

COMMANDER REPORT

James Carlisle

This has been a busy year for the Department of Montana. A year ago we began working on streamlining the manner in which the Department does business. The purpose of this committee was twofold: 1) to save money, 2) to more efficiently utilize our personnel. Through the use of emails, the committee has reviewed all of the suggestions of Department personnel and has finalized some proposals for the Department to consider at this Convention. The chairman of this committee, Elmer Palmer, has devoted the most time to this project.

In addition the chairman of the membership committee (Elmer Palmer) and I put together a membership plan spelling out the duties of multiple officers from the Department Commander to the local Post Commanders. A time line was also created for different periods of time initiating different duties to be accomplished by these individuals.

Instead of spending the holidays with my family in Hawaii, I worked on American Legion Baseball issues. There were several issues balled up into one problem that had to be sorted out. Some issues involved interpreting the rules as developed by the American Legion Baseball committee and checking to see if protocol had been followed. Several proposals seemed harmless, such as holding a meeting with the individuals involved. However I deemed it was a waste of time and resources because the Department Constitution places absolute authority in the three members of our Department Baseball Committee.

Beginning in March, I attended ten of the eleven spring conferences, traveling some five thousand miles. The Spring Conference in Shelby conflicted with a conference I had with multiple legal entities involving a guardianship in Missoula. By my records I spent twenty four days on the road living in motels. During this time frame, I also attended the American Legion Oratorical Contest.

Presently I'm involved with numerous Department officials working on American Legion Baseball issues involving the former coach of one our American Legion baseball teams. There are multiple issues involved, that I have previously reviewed and deemed to be correctly handled. Many of the issues could have been handled better if the coach and Post had initially followed the correct procedures as specified in the rule books.

Thanks to all of you for allowing me to be your Department Commander for the 2012-2013 membership year! Many of you have gone to great lengths to support the Department with your time, money, and efforts. It was my honor to work with you.

VICE COMMANDER

Dick Ellwein

I participated in the Missing in America Project at the Montana State Veterans Cemetery at Fort Harrison in July. I received the flag of SP3 Charles Spears, US Army. There were seven veterans laid to rest at the cemetery that day. The Missing in America Project mission is to locate any cremated remains of a veteran located at a Funeral Home and not claimed by any family members and provide them with a respectful burial.

I attended the National Membership conference in Indianapolis, Indiana on August 3rd and 4th. I learned how each Department received their membership goal for the new membership year.

I attended the National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana in August. Besides attending the business meetings I sat on the Naval Affairs committee, this is a subcommittee of National Security. I attended an event session named American Legion Subject Matter Experts Training. The training highlighted VA&R, Public Relations, Military Outreach, and Americanism. I believe this could be a program our Department could use to train new members and refresh long standing members who have been in the American Legion for awhile. I am a dual member so I attended the Sons of the American Legion convention which ran prior to the American Legion convention.

I attended all the Fall District meetings. National Commander Jim Koutz made his Montana visitation at the District #5 and #4 meetings. I attended the Fall Conference in October.

I helped at the Auxiliary Department gift shop on December 2 and 3, 2012 at the VA Center. On December 15, 2012 I participated by placing a wreath honoring the US Navy veterans in the Wreaths across America program at the HAFRC in Helena.

I attended all the Spring District meetings. I served as a timekeeper at the Department Oratory contest held in Belgrade on March 24, 2013. I attended a POW-MIA ceremony at the State Capitol on April 4, 2013. A legislative bill was passed to have State government facilities to fly a POW-MIA flag as well as the US and State flags.

Eastern Zone Commander
Pete Olsen

The Eastern Zone Commander's accomplishments to date are:

1. Attended the District 1 Spring meeting.
2. Attended Post 81 meeting and discussed membership.
3. Communicated with the Commanders for District 1 and 10 regarding membership.
4. Discussed membership with the State membership chairman, Mr. Elmer Palmer.
5. Represented Eastern Zone at funeral for SFC Linde, a soldier killed in action in Afghanistan.

I did not attend the District 10 Spring meeting due to conflicting professional commitments.

Western Zone Commander
Roger Hancock

As my tour as Western Zone Commander comes to an end, I would like to say thank you to all my District Commanders. It has been a pleasure and honor to serve with you.

This last year I have made all my District meetings, encouraging Legionnaires to work membership and to make The American Legion (TAL) visible in their communities. I have also encouraged Legionnaires to increase their knowledge base of TAL by reading our pamphlets and by taking the American Legion Extension Institute online course. I have met too many Legionnaires who refuse to recruit, because they feel unqualified. We don't have to be experts on TAL. We just need to have a general knowledge or know the TAL mission statement. This will empower us as The American Legion to go forward and increase our membership.

I have kept an open line of communication with my District Commanders including encouraging them to meet membership goals. I have had to increase the District's membership numbers and I am proud to say that all District Legionnaires have responded positively by tackling their increase as professionals. Also during the last year I have been mentoring a Legionnaire. I believe in leadership by example and have extolled the benefit of bringing younger Legionnaires along who will benefit their Post, District, and Department.

This March I attended the Department Oratorical Contest in Belgrade. I met with the contestants representing my Zone. All 3 Districts had a contestant and I was impressed by their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and their demeanor. I also volunteered and helped with the contest by monitoring and providing encouragement to all the candidates.

South Central Zone Commander

Dan Smart

No Report Submitted

North Central Zone Commander

Hal Rice

One year down and one to go. I hope the next year is as good as my first year has been. This spring I attended the District 8 meeting at Ft. Benton, District 2 meeting at Turner and District 3 meeting at Galata. At these meeting I gave a talk on ways for Posts to recruit new members. One of these is the use of social media with Facebook being the one that have used. This reaches all over the country and most people try to keep a connection to home or relatives. Some of these are probably in the military or have been and most are willing to join your Post to have that connection. I also suggested going to retirement homes or community centers etc. as some of these have photos of veterans on their walls. Good place to get names for new members. I also suggested that all Posts get the Vietnam Commemorative Medal and present it to your Vietnam veterans. We did this at Post 102 in Geraldine at our Christmas party. We got roses for spouses and had them pin the medal on the veteran and thanked them for their service. What a morale booster it has been.

In closing I would like to thank Jon Monteaux, Dean Young and Tommie Crook for all their hard work and look forward to next year.

N.E.C Report

Elmer Palmer

As National Executive Committeeman, I represented the Department of Montana at the Post Convention Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting in August, Fall National Meetings in October, 2012, and the Spring National Meetings in May, 2013. I represented the National Organization to the Department of Montana

at the Fall Conference in October, 2012, and will do so again at the Department of Montana Convention in June, 2013, in Lewistown, Montana.

I attended and gave briefings at nine of the eleven Fall District Meetings, missing two to attend the Fall National Meetings, and nine of the eleven Spring District Meetings, missing two for personal injury. I also attended the Zone and Department oratorical contests. I additionally gave testimony at two committee hearings of the Montana State Legislature for bills that were supported by the Department of Montana, The American Legion, and written support to several others.

At the Fall Conference I spoke about Resolution 64 approved by the National Executive Committee calling for an All Time High in Membership. I discussed this in all the District Meetings that I attended. This Spring National Executive Committee Meeting approved the Membership Plan that was developed by the National Membership and Post Activity at their January meeting. This will be taking much of the time and efforts of the Department officers as they begin the implementation of this plan, and the modification of the plan as suggested by the incoming Department Commander at the August Membership Workshop. These changes will adapt the National Membership Plan to the Department of Montana circumstances.

The prime action of the NEC this Spring Meeting was to approve Resolution 1, approving the Manual of Allocations, the publication that defines the names, composition, manning and operation of the committees of The American Legion. This is a sweeping reorganization of the operation of The American Legion and the Commissions and Committee that are the operation and planning bodies of the organization.

Some Committees and Commissions were renamed, some reorganized, and some were eliminated, with others being created. These reorganizations are to make it easier to determine who has authority over subject matter and actions. The next few years will be important in that appointments to the new committees will have to be made.

The appointment nomination form will have a revision, also. While the new one was not available for examination, the explanation was that it will ask for more information on the Legionnaire that is being proposed to fill the appointment. The form will request more resume information. The goal will be to have more information available to the Committee on Committees to ascertain if the person being nominated is knowledgeable on the subject matter handled by the Committee or Commission, or being nominated just because he is a 'good old boy'.

A report was made by the 100th Anniversary Committee. Much of the celebration will be at the Posts and Districts. All are being encouraged to build a history of their Post or District. Teddy Roosevelt IV will be the Honorary

Chairman of the Honorary Committee. He will be tapping important supporters for funding to do some of the events and public support.

Alternate N.E.C.

Dave McLean

Over the course of the 2012-2013 year, I was available to fill in for Elmer Palmer, the NEC, when needed. I traveled to Indianapolis for the fall 2012 NEC meetings. During this trip, I attended all of the NEC meetings to educate myself on what takes place so I would be prepared in the event I become the NEC for the Department of Montana. I spent a great deal with NEC, Elmer Palmer, learning the proper procedure for tracking and recruiting new members for the Legion from the direct mailing solicitations utilized by National. Elmer is a true expert in this area and it was very educational.

Past Commander

Ray Robison

In this past year I have had the honor to serve on the Big Sky Honor Flight Committee and have travelled with all of the flights to send our WWII Veterans to DC. Up to this time we have had 5 flights with two more scheduled for the fall of 2013. I also have had the opportunity to speak at several organizations promoting this program and continuing to support the Department of Montana of The American Legion. I want to thank Dixie Parson, Department of Montana American Legion Auxiliary, for choosing this very important program as her project for this year.

Historian

Art Ellison

On his second stop of the world wind tour of the Departments' National Commander Jim Koutz made his second official business by coming to Montana. I traveled with him and other Department officers as he attended first an evening social hosted By Fort Owen Post 94 in Stevensville. He was warmly greeted by those present and gave an informative talk about his goals for the year 2012 – 2013.

The next day, Saturday, we attended the District 4 Meeting in St. Ignatius and Sunday the District 5 Meeting hosted by Lolo Post #135. From there Commander Koutz proceeded to Hamilton and attended the burial ceremony of the repatriated remains of Cpl. Luther Jesse James, who was killed in the Korean War and buried in a mass grave with his comrades in Korea.

During my presentation at each District meeting I continued to talk about the need for a Post history book. I told stories out of the past history books of the American Legion of Montana and how important the information contained in those books is and how important it is to maintain records for the future. Without a history or any record of Post members and activities, what history that is known, dies with the last person who goes to Post everlasting. And without a record neither the Post nor the individuals ever existed.

As we passed around the state, I found many interesting unrecorded things about the early days of the American Legion of Montana and enjoyed passing this information on to the Districts.

I talked with many individuals and found that there is a great deal of interest in their Posts about their history. One of the major problems within the Posts is that everyone feels maintaining a history is a big job. But, I encouraged each Post to make a history book and bring it to the Department Convention to show others what they have done during the past year. I am looking forward to looking at all of these books that had remained hidden in the Post homes. I hope to see a lot of books there.

Adjutant's Report Gary White

The year started with the National Convention in Indianapolis, IN where I performed the duties of delegation secretary and coordinated with all Montana delegates to ensure their stay was hassle free. I had no committee assignment due to the number of attendees. Upon return from National Convention I attended all Fall District meetings with the exception of Districts 8 and 9, which I missed due to the Commanders and Adjutants Conference in Indianapolis.

I planned and executed Fall Conference in Helena Oct 26 - 27. In December I started working American Legion Boy's State with Dan Wickens, the Director and John Louk the Committee Chairman. All Spring District Meetings were attended with the exception of my District, District #6, which I missed due to my attendance at the Legionnaires Insurance Trust meeting in New Orleans, LA.

