 100% will get \$100. We already have quite a few winners in that regard, so I'm going to shout them out along with a lot of thanks for your diligence and dedication to making goal. District 1 Bainville, District 2 Rocky Boy, District 3 Conrad, District 4 Lakeside, District 5 Drummond, District 6 Townsend, District 8 Cascade, District 9 Winifred, and District 11 Park City, and currently District 2. We currently have 23 posts that have made goal. All the posts in the department have been working in getting membership in and I appreciate your efforts.!

With the help of the Candidates for Vice -CDR, Linda Cousineau, Irene Dickerson, and Andy Rice, we emailed 99 pages worth of members that have expired, meaning they have not renewed their membership for the year 2025. That was a lot of time and effort and I thank each one for their help. Just a reminder that, even though the membership of Department falls on the Vice-CDR, everyone in the Legion is responsible for membership. It takes us, as a family, to make goal and everyone's help is appreciated!

We found out by doing the emails that there are some emails no longer valid as well as the phone numbers. When you do your next round of Buddy Checks or at your next meeting, try to get a current email address and phone number of your members.

With a valid email it would be easier and cost effective to email your post or district newsletter to your members. For those that do not have a valid email address or phone number, try to do an in-person Buddy Check and get the information during your visit. We can't help our veterans if we can't reach them.

I want to inspire everyone in our great organization to work on our programs and grow your post programs. Your inspiration will catch fire to others who believe in the same goals and together as a family we can achieve many great things. Again, thank you everyone for all you do in the American Legion, your dedication and enthusiasm is greatly appreciated!

Chaplain's Corner

April Reflections: A Season of Renewal and Hope

As we move into the heart of spring, April brings with it the promise of renewal. Across Montana, the snow begins to melt, rivers rise, and signs of new life begin to emerge. It's a season that reminds us not only of nature's rebirth but also of the spiritual renewal that many of us reflect on during the Easter season.

Easter, celebrated by many in the Christian faith, is a time of hope, redemption, and the triumph of life over death. It reminds us that no matter how long or harsh the winter has been—whether in the weather or within our own lives—there is always the opportunity for new beginnings.

For chaplains across the Legion family, this is an important time to offer comfort and encouragement. Our fellow Legionnaires may be facing loss, loneliness, or transitions in life. Others may be welcoming change, growth, or unexpected joy. No matter where someone stands this April, we as chaplains are called to be present—to listen, support, and remind them that they are not alone.

Let us also remember and honor the sacrifices of our comrades, both past and present. Just as Easter speaks of the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of love and freedom, so too do we reflect on those who gave all so that we may live in peace and liberty.

As you gather this month—whether in fellowship, remembrance, or quiet reflection—may the spirit of the season fill your heart with renewed purpose. May we all carry forward a message of hope, compassion, and strength as we continue to serve our communities, our Legion family, and one another.

Wishing you peace and blessings this April, and a joyful Easter to all who celebrate.



WORKING FOR ALL LEGIONNAIRES

Hello, fellow Legionnaires! My name is Irene Dickerson, and I am running for Vice Commander of the American Legion Department of Montana. I'm a retired Army officer with 30 years of active duty and Reserve service, including deployments to Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan, retiring in 2013. I've been a Legion member since 2014, serving as Adjutant for Post 524 in Texas and currently as District 10 Commander in Southeast Montana. I also serve as the Dean of Montana American Legion College and the Department's Woman Veterans Coordinator.

I am committed to growing the American Legion College, increasing female veteran involvement, and expanding Montana's membership through training, outreach, and community engagement. My leadership philosophy is rooted in teamwork, open-mindedness, and problem-solving, with a focus on ensuring The American Legion remains impactful and relevant.

I look forward to working with you to strengthen our mission.



Lowell Long, Alternate NEC



He has served in the following leadership positions in the American Legion and SAL. Post 48 Commander and Adjutant, District 2 Commander and Adjutant, North Central Zone Commander, Department Vice Commander, Department Commander, Squadron 48 Adjutant, North Central Zone Commander, Detachment Commander, and SAL Alternate NEC.

He has served on many Department and National Committees including Boys State Committee, Oratorical Scholarship Committee, the Centennial Committee, the Conventional Armed Forces Committee at National and the Membership Training and Development Committee for the Sons of the American Legion at National.

I look forward to continuing to serve the Department of Montana and represent our Department at the National Level. Please Vote for Lowell Long for Alternate NEC at our Department Convention this June in Helena.

Greetings fellow Legionnaires! Many of you know me, but for those that do not my name is Andrew Rice and I am currently serving as the North Central Zone Commander. During the fall conference I officially announced my campaign to run for Department Vice Commander. First, I will start with a little history about me. I am 39 years old and served a total of 8 years in the US Army and Army National Guard. During that span I deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom 5-7. Early into my military career, my father, Hal Rice, was insistent that I join the American Legion and I have now been a member of this great organization for 21 years. Over the course of my time in the American Legion I have served and am currently serving as the Post 102 commander in Geraldine. I have also been the district 8 commander before moving into the zone commander position for my respective area. Each position I have held has been greatly enjoyable and a fulfilling experience and I have also been at the forefront of our push to be more visible in the public and helping the department to implement some of the ideas that have been put forth. Other positions I currently have are the Squadron 102 commander in Geraldine and I am also serving as the Detachment Commander for the SAL.

