



**YELLOWSTONE POST 4**  
**1540 BROADWATER AVENUE • BILLINGS, MT**



# QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

**ISSUE 2-24**

**April – June 2024**

## Dates to Remember

- April – Military Child Month
- 4/5 – Gold Star Spouses Day
- 4/9 – Nat’l Former POW Recognition Day
- 4/14 – Air Force Reserve Birthday
- 4/15 – Tax Day
- 4/22 – Earth Day
- 4/23 – Army Reserve Birthday
- 4/24 – Administrative Professionals Day
- 4/30 – Nat’l Military Brats Day
- May – Military Appreciation Month
- 5/2 – National Day of Prayer
- 5/4 – National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Day
- 5/8 – Victory in Europe (VE) Day
- 5/10 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- 5/12 – Mother’s Day
- 5/13 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day
- 5/17 – Nat’l Defense Transportation Day
- 5/18 – Armed Forces Day
- 5/27 – Memorial Day
- June – PTSD Awareness Month
- 6/6 – D-Day
- 6/14 – Army Birthday / Flag Day
- 6/15 – Juneteenth Day
- 6/16 – Father’s Day
- 6/20 – American Eagle Day
- 6/20 – Summer Solstice
- 6/23 – Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday
- 6/27 – PTSD Awareness Day



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## SURVEY LOOKING AT VETERAN CARE IN MT

KTVH – Helena; article by John Riley

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services is encouraging Montana veterans to participate in an online survey designed to aid the state in addressing long-term care needs.

“The goal of the survey is to thoroughly examine Montana’s veteran population demographics, assess the current state of long-term care services, and evaluate future needs,” said Senior and Long Term Care (SLTC) administrator Barb Smith.

The survey is estimated to take around 10 minutes and is available online at [veteransurvey.mt.gov](https://www.veteransurvey.mt.gov). The deadline to participate has been extended to May 31, 2024.

The survey will evaluate the need for nursing homes, domiciliary, and Alzheimer’s disease support services, as well as the various types of community and in-home care that are needed. Assessing the condition and capacity of Montana’s veteran cemeteries also falls within the scope of the project.

“Valuable insight from survey participants will help us tailor our services more effectively, ensuring they meet the real and evolving needs of our veteran population,” Smith said. “Individuals needing assistance to complete the survey are encouraged to reach out to local veteran organizations.”

Approval for conducting the Veterans’ Long-Term Care Needs Survey was established through House Bill 264 which passed with broad bipartisan support. The bill was signed into law by Governor Greg Gianforte in April of 2023.

**Source:** <https://www.ktvh.com/news/state-conducting-a-survey-looking-at-veterans-care-in-montana>



## COMMANDER’S CORNER

Hi All,

Just checking in to keep you informed.

Elections are April 15 and all paid members in good standing are encouraged to attend.

Summer will soon be here and if you enjoy the outdoors, we have American Legion Baseball about to kick off their season. We also have some softball teams that we sponsor that would love having a cheer section.

More improvements have been made at the Post and there are more to come.

As Legionnaires, always remember: Service before Self, and don't forget to play nice.

Your Commander, Jay Adams

**VA MONTANA HEALTH CARE PRESS RELEASE**

Beginning today (March 5, 2024), all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving in the military – at home or abroad – are now eligible to enroll directly in VA health care. Under the PACT Act, a phased-in approach to enrollment eligibility was established. However, the VA recently announced that they were expanding coverage and eliminating the phased-in approach – meaning that millions of Veterans are becoming eligible for VA health care up to eight years earlier than written into law.

With this expansion, all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country – at home or abroad – will be eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without first applying for VA benefits. That includes all Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, and any other combat zone after 9/11. It includes all Veterans who deployed in support of the Global War on Terror.

This includes Veterans who never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty here at home – by working with chemicals, pesticides, lead, asbestos, certain paints, nuclear weapons, x-rays, and more.

“This is a big expansion of health care for Montana Veterans. We now have three new groups of Veterans eligible for VA health care years earlier than called for by the PACT Act,” said Montana VA Health Care System Interim Director, Duane Gill. “Even if you never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or serving on active duty here at home – you can enroll, too.”

Veterans do not need to be sick or file a claim in order to be eligible. Veterans only need to provide proof that they served in one of those locations or operations – or participated in one of the activities that could have exposed them to toxins or hazards.

To enroll, Veterans need to visit [Apply For Health Care | Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](#) or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more and apply for VA health care today.

Montana VA serves over 47,000 enrolled Veterans across Montana—an area roughly 147,000 square miles in size. Veterans are cared for by a staff of 1,400 at 18 sites of care across the state. One third of Montana VA employees are Veterans. Veterans can connect to their VA healthcare records, information, and message their VA care teams 24 hours a day through the [MyHealthVet patient portal](https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/how-to-use-mhv) (<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/how-to-use-mhv>). Montana VA information, updates, and events are available on the [Montana VA website](https://www.va.gov/montana-health-care) (<https://www.va.gov/montana-health-care>) and [Facebook page](#) (<https://www.facebook.com/VAMontana>).  
**Source:** <https://www.va.gov/montana-health-care/news-releases/veterans-eligible-to-enroll-with-va-sooner-than-expected/>

**ADJUTANT'S NOTES**

The American Legion was founded on four main pillars of service; this quarter I will focus on the first pillar. The American Legion was founded by veterans to help veterans after their discharge from military service. Within this pillar can be found American Legion services and programs.