Other day to day accomplishments included publishing six issues of the Montana Legionnaire, attending Montana Veterans Affairs Division meetings,

coordinating with the Liberty House Board and maintaining contact with the Montana National Guard Funeral Honors Program and the Yellow Ribbon Program. Maintaining the budget and finances of the Department, the Sons of the American Legion Detachment, American Legion Baseball, American Legion Boys State, Coordinated Children & Youth, HQ Post #105 and the Department's National Convention Fund. Additionally in conjunction with various Posts I planned and conducted 2 Yellow Ribbon demobilization briefings for returning Montana National Guard Units and individual soldiers. I would like to thank all the Legionnaires and Posts who assisted in these vital briefings. I also conducted seven reconnect visits with units of the Army Reserve and National Guard. I assisted in processing 7 TFA requests.

I coordinated and administered the Department Rifle Raffle and Big K programs.

I coordinated and prepared National Commander Jim Koutz's visit to Montana. I wish to express my thanks to the Posts that participated in these visits and went out of their way to show them their generous hospitality.

I attended Missing in America and Memorial Day Ceremonies at Fort Harrison State Veterans Cemetery and the Wreaths Across America Ceremony at Fort Harrison. I also attended Past Department Commander Hal Manson's funeral.

I worked with our Legislative Chairman and the Commander in testifying and coordinating support for legislation before the Legislature. I was disappointed in the lack of Legionnaires participating in hearings before the Legislature, there were many times to numerous to count that I was the only Legionnaire testifying. Last year in my convention report I stated "this year more than any other, has been a constant challenge in regards to the officers, chairman and Posts making their deadlines and submitting proper reports to Department" to that I would like to add it pales in comparison to the lack of responsibility that was shown in regards to suspenses and coordination this year. I would ask that all officers, chairman and Posts to make a concerted effort to make all deadlines and suspenses, and to work with their Posts to ensure they do the same.

To the Zone and District Commanders and to the Post Adjutants I thank you for your dedication and co-operation. I hope we can continue to work together for the good of the American Legion.

See Appendix A.

Chaplain
Ed Sperry

Attended the Legion Chaplain School. It was worthwhile and I recommend future Chaplains attend. Finished my survey of the Montana Chaplaincy and have submitted a resolution which will be considered at the Convention. In my opinion, if the resolution is approved it will result in a more effective chaplain's program throughout the state. Whether adopted or not at this time there may well be a need for further consideration at a later date. I therefore place the resolution in this year end report. May I express my sincere thanks for the honor of serving as your Department Chaplain. God Bless you, the Legion, and our nation.

Service Officer
Kelly Ackerman

Since the Fall Conference, I have attended the DSO School and Washington, D.C. Conference in February 2013.

I attended Spring District meetings in St. Ignatius, Missoula Post #27, and Manhattan where I discussed the VA's internal transformation programs such as VBMS and Fully Developed Claims. I also discussed the topic of "pension poaching", and the American Legions ongoing involvement in bringing this problem to light on a national level. I encouraged the importance of registering an account with "ebenefits", "myhealthyvet", and utilizing the AL Claims Coach app for smart phone users.

I have written 51 articles for the Legionnaire with a focus on the VA's internal transformation programs such as Fully Developed Claims, Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS), and the focus on expediting DIC and Death Pension claims within the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Parliamentarian
Jim Grosset

Since being appointed as the Parliamentarian for another year, I had the pleasure to attend the National Convention in Indianapolis. My next adventure will be representing the Department of Montana at the Royal Canadian Legion Alberta/North West Territories Convention to be held in my home town of Calgary in June.

I look forward to the Department Convention in Lewistown in June. This should be an eye opening event and look for some changes, hopefully for the better.

Finance Officer
Carl Nordberg

Following is the financial report of cash on hand at Department headquarters for the period

May 7, 2012 to May 7, 2013

	May 7, 2013	May 7, 2012	Difference
Checking	7,403	13,234	- 5,831
Money Market	92,562	102,980	- 10,418
<u>DA Davidson</u>	<u>246,984</u>	<u>228,545</u>	<u>+ 18,439</u>
	346,949	344,759	+ 2,190

Department Convention expenses have yet to be taken out of the budget.

Endowments	26,086	26,030	+ 56
------------	--------	--------	------

Judge Advocate
Jim Shockley

1. The undersigned has little to report, which is good.
2. I did submit to the Commander an outline of an appeals process for a legionnaire with a grievance in the Department of Montana.
3. There is has been a conflict between the Department and Post 20 of Dillon over a baseball coach. The Post was aggravated that the Department said that if that individual coached the Post 20 Team (Dillon Cubs) the team could not play Legion baseball. The coach is threatening litigation. I feel that the situation is under control and that things will be settled in the next few months with no litigation.

Sgt-At-Arms
Randy Kemp

I was appointed Sergeant at Arms by Commander Jim Carlisle and performed duties as such at Convention 2012. I conducted a POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony at the Convention 2012 joint banquet. At Fall Conference in Helena, I escorted and announced all visitors to Commander Carlisle. These guests were from the inside and outside The American Legion Family. I will perform duties as needed at Convention 2013 in Lewistown, Montana June 28 to 30, 2013. While I attended another meetings, like the District 7 meetings, I attended them in other official capacity. I always kept in mind my Sergeant at Arms duties to maintain order at any meeting I attended.

District 1 Commander Report
David Dean

Being District 1 Commander I found out that it takes a lot of time to do the job correct, I learned a lot this year. I am now involved in putting the history of Post 81 together and with all the lost records it's going to be difficult but I will attempt it. I had the privilege to help out in many Military Funerals. As District 1 Commander at the spring meeting in Wolf Point I installed Chris Dunphy as District Sgt. at Arms and Pat Dresher as District Service Officer. Ron Moccasin agreeded to stay on a District Chaplain Shelly Harda was elected District 1 Commander and I was elected Vice Commander.

S.A.L. member Andy Ellerkamp and soon to be Post 81 member John Crum attended a class and are now able to teach shooting sports.

Post 81 is about finished with getting Boy Scout Troop 296 reformed, those involved were Harry Mc Cormmick, Pat Dresher, Pete Olson and Jim Carlisle

District 2 Commander Report
Jon Monteaux

This will be my last report as District 2 Commander and I want to thank all those who were so helpful to me in this learning experience. Also, for bearing with

me and being patient as I stumbled through Roberts rules or some other procedural matter that I was not up on at the District meetings. Some are much more patient than others obviously. I will remain Post commander at Post #67 at Rocky Boy until my Post adjutant Captain Chauncy Parker of the Montana Army National Guard returns from Kandahar City, Afghanistan later this year to take command of Post #67. Where I will remain as an active member. Each day at Post # 67 we pray for Captain Parkers safe return. The revitalization of Post 110 at Fort Belknap is near complete. Most officers positions are filled and they are growing in membership. With a veterans rep available and a mental health professional making monthly visits to the community, I feel the young returning veterans or now being far better served, and the Post is becoming much more visible in the community also.

District 3 Commander Report
Dean Young

I will start, by saying that the Post is the home of the American Legion. It might be a wild game stew feed in Sweet Grass, or a District meeting in Galata.

When I got a chance to get to know the Veterans in the Posts of District 3. Then I was at home. I think District 3 is a very good District. I know, like all homes it takes work, but when Veterans work together we become one. I hope to see all of you at Convention in June!

District 4 Commander Report
Greg Davis

No Report Submitted

District 5 Commander Report
Harve Murray

District 5 has a membership and District meeting monthly. There has been a good turnout of Posts.

Post 131, Alberton and Post 124 Frenchtown have constructed a new Veterans Memorial at the Frenchtown Pond State Park. There are other Veterans Memorial's being constructed in Missoula, Ravalli and Granite counties by Post 47

Hamilton, Post 91 Corvallis, Post 94 Stevensville, Post 135 Lolo and Post 125 Drummond.

Post 101 Missoula brought the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall to Missoula. A good turnout was reported.

I would like to thank The American Legion Department of Montana, District 5 and all 16 Post's in the District for all the good work they have done for the American Legion in Montana. It has been a good 1 & 1/2 years.

District 6 Commander Report

Harvey Howe

Due to my health this last year I wasn't able to see the Posts. The only thing I got done was my District meeting and the District Oratorical Contest, which I had just one student from Helena and who went on to win Department and then on to the National Contest.

District 7 Commander Report

Len Albright

I completed all of our Post visits again this year. We helped the Posts acquire information on essay contests, oratorical, Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, Fire Fighter of the Year, etc. Many of the Posts will try to participate more next year.

District 7 again this year reached 100% membership goal and saw a small rise in our younger veterans signing up. We will continue to increase our Iraq/Afghanistan veterans membership efforts.

We have invited all the Posts in District 7 to participate in the fourth annual Memorial Day Parade hosted by Post 14. We're searching for any and all WWII veterans to ride as they are the Grand Marshall's this year. They will be grouped together in the front of the parade. Of course, all veterans from all wars are invited to participate also.

Some of District 7's Posts performed Honor Guards for our fallen veterans at their funerals. More this year than in the past.

Our goal next year is to reach 100% membership again, as well as recruiting younger veterans. District 7 will continue to support and

participate in veteran's functions throughout the state.

Post #87 had a young lady as an oratorical contestant and she represented District 7 at the Department competition. Post #14 has 2 Boys State representatives going to Helena.

District 8 Commander Report

Tommie L. Crook

District 8 held it's Spring Meeting in Ft. Benton with eight of eleven Posts represented. Department Commander Jim Carlisle briefed about the duties of a District Commander to turn in nominations for Post Awards and memberships importance. He congratulated Post 341 Malmstrom, Post 51 Augusta and Post 102 Geraldine for 100% Membership. At the end of the year, District 8 had 4 Posts 100% or over with Post 103 Power obtaining and exceeding their goal. Congratulation to all the Posts in District 8 for obtaining or exceeding their goals.

I was able to attend Post Meetings in Vaughn, Fairfield, Augusta and Power. At each meeting I was able to brief about how important it is that each Commander works with his or her Adjutant to communicate with their members. By visiting, phone calls, email or mail. And for all officer's to read and understand the manual's given to them after the Department Convention. And also about MyLegion.org and how valuable a tool it is for members and officers.

In District 8, 4 Post are working together to build a Veterans memorial in Fairfield. Meetings are held weekly with the help of volunteer's and the community. They hope to break ground within the coming months.

I would like to also say "GREAT JOB" to Post 341 for volunteering over 2100 hours to the community by bell ringing, maintaining an information booth at Farmers Market and Flea Market, highway clean-up, MT Patriot Guard Riders and providing Chaplains services for hospital, nursing and home visits.

District 9 Commander Report

Brad Marking

No Report Submitted

District 10 Commander Report
Kenneth Fenstermaker

No Report Submitted

District 11 Commander Report
Dale Webb

Since last fall we have worked on many things in District 11. I have attended meetings at every Post but Hardin and Fromberg. I have emphasized that my job as District Commander is not to tell the Posts how to operate their Posts but to help them any way I can to make their Post a better Post.

As District Commander I helped in three schools to celebrate Veterans Day and gave talks about Veterans Day to several different classes. All three schools brought in Veterans from the community and furnished them a lunch.

Also the District helped with the Toys for Tots program by collecting toys and helping get them distributed throughout Yellowstone and Carbon Counties.

As District Commander I have helped the National Guard in their 60 and 90 day Post deployment resource meetings. These were held at the Billings Holiday Inn. I emphasized that almost every town has an American Legion Post and we can be utilized to help get the different resources out to the veterans within these communities. I would like to see a phone number in every community listed under the American Legion so vets can look in the phone book and know who to call for help and to find out what resources are available.

We had a fair turnout at our District Meeting and the Department Reports were of great help. I need to get to all the Posts and find out if there is any interest in LEAD training within my District.

For Memorial Day most of the Posts are having their own ceremonies within their community. Laurel, Billings and Park City will all help at the Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery in Laurel.

As of next year District 11 will have a new Commander. George Blackard has been elected and will take over in June. Congratulations to George and best of luck in the next two years.

Americanism
Joyce Babcock

I attended the National Convention in Indianapolis and stayed on Convention floor for most of the sessions. There were special showings of videos on the importance of our Americanism Program in the development of Patriotism and responsibility in the youth of America in today's society. I viewed these videos when the General Sessions were in recess.