Now a bit about my reasoning to want to run for the Department Vice Commander position. Many talks have been had about wanting to infuse some youth into the organization and I find myself in a unique position that I can relate to our existing membership in many ways but also understand the mentality of the younger veterans across the state and some of the things they are looking for. During my time manning booths at the fairs and talking to veterans in public I have been able to recruit and have meaningful talks with many of the veterans from Malmstrom Air Force Base and other communities. Much of this falls into my vision for the American Legion and it falls into just three words: Unity, Family and Mission. Unity in that we work together to reach our goals. Family that we work together across the board. The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, and the Legion Riders are the family and as a family we are so much stronger together. As we know, family does not always agree with each other but we can always work out our differences to focus on the third word; mission. The mission is always to be there for our veterans. Whether they are a member or not, we are there for our veterans. For me this is an amazing organization to belong to and I end this with my solemn promise to give this organization and our members and veterans my absolute full effort and attention to keep it as strong and amazing as possible.



PDC Richard A. Klose Sr. for NEC

Fellow Legionnaires,

I am honored to announce my candidacy for National Executive Committeeman (NEC) to represent Montana at the National NEC meetings.

As a proud resident of Laurel in south-central Montana, I am centrally located and well-positioned to travel throughout the state, assisting the Department wherever and whenever needed.

With my experience as a member of the National Membership and Post Activities (M&PA) Committee, I have gained valuable insight into the workings and responsibilities at the National level. This experience has prepared me to effectively advocate for Montana's interests and contribute to the success of our Legion programs.

I humbly ask for your support and your vote at our 2025 Department Convention. Together, we can strengthen our mission and ensure Montana's voice is heard.

RICHARD A KLOSE SR. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Vote For Me

Department Commander

KIM KAY C MCCARTY MARTIN



Now that you know my American Legion and Legion Family history, let's talk about what I did and do outside of the American Legion Family. In other words, my **community involvement, leadership opportunities and diversity**.

For 15 years, I have been volunteering as a member of the **Lewis and Clark Honor Guard** for Veterans funeral honors.

My **Rotary** 14 years have been spent as President, Vice President, Executive Board, and Sgt at Arms. I went to **India** to administer Polio vaccines with other US Rotarians and truly enjoyed it.

Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Association interested me enough to become a Director from MT District 5390 and a member of the Environmental and Conservation Team.

As Vice President of **Toastmasters Helena**, I filled in for the President when she was no longer able to make the meetings.

In Tampa Florida, I **taught First Aid / CPR** for the American Red Cross, **was an Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic**. Here in Montana, I worked as a **Capitol security guard, Shodair Hospital Child Care Worker** and long-term care facility **Licensed Practical Nurse**, which involved standard long-term care and then **nurse in charge of a 20-bed Alzheimer's Unit**. After six years the Unit was changed over to a medical rehabilitation unit for after-surgical care. I worked with 3-4 physical therapists and then transferred as a nurse to a long-term care/emergency hospital closer to home. My shift included six hours as the **only nurse for the Broadwater County jail** and then six hours back at the facility.

I will bring this leadership experience, diversity and commitment to the Vice Commander position in support of our entire Legion Family.

**AMERICAN
LEGION**

VOTE

Linda Cousineau

Department Vice Commander

"Life is forever changing"

I'm 110% ready for our next change



15 year member

Jeff Nelson

I am running for the position of Alternate NEC and would like your support. My background includes 2 years as Montana Dept. Commander, serving through the covid years, Named Commander of the year by National as the highest ranking Commander for surpassing goal in membership 2019, Being Montana SAL Commander the following year, Having attended 14 National conventions and meeting many delegates from all areas of the United States and served on numerous committees with them.

I feel it is a time for trust and transparency from our leaders and am asking your support in seeking this position.



Raymond Read, Department Historian

I am announcing my candidacy for re-election as the Department Historian for the year 2025-2026, This would be my 22nd year in that elected position. Previous position I have held. Past Commander of American Legion Post 2, Department Shooting Sports Chair, Department Homeless Veterans chair, 100 Anniversary Committee Chair and Department Adjutant 2001-2003. I have been a continuous member of the American Legion since 1983.



“Inspire, Train, Learn”

VOTE

Glen Sharbono

**National Executive Committee
2025-2027**

- **Post Adjutant 2014-2025**
- **Post Vice Commander 2015-2017**
- **Post Commander 2018-2021/2022-2025**
- **American Legion Family Ribbon**
- **Post Excellence Award**
- **Post and District Oratory Chairman**
- **District Vice Commander/Adjutant**
- **Merv Gunderson Award**
- **District Commander**
- **2017 Graduate American Legion Basic Training**
- **2017 Graduate of Montana Legion College**
- **2017 Graduate of The National American Legion College**
- **Dean of The Montana Legion College**
- **Department Vice Commander**
- **Department Commander**



Glen Sharbono



Alternate NEC Member currently serving since 2023 and trained to be your next National Executive Committee Member!