Our organization's positions and programs are guided by resolutions passed by American Legion National Convention delegates, and committee and commission members who represent 2.6 million wartime veterans and their families. These programs, and the men and women who take the time to perform them, are what allow The American Legion to make a difference locally, and on the state and national levels. It's who we are and what we do.

1. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation – Focuses on VA health care, veterans' benefits claims, the GI Bill, jobs and business opportunities, adjustment assistance for wounded warriors returning home, and other important issues taken up by our veterans.

2. National Security – The Legion's ongoing commitment to success in the global war on terrorism - that we support the troops and their mission. Full commitment to our POW/MIA's, and supports opportunities for legal immigration.

3. Americanism – This organization promotes obedience to law and order, and respect for the U.S. Flag. The American Legion builds enthusiasm for public service among young people through such programs as Boys Nation and the National Oratorical Contest.

4. Children and Youth – Help children who are sick or in need, or simply looking for opportunities to achieve their goals. The American Legion has advocated on their behalf, fighting against such social ills as child pornography, teen suicide, drug abuse and violence at home.

The American Legion, with 2.7 million members and more than 14,000 posts, has flourished since 1919 because of these pillars, these values. The pillars are us, and we are them. As you read the following pages, take pride. You are among millions of extraordinary veterans who call themselves Legionnaires, past, present and future. And it is our duty to keep strengthening the pillars.

David Walters, Adjutant

**POST 4 MONTHLY EVENTS**

- American Legion Meeting – Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 7:00 p.m.
- Executive Board Meeting – Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 6:00 p.m.
- Legion Riders Meeting – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 7:00 p.m.
- Auxiliary Meeting – Every 4<sup>th</sup> Monday at 7:00 p.m.
- Sons of American Legion Meeting – Every 1<sup>st</sup> Monday at 7:00 p.m.
- Dart League – Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Sunday
- Pool League – Every Monday & Thursday

**Find us Online!**

Like us on Facebook & keep up to date with our Post events ... Search for:  
**American Legion Post 4**

**LEGION HALL RENTAL**

Post 4 has TWO Banquet Halls (with bar) available to rent for special functions.  
 Please contact Maria Rivera at 406-671-4598 for more info.

## New Veterans' Living Center in Miles City

HELENA, Mont.— The Veterans Health Administration awarded a contract on January 30th for a new Community Living Center in Miles City, Montana. The new CLC will take approximately 18 months to construct and is expected to open in the Fall of 2025.

“We are pleased to announce the new Community Living Center is coming to Miles City,” said Duane Gill, Montana VA Health Care System’s Interim Executive Director. “Montana Veterans deserve and have earned the right to receive the highest quality of care. For those Veterans who are needing nursing home level of care, Montana VA Health Care System is excited to announce that we will soon be able to provide that care in this new, state-of-the-art, modern facility.”

The new facility construction is estimated at more than \$6 million and will host a variety of services to include: clinical staff (including an MD), Nursing, Veteran Transportation Service, Social Work, Primary Care, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Recreational Therapy, Nutrition and Food, and Chaplain Services. The new facility, located at 2300 Wilson Street, will be leased by the Montana VA for the next 20 years and will serve Veterans across the state. The current Miles City CLC has approximately a dozen residents. Once the new facility is opened, residents will be moved to the new location with no loss in care or services. Then, the current CLC location will be transferred to Custer County.

Source: <https://www.va.gov/montana-health-care/news-releases/va-awards-contract-for-new-community-living-center/>

## SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Post 4’s Squadron of Sons of the American Legion will begin meeting again in April! Beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, the SAL will meet every month on the first Monday at 7:00 p.m. at Post 4 in the Yellowstone Room. The SAL is open to all males whose parents or grandparents served in the US Military and have American Legion membership. If you have questions, or know someone who would like to join, please contact: Jake Adams at 406-672-6457.



### POST 4’s

## MESS HALL



### KITCHEN HOURS

(new kitchen hours begin in May)

Monday-Friday: 5:00 – 9:00 PM

Saturday: Special Occasion Availability

### BAR HOURS

Monday – Friday: 5:00 PM ‘til closing

Saturday & Sunday: 11:00 AM ‘til closing

## AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS

The Riders have been busy this winter. We presented colors at the fights in November and December. Also, an election cycle has been completed. The weather has been hit and miss but we’ve managed a couple of short rides every month this year so far. The Riders are having a “Knock Off the Frost” ride on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>; we’ll be meeting prior to noon to check out each other’s bike, do a little safety check. All are welcome to join. We are also putting on a Poker Run this fall. Details to come as the committee gets to work. As always, everyone is welcome to join us on rides as guests. Keep two wheels down.