Again this year I was unable to attend the District meetings outside of District 11. However, I did email or snail mail to the Districts and some Posts stressing the need to get into the schools early with our Americanism programs. Attended Fall Conference in Helena and gave my short report on events I had promoted up to that time. I again pushed for Posts to use the Americanism School Awards Program and have seen a slight increase in this area of activity. Operation Military Kids continues to take a good deal time and is having a good deal of success in assisting our Montana military youth in adjusting to the realities of life in a military family.

I will again be collecting information from the CPRs and assisting in selection of winners of the Department Awards for the Americanism programs and reporting of same. I have emailed, called, and sent Post cards in an effort to get the Consolidated Post Reports and Post report for Officers that was due in May. Did get a lot in that way but unfortunately there are some Post Adjutants out there who just don't seem to get the message as to how important these are.

REMEMBER-now is the time to have your Post Chairmen in each Youth program get the papers and information together and ready to present to the schools in your area. You will have a much greater success in getting the program in if the teachers and staff can put it in their lesson plans while those plans are being written. They are written BEFORE school resumes in Fall!. Best of luck for the coming year.

My picks for Americanism CPR awards are over 150 members: Bozeman #14 for top award and for certificates:

- #94 Stevensville
- #21 Anaconda
- #27 Missoula
- #2 Helena
- #30 Belgrade

#87 Manhattan

Under 150 members: St Ignatius #106 for top award
and for certificates:

#24 Harlowtown

#84 Belfry

#47 Hamilton

With the information from the Consolidated Post Reports these are the Posts who have done a very good job of working the Americanism program to the benefit of their communities.

Baseball

George Haegele

We had a good year in 2012. Both Class AA and A had very competitive tournaments for the state championships.

In 2013 we will have 9 Class AA Teams, 32 Class A Teams, and 6 Class B Teams. Nearly 900 young men will participate in Montana/Alberta American Legion Baseball in 2013. There will be 1 team from British Columbia, Canada, 1 team from Idaho, 6 teams from Alberta, Canada and 39 teams from Montana.

The four Class A District Tournaments will be held in Glasgow, Vauxhall, Alberta, Anaconda, and Kootenai Valley (Eureka) from July 25 through July 28.

The Class A State Tournament will be held in Helena August 1-5. The Northwest Class A Regional Tournament will be held in Wheatland, Wyoming August 8-13.

The Class AA State Tournament will be held in Billings, hosted by the Billings Scarlets, July 31-August 4. The Northwest Regional Tournament, Region 7, will be held in Eugene, Oregon August 8-12. The World Series will be hosted by Shelby, North Carolina August 16-20.

Here are the winning teams and individuals from the 2012 season.

Class A State Champion – Mission Valley Mariners. Runner-up was the Glasgow Reds. Both teams represented Montana at the Northwest Class A Regional Tournament in Burley, Idaho. Glasgow finished in 4th Place and Mission Valley is the Northwest Class A Regional Tournament Champion. Class AA State Champion –Billings Royals. Runner-up was the Billings Scarlets.

Both teams represented Montana at the Northwest Regional Tournament (Region &) held in Billings. Both teams Lost on day one, won on day 2, and were eliminated by losing on day three. Regional winner was Bellevue, Washington.

The World Series was held in Shelby, North Carolina and was won by the team from New Orleans, Louisiana. They defeated Brooklawn, New Jersey 4-0. The

attendance at the World Series was a second straight all- time high. This year's World Series paid attendance was 101,925 spectators.

Class A Coach of the Year – Jack Sprague – Glasgow Reds Class

AA Coach of the Year – Brent Hathaway-Missoula Mavs

Adam Hust-Billings Scarlets

Class A Most Valuable Player-Justin Evertz-Mission Valley Mariners

Class AA Most Valuable Player-Luke Reinschmidt-Billings Royals

Class A \$1,000.00 Scholarship-Jake Capko-Bitterroot Red Sox

Class AA \$1,000.00 Scholarship-Cayden Napierala-Great Falls Chargers

This was my 16th year serving as a member of the National Tournament Staff. My assignment in 2012 was Tournament Director at the Central Plains Regional in Dickinson, North Dakota.

Our coaches and administrators continue to do an outstanding job of assisting Montana/Alberta players to get the opportunity to play at the college level.

Thanks again to my Vice-Chairmen Duwayne Scott and Bill Houston, District Chairmen Jim Monteith, Ron Edwards, Ural Wayne Raymond, and Gary Parry for their invaluable help and support.

A special thanks to Commander Jim Carlisle. Without your wholehearted support of me and the Baseball Committee, we could not have been able to accomplish many of our goals for the betterment of American Legion Baseball in Montana. Gary White is always available for help and support. Thanks, Gary.

Without the support of all our officers and members our Department of Montana American Legion Baseball program could not achieve the success we now enjoy.

Thanks again, to you all, for another enjoyable and rewarding year as your Department Baseball General Chairman.

Boys Scouts

David Gray

No Report Submitted

Children and Youth

John C. Pellergrini

I haven't much to report on Children and Youth this time. I have had 2 requests for TFA's since the Fall Conference. Most of the 2013 pins are sold. I am looking forward to seeing the members of the Department Coordinated Children and Youth Committee at the Department Convention.

At my request, I am being replaced as Chairman of the Committee and will no longer be part of the Committee after the Convention. I would take this time to thank everyone who assisted me and guided me during the past few years that I have had the privilege of working with. My best wishes to you all, new and old, in the future.

CONSTITUTION & INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Jim Grosset

Since my last report of 2012, I have been working with the Steering Committee on trying to save money for the Department. There will, if passed at the Convention, be some changes to the Constitution. This report will be ready at the Convention.

I attended the National Convention in Indianapolis last summer. I learned a few things as you do at any Convention. It was good to meet some old and new friends. This June I will be part of the contingent representing the Department at the Royal Canadian Legion Convention to be held in my home town of Calgary. This will be a very enlightening experience. I look forward to this summer's Department Conversion in Lewistown.

2013 CONVENTION REPORT

Demorise E. Allen, Jr.

The Judith Gap American Legion and Auxiliary welcomes all of our Legion Family to Lewistown and our 95th Convention. We are hoping we will have a great Convention filled with a lot of camaraderie, education and fun. Conventions are a sort of family reunions, so come have a good time. The Yogo Inn is anxiously waiting for your arrival and we are confident they will be a great host for your stay.

The Judith Gap American Legion and Auxiliary has had a good time preparing for this Convention. We hope all of the i's will be dotted and the t's crossed. We still have plenty to do in this next month. We are proud to host this Convention.

We would like to Thank all of you in advance for your attendance

2014 CONVENTION REPORT

Randy Kemp

The American Legion Gallatin Post 14 will host the American Legion Department Convention 2014 in Bozeman, Montana June 25 to 29, 2014.

1. Rooms are blocked out at The Gran Tree Inn located at 1325 North 7th Avenue in Bozeman, Montana. There is easy access from Interstate 90 and a map will be provided with directions to the motel.

2. We have coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce and prepared welcome packets.

3. The following committees have been established:

- a. Booklet
- b. Decorating
- c. Registration
- d. Transportation
- e. Food and beverage

4. We have established deadlines for attaining planning goals. Meetings are on going and communication with the Chairman of 2013 Convention have continued and will continue until Convention 2013 is completed. An after action review will take place in an attempt to eliminate any problems suffered during Convention 2013.

5. We met with the Department Adjutant to clarify rooms needed for Convention 2014. A meeting took place with the Event Planner at The Grand Tree and a room rate was discussed and we received a discounted rate based on the number of rooms required.

6. Additional members of Post 14 have indicated that they want to work on the committee and help make Convention 2014 run smoothly and compliment the Bozeman community, hopefully making Convention 2014 one of the best in convention history.

DISTINGUISHED GUEST REPORT

Sam Pappas

Montana had the pleasure of hosting the Western Region National Vice Commander, Jeanette Rae during the Fall Conference. We enjoyed her visitation and information for the good of the Legion. I and a contingent will be going to Calgary the first part of June to participate in their provincial conference. We will have members of the Royal Canadian Legion attend our Department Convention.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Fred Bell

Like Past Chairman Rodney George said in 2012, “I would like to start my report by thanking past Chairman Sperry for all that he has done to make the Education & Training Committee a viable and integral part of the Department of Montana.” I also would like to thank Rodney George for his hard work in setting up the 2013 Essay and Americanism & Government Survey, that I took over. As Mr. George said last year “We are working to carry on with the programs that were started under his (Ed Sperry’s) watch. Many of these programs will take many years to bring to maturity and we look forward to facilitating their involvement. We now have a new audio-visual expert to help us with the production of the lessons and videotaping processes that will be needed to further our Department Training Matrix, which will be known as the Montana Keystone Project. We welcome Mr. Ted C. Hall and his expertise to the Education & Training Committee.”

I met with Ed Sperry, Ted Hall, and Dale Webb in Belgrade a couple of months ago and it was a very productive meeting. I hope to work with Ted in doing five minute U-Tube excerpts versus the National Legion’s half-hour to hour long DVDs, etc. The five or so minute excerpts are quickie ways to get information across to busy people, who have internet access, although there is no reason not to combine these short training sessions onto a DVD that can be used by non-computer members.

As Mr. George said last year “In the near future you may be asked to assist us with the making of instructional videos in your area of knowledge. I hope that you will participate in this worthwhile effort. We will be contacting certain people to utilize their expertise and to minimize costs to the Department this will primarily be done during convention and fall meetings. I would also ask that if you have any input as to lesson subject matter that would be of assistance to you or your Post that you would contact me and notify us of your wishes.”

Before moving to the results of the contests that we use to further the constitutional knowledge of our youth, I’d like to thank the following Educational/ Training Committee members for their work on reading and grading the essays for the seventh, eighth, and high school students. They are Mr. Gerry Christensen,

Ms. Peggy Ellison, and Mr. Ted Hall. The winners of the essays are:
Seventh and eighth grade Constitutional Essay Contest Results:

First Place - Madison Ulberg,
Woodman Middle School
*"The Second Amendment in Today's
Society"*

Post 135 Chief Joseph, Lola sponsor

Second Place - Sarah Brezenski,
Home-Schooled
*"Government Gets Power from the
People"*

Post 135 Chief Joseph, Lola sponsor

Third Place – Mari Koster,
Hellgate Elementary
"Sustaining Our Rights"

Post 68 Andrew Bedard, Missoula sponsor

High School Constitutional Essay Contest Results:

First Place – Katie Braten,
Home-schooled in Roberts, MT
*"Duties & Responsibilities of the Citizen Under the U. S.
Constitution"*

Post 84 Belfry sponsor

Second Place – Stephen Brezenski,
Home-schooled, tenth grade
"America's Unique Form of Government"

Post 135 Chief Joseph, Lola sponsor

Third Place – Cooper Spicher,
North Star High School
"The Second Amendment"

Post 88 Liberty County sponsor

Our largest outreach to students again this year was in the Americanism and Government Survey. *Many thanks to Mr. Ed Huff, history teacher, for making up the questions and answers.* We had returns from seven different high schools with a total of 156+ students participating. Our Department winners were:

First Place – Charsi Workman,
Grass Range High School,

Post 96 Roy sponsor

Second Place – Gabriella DeMarinis,
Capital High School,

Post 2 Lewis & Clark, Helena sponsor

Third Place – Perry Sobba,
Whitefish High School,
Post 108 Theodore Roosevelt, Whitefish sponsor

In conclusion I would like to say the following:

To minimize costs, most future lessons will be filmed via digital camera at the Department Convention and the Fall Conference and then put on U-Tube and collected on DVD's. They will be only short approximately 5 minute runs.

Again, I would like to remind you that this year the instructions, questions, and answers (only for your grading) for the 7th & 8th Grade-School Essay, the High-School Essay, and the Senior (12th Grade) Americanism and Government Survey will be included in each Post's packet that you will receive at the Department convention in Lewistown. It is imperative that this information is given to the Post's representative that will be handling each contest. There will be no other notification provided. It is up to each Post to follow the instructions and deadlines to ensure that your students have a fair opportunity to compete for the prize money. You need to start in the schools early in September, before they have set up their curriculum for the year! Go see history, government, English, and even speech teachers and get them to “buy into the program.” They have to be “sold” on it to use it!

ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT

Art Ellison

The Endowment fund has had very little activity this past year, mainly due to the lack of advertisement. The cause of this is the IRS has made stricter regulations regarding 501C3 non-profit organizations. Committee member Dave McLean had been working on the IRS paperwork and incorporating the Endowment Fund with the State but because of his workload. I have now asked the Department Judge advocate Jim Shockley to take over from Dave. We are hoping to have this done before the end of the year. In order to seek grants in sufficient amounts from large corporations. It is necessary for the endowment fund to be incorporated and registered with the IRS as a 5013C nonprofit organization. The fund activity has been interest earned on the 3 CD's only. The fund has increased a modest .98% due to low interest rates. Once the paper work is finished and we are a 501© 3 fund we are looking for tax deductible donations to the endowment fund by individuals as well as corporations. So the endowment fund can show a steady increase. I have been studying grant writing and have found that it is a very involved process, and requires a great deal of information. There appears to be a of

movement to move the Endowment Fund under the Finance Committee Chairman. This would prove to be disastrous for the fund in raising money. Already, the finance committee chairman is a member of the endowment fund committee as written in the original requested to the Department executive committee. Everything I have read on endowment funds indicate that the endowment fund should be kept completely separate from all other finances to prevent the misuse of endowment fund monies for purposes other than those it is intended for. I strongly oppose any effort to combine the endowment fund with the finance committee.

FLAG ALLIANCE

Ed Sperry

We are in limbo; there is nothing to report.

FINANCE CHAIRMAN

Merv Gunderson

I would like to thank and acknowledge the members of the committee for their diligence and commitment to the Legion this financial year. The entire committee worked to create a finance budget that met the needs of the various committees, officers, and staff while frugally protecting the financial assets of the Department. Elmer Palmer, Michelle Harada, Jed Damson, Jeff Nelson and Finance Officer Carl Nordberg have done an excellent job with their positions on the committee. Without their assistance the finance committee would not have been as successful. It is important that the Finance committee acknowledge Department Adjutant, Gary White, for his stewardship of Department finances.

I would particularly like to acknowledge Elmer Palmer for handling the Finance Committee reports at the Department convention in Helena last year. I was finishing my year as National Vice Commander, which required my attendance at the Department of California convention. Since the state convention in Helena, I have had the opportunity to review the finances of the Department on a monthly basis by comparing vouchers and deposit receipts to computer entries. All finances have been accounted for, our annual audit has been completed and the IRS form 990 has been filed by the Department. All Department finances are in order.

We had a good membership year. We missed our 95% goal by 140 members. That created a budget shortfall of \$1,550.00 and it looks like we will probably not make the 100% goal. Many of our Posts and members continue to

seek out new members and work on renewals. Your finance committee is very grateful for that effort. Membership is by far our greatest revenue source. The budget expenditures that were set by the Finance Committee last year appear to be on target. Our revenue for the 2012 - 2013 year has followed most of the projections we made. Our expenses for committees and individuals have held fairly constant.

The Ways and Means committee requested reinstatement of the Big K again this year. That fund raiser was felt to be extremely important because the funds generated are distributed to Posts, Districts, Auxiliary, and SAL. Unfortunately the cost of the fundraiser is totally born by Department. In the 2009-2010 year our profit had dropped to \$460.00. This year the Department will make a profit of \$2,000. I will continue recommending that we receive a commitment from the executive committee to promote the Big K. Each Post has to be involved for this to generate greater finances for the Department of Montana.

The rifle raffle was successful. It appears we will meet or exceed our budgeted target of \$8,500.00. The Finance Committee wishes to thank all members who took the time to sell the raffle tickets. Their efforts are immensely appreciated.

The committee is reviewing our investments. Our investments with D. A. Davidson Company are paying off. We have investments in Mutual Funds, CD's and a Money Market account. The finances are invested as safely as possible with the intention of gaining the greatest interest rate. We have reinvested some of our funds in accounts that have a little more risk. As we renew we are able to realize a more current interest rate. We are able to mitigate most investments losses to prevent any large hit with the volatile economy. Mutual funds always follow the market trend but they are usually fairly safe in the longer term. Our mutual fund investments are in more conservative funds so they will not increase as rapidly nor will they lose ground as rapidly as less conservative fund investments. Those investments are designed for longer term return and will respond with the economy. Due to volatility of the market, we will continually monitor the Mutual Fund account. The committee is receiving updates from D.A. Davidson on the funds we have invested. This year we realized a \$9,000.00 gain over our budget projection from our D.A. Davidson investments and earned interest.

There have been only a few budget increase requests from committees, officers, or staff. None were allowed. All budgets are within their limits except the vehicle auto expense and insurance.

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) continues to be a dependable source of income. Thank you to all the Montana Legion members who participate in the program by purchasing various policies. This year we received \$27,542.73. This is \$10,542.00 over what we budgeted. There were several reasons for the increased amount. The biggest change was the fact that the LIT decided to enhance the

amount paid to Departments this year only. This was a direct result of the Departments promoting the LIT to members. We need to continue promoting the LIT to our Posts and members. Without the LIT funding source dues would have to increase or budgets would have to severely drop.

There has been much discussion amongst members regarding increasing the mileage allowance. With the current cost of fuel along with projected fuel increases it is necessary to revisit the mileage allowance. Currently we allow 28 cents per mile. As you all know the expenditures demand a revenue source to offset the cost. The burden of travel is felt by all call-ins. The committee realized this and increased the travel to 32 cents a mile starting with the convention in Lewistown.

The Finance Committee encouraged purchasing a more fuel-efficient vehicle. The Department followed that recommendation and approved that purchase. The Adjutant purchased a Ford Escape in February 2013. The vehicle is used for daily trips around Helena. The vehicle will also be used for extended trips where only a few people must attend. The Department is keeping the Suburban. It has relatively low mileage and will be used when traveling requires more than 3 people. Trips where people and luggage must travel require a larger vehicle. Most District meetings will require usage of the Suburban due to the amount of supplies, luggage and riders.

There are other requests for increases in program allowances and scholarships. Your finance committee is empathetic to the desires of Department officers and all committee chairmen. However, without hard dollars it not likely we can afford to approve many of their requests.

We did increase the American Legion Boys State Budget to overcome an unforeseen shortfall. The shortfall came mostly from the increase in food services from the college's subcontractor. American Legion Boys State had to increase their fee this past year by \$20.00. The American Legion Boys State committee handles the budget for American Legion Boys State. The Finance Committee is charged with approval of their budget. The biggest reason for the increase was the cost of food. Carroll College has a contract with Sodexo to operate the cafeteria. It appears they will be asking for another increase. This may mean another \$20.00 increase for participants of the program. The American Legion Boys State committee will be reviewing their options with Carroll College

Address Labels continues to be a mainstay of income for the Department. It is our third largest income source. We realized only a 6.96% return but we were able to increase our income by over \$3,000.00.

"On-line renewals" is an area your finance committee continues to work on. Posts that are not registered on MyLegion.org and are unable to check on-line renewals create a big problem and are actually costing the Department money. The

adjutant must send them notices each month letting the Post know which members have renewed on-line. The adjutant must also send notices of credits that the Post has. In several cases the credit may be \$.50 and cost of mailing the letter is \$.46. It is imperative that Department and District officers work with their respective Posts to get them the ability of on-line usage.

The Steering Committee is the final area I would like to bring to your attention. The Steering Committee worked with some members of the Finance Committee to determine costs or savings of the Steering Committee's recommendation. There were many issues that came up during the discussions. The bottom line is the membership must make the finale determination of the Department's direction. A major part of that determination will center around how the Department's finances are allocated. We have a finite income with the majority coming from membership. The Department is at a point where we must make changes to reduce costs or increase income. The Steering Committee is addressing reduction in costs with their recommendations. If we do not reduce expenses the Department will have to pursue a dues increase. We have always done our best to hold dues down and do not want to see dues increased. However, the reality is; increase income or reduce expenses.

The Finance committee is responsible to ensure that our finances are balanced. We do the best job possible to maintain the integrity of our investments in order to derive an income source from interest. The committee will continue to monitor the Department's investments to maximize our revenue stream. Overall, the Department is in good shape. However, the committee will continue to be conservative with our resources and monitor all requests for expenditures. It is every member's responsibility to help. Our biggest downfall is membership renewal. The committee would appreciate everyone's concerted effort to increase the renewal rate. As always, asking a veteran to join and acquiring new members is extremely important. Between the DMS members national is releasing for us to acquire, Department holding Post members and the "stay alive" referrals Posts should be able to flourish.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Department of Montana again this year. Your committee and I are looking forward to serving you in the upcoming year.

HEROES TO HOMETOWN REPORT

Dick Ellwein

Hero to Hometown pamphlets were distributed at district meetings in the Fall. Guardsmen from several National Guard units have returned from their

deployments during this past year, Legionnaires were present to welcome the troops home.

HIGHWAY FATALITY MARKER REPORT

Lee Heser

I am happy to report the American Legion White Marker Fatality Safety Program is alive and well. This year, as in the past year, a few more Posts have reinstated this program. Not every Post is involved in this most worthwhile program, but we are gaining.

I want to thank the Department Commander for his emphasis on this program. He has made sure his Zone and District Commanders have made this program a priority. Therefore, a most sincere thank you to all Posts who are active in this life-saving program that has brought credit to you and the American Legion. The American Legion White Marker Fatality Safety Program is only administered here in Montana. None of the other 49 states has this program. Therefore, be proud of this accomplishment. For those Posts that are involved in this great program, keep up the good work. For those Posts that are thinking about doing this program, don't procrastinate. Get started now! If you feel you need some help, call me. There is a possibility I can make a trip to your Post, but as a minimum, we can do a phone call or get together at the Fall Conference in Helena.

I am averaging about 7 to 8 calls or emails per month requesting Posts to put up a white marker. I try to answer these emails with a copy to the geographical Post responsible. My biggest disappointment is many of our Post Commander or Adjutant emails are wrong. Be sure and correct your emails by contacting our Department Adjutant, Gary White, prior to our Department Roster being published.

I had another senior student from the University of Montana contact me, and he wanted to know more about US Highway 2 and Montana Highway 93 White Marker Program. These reportedly are the deadliest highways in Montana. He was writing his thesis on this along with numerous photos. He came to American Legion Post #137 twice this past year, getting information from myself and our Post White Marker Chairman, Bob Bigler. He also came and helped clean and paint white markers on Saturday, May 11, 2013. I asked for a copy of his report

along with some pictures. Once I get these, I will get a copy to Gary White for the American Legion paper.

I have made several trips into Districts 4 and 5 to Posts that have problems with this program and have not done their annual maintenance for 2 to 3 years for various reasons. I have asked and begged for them to please get it done. If they fail to do the maintenance this year, I will need to get some help from the District and Zone Commanders. A couple bad Posts that do not do their annual maintenance brings discredit to our entire program and puts us in jeopardy of losing this most worthwhile program. Our Letter of Agreement with Montana Department of Highways states that we will keep our white markers clean, painted and free of decorations and memorabilia. American Legion Post #137, of which I am a member, completed their White Marker annual maintenance on Friday and Saturday, May 10th and 11th. For about 4 days after that, I had six phone calls, two from the Sheriff's Department reporting vandalism on the white markers. I asked what was vandalized, and they said all the decorations had been removed and put at the bottom of the Post. The other deputy sheriff said the decorations had been removed and the white cross had the names painted out. I explained that this was an annual event where we clean and repaint the white markers and Posts. My instructions to our Post members who help is to carry plastic trash bags and bring the decorations back to the Post dumpster. I also had to explain to a couple of mothers why their decorations were removed. I also told them that the local newspaper had put a short announcement in the paper that the white markers were being cleaned and repainted. Therefore, if such things as rosaries, photos, necklaces and other memorabilia were to be saved by the victim's family, they needed to gather them prior to our painting date. With this, I conclude my report. Again let me thank everyone who is involved with the above program. Happy trails and drive safely!