National Western Vice President Visits Montana, Tours Helena and Townsend, and Judges Oratory Contest

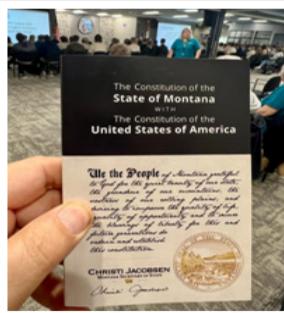
Montana recently welcomed the American Legion Auxiliary National Western Division Vice President during her visit to the state. During her time in Montana, she toured the Helena and Townsend areas, meeting with local Auxiliary members and gaining insight into the impact of their programs. A highlight of her visit was serving as a judge for the Montana Oratory Contest, held on March 29th in East Helena. The contest, an annual tradition, showcases the public speaking skills of young participants as they present speeches on constitutional principles and American values.

Her presence at the event underscored the Auxiliary's commitment to fostering youth leadership and civic engagement. Local members appreciated the opportunity to share Montana's dedication to the American Legion Auxiliary's mission and showcase the hard work of students competing in the oratory contest.

The visit strengthened connections between the national and local levels of the Auxiliary, inspiring Montana members to continue their service to veterans, military families, and communities.

Sunday, she attended the District 6 meeting in Anaconda where she was a featured speaker. Deb's theme for her year is "The Measure of Service" and she gave our measuring tapes. Northwest Vice Presidents have 7 states to visit and bring greetings from American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters. The states are Montana, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming. Deb and her husband, who traveled with her, resides in Nebraska enjoyed the sights of Montana by renting a car and driving to Missouri Headwaters Park and other sights. They also toured the Capitol and Last Chance Gulch.





Boys & Girls State 2025!



Dates: June 8-14, 2025
 Location: Carroll College in Helena, MT
 Apply Online:
<http://mtlegion.org/americanlegionboysstate.html>



Points of Contact

Duane Cunningham, 406-465-1451, deptmtadjutant@gmail.com
 Kathy Long, 24bluejay@gmail.com



Brooklyn 14.0 Pro Tandem Pedal Kayak (PK14) Gray Camo Valued at \$3695.00

2-BKC KP224 86" Kayak Paddles 2 Piece Heavy Duty Light Weight Paddle with Anti-Slip Grips \$100.00



2 -Upright Aluminum Kayak Seats \$299.98



Room for Two: The spacious 14-foot hull provides plenty of space for a pair of paddlers and has a stunning 670-pound total weight capacity

Easy Cruising: Can support a built-in trolling motor making cruising effortless, while a hand-operated super wide rudder makes control precise and responsive with a better turning radius

Cargo Capacity: Not only can Brooklyn 14.0 Pro pedal Tandem Kayak take the weight, but it can store your stuff in a pair of sealed hatches or in a rear cargo recess – as well as a new storage area near the seats for any quick grabs, like lures, bait, etc.

Superior Stability: The 14-foot long, 34-inch wide hull creates a platform so stable you can stand for casting and that won't tip even in rough water

Easy Transport: Along with the side grips, the Pro yaks have new molded carry handles in front and rear of the kayak

2-BKC UH-PKDRIVE Kayak Pedal Drive Supports PK11, PK12, PK13 OR PK14 \$1195.00



HARLOWTON HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR WINS MONTANA AMERICAN LEGION ORATORICAL CONTEST

East Helena, MT – March 29, 2025

The 86th Annual American Legion High School Oratorical Competition, sponsored by the American Legion of Montana and its 118 Posts across the state, concluded in East Helena on Saturday, March 29. Carmen Katzenberger of Harlowton emerged as the champion, surpassing four other talented contestants.

Carmen won the local competition sponsored by Harlowton Post #15 before advancing through the District contest to secure a place in the state finals. Gabriel Stordahl of Bozeman claimed second place, while Kaylee Hampton of Kalispell finished third, Madison Clement of Helena took fourth, and Claire Van of Corvallis placed fifth.

As the Montana state champion, Carmen receives a \$5,000 scholarship from the American Legion of Montana and will advance to compete at the National Oratorical Contest in Hillsdale, Michigan, on May 17-18. The second-place winner, Gabriel Stordahl, earns a \$1,500 scholarship, while third and fourth-place finishers, Kaylee Hampton and Madison Clement, each receive \$500 scholarships.

The American Legion established the Oratorical Contest in 1939 as part of its comprehensive Americanism Program. The competition is designed to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the United States Constitution among high school students.

Contestants deliver a prepared oration on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, emphasizing the responsibilities and duties of American citizenship. Each speech must be an original composition and range between 8 to 10 minutes in length.

In addition to the monetary awards from the American Legion of Montana, program fee waiver scholarships are available through various institutions within the Montana University System, as well as Carroll College. Interested students can obtain more information from their high school guidance counselors or the American Legion.



Department Adjutant

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2. Reconcile and examine bank statements monthly. The Post's bank statements should be reconciled on a monthly basis by someone who does not issue or sign checks on behalf of the organization. In addition, copies of checks, ACH, and other information relating to deposits and withdrawals should be maintained along with the monthly statement. Checks and other expenditures should be examined to verify that the payments are consistent with the organization's activities and that the expenditures were appropriate. Similarly, deposit activity should also be reviewed to ensure that it corresponds to expected revenues. For example, if the organization held a fundraising event that generated cash, the reviewer should ensure that there are cash deposits matching the amounts received at the event. If the organization banks online, it should still be sure it is regularly downloading or printing and storing its bank statements, deposit slips, check images, and similar documents. Banks routinely charge fees to access older records.

