

# **THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 118, GARDINER, MONTANA**

## **Adjutant's and Commander's Newsletter**

**December 4, 2009**

Comrades,

I am greatly obliged to you, and to all who have come forward at the call of their country (Abraham Lincoln).

### Roll Call

The Post continued its support of veterans, their families, and our community through the summer and autumn, with meetings at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month in the basement of the Gardiner Community Center.

Thank you for paying your dues and supporting The American Legion. We ask you to keep working to bring new members to the post and achieve our goal of 53 members. The Legion is this nation's strongest advocate for getting American service members the benefits they were promised for serving their country. In the past six months, the Legion has pushed Congress to create job training programs for soldiers returning from combat, and to extend job assistance programs to any National Guard soldier that served full time. The Legion is also lobbying for the expansion of work study programs to place new veterans in better paying jobs. Perhaps most importantly, the Legion is a place where veterans can go to talk with people that understand what they've been through, who will listen without passing judgment, and do what they can to help.

Gardiner Post 118 was presented with a post excellence award from Dave Rehbein, the National Commander of The American Legion, at the 2009 Montana convention. This prestigious award honors American Legion posts that achieve a high standard of participation in each of four key areas: membership, youth activities, community service, and service to U.S. troops or veterans.

The Post received an award for "Best Commercial" from the Gardiner Rodeo Parade organizing committee for leading the June 20<sup>th</sup> parade with the National and Post colors. We thank Rick Wallen for coordinating this effort.

The students and faculty of the Gardiner school invited Post members to a beautiful and inspirational ceremony on Veteran's Day. We were deeply honored by the respect and devotion the students demonstrated towards our troops, veterans, and missing and departed comrades.

### Service Accomplishments

The Post continued to distribute Blue Star Banners to families in the Gardiner area with members currently serving in the Armed Forces. Blue Star Service Banners were a common sight during WWI and WWII, and were resurrected by the Legion in 2001. Each blue star represents one family member serving in the military.

The Post distributed remembrance poppies in June and served coffee and other items on August 15<sup>th</sup> to raise \$100 for the Fisher House Foundation which builds and donates “comfort homes” on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful times. You can donate online at **www.fisherhouse.org** or send a check to **Fisher House Foundation, 111 Rockville Pike, Suite 420, Rockville, MD 20850-5168**. The Foundation has received an A+ rating from the American Institute of Philanthropy.

The Post conducted a clean-up of the road section between mile posts 11 and 13 along highway 89 on July 16. We thank Rick Wallen for leading this effort. We also appreciate the participation of Carolyn Wallen, Terry Wilks, and Marie Yanc from our “unofficial auxiliary.”

The Post donated used cell phones to the **Cell Phones for Soldiers** program. Proceeds from donated cell phones are used to purchase prepaid calling cards for American troops. You can donate by sending used cell phones to the **Cell Phone Recycling Center, 2555 Bishop Cir W, Dexter, MI 48130-9916**. Shipping instructions can be found at **www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com** and include: 1) deactivate phones and turn off power; 2) keep the battery attached to the phone; 3) indicate on the package that it contains lithium-ion batteries (no lithium metal); and 4) only send a maximum of three phones/batteries per envelope.

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, Rick Wallen from the Post taught Cub Scouts from Troop 551 the proper and dignified way to dispose of unserviceable United States flags. We thank Rick Wallen for his time and expertise.

### Membership Updates

Laneda Stark was called to Post Everlasting in February 2009 and interred with military honors at Mountain View Cemetery. Laneda was a 58-year member of Gardiner Post 118 following her Army service during World War II. Please remember Laneda in your thoughts and prayers.

SSG Anne Mitchell was the Soldier of the Month for October 2009 while serving at Camp Victory, Iraq with the 143rd Military Police Det (L&O). Anne safely returned to Bozeman on October 31, for which we are all eternally grateful. **Welcome Home, Anne!**

Harvey Yanc was presented with the Commander’s Appreciation Award on November 10<sup>th</sup> in recognition of his outstanding and devoted service to the Post.

Special thanks to Post member Dave Stempien for his generous contribution to the Post and the activities we support!

We maintain a Post photo album at <http://www.mtlegion.org/> where we continue to add photographs of post activities and members. To view the photographs, choose “Photo Album” and then double-click on the “Department Posts” picture. Next double-click on the “Gardiner Post #118” picture. There are four pages of pictures currently in the Post’s photo album. If you click a particular thumbnail photo, then you can view a larger-sized version and read a longer

description of the activity. The current edition of the Post newsletter will also appear under the Post Newsletter section and under the Post Information page.

In Closing

We extend our appreciation to our countrymen who have answered our every need. And we celebrate the magnificent men and women who willingly and selflessly continue to go into harm's way to protect this great Nation (James Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps)

Sincerely,



P.J. White  
Commander  
&  
Wendell Olson  
Adjutant



Harvey Yanc (right) received the 2009 Commander's Appreciation Award from P.J. White (left) on November 10<sup>th</sup> in recognition of his outstanding and devoted service to the Post, especially with coordinating the Boy's State program.