HOMELESS VETERANS COORDINATOR REPORT

Ray Reed

The Montana Department's formal participation in The American Legion's Homeless Veterans Program is four plus years old. Montana Department members, Post and above are becoming more aware of this continuing human problem. Department Commander Jim Carlisle appointed me as Department Homeless Veterans Coordinator in June 2012. I respectfully submit the following report of the record for 2012-13

Montana Statistics Related to Homeless Veterans are as follows based on the last Point-In Time Survey conducted in 2012. The 2013 Point in Time Survey results is anticipated and may be available as an update to this report.

Of the 102,246 veterans recorded by the VA as being in Montana , 77,658 are indicated as wartime veterans. Breakdown by era is: Gulf War- 29,732; Vietnam- 35,044; Korea-10,448; WW II-4,784. Peacetime veterans number 24,589. The ratio of gender is Female veterans 9044 and Male veterans 93,203. Comment: It is estimated that based on averaging 2.5 members per veterans household that the total veterans population including family members is close to 255,000 or over 1/4 of the total population of Montana.

National Statistics indicate that up to 3.8% of Montana's population of veterans are considered to be at risk or homeless. The definition of homeless as defined by United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is, "Without and abode or home, living with family or relative because they cannot afford or qualify for a home residence, or living in a institutional setting because they cannot qualify or are financially unable to rent or own a home."

In the latest Montana Homeless Survey for 2011 of the 2,261 respondents 526 they had served in the military but had no family with them; 86 respondents had family members with them totaling 335 of which 163 were children This indicates that homelessness among Montana veterans was 6% based on the Survey results.

Recommendations:

1. That the Montana Department of the American Legion continue to implement a Homeless Veterans strategy in coordination with the National Economics Division of The American Legion, the Veterans Administration of Montana, the Montana Department of Health and Human Services and the many local service organizations who dedicate resources to reduce and ultimately eliminate homelessness in Montana

2. That the Department of Montana of the American Legion strive to establish Homeless Veterans coordinators at Post, District, Zone levels to interface with the Department on issues and potential solutions Montana's homeless Veterans. In lieu of dedicated resources the responsibility falls to the Post, District, and zone commander by default.

3. That the Department of Montana of the American Legion support the various Homeless Veterans Stand down scheduled throughout Montana for 2013. They as follows

Browning, Montana	August 2013 TBD	Contact Kathy Momberg
406-338-2111		
Helena, Montana	September 6, 2013	Contact Terry Stephens
406-447-6045		

Poplar, Montana 406-653-6326	September 14, 2013	Contact Dan Hutchinson
Great Falls, Montana 406-799-6709	September 2-28, 2013	Contact Rodger McConnell
Libby, Montana 509-462-2500 Ex4001	October 5-6, 2013	Contact John Davis
Billings, Montana 406-256-3322	October 2013	Contact Meridith Cox
Dillon Montana	September 2013 TBD	Contact

INSURANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
GARY WHITE

As of March 13, 2013 - \$239798.00 in premiums were paid in the Department of Montana for Long Term Care, HIP, AUX HIP and Cancer, Cancer Disability, AD & D and Life Insurance; an increase of \$3,511.00 since 2012. Last year we had a decrease, so we are now moving in a more positive direction. Allocations paid to the Department were \$26,383 an increase of \$5,650, this is after last year's decrease of \$10,673.00. We received a promotional bonus of \$1,408, an increase of \$20.00, this after last year's decrease of \$9.00.

This year our projection of income for 2013 was \$17,000.00, we exceeded that projection by \$10,542.00.00. With the aging of our membership we continue to lose insured members at a higher rate of new policies being written. We must rectify this by informing our members of the many insurance opportunities LIT offers. There is a myriad of promotional information available for the Post to use, please contact me if you require any information. Our job is not to be insurance salesmen, but to inform our members of the insurance benefits. Please remind your members of the Accidental Death & Dismemberment benefit periodically so they can take advantage of this program. Of the 10,824 members on April 4, 2013 only 3,504 were enrolled in the free Accidental Death & Dismemberment program,

32.37% of our membership. This is an increase of 322 members, or a 4.04% increase from last year, we are still a long way from 100%. Signing up for the free AD &D is our best way of ensuring the LIT markets to the right age group. Please continue to emphasize members renew their AD & D. If a member is in doubt about being registered they can call LIT or go online to check their status, every year we have family members of deceased members attempt to file a claim only to find their loved was not registered. The renewal will be good until 2016. We have got to ensure our members are registered for this benefit, especially our new members, and remember any member acquired through DMS has never been given a registration opportunity for the free AD &D.

Posts that met the LegionCare sign up challenge were Post #96 Roy, \$15.00, Post #66 Lavina, \$10.00, Post #65 Ennis, \$10.00 and Post #115 Butte, \$15.00.

Because of our efforts in promoting the LIT programs the Department received the inaugural John J. (Jack) Flynn Trophy, the trophy is displayed at Department Headquarters. This is a travelling trophy, so if we intend to keep it we will have to continue our efforts in promoting the LIT.

Over the years the insurance program has been a “cash cow” for the Department, however unless we get more members interested in the LIT programs it will continue to decrease in allocations paid. The LIT recognizes that they must continue to offer good reasonably priced products and introduce new products to interest our new younger members.

Our best selling policies continue to be the Hospitalization and Cancer policies. This year the Auxiliary participated in marketing the Cancer program to their members, as a result they received an allocation of \$544.00, an increase of \$185.00.

Since 1967, when our Department joined with the Legionnaire Insurance Trust the Department has received \$579,162.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Duane C. Carlton

The 63rd Legislative Session went in like a lion, with many opportunities for this session to actually do something good for our Montana veterans, but it finished like a lamb, sorry to say. Bills such as the Military Retired Pay state tax exemption were tabled before they could be put forward for a vote. Nationwide, 27 states exempt military retired pay from state tax, but Montana, which has about 9,000 military retirees, could not get the mission accomplished, again. This issue has been raised in numerous sessions before, and has met the same fate each time. Go figure.

By the numbers, twenty-eight bills which contained language for our veterans were introduced, and twenty became law. Thirteen other bills were written but didn't make it to the floor, they "died in process." Representatives from the American Legion Department of Montana, the Veteran's of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Viet Nam Veterans, and the Montana National Guard's Officers and Noncommissioned Officers Associations attended many of the sessions which directly involved veteran's benefits or veterans as a whole. In most instances, we testified either for or against bills which impact veterans. We also assisted legislators with "bill language" which would more accurately reflect impacts to veterans. This assistance was needed many times because some of the legislators who were writing the bills did not have a full and clear understanding of veterans and their status within the state and federally. Overall, most were certainly willing to listen and accepted our assistance. For the most part, if a bill contained a significant negative impact on our state budget, it did not pass. Also, the sheer number of bills which contained "veteran" language worked against our constituency – quite simply, the legislators got tired of hearing "veteran bills."

Our efforts in the future need to focus on fewer, more impactful legislative actions. The sponsoring legislators and the veteran's organizations need to work together to reduce the number of what I call "fluff" bills (those bills that "feel good" but actually do not impact our veterans in a positive way) and to support legislation that actually helps our veterans. I would like to thank the members of this Department who took the time to attend the hearings for their support during the 63rd Legislative Session. Many of you spoke, and spoke well in support of our efforts. We can look forward to continuing this fight in the future at the next session.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN REPORT

Elmer Palmer

The Membership Committee was active throughout the past year. While we did not make our goal, efforts by the committee were directed at the District Membership Chairman, who, in some cases, was also the District Commander.

The Department Adjutant faithfully prepared a membership report nearly every day, some days more than one. These were shared with the District Membership Chairman, the District Commanders, the Zone Commanders and the Department Officers. On the 100% Target Date, the Department was at 95%.

National Membership Recruiter Jim Fiedler visited the Department three times during the year. This is a perfect time to have a Legionnaire travel with Jim, and learn the finer points of recruiting. On more than one day, Jim had an experienced recruiter with him. From a friendship point of view, this is good. But from a training point, it means that two new recruiters missed the opportunity to learn, one with Jim and the other with the experienced recruiter with him.

Our goals for the coming year were set to help reach the 'All Time High' goal set by the National Organization. It gives us a high number to reach for. But, in order to achieve these goals, all members have to add in the recruiting effort.

NATIONAL SECURITY REPORT

Randall A. Brown

At the Department Fall Conference that was held in Helena during the month of October, I made my written and oral report. I also provided information concerning the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year and the Firefighter of the Year programs to several Legionnaires in attendance. The Montana American Legion "Firefighter of the Year" for 2013 was selected in January and was the American Legion Post 2 candidate, Rick Abraham. The candidate from Post 30, Jerrod Robinson, was selected as the Montana American Legion "Law enforcement of the Year" for 2013.

As runners participating in the Boston Marathon reached the finish line on April 15, two explosions caused destruction and death. A terrorist attack was launched on American soil again! Policeman and FBI agents were immediately placed into a full-scale investigation as to who or what organization is responsible for this cowardly act. Bringing those responsible for this unforgivable act became a top priority. Two brothers, originally from Chechnya but currently living in the United States, were identified as the terrorists and were charged with this and other horrific crimes. After a shootout with police one brother was killed and the other later taken into police custody. The investigation continues.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban and al-Qaida continue their resistance with military action, suicide attacks and the use of improvised explosive devices. Recently, some of these terrorists have infiltrated the Afghanistan Security Forces and have killed several of our NATO advisors, (mostly US Forces). As a result, many of these advisors have suspended training operations with their Afghanistan counterparts. Currently, NATO Troop levels are being reduced and more areas of the country are being turned over to the Afghanistan Army for their control. Current plans are to end the NATO

combat role by the end of 2013 and make a transition to a training, advise and assist role.

North Korea continues to be a national security concern because of its' nuclear program and the fact that this country has launched various military strikes against South Korea many times over the past years. Currently, this country is making threats that it is ready to launch nuclear weapons on the U.S. and its' allies. This situation is a serious threat and must be kept in check.

In Pakistan, increased military action against government forces and prominent leaders has forced the Pakistan Army to step up the fight against Taliban militants with increasing degrees of success. Military missions that cross from Afghanistan into Pakistan are causing some potentially dangerous political ramifications with that country as the Taliban use parts of Pakistan as a sanctuary. The situation between Pakistan and India over Kashmir remains a national security concern because of both country's nuclear capabilities.

Yemen is a training area for terrorists and the U.S. has increased counterterrorism aid to this Arab nation to support Yemen's campaign against al- Qaida. Citizens in this country are currently involved with the pro-reform protests that are spreading throughout North Africa and Middle East countries.

Protesters forced longtime Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to resign, and a new government has taken control of the country of Egypt electing Mohammed Morsi as President. It remains unclear as to how this change will affect relations with the United States and Israel. However, there continues to be internal problems with the new regime and demonstrations continue throughout the country protesting new policies. It appears that the new regime is working toward an Islamic form of government.

In Syria, demonstrators against the current government have been attacked and many killed by government forces. Many countries have expressed their desire to have the current leader to step down, however, at this time this has not happened. The United States has closed its embassy in Syria and recalled its ambassador. Syria has launched missiles into neighboring Turkey and the United States has now deployed Patriot Missile Batteries along Turkish border. These units are designed to counter attack any further missile launches from Syria. This brings the United States one step closer into becoming involved in this conflict.

On 11 September 2012, mob attacks at the American Consulate in Libya killed the U.S. ambassador, three other Americans and several Libyan security guards. These acts of violence are being carefully analyzed and measures put in place to prevent future occurrences.

Because of Iran's nuclear program, which western nations believe is enriching uranium for weapons purposes, the US recently imposed sanctions targeting Iran's ability to sell oil on the world market. Canada has closed its embassy and brought their ambassador home. They have also sent Iran's diplomats back to Iran. Other nations have pledged to buy less oil from this country. Israel considers a nuclear-armed Iran to be a threat because of its missile capabilities, support for anti-Israel militants and frequent references by its' president to destroy Israel. The US is concerned that Israel might be preparing to attack Iran over its' nuclear program.