3. Adopt cash handling procedures. Ideally a cash register or multiple-copy receipt book should be used in the collection of cash. With respect to fundraising events or other situations in which the organization receives cash, it should arrange for two people to accept, record, and monitor the collection and a third person to arrange for its deposit. Cash transactions should be recorded into a journal or log to enable account reconciliation. It is important that any cash revenues be deposited to the organization's bank account as soon as possible, and that management verify that the amount deposited matches the amount collected.

4. Document income from sources other than cash. Revenue from sources other than cash (i.e. credit cards,

checks, etc.), should also be entered into a journal or log, at the very minimum. Checks should be restrictively endorsed (for example: "for deposit only, ABC organization, First National Bank, account # 123456789) immediately upon receipt. Checks and deposit slips should be copied before they are deposited. Organizations that receive non-cash donations should also adopt controls similar to those for cash donations to ensure that such donations are properly received, recorded, and accounted for.

5. Control the use of credit and debit cards. Credit and debit cards are convenient, but each authorized user increases the possibility that the cards will be used for improper purchases. If the organization uses credit or debit cards, it should limit the number of users and set policies regarding their use. Credit card statements, bank statements, and supporting documentation should be reviewed monthly by someone who is not on the list of authorized card users. The reviewer should confirm that each charge is supported by a receipt and documentation of the business purpose of the expense. Some financial institutions allow organizations to set and adjust strict limits on usage of electronic payment methods and to send automated notifications to reviewers in the event of any attempted or actual misuse. Such services are particularly valuable to smaller organizations who rely on volunteers or smaller professional staffs.

6. Control the disbursement process. All disbursements, whether made by check, positive pay, or an e-pay system, should be approved by someone other than the person who physically makes the payment. The approver should confirm that the payment is supported by an appropriate check request, invoice and/or purchase order, that the same invoice is not paid more than once, and that the stated amount of goods or services were tru-

ly received by the organization. The organization's list of vendors should be reviewed for reasonableness, duplication, and "ghost vendors" on a regular basis.

Cash expenditures should be avoided to the extent possible. Consistent with the proper segregation of duties, a single person should not be responsible for the collection, deposit, and reconciliation of cash receipts or other sources of income. If it is necessary to make payments in cash, those payments should be fully documented through advance approval, signed receipts by persons receiving cash, and expense vouchers or other documentation that the cash was used appropriately.

7. Control expense reimbursements. Organizations should require all reimbursable expenses to be preauthorized. Preauthorized expenses should only be reimbursed if original receipts and other supporting documentation are submitted with the reimbursement requests. Reimbursement payments should only be necessary when organizational funds cannot be used to pay for the expense in the first instance. Under no circumstances should anyone ever write their own reimbursement check. Check stubs or copies of reimbursement checks should be retained along with authorization forms, reimbursement requests, and receipts. If an organization fails to maintain adequate documentation to demonstrate that the reimbursement was for legitimate organizational expenses, the reimbursement could potentially be treated as a form of prohibited inurement or taxable income to the recipient.

8. Use time sheets and proper payroll controls. Nonprofits are generally required to report expenses on a functional basis, and payroll is often a nonprofit's largest expense. Organizations should require all employees to use a timekeeping system which

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Department Adjutant

continued

allows time worked to be recorded by functional area and which provides a mechanism for supervisory approval. Before paychecks are issued, a person in a position of control should ensure that timesheets have been properly approved, payroll allocations are reasonable, and that no duplicate checks or “ghost employees” are included in payroll. If the payroll reviewer is also an employee, a member of the board should in turn review the reviewer’s pay for accuracy.

9. Utilize budgets. Every organization should develop an annual budget process in which it estimates incoming revenue and outgoing expenses for the year. The budget should be tracked and actual results compared to budgeted projections. Unexplained variations from projections can be an early warning signs of potential problems. For example, a drop in cash income could be a sign of skimming. Budgets help organizations identify goals and potential problem areas so that they can build on those successes or take corrective action to resolve problems. For example, if an organization has an annual fundraising event, a budget provides a revenue target for that event and also enables the organization to set planned expenditures.

Investing in Tomorrow: Celebrating Children & Youth Month with the American Legion

Every child deserves a chance—a chance to be seen, to be heard, and to be supported. At The American Legion, that belief stands at the heart of one of our Four Pillars: Children & Youth. Each April, we shine a special light on this pillar by observing Children & Youth Month, a time to recommit ourselves to the youngest members of our communities and to the values that secure their future. The Children & Youth pillar is more than programs and scholarships—it’s a promise. A promise to protect, nurture, and empower the next generation. Whether it’s providing financial aid to a veteran’s family during a time of crisis, sponsoring a youth baseball team, or guiding a young speaker through a life-changing oratorical contest, The American Legion stands proudly

behind the mission of shaping strong, capable leaders for tomorrow.