Trevor Barnhart, Director  
Yellowstone American Legion Riders  
406-598-5055



## HONOR GUARD

Honor Guard has been relatively quiet in 2024 so far. We closed out 2023 with 62 Honor Guards; with only 52 weeks in a year, that’s quite a lot. In January, we did honors for: Charles Gilje (Army); Kenneth Schlaht (Marines); and Reid Hagan (Air Force). There were no honors in February.

Al Hager, Honor Guard



## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We would really like to be more inclusive of and see more activity from our Post 4 Legion members. If you have any ideas about how we can achieve this, please let us know by sending us an email: Adjutant David Walters: [alyellowstonepost4@gmail.com](mailto:alyellowstonepost4@gmail.com)

## UPCOMING BAR FUNCTIONS

- 4/2 – Traveling Softball Fundraiser, Taco Tuesday
- 4/12 – Pool Tournament
- 4/14 – Am. Legion District 11 Meeting
- 4/27 – YALR Legion Riders Knock Off the Frost Ride
- 5/7 – Softball Season Begins!
- 5/27 – Memorial Day
- 6/22 – B.A.C.A. Poker Run

## We want to hear from YOU!

Do you have comments or ideas to submit to the newsletter? Email Sara Floyd at [post4auxiliary@gmail.com](mailto:post4auxiliary@gmail.com). The deadline for the next newsletter is June 10<sup>th</sup>.

### AUXILIARY

Greetings from Auxiliary Unit 4! We are officially official! We have received our Unit Charter!! I am pleased to announce that we now have 24 paid members; many are ALA members for the first time! So far, our average attendance is ten at our monthly meetings. Elections took place at our March meeting and here are our officers for 2024-2025:

President – Sylvia Machler; Vice President – April Wheeler; Secretary – Sara Floyd; Treasurer – Amy Barnhart; Chaplain – Sue Davidson; and Sergeant-At-Arms – Lori Warnell. Congratulations! New officers will be installed in April.

As we move forward into the coming year, fundraising will be important so we have the funds to do the work of the Unit and to support the work of the Post. As the only American Legion Auxiliary Unit in Billings, we are tasked with hosting the District ALA meeting on April 14th. Because so many of our members are new to these activities, many of us are learning as we go, leaning on the experience of those members who have been involved for a time. But with the “can do” attitude our members present, all is going well. We also are planning our next Poppy Drive to be held on National Poppy Day, May 24, 2024. With assistance from Post 4 members, donations, and sales of patches and decals, our last poppy drive raised nearly \$1,700.

ALA Girls State is quickly approaching. So, we also are actively recruiting girls to attend ALA Girls State reaching out to schools and school groups, area service clubs, 4-H Clubs, FFA clubs, church groups, Girl Scouts, and other youth organizations. We already have two applications and have a goal of two girls from each of the Billings area high schools.

We also are having to reflect on our past year as our members working on our individual annual Year-End Impact numbers. Volunteers so often think they don’t do much, but when each person’s efforts are grouped with the others, the total impact of a small group is amazing. What is already clear is that we have a very generous, energetic, and optimistic group. I look forward to seeing the combined numbers of hours volunteered, individual donations given or dollars spent, miles driven, and the number of veterans, families, and needy children assisted. Based upon what our members have demonstrated so far, we can look forward to a very productive and effective Unit in this new year.

Joy Mariska, Unit Secretary  
Phone: 406-252-3680 jamariska2@gmail.com

### POST 4 DIRECTORY

#### AMERICAN LEGION OFFICERS

- Commander ..... Jay Adams
- Vice Commander ..... Pat Weber
- Adjutant ..... David Walters
- Chaplain ..... Daniel Stetler
- Finance Officer ..... Rick Friez
- Sergeant-at-Arms ..... John Miron
- Post Historian ..... Gil Floyd
- Lifetime Honorary SAA ... Matt Grandpre

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Post 4 Adjutant: David Walters  
 Email: alyellowstonepost4@gmail.com  
 Phone: 406-656-1510

Post Operations Director:  
 Maria Rivera  
 Email: mluzrivera11@gmail.com  
 Phone: 406-656-1510

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

- Drew Danforth, Past Commander
- Pat Weber
- Jim Salsbury
- Ryan Parsons
- Bill Bolles
- Harlon Owens



**Legion Meetings  
are EVERY 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Monday at  
7:00 p.m.  
Please join us!**

### CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

Father God, You know that it can be difficult for a person who has returned from battle or stressful military service to reintegrate into ‘normal’ everyday life. You know that veterans can feel isolated and alone even in the midst of their friends and families because there are few around who understand their experience. So I ask You to place in the path of our veterans those who do understand (or strive to), that they may feel less alone. Remind them often that while their fellow human beings may never fully comprehend, You see, You know and You identify with them in everything. Amen.