In the African nation of Mali, Islamist fighters are attempting to unseat the current government. France has entered into the conflict and is assisting the Mali military forces. Many fear that Mali could become a launch pad for terrorist attacks on the West and a base for coordination with Al-Qaida in Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan. In support of al-Qaida linked terrorists in Mali, terrorists captured a natural gas plant in Algeria where over 80 hostages and militants were killed, including American citizens, before Algerian forces reclaimed the gas plant. Recently, American troops have been deployed to Mali to man surveillance drones designed to provide intelligence to the French Forces.

China has military strength and capabilities that cannot be ignored. Recently, China has constructed and deployed its' first Navy Aircraft Carrier. Current relations with China are good and it is hoped that this will not change.

The situation between the Palestine's and the Israelis is always a national security concern. Currently, the Fatah group controls the West Bank and the Hamas group has seized control of the Gaza Strip, therefore, splitting the two parties. Israel and other western nations are supporting the Fatah Group, but do not recognize or support the Hamas Group. The Hamas Group continues to observe an uneasy cease-fire truce currently in place which could trigger a strong Israeli military response.

Illegal immigrants entering this country from Canada, and mostly from the Mexican border, continue to be a national security concern. A large percentage of these illegals actually enter the United States on a VISA, however, never return to their country. Many of these illegal immigrants siphon off welfare funds, become involved in criminal activity, and receive humanitarian aid that is designed for legal residents of this country. The Canadian border has many areas across the United States where it is

relatively easy to cross without being detected. When illegal Mexican immigrants are apprehended, there is little or no punishment involved, and they are returned to Mexico. Often times, they are back across the border within days of deportation. This is a serious problem.

Our country has been in a recession. Currently, the economy is starting to improve, and the strength of the US dollar is rising. Unemployment rates are still high and jobs are scarce. The country is faced with huge debts and high oil prices. The majority of employment opportunities are within the service industry. The higher-paying manufacturing jobs continue to be eliminated or exported out of the country. It has become more and more difficult to even buy products that are made in America. The current administration has plans to drastically reduce our military forces and military capabilities which will have the affect of even more unemployment problems and impact our national security interests. Mandatory Federal spending cuts have taken place, which will have huge impacts on national security issues, and at the same time this administration is giving millions of dollars away in aid to other countries. These policies need to be re-examined.

In summary, there are many national security concerns that affect this country. The United States must be very careful about possibly intervening in pro- reform events taking place in the Middle East and African nations, and to re- examine our foreign aid policies. The things that our nation needs to make top priorities are the total support of the Armed Forces and it's needs, continue reducing the effects of recession including high unemployment rates and budget deficits, to reduce the current oil prices, reduce our dependence on foreign oil and we need to secure our borders with Mexico and Canada.

ORATORICAL REPORT

Carl N. Bartman

The Department of Montana Zone and Department contests were held on 24 March 2013 at the National Guard Readiness Center on Airport Road in Belgrade, Montana. This location change was necessitated by the action, or lack thereof, of the administration at Montana State University-Bozeman. The Zone contests started at 0900 and the Department contest at 1300. A luncheon break was held

between the contests. A local firm, the Pickle Barrel, catered the lunch service well within budget.

The Zone Contest had seven contestants present with one Zone opting out of the competition. Three contestants were available for the Department contest which was won by Shae Rowe of Jefferson City, 18 years of age, a senior at Helena High School and the son of Tom and Renae Rowe. He was sponsored by Post 2 in Helena. After receiving his scholarship awards from Department Commander Jim Carlisle, he was sent to Indianapolis, Indiana to compete in the National Finals.

Fifty-four American Legion Departments competed in the national Finals with Ms. Agnes Reiger of Kansas City, Missouri winning an \$18,000 scholarship; Ms. Elizabeth Scannell of Goose Creek, South Carolina winning a \$16,000 scholarship; and, Ms. Rachel Schartz of Humboldt, South Dakota winning a \$14,000 scholarship. The first place winner also attended American Legion Auxillary Girl's State and learned of the contest through her history teacher. She plans on attending Vassar in the Spring and the scholarship will cover her first year.

The other two members of the Department Oratory Committee are Jeff Holmes and Lowell Long and it "isn't their first rodeo" either. They are available to answer questions, solve problems, and assist in conducting local Post and District contests. Do not hesitate to call on any of us to assist where needed.

I am looking forward to another good year of Constitutional Oratory Scholarship contests and hope to see every District and Zone in Montana represented.

However, this is my last report on the Oratory Contest in Montana as the Committee Chairman. I have decided to opt out of the committee to make room for younger, more capable members. I wish the new Committee Chairman and his committee the best of luck and a very successful contest every year.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

George Blackard

This year I had the opportunity to read several newsletters from posts across Montana. One thing I realized is, we do not have enough posts sending out newsletters or we do not have enough posts submitting newsletters to Department for the newsletter contest. Because we only meet once a month it can be difficult to sustain the momentum and excitement that we create at our post meetings and it can be difficult to get the word out to the full membership about Post projects and events. Let's be honest, the majority of our members do not attend meetings regularly so they have no idea what we are doing. I firmly believe that a portion of those silent or inactive members would be more active if they knew of the great things we are doing. This is where a good newsletter comes into play.

A good newsletter is critical to Post operations. It lets us contact and inform those who do not regularly attend meetings and it helps us to sustain the excitement we create in our post members who do regularly attend meetings. The newsletter is another “contact point” with our members. Instead of one “contact point” a month the newsletter allows us to have two. If it is a good newsletter our members may pick it up more than once a month creating three or four or even five “contact points” a month. The more contact we have with our members the more likely they are to feel like a part of the group. Members who feel like a part of the group are more likely to join in with the group for post activities. A good newsletter should have useful information; it is not enough to have a calendar of events. Every newsletter should include contact information for post officers especially the Post Chaplain. It should include information on past events and future events, reports from post officers, reports from the Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion if you have them. It should include information on how to contact your post Service Officer if you have one or a Service Officer at the Vet Center or VA level if you do not. A newsletter should have a bit of Legion history and information about Legion programs the post is active in or that the Legion as a whole, has. And finally it should include something about membership and how to join the American Legion. A newsletter should be something that a veteran who is not a Legion member would see and think “I want to be a part of that”. This year’s winner of best newsletter in the large post category is Kalispell Post 137. Their newsletter included a list of post officers and their contact information, a schedule of events & meetings, it listed programs the post works regularly, had officer & committee reports, included something from the Auxiliary, talked about membership and was easy to read and well organized. This year’s winner of best newsletter in the medium post category is Chief Joseph Post 135. Their newsletter included a list of post officers and their contact information, a schedule of events & meetings, reports from multiple officers & committee persons, something from the Auxiliary and something from the Sons of The American Legion, they mentioned important news, mentioned American Legion National, talked about membership and was easy to read and well organized. This year’s winner of best newsletter in the small post category is Sun River Valley Post 130. Their newsletter included information about the Auxiliary, listed meeting times, had contact info for Legion & Auxiliary, mentioned VA benefits and Legion benefits, listed upcoming events and was easy to read. Congratulations to the winners. A good post newsletter can be in paper form or electronic or digital form. Paper form is fine but digital newsletters can be shared with hundreds of people with the click of a button. A Post producing a newsletter in any form that includes the vital information is a post with a chance.

S.A.L.ADVISOR
John C. Pellegrini

Membership in the SAL is doing fine. As of this report, we have 17 Squadrons at or above goal and 9 Squadrons within 5 or less of reaching goal. I feel confident that they will all be there by Convention time. It just takes a few calls to make things happen.

We are presently 18th in membership percentage for the Nation standing at 91%. Our renewal percentage is 87%. We received an award last year for being in the top ten for renewals.

I was on a conference call with National Commander Huntzinger and our Vice Commander Mike Deutsar from Oklahoma. All the Detachments in the Mid-Western Region seem to be doing the same as to membership. There are a few Detachments in the South that the Commander is concerned about.

I will be attending the Spring NEC meeting in May and have been approved for my position on the Committee on Committees and hope to be some help to our Detachment when we meet for appointments.

Once again, remember how important the SAL is to each Post and keep them busy.

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Kelly Ackerman

No Report Submitted

VA HOSPITAL VOL. REP MILES CITY

Robert Crow

At the present time this V.A. in Miles City unit consists of an outpatient treatment center and a nursing home or living center for twenty residents.

The outpatient treatment center sees most veterans by appointment but there is some walk in activity for which care is available.

The Living center has a variety of activities depending on what the individual wants to do. There are book reading classes on subjects of interest to individuals and small groups. There are bell ringing sessions, which I think is more for upper body exercise than for quality of sound that is made. They go on fishing trips when the weather is nice. They go out to lunch or dinner and each veteran pays for the meal they eat. Even wheelchair Veterans can enjoy this activity. For those that are extremely handicapped the activities director has bedside conversations with these individuals. Then there is always BINGO. There is free BINGO to the veterans that is sponsored by various social groups including The American Legion. This is a very popular activity for the residents as it helps pass time and provide quarters needed for a can of pop or candy bar.

That is the V.A. Medical Center at Miles City.

SHOOTING SPORTS

Ray Read

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is a gun safety education and marksmanship program that provides the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment, and competition. The program utilizes the .177 caliber air rifle, both males and females can participate, through American Legion Post, Auxiliary Unit, or SAL squadron sponsorship.

It is a three-part program that combines the Basic Marksmanship Course, Qualification Awards, and Air Rifle competition.

The Basic Marksmanship Course is a comprehensive package for the beginning shooter with little or no marksmanship experience. Gun safety and marksmanship fundamentals are taught through a balanced mix of short lecture and discussion followed by hands-on activities. The cornerstone of the Basic Marksmanship Course is the SHOOTER'S GUIDE TO POSITION AIR RIFLE, now in its third edition. The guide provides a thorough explanation of the essential fundamentals needed for success as an entry-level competitive shooter.

Another highlight of The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is our annual JUNIOR POSITION AIR RIFLE TOURNAMENT. The tournament begins with Postal matches to determinate state and/or regional champions. The next stage is a Qualification Round (also a Postal match) to determine the shooters who will earn expense paid trips to compete in the National Championship. The American Legion's 2013 Junior 3-Position Air Rifle preliminary round results for individuals and teams in the sporter and precision category are now scored and official.

I would like to thank all those Montana Department Junior Shooting Sports Programs who are instrumental in mentoring our JSSP shooters in organizing, equipping, preparing, training and conduct of one of the American Legion's best Children and Youth programs now in its 23rd year..

The top 30 individuals in both categories and the initial competition were sent target sets on or before March 1 for the qualification round -- The returned fired targets had to be Postmarked by March 30. Based on the qualifications round scores, the top 15 competitors in both Sporter and Precision category will be invited to compete in the 23rd annual American Legion Junior 3-Position Air Rifle National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colorado, August 6-11.

Montana had one individual step up to the qualification round. The individual is Robert Scott, a member of Gallatin County 4-H Shooting Sports Precision Team 1 (Post 87). Scott placed 25th out the top 30 with a score of 579 out a total of 600 points. The top score was 591 so you can see that this category is very competitive with a spread with lowest qualifying score being 578 or a total 13 points from first to 30th place.

Gallatin Co. 4-H Shooting Sports Precision Team 1 placed 2nd in Region 11, Region 11 consists of the states of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska and the Team placed 4th in the National Standings. The Team will shoot in the qualification round and will receive further recognition if they place in the top five teams in that round. The Team members include Robert Scott, Rachal Yager, Ticer Nelson and Maranda Nelson. They are hosted by Post 87 Manhattan, Montana.

Montana individuals placing in the Region 11 totaled 31. The top twelve from Montana in the Regionals were: Scott Roberts #3, Rachal Yager #9; Ticer Nelson, #14, Maranda Nelson, #16 -of the Gallatin Co. 4-H Shooting Sports Precision Team 1 (Post 87); Ivan Roe, #47, Maddison Korthas, #53, Tana Dincau, #58, Jarhet Reed, #61 of Gallatin -Co. Shooting Sports Sporters Team #1 (Post 87); Sdyney Lambeth, #63, Colin Scott, #65, Bryson Mobley, #66, Braden Neslon #72; of Gallatin County 4-H Shooting Sports Sporters Team #2.