In the Department of Montana, this mission comes to life through a variety of enriching programs:

- Montana American Legion Boys and Auxiliary Girls State, where high school juniors immerse themselves in the democratic process, learning the weight of civic duty and the power of informed leadership.
- Junior Shooting Sports, promoting marksmanship, discipline, and safety—qualities that build confidence and character in young athletes.
- The Oratorical Contest, which challenges students to explore and articulate the principles of the U.S. Constitution, developing their voices as informed citizens.
- The Americanism and Government Survey and Essay Contest, where students sharpen their understanding of American ideals while earning scholarships for their efforts.

10. Get it in writing. Remember to document all internal control procedures in writing or in a protected digital format. For example: if you review and approve the payroll report, you should immediately sign and date the report; or if you review and approve the online monthly bank statement, you should immediately send an email to the Treasurer to that effect. If you perform an internal control procedure but fail to document that fact, the organization cannot prove that its internal controls are being implemented.

11. Adopt a conflict-of-interest policy. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual’s personal interests – family, friendships, financial, or social factors – could compromise his or her judgment, decisions, or actions in the workplace. Organizations should have a written policy that clearly states how conflicts should be disclosed, how a majority of disinterested board members make decisions, and how a conflicted board member would be excluded from any situation that might prevent them from being impartial or from appearing to be impartial. Written record of how and when this policy is implemented should be recorded in board minutes.

Please take a look at how your Post is doing business and implement good financial practices if yours are missing or need an update. Thank you for all you do.

- American Legion Baseball, a century-strong tradition that teaches sportsmanship, teamwork, and resilience.

- The Children & Youth Scholarship, offering vital support to the children of veterans—because when we stand by our families, we strengthen our nation.

These are not just programs—they are lifelines, launching pads, and safe harbors. They are evidence of what can happen when a community chooses to invest in its youth.

This April, we invite you to join us. Support a scholarship, attend a contest, coach a team, or simply speak encouragement into the life of a child. The impact you make today might just shape a future leader, a compassionate neighbor, or a resilient dreamer.

Because when we lift up our youth, we don’t just honor a pillar—we build a stronger, more hopeful tomorrow for all.



40 & 8



2025 National Box Car Fundraiser

Grande Du Montana has again been limited in the number of 2025 National Box Car Pins provided by The National Box Car program. To qualify to apply for the annual maintenance fund our Grande must raise a minimum of \$150 dollars in pin sales and other donations. This year the fundraiser will include the limited pin sales (100), the National Crew Card (100) and the Second Chance Cards (50).

Buy a 2026 National Box Car Association Pin pictured below. Price is \$5.00. The Grand will retain \$2.00 for support of the Box Car and its programs. SO, Buy a 2025 Crew Card for \$5.00 and become eligible for a cash drawings totaling \$225, with \$100 for first draw; \$75 for 2nd draw and \$50 for third draw. Only 100 cards are available. Announcement! This year we are again conducting a Second Chance Drawing which will generate cash prizes of \$75 for First Draw; \$50 for Second Draw and \$25 for Third Draw. Only 50 cards are Available. After Pin and cards sales are complete funds generated necessary funds will be returned to Nationale to pay for the Pins and cards and the remainder will be placed in support of the Maintenance and upgrade of the Montana MERCI CAR located at the Montana Military Museum at Fort Harrison. Montana's Car marked its 75th Anniversary in October 2024.

Buy and proudly wear the 2025 National Box Car Association Pin and associated cards with proceeds going to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Montana MERCI CAR

Drawing will occur at the 40 & 8 Social in Helena, Montana during the 2025 American Legion/40 & 8 Convention.

Also, Grand du Montana is selling pins for the 40 & 8 for the Child Welfare program. The prices for the pins is \$5.00 and the proceeds will go to this program. We only have an allocation of 80 pins for 2025. Proceeds go to support our on-going Nurses Training Scholarship. This has averaged \$500 per year since inception. 1955-2025 68 years x \$500 = \$35,000. Only 80 pins available.

\$25.00 for all five items! For great causes!!

Members of 40 & 8 have pins and cards. Please contact: Larry Steele, Linda Cousineau, Eddy White, Jed Damson, Lowell Long, Dick Ellwein, Kim Kay McCarty Martin, Don Jones, or me for details. Thank you!

Ray Read 406-458-9847 or 406-235-0290 or e-mail myfun51@msn.com Stay Safe! Also approach any of the Grand Officers or the voiture Cheminots.



**Order Form American Legion Department of
Montana
Glassware Sets**

Support the American Legion by purchasing a set of custom glasses featuring our Family Logos!

Product Details:

- **Beer Pint Glass Set (4 glasses) - \$40**
- **Whiskey Glass Set (4 glasses) - \$40**

Each set features the official American Legion Family Logos, making them perfect for gifts or personal use!

Customer Information:

- Name: _____
- Address: _____
- Phone: _____
- Email: _____

Order Details:

Item	Quantity	Price per Set	Total Price
Beer Pint Glass Set	_____	\$40	_____
Whiskey Glass Set	_____	\$40	_____

Subtotal: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Payment Method:

Check (Payable to *American Legion of Montana*)

Credit/Debit add 4% processing fee

Visa
MasterCard
Discover
Amex

Account #	
-----------	--

Expires:
____ / ____ / ____

CVV#	
------	--



CALL TO CONVENTION

GREETINGS

The 106TH Annual Convention of The American Legion, Department of Montana is hereby called to meet and assemble at Helena, Montana June 20, 21, 22 2025 to transact and consider such matters as are included in this call and any other business which may properly come before it.

PURPOSE

The Convention is called for the purpose of electing officers to the ensuing year, electing delegates to the National Convention, amending the Department Constitution, presentation of annual reports, and the transactions of such other business as may be brought before it in conformity with the provisions of the National and Department Constitution.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION

Representation in the Convention will be by Posts. Each Post in good standing shall be entitled to two delegates and two alternates and in addition shall be entitled to one delegate and one alternate for each one hundred members, or major fraction thereof, whose dues have been received by the Department thirty days prior to the date of the Convention, or May 29, 2024. A Post, to be in good standing must have a minimum of ten paid members and no indebtedness to the Department.

CREDENTIALS

Posts shall submit to Department Headquarters in Helena prior to June 15, the names of delegates and alternates. Cards for voting delegates will be in the Convention office. Each Post delegation should select a Chairman prior to departure of delegates for the Convention.

DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A regular meeting of the committee will be held on Thursday, June 19, 2025 at 3:15 P.M. The first stated meeting of the Department Executive Committee following the Department Convention will be held immediately upon adjournment of the Convention. The term of office of the newly elected members will commence immediately with the adjournment of the Convention.



**GOOD FOR
1 BEER**
The Kicks!

Raise a Glass to the American Legion Pilsner – Order Yours Today!

Looking for a smooth, refreshing brew that also supports a great cause? The American Legion Pilsner is here! Whether you're stocking up for your own enjoyment or bringing it to your bar, this crisp and satisfying beer is the perfect way to show your support for The American Legion.

For Individuals – Order by the Case!

Why grab just a six-pack when you can get a whole case of this premium pilsner? Ordering is easy—just fill out the official form, submit it, and get ready to enjoy a brew that stands for service and community. All case orders will be ready for pick up at the Department Convention in Helena!

For Legion Bars & Local Businesses – Get It on Tap!

Want to serve Legion Pilsner at your Post's bar or local establishment? We're making it happen! Simply send your Point of Contact (POC) details to amlegmtsec@gmail.com, and we'll work with our distributor to get this all-American brew flowing from your taps.

Don't wait—place your order today and raise a glass to camaraderie, service, and a great beer! 



INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

All Department Officers and District Commanders will be sworn into office at the conclusion of the session on Sunday morning, June 22, 2025 and will automatically become members of the Department Executive Committees.

Any inquiries for information with reference to the Convention will be answered from Department Headquarters.

DISTRICT STANDINGS

DISTRICT 2	100.81%	JED DAMSON
DISTRICT 11	91.47%	RICHARD KLOSE
DISTRICT 3	90.97%	KEITH STARK
DISTRICT 5	89.91%	ALEX VOGEL
DISTRICT 4	89.55%	ROBERT LEHMAN
DISTRICT 9	89.14%	DEAN MARTIN
DISTRICT 10	86.76%	IRENE DICKERSON
DISTRICT 7	86.12%	DON CARLSON
DISTRICT 6	85.96%	DAVE HAULMAN
DISTRICT 1	82.12%	JERRY DAVENPORT
DISTRICT 8	80.27%	MICHAEL ALLISON

BEST % BY DISTRICT

Post 85	Bainville	100.97%
Post 11	Havre	116.83%
Post 69	Galata	105.26%
Post 426	Lakeside	150.94%
Post 125	Drummond	100.00%
Post 31	Twin Bridges	104.65%
Post 19	Big Timber	95.38%
Post 133	Cascade	104.76%
Post 18	Roundup	113.04%
Post 114	Fairview	100.00%
Post 100	Park City	105.08%

Service Officer

Eric Beal

Veterans Benefits Administration VA announced that it has updated its process for awarding G.I. Bill benefits. This means that many Veterans who served multiple periods of military service (for example, Veterans who reenlisted) may be eligible for additional benefits for themselves or their beneficiaries.

Specifically, under the previous policy, eligible Veterans who served at least two periods of service were forced to choose between the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post-9/11 GI Bill for a maximum of 36 months of G.I. Bill benefits. Under the updated policy, Veterans will no longer have to make that choice when they apply for benefits, meaning that they can qualify for up to 48 months of G.I. Bill benefits. Many Veterans are also now eligible for additional, retroactive benefits. Specifically, Veterans who served at least two periods of service—one that qualified them for the Montgomery G.I. Bill and a second that qualified them for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill—may be eligible to receive up to 12 months of additional G.I. Bill benefits (bringing them to a total of 48 months). These Veterans may be eligible to receive 12 months of additional, retroactive G.I. Bill benefits (bringing them to a total of 48 months).



Big K Raffle Form

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Local (circle one) Post/Unit/Squadron #: _____

Please send this completed form and your check for \$25.00, made payable to:

The American Legion of Montana

PO Box 155

Fort Harrison, MT 59636

Thank you for supporting The Big K raffle!



AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS

Reflections on a Powerful Weekend at the Annual

ALR Meeting

Brian Carpenter

As your Director, it's an honor to share my reflections on what was an incredibly productive and energizing weekend at the Annual American Legion Riders Department of Montana Meeting. Riders from across our great state came together not only to take care of business, but to strengthen the bonds that make this family so unique.

First, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to Jeff McMillan and Chapter 2 for stepping up and hosting this year's gathering. Your attention to detail, hospitality, and dedication ensured that everyone felt welcome, and that the meeting ran smoothly. From the setup to the fellowship, you went above and beyond — and it did not go unnoticed. Job well done.

A special shout-out goes to Les and Josh for organizing the friendly games of poker Friday night. It was a great way to unwind, laugh, and build camaraderie among Riders — thank you both for adding that extra dose of fun to the weekend.

The weekend was filled with forward momentum, and I'm proud to say we're heading into 2025 with renewed focus and purpose. We covered a lot of ground during Friday's meeting: chapter updates, event planning, and discussions about improving communication and representation across Montana. What stood out most was the collective spirit in the room — a clear reminder of why we ride, who we serve, and the legacy we're building together.

A major highlight of the weekend was the 1st Annual ALR College. This initiative is something I've been excited to see come to life, and the feedback from those who attended was overwhelmingly positive. The College provided a space for learning, collaboration, and leadership development — equipping both new and seasoned Riders with tools to lead more confidently and operate more efficiently within their chapters. This is just the beginning, and I'm looking forward to seeing this grow year after year. A sincere thank-you goes to Ken "Lucky" Nadeau, National Road Captain, for taking the time to come and lead the instruction. His insight, experience, and genuine care for the Riders was evident, and his presence brought tremendous value to our very first session.

I left this meeting more confident than ever in our mission. We are more than a group of riders — we are ambassadors of the American Legion Family, and we show up with purpose wherever we go. Whether it's honoring veterans at funerals, supporting local causes, or raising awareness with every mile we ride, we do it with pride, respect, and heart.

To all who attended, thank you for your commitment, your ideas, and your passion. Let's carry the energy from this weekend into the riding season ahead and continue to lead from the front.

Ride safe. Ride proud. Ride for those who can't.



Thank you for Boys/ Girls State Raffle

Kathy Long, Co-Chair for MT Boys and Girls State

With the last round of District meetings finished up, I wanted to announce the winners from the secondary raffle of donated items from our February Boys/ Girls State fundraising event. We had a few items come in after the fundraiser and the Boys/ Girls State committee directed a secondary raffle to be held throughout the Spring District meetings.

I would like to thank those who helped make the entire fundraising event and raffle a success. We raised a total of \$1,457.00 from the raffle, in addition to the \$8,507.00 raised at the banquet. The program costs in the neighborhood of \$60,000 a year, so every dollar helps!

The winners were Stephanie Pellican from Eureka District 4 (the afghan), Corine Simon from Plentywood, District 1 (hair spa) and Stacy Bear from Kevin, District 3 (set of mugs).

We are already collecting items for next year's event, or if you simply want to donate to the program, please reach out to me. Thank you again for supporting American Legion programs and Montana's future leaders!!

Its Election Season

With Department Convention right around the corner, which includes the election of Department Officers, has your Post started discussing how you would like your Delegates to vote at Convention? This year we have a handful of positions to fill (Commander, Vice Commander, NEC and Alternate NEC) with most of these contests being contested by multiple quality Legionnaires.

In May, your Post meeting should include a discussion on the candidates and the resolutions that have came out of the Spring District Meetings, and how your Post body wants to support, oppose or vote. Each Post has the opportunity to send at least two voting delegates to Convention. They act as the voice of the Post body. It is critical that these issues are determined prior to your delegates assembling at Convention, otherwise the Post body voice is unheard, and the decisions are then made by individuals who may or may not be in the majority.

Each Post will receive a packet in the mail prior to convention that contains the resolutions being brought forward, discuss them as a body and select your delegates. Those selected carry your voice to Convention. If your Post has not sent a delegate to convention in a while, volunteer to be the delegate. There are 118 Posts in Montana and normally we only get around 35 Posts to attend. That's not a good representation of our Department. Come to Convention and come prepared, have a voice. See you in Helena, June 19th-22nd.

Women Veterans Symposium

May 16-18

At Fort Harrison and the Doubletree Downtown

FRIDAY

0900 set up
0930 opening ceremonies
 Color guard tentatively Hardin post
 Apsaalooke female honor guard
 Chaplain Dorothy Goodwin
Opening remarks Irene Dickerson
 National Guard BG Doval (tentative)
1000-1300 vendors
1200-1300 lunch speaker Dallas Knight (tentative)
1300-1600 VA team speakers
Break to check in hotels
1830 ICE BREAKER Connie Schultz (tentative)

SATURDAY

0900 opening remarks to explain the day Irene Dickerson
Speaker Bre Rodriguez (tentative)
0930-1200 breakout
1200-1300 lunch Juliana Mercer (tentative)
1300-1500 Breakout
1800 (6pm) Dinner
1930 (7:30pm) Sip & Paint (painting to be auctioned off)
Close event

Breakouts:

APC-gym, massage, yoga
Quilt poker run no cost
Fly fishing event/class
tentative Kathie Frank
Empowering women class (~\$47.00)
Horse sense healing
Self defense (tentative)
ALR riders event (for riders only-poker run -\$10)

Register by May 5th at the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeAmc8xOf1oyQ-XTCXxvjQIZY6cLpPmeyvy-4oIfRfErzfHcw/viewform?usp=header>

Exciting Plans Underway for the 106th Department of Montana Convention in Helena

The Department of Montana is gearing up for an outstanding 106th Annual Convention, set to take place in Helena from June 19-22, 2024. This highly anticipated event promises a blend of meaningful discussions, camaraderie, and a shared commitment to The American Legion Family's mission.