There were 20 Teams from Montana out of a total participation of 61 teams participating in Region 11. The Top 5 Montana teams were Gallatin Co. 4-H Shooting Sports Precision Team #1, 2nd place, Flathead Co 4-H Shooting Sports 17th place, Gallatin Co 4-H Shooting Sports Sporters #1, 20th place; Gallatin County 4-H Shooting Sports Spoerts #2 25th and Lewis & Clark Co 4-H Shooting Sports 28th place.

If you are getting started we would strongly recommend that you focus your efforts on the sporter category. It does not take a lot of money to get started in the sporter category; the junior athletes do not need any sort of sophisticated shooting clothing like the precision category does.

If you have not already done so we would recommend taking a look at the Civilian Marksmanship Program's

WebPages @ www.odcmp.com/Services/Programs/3P.htm. Look at the National Standard 3-Position Rules @ <http://www.odcmp.com/3P/Rules.pdf>. This will give you a very good background on what is allowed in terms of sporter category rifles, clothing, and additional equipment.

With regards to sporter category rifles, those that have been successful in our National Championship tournament have fired the Daisy 753/853 pneumatic rifle, the Daisy M888 CO2 rifle or the Daisy XS-40 Valiant compressed air rifle. More information about these and other rifles can be obtained from the Daisy WebPages @ daisy.ifware.com/cgi-bin/daisy2/products_avanti.html.

The CMP has an excellent extended payment program to purchase either the 853 or the M888 rifles. More information can be found @ [www.odcmp.com/Services/Programs/Sporter Air Rifle.htm](http://www.odcmp.com/Services/Programs/Sporter_Air_Rifle.htm).

It is up to you, your finances, and the number of junior athletes you will have as to how many rifles you would want to consider buying. Most teams will have 3 or 4 athletes training on one rifle. Of course this will mean re-adjusting the sights for each of the athletes, but this is good training. As you progress and find that you have two or three athletes that are better than the others you may want to consider letting them fire only their particular rifle.

If you continue with the program and have some athletes who are interested in continuing in 3-Position competitive shooting that would be the time to consider moving them into the precision category. We can provide you with more information if you would like.

We hope that the above will prove to be helpful. If we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your interest in 3-position air rifle and The American Legion's Junior Shooting Sports Program.

Please update your Shooting Sports Contact Information and watch for the 2014 Junior Shooting Sports Program Match Program

VETERAN'S ECONOMICS

Byron Erickson

Due to efforts of the American Legion, ESGR, and other agencies and partners the economic situation for many veterans has improved. I am including a Power Point presentation (see appendix C) on what is being done to help our service members reintegrate with society. It can be expounded upon when I present at the next meeting.

Job Assistance

There was an effort to bring more DVOP and LVER (Disabled Veteran Outreach Program and Local Veteran Employment Representative) staffing to the rural states by a bill in congress that would have considered service delivery area, not just veteran population in the funding distribution formula. For now the Job Service offices in Montana have Jobs for Veterans Staffing Grant money that pays for veteran DVOP/LVER staffing in 7 out of the 23 offices in the state. This means over 22,000 square miles per position. The change would have placed assistance in perhaps all of the 23 offices.

Tribal Veteran Endeavors Reservation veterans return home to high unemployment rates and the economic and social challenges of reservation life. We have not forgotten them. Attached you will find two pictures of how data is compiled. One is by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the other is by the State. Below is the different criteria used to establish the data.



**Research & Analysis Bureau
Labor Force Calculations**



**Bureau of Indian Affairs
Labor Force Calculations**

Please Note: The Research and Analysis Bureau and the Bureau of Indian Affairs use different criteria for calculating the labor force rates which will yield different results.

Research and Analysis Bureau Criteria:

- Statistics represent labor characteristics of the reservation, not the tribe.
- Unemployment rates produced by Montana Department of Labor
 - Labor Force definition:
 - Civilian, non-institutional population 16 years and older
 - The sum of Employment and Unemployment
- Employment definition:
 - Did any work as paid employer or,
 - Worked in their own business, profession, or farm or,
 - Worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family owned enterprise
- Unemployment Rate definition:
 - Equal to the number of Unemployed divided by number in the Labor Force

Bureau of Indian Affairs Criteria:

- Statistics represent labor characteristics of the tribe, not the reservation.
- Labor Force definition:
 - Number of tribal members between 16 and 64 years old
 - Available for work
 - Not disabled or incarcerated
- Employment definition:
 - Tribal members working for money
- Unemployment definition:
 - Calculated by subtracting

Comments: As you can see the BIA has substantially higher numbers (see attachments on tribal data). My analysis finds the BIA analysis closer to reality. 15 hours of work is not a living. Owning a business does not mean you are making money. Doing work for any employer could mean one hour of work for someone who reported giving you wages. I adopt the BIA analysis as it is a clearer picture. The concern here is the economy tribal veterans' face when they get home.

While the state Job Services have stepped up their assistance to reservation areas it may be that the JVSG funding should be expanded to include tribal funded DVOP positions. Funding is provided to Guam, Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. It seems tribes should be considered.

There has not been any movement to assist tribal veterans since the information above was reported last year.

Veteran Services Provider Meetings

There are grassroots efforts across Montana to maximize available services to veterans that will assist them with self sufficiency. These meetings are made up of service organization representatives, VA counselors, congressional field representatives, Job Service representatives, State Vocational Rehabilitation, numerous VA representatives, and many more.

The meetings have coordinative, and cross educational value. They are located in Bozeman, Billings, Kalispell, Missoula, Butte; and regional ones in Great Falls (Browning, Cut Bank, Shelby, Havre), Glendive (Sidney, Miles City). Some regional meetings rotate. Helena had one previously that may be revived. Some meet monthly and others quarterly or biannually.

Keith Kelly Sworn In

Keith Kelly, the Montana Commissioner of Labor, has taken the Oath of Office as the Assistant Secretary for Veteran Employment and Training, U.S. DOL/VETS. He is a Vietnam Veteran. This is a great honor for Keith Kelly and an opportunity for Montana values.

The new position is restrictive for ethical reasons and Keith will not be able to do much in Montana for a couple of years.

Stand Downs and Homelessness

The VA funds Stand Downs for all veterans who show up. The U. S. DOL/VETS monies support Homeless Veteran Stand Downs only. The DOL grant is getting so restrictive grant applicants may tire of the process and not apply for it in the future.

Stan Downs are valuable as they provide needed services to all veterans and those who are homeless.

Health Care

There have been new VA Clinics started in Montana to help veterans who need care many miles away from Fort Harrison. The new clinics are at Libby, Havre, Lewistown, and Cut Bank.

In the Sidney area it has been reported that veterans need more medical and psychological assistance.

See Appendix B

WAYS & MEANS

Merv Gunderson

I would like to thank committee members Mike Susag, and Pete Fabani for their assistance.

The Ways and Means Committee looked at several options for revenue generation this year. We recommended leaving the Big K in place. The Big K is a premier fundraiser that distributes funds to Posts, Units, Squadrons and Districts; as well as, deriving revenue for the Department. The Ways and Means committee believes it is essential to keep a fundraiser in place that rewards those entities that promote the program. The label program has long been a good revenue source for the Department. The Ways and Means committee recommended we continue the label program.

The largest fundraiser for the Department has continually been our firearms raffle. The Ways and Means committee recommended we raffle a "Quigley" Sharps rifle for this year. The nice thing about this rifle is it is made in Montana by the Shiloh Arms Company located in Big Timber. In the past we have received complaints that not everyone wants to win a weapon. This year the Finance Committee recommended a second place prize that would be well accepted by all individuals. Pamela Harr was contacted and agreed to let us purchase a bronze statuette titled, "Taps". That prize is very valuable and will make a nice addition to household or Post. The third and fourth place prizes will be cash of \$300 and \$200 respectfully.

The Ways and Means committee recommended that tickets for the rifle raffle be distributed on a request basis. It has proven to be very costly when we send books of tickets to Posts that do not sell or promote the fundraiser. Additional cost for printing tickets creates a problem. Especially, when hundreds of unsold tickets are returned to the Department Adjutant at convention. This year the committee recommended the tickets have sequential numbers and placed in books of 15 tickets. The price per ticket is \$10.00 or three for \$20.00. In an effort to

ensures those selling tickets get a portion of the income, the entity selling the tickets is allowed to retain \$10.00 from each book for their fundraising efforts. The net gain for the Department is a minimum of \$90.00 to a maximum of \$140.00 per book.

Total fundraising for the Department of Montana has exceeded our expectations. The Big K fundraiser produced a profit of \$1,996.13. At this time the Rifle Raffle has raised approximately \$8,500.00 profit and is still growing. The mailing label program is still a good stable and made a profit of \$17,144.00. That figure could continue to grow. The Legionnaire Insurance Trust brought a substantial amount to the budget this year. That will be covered in the Finance report and the Insurance Trust finance director's report.

Finally, the Ways and Means Committee would like to acknowledge and thank Kevin Kent for his efforts in providing support for our fundraising efforts. Kevin developed the raffle tickets and has been instrumental in providing information on the Montana Legion web site.

WOMEN VETERANS COORDINATOR

Ruth Chaney

This has been a year of position development and outreach to members of the eleven American Legion Districts in Montana. Although the position has existed for approximately 3 years, focusing the outreach efforts in productive ways has been a challenge. In the spring of 2013, I attended all eleven District meetings in an effort to talk directly to and with Legion members, men and women, throughout the state. The effort was instructive in several ways. Very few women seem to be active at the Post and District level throughout the state. The largest number of women attending District meetings occurred in two Districts. A few Districts had one woman attending the District meeting, and several had none. When male Legionnaires were asked if they had women members in their Posts, all said yes, but most went on to say the women are not active in Post activities because "they prefer to attend Auxiliary meetings", and in several instances I was told the women members were ill or gone on the day of the District meeting.

My talk at each District meeting focused on creating awareness among the male members as to why women would choose to join the American Legion and why they would not. I noted that the Commander sets the tone of welcoming and inclusiveness for women veterans, or they set a tone of exclusion. Women do not want to be treated different or special, but we do expect to be equal in the Posts we choose to join.

It is important to women and to the American Legion that women be actively recruited as members and encouraged to be active participants in Legion activities. Membership goals tied to the 2019 anniversary are unlikely to be met without appealing to women veterans. Women, whose veteran benefits are lacking in many ways, need the powerful legislative voice of the American Legion to put forward and fight for benefits more attuned to our specific needs. And women veterans are just as interested as male veterans in “veterans helping veterans” and in advancing the ideals of Americanism within our youth. Participation of women in American Legion Posts throughout Montana will only increase the effectiveness of local Posts as they strive to assist youth and veterans in their communities. The more fully the American Legion in Montana appeals to and recruits ALL veterans, both men and women, the greater value it will have and the more fully it will achieve American Legion goals.

The American Legion is making an effort at all levels to appeal to women veterans. However, cultural changes within the Legion and the Legion Auxiliary are needed to fully convince women they are welcome and will be treated as equals. For example, Sons of the American Legion is a very fine organization that promotes values of Americanism to those who qualify to join. The qualifications to belong are strictly male. Membership criteria for the Legion Auxiliary includes women veterans. Quite often, I was told by male Legionnaires that women veterans “prefer to be with the women in the Legion Auxiliary”. The question is, why do women veterans prefer the Auxiliary over the Legion? Women veterans need to belong to the American Legion, NOT the Legion Auxiliary. The American Legion sponsors Boys State and the Auxiliary sponsors Girls State. Some local Posts do not have an Auxiliary, and thus a deserving young high school woman is not afforded the opportunity offered to her male classmate. Male spouses of female veterans are not eligible to join the Legion Auxiliary, and thus there is no Legion organization for them to participate in. We need male spouses to support their Legion wife and such support may be more forthcoming when there is a Legion activity husbands can participate in to further benefit the Legion and the community. A Legion organization that welcomes male spouses of women veterans encourages a shared interest between husband and wife will benefit the Legion as a whole.

As the American Legion more actively attempts to appeal to women veterans, determining success will be difficult given lack of a gender selection on the Legion application form. Unless a formal tracking method for women veterans within the Legion is developed, determining success in recruiting them to join the organization will be anecdotal and based on how visible women are in Post, District, and Department activities. Determining what recruiting methods are most successful in appealing to women veterans will be difficult, and less than

effective recruiting methods may be repeatedly used because of the inability to determine effectiveness in a timely manner. The American Legion is the largest veterans organization. It needs to appropriately resource it's recruitment of women veterans and the avenues by which we determine recruiting success.

The Legion webmaster developed a website for the position of Women Veterans Outreach Coordinator, as well as a blog. The blog is a useful tool in overcoming the distances in such a large state, and enable women veterans, in particular, to discuss in an open forum, issues of importance to them. Although the blog has had almost 200 hits to date, discussions between women veterans have yet to occur. It has been a useful tool for me to put information out that is potentially read by women veterans throughout the state. Hopefully, it will evolve into a tool by which women veterans address and discuss issues and obtain varied perspectives on the quality of their veterans benefits. Collating issues expressed by women veterans on the blog can then be forwarded to the Department Commander who can relay them to the appropriate Departments and legislative bodies.

SUMMARY: As the Women Veteran Outreach Coordinator, I have had a year of enlightenment. I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to attend the District meetings throughout Montana but am not encouraged by the low number of women participating at the District level. Discussions with male Legionnaires rarely elicited descriptions of active attempts to appeal to women veterans. Bringing women veterans into the American Legion and embracing them as veterans with equal rights is a significant culture change for the organization. It's going to be a "slow go" and will require a focused and unrelenting effort into the foreseeable future to achieve an organization that reflects in numbers and enthusiasm, the contributions of women in our military.

Steering Committee
Elmer Palmer

The Steering Committee met several times through Electronic Methods, and two meetings of a majority of the committee on 15 October 2012, Carlisle, White, Gunderson, McLean and Palmer; and on 25 October, 2012, Carlisle, White, Hancock, Ellwein, McLean, Monteaux, Gunderson and Palmer. In November two District Commanders, Dale Webb and Scott Eldridge, and Past National Vice Commander John Pellegrini were added to the committee.

In January the chairman met with Finance Chairman Gunderson and Adjutant White to assign cost savings to the various recommendations. A conservative estimate was used in most cases, so the actual savings could be more, but not likely

less. Most of the labor since that time has been reviewing the draft of this report and making necessary corrections in the language and order of the findings. A few items were modified, combined or removed. The ideas put forth in this report are highly supported by the committee, most with unanimous support of committee members.

The purpose of this committee is to look for ways to streamline the Department of Montana with a look to saving money and possibly form a more productive operation, getting more performance for the money we spend.

Other departments and the National Organization are considering the same measures. Some Departments have found it necessary to raise dues and others have dropped participation in some of the Legion's most prestigious programs. Either of these answers would be disastrous to the Department.

The time to act is now. Recent discussions with Adjutant White has indicated that with the current budget of the Department of Montana, and the expected raises in costs for materials, services and postage, and the short time expectations in membership gain, the Department of Montana could easily find it necessary to cut programs or increase dues.

With all due respect to the distaff portion of the Department, the 'he' and 'him' are generic and should not insult any female Legionnaire reading this missive. The following recommendations are presented to the Department Executive Committee and Convention for approval:

1. Eliminate the four Zone Commanders. This action has been taken by other departments, and has had no unfavorable effect on the department. The savings realized would be four call-ins for Fall Conference and Convention. This action would not eliminate the term zone or the makeup of the current zones. **When the position of Zone Commander was originally created, the prime duty assigned to them was conducting the Zone Oratorical contests. Shortly thereafter, it became evident that the Zone contests were not being conducted in all Zones as intended, and the Zone contest was combined with the Department contest. This position is also a burden on the district providing the Zone commander, decreasing the available leadership in that district. The Department of South Carolina has done this, and after a year they feel that the benefits were not only a financial savings, but resulted in a better relationship between the District**

Commanders and the Department Commander and Department Adjutant, and vice versa. **Savings: \$3400**

2. Eliminate the positions of Chairman of the Membership Committee and Membership and Post Activities Chairman. We will create an Appointed Department Office of Membership Director a member of the Executive Committee with Voice no Vote, appointed for a renewable term of three years. This would not realize a savings, but would strengthen the membership program of the department. Strengthening our membership will bring in more dues and cover part of our programs. **Making a Membership Director position and making it a non-voting position on the Executive Committee has a couple of advantages for the department. First, it will ensure that the person in charge of membership will be present to answer to and/or give input to the Executive Committee at the meetings of the DEC, and second it puts the knowledge of the membership leader at the immediate availability of the DEC. Several departments have been using a Membership Director for years, often making it a paid position.**

Cost \$35

3. Post Activities duties are few, and will be handled by the Vice Commander, as he will no longer have direct membership duties, but will retain the general membership responsibilities held by all officers. His primary job will be developing leadership skills and filling in for the Commander as needed. He will take on any additional duties as assigned by the Commander, with particular interest in Post Activities. **As Past Commander McLean refers to the position of Alternate NEC, the vice commander is in a lot of ways the 'spare tire' for the commander. This does give him/her an opportunity to gain leadership experience and a feeling 'close-up' to all the duties of the commander.**

Wash

4. Reduce the Membership Committee to one member from each Zone plus one 'At Large' member. This will reduce the number of members from 13 to five. The saving would be eight call-ins for both the Fall Conference and Convention. With a term of three years, the rotation of these members would be determined after implementation. **The current makeup of the Membership Committee is unwieldy. Many of the**

members do not attend the meeting because they figure there are enough other members there and they are not needed. Additionally, it is hard to find five members that have an interest in membership, and nearly impossible to find thirteen members that are interested and willing to accept the duties.

Savings: \$2800

5. Create the Appointed Department Offices of Americanism Director a member of the Executive Committee with Voice no Vote, appointed for a renewable term of three years. All Americanism programs will report to this Director, who will in turn report to the Executive Committee and thus the commander. This will replace the Americanism Chairman.

Cost \$35

6. Remove Training from the Education and Training Committee and combine the Education and Oratorical committees forming the Civic Programs Committee to be responsible for all of the Constitution and Government programs; Oratory, Constitutional Essay and Government Survey. Additionally, the Civics Program Committee would be assigned to the Americanism Director, in keeping with the organization maintained at the National level. With a membership of five members with one being designated the chair, a three year term with rotation to be determined after implementation. **These programs, if properly presented, can feed on each other and given the opportunity to see the whole picture, a contestant in one program can easily adapt into another program. In a department the size of this one, we should be able to operate all these programs, but it takes coordination between them, and putting them all in one committee will do that much better.**

Savings: \$1050

7. Create the Appointed Department Office of Training Director, member of the Executive Committee with Voice no Vote, appointed for a renewable term of three years. This Director will be in charge of all training. With the advent of the new American Legion Extension Course and the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) training program, the National Organization has taken the responsibility for training. The Director will accomplish the scheduling of training. **As discussed in the Membership Director, making this person a member of the Executive Committee creates a closer linkage between this person and the Executive Committee. Our training committee has spent many hours working to**

achieve some form of training to reach the 'blue cap' Legionnaire, and the National Organization has put that package together, The Training Director should work hard with the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee to see that we get this training to the members of the department.

Cost: \$350

8. Reduce the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Committee to a single SAL Liaison. National requires that there be a liaison between the Department and the Detachment. A committee of four is an overkill of this requirement. **There is really no business conducted by this committee. The liaison could be done by a single individual member. Savings, three call-ins for Convention.**

Wash

9. Revise the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will take responsibility for all financial activity, to include Ways and Means and Endowment. The Finance Committee Chairman will become the Department Finance Officer. The committee will consist of seven members, to one member from each zone and three 'at-large' members, with no more than two members from any zone. Ways and Means and Endowment will be sub-committees of the Finance committee, as assigned by the Committee Chairman. The term of office will be three years and makeup will be such that no more than three members will be appointed in any year. This will eliminate the Ways and Means and Endowment Committees. The Commander will assign the Chairman/Finance Officer from within the Finance Committee. **Initial terms of office will be adjusted to give proper spacing to the rotation. The committee has spoken with the current and former JAG, and they states there is no problem with these procedures. No conflict of interest will be present. In order for donations to qualify for the Montana Charitable Tax Credit, the Montana American Legion Endowment needs to be a separately incorporated 501(c)3 tax exempt entity. When this incorporation takes place, the American Legion of Montana Finance Committee would be listed as the Board of Directors and the Finance Officer as its primary officer. This corporation would have its own set of bylaws directing its operation. By making the Ways and Means Committee and Endowment Committee**

sub-committees of the Finance Committee, the sub-committee could meet after the Finance Committee, having plans for the approval of the Convention, since this would occur before the first day of the Convention.

Savings: \$1300

10. Make better use of Electronic Media. Resolution ? approved at the 92nd Convention in Miles City called for all posts to have a post email address by the following convention. Utilizing email for general correspondence with the posts can reduce the postage necessary. **The committee realizes that we have too many older legionnaires that cannot handle electronic communications, and that it will take time to get some posts onto the email and web. But the department should use these means of communication as often as we possibly can. Each letter that we don't send saves us the price of the stamp, paper, and envelop. Savings: \$750-1000 (conservative.)**
11. Montana Legionnaire. The largest single line item in the budget after wages and benefits is the Montana Legionnaire. Each issue runs at a cost of roughly \$6630.00, and postage costs are expected to drive this cost higher. The committee suggested that this cost be examined to see what changes can be made. **There are three options that could happen with the paper. Option 1. Make ONE ISSUE ONLY of the Montana Legionnaire an 'electronic only', publishing the issue and to the Department website and emailing a copy to all Legionnaires that provide an email to the Department Adjutant. This option would provide a savings of mailing and printing costs for ONE ISSUE of \$5380.00. Option2. Reduce that number of issues of the Montana Legionnaire from SIX (6) issues per year to FIVE (5) issues per year. This would save the cost of editing, printing and mailing ONE ISSUE ONLY of the Montana Legionnaire totaling \$6630.00. Option 3. Reduce the publication of the Montana Legionnaire to a quarterly paper, printed four times a year. The time of printing for the four issues would be adjusted by the Department Executive Committee. Savings: \$5380 for making one issue an 'Electronic only!' issue. \$6630 for missing one issue completely. \$13260 for making the Montana Legionnaire a quarterly.**

Total savings. As stated above, each of these items was evaluated by the Adjutant and Finance Chairman. They used a conservative “best estimate” to come up with the numbers. Depending on which of the publishing options is selected, the final Total Savings are as follows:

**Totals: \$14260 for making one issue an ‘Electronic only!’ issue.
\$15510 for missing one issue completely.
\$22140 for making the Montana Legionnaire a quarterly.**

Implementing these changes will require actions by the Executive committee and changes to the Department Constitution and By-laws. While examining the constitution to consider the needed changes, Past Judge Advocate McLean and the chairman found that there are several areas where the constitution is in need of change for both form and content. This would be a perfect time for the Commander to assign a review by the Constitution Committee to examine the constitution and by-laws and update them.

Conclusions: Since the purpose of the Steering Committee was to work for the best savings of funds for the Department of Montana, the obvious conclusion would be to accept the largest savings and drop the publishing of the Montana Legionnaire to four issues and maximize the savings. In informal talks with Adjutants and Commanders at the Spring Meetings in Indianapolis, the committee chairman found that several of the departments have already dropped their paper to a quarterly publication.

It is the recommendation that the report of the Ad Hoc Steering Committee be accepted with the inclusion of the quarterly publication option, saving the Department of Montana \$22,140.00 in this coming year. Resolution __ has been submitted to the Resolutions Committee to adopt the actions of this committee as the actions of the Convention of the Department of Montana.