Convention Highlights

Legionnaires will convene at the Helena Civic Center, while the American Legion Auxiliary will hold its meetings in the elegant ballroom of the DoubleTree Downtown. These venues provide an ideal setting for productive sessions and collaboration among members. Additionally, the Sons of the American Legion Detachment and the Department American Legion Riders will also be holding meetings during the convention week.

A significant highlight of the event is the joint banquet, featuring the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary as the distinguished guest and speaker. Her presence will add a special significance to the event, inspiring attendees with her leadership and dedication.

With a schedule packed with important discussions, networking opportunities, and moments to celebrate collective achievements, this convention is set to be both engaging and impactful. Stay tuned for further details, and mark your calendars for this memorable gathering in the heart of Montana!

Convention Golf Scramble – Saturday, June 21st at Bill Roberts Golf Course

As part of the convention festivities, attendees are invited to participate in the Convention Golf Scramble on Saturday, June 21st, at Bill Roberts Golf Course. This event encourages friendly competition and camaraderie among Legionnaires and guests.

Scramble Format and Rules

Teams will be randomly selected through a blind draw, ensuring that players have the opportunity to meet and play alongside members from different areas. The tournament will follow a scramble format, which is especially well-suited for golfers of all skill levels.

- Teams: Four-person teams selected at random.
- Tee Shots: Each player hits a tee shot, and the team selects the best shot.
- Ball Placement: The other players pick up their balls and place them within one club length of the selected shot (no closer to the hole).
- Play Progression: The team continues selecting the best shot and playing from that position until the hole is completed.
- Restrictions: Players cannot move the ball from rough to fairway or change its lie.
- Drive Requirement: At least one drive from each player must be used during the round.

Whether you're a seasoned golfer or a beginner, this scramble is the perfect way to unwind and connect with fellow Legionnaires. Join us for a great day on the course and make lasting connections while enjoying the beautiful Helena setting!

Essay Contest Results

High School Essay: 6 Submitted

1st	Iris Foster @ Corvallis HS	Corvallis Post #91
2nd	Thea Jackson @ Hamilton HS	Ravalli Post #97
3rd	Cody Bradford @ Stevensville HS	Fort Owen Post #94

Junior High School Essay : 7 Submitted

1st	Brooklyn Cary @ Home School	Ravalli Post #47
2nd	Mikki Norman @ Huntley Project JH	Andres Pearson Post #117
3rd	Paige Maddox @ Twin Bridges JH	Dan Brockman Post #31



Meagher Post 25 is selling this vehicle. It is a 2006 Ford E450 Super Duty Diesel. It is a 12 passenger van and clean. The wheel chair lift is not working but the vehicle is in good condition. If you are interested, please call Commander Cummins at (406) 855-7751.

AMERICAN LEGION OF MONTANA
106TH DEPARTMENT CONVENTION
HELENA, MONTANA
JUNE 19-22, 2025 REGISTRATION

NAME OF REGISTRANT(S):	CIRCLE ONE:		
	LEGION	ALA	SAL
	LEGION	ALA	SAL
ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	
EMAIL	CELL PHONE		

PLEASE NOTE ANY SPECIAL DIETARY RESTRICTIONS!

ACTIVITY	COST PER PERSON	TOTAL
REGISTRATION FEE	____ X \$35.00	
LEGION FAMILY NIGHT 6/19/25	____ X \$20.00	
PAST DEPT COMMANDER, INCOMING PRESIDENT & PAST PRESIDENT BREAKFAST 6/20/25	____ X \$25.00	
AMERICANISM LUNCH 6/20/25	____ X \$30.00	
LEGION FAMILY BBQ 6/20/25	____ X \$30.00	
MEMBERSHIP BREAKFAST 6/21/25	____ X \$20.00	
JOINT BANQUET 6/21/25	____ X \$45.00	

CONVENTION HOTEL

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HELENA DOWNTOWN

22 N LAST CHANCE GULCH, HELENA, MT 59601

TO BOOK ONLINE [click here](#)

406-443-2200

CONTACTS

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

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

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

COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORMS

MAIL PAYMENTS AND FORMS TO:

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

PO BOX 155

FORT HARRISON, MT 59636

2025 Convention Golf Scramble Registration Form

Event Details:

Date: June 21, 2025

Location: Bill Robert's Golf Course

Tee Times Begin: 1:00 p.m. (every 9 minutes)

Registration Deadline: June 1, 2025

Participant Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Play Options (Check One):

9 Holes with Cart - \$37.00 per person

Rental Clubs Needed? (Limited Availability)

Yes (\$20 for 9 holes)

No

Payment Method:

Check (Payable to American Legion of Montana)

Return this form by [Insert Deadline] to:

MAIL PAYMENTS AND FORMS TO:

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MONTANA

PO BOX 155

FORT HARRISON, MT 59636

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

Thank you for registering for the 2025 Convention Golf Scramble! We look forward to seeing you on the course!