



Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154, Inc.

Rathdrum Idaho Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue #5

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Email: rathdrum154@gmail.com

Website: Rathdrumpost154.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RathdrumAmericanLegion>

Mailing Address: PO Box 1116, Rathdrum ID

Meeting at: Lions Club 16114 N. Meyer Rd Rathdrum - Editor: Jean Bledsoe



American Legion Post 154 Mission Statement

The American Legion Post 154 is a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness to support Veterans and the Community at large. We are committed to mentoring and sponsorship of youth programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow service members, veterans, and their families in our communities. Our success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. This organization belongs to the people it serves and the community in which it thrives.

Commander:

Good day American Legion Family. One of our biggest events of the year is our annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Pinegrove Cemetery which will be held on May 31 at 12 p.m. On Memorial Day, many well-intentioned people take time to tell the veterans in their lives, "Thank you for your service". Memorial Day is essentially the one day that we should remember all veterans that are no longer with us, whether that is from combat, everyday accidents, or just the natural course of life when the Commander of us all calls them home. "You 'memorialize' those that decided to sign a contract to be a part of something that would help the American people by joining the American military. In 1967, "Memorial Day" was declared a federal holiday—a century after the first Decoration Day. Observances today are much like they were then, as we participate in parades, share good will with our families and friends, and honor those that gave all to provide us the freedom we enjoy. Many veterans today from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and the War on Terror use it as a date to somberly remember those who didn't make it home and ponder their sacrifices. Indeed, for a lot of today's vets, it may be the most important date we celebrate all year.

The other important event is our Poppy Days. We do this to help folks remember what Memorial Day is all about. Thank you to all that have volunteered to assist us in the local grocery stores. It is a great way to speak with fellow veterans and have the public see us in their community.

I hope you all have a wonderful May and keep safe. For God and Country! Dee Sasse, Commander



SAVE PAPER! SAVE POSTAGE! SAVE TIME!

QUICKLY AND EASILY RENEW ONLINE

July 1st is the start of the American Legion's early renewal drive for 2023 membership. If you can do so, this year we are asking everyone to try to renew early and online. We had 49 members use this process last year and it is easier and faster than sending your dues to the Post 154 PO Box. This takes at least 9 days to process once we get the dues notice versus 24 hours online.

The online process is simple, all you need is your ID card number and your credit card. Using your computer, go to:

<https://www.legion.org/renew> and follow the online instructions. It should only take 2-3 minutes and you're done. Remember this is renewing for 2023, starting July 1.

Also, the earlier you renew the less follow-up renewal letters you receive from National.

Bill Kinder, 1st Vice Commander Membership Chairman

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

IT'S NOT THE AMOUNT YOU PAY TO BECOME A MEMBER, BUT THE PRICE YOU PAID TO BE ELIGIBLE.

Finance Officer:

AMERICAN LEGION POST 154 - FINANCIAL REPORT

MONTH:

March

2022

INCOME / EXPENSE STATEMENT

<u>Income</u>			
	Flag Sales		\$396.00
	Honor Guard		\$450.00
	Donation to Boys State		\$3,200.00
	Membership		\$45.00
	Member donations to Boys/Girls State and Veterans Home		\$57.00
	Member donations to Coffee Fund		\$5.00
	Hat Sales		\$52.00
	Patch Sales		\$5.00
	Interest Income:		\$0.34
Total Income:			\$4,210.34
<u>Expenses</u>			
	Membership		(\$37.50)
	American Legion Idaho to send 8 young men to Boys State		(\$3,200.00)
	Ken Johnson, reimburse for Honor Guard Supplies		(\$34.23)
Total Expense:			(\$3,271.73)
<u>NET INCOME / LOSS:</u>			\$938.61

BALANCE SHEET

<u>Assets:</u>			
	Balance in bank account per statement:		\$6,305.42
	Equipment and Inventory:		\$4,500.00
	Capital Reserves:		\$68,621.11
	Money Market Account - WA Trust: (0.03%)	\$13,780.56	
	Savings Account - Idaho Central CU	\$25.00	
	12-Mo CD - ICCU (0.400% Mat. 6/28/22)	\$20,399.25	
	12-Mo CD - ICCU (0.400% Mat. 7/30/22):	\$20,660.84	
	12-Mo CD - ICCU (0.35% Mat. 2/01/22)	\$13,755.46	
			\$79,426.53
<u>Liabilities:</u>			
	Uncleared checks		(\$3,234.23)
	Restricted Funds (Veterans Home)		(\$308.50)
	Restricted Funds (Boys / Girls State)		(\$1,551.50)
	Restricted Funds (Flag Box Program)		(\$530.01)
	Restricted Funds (Flag Education Program)		(\$130.25)
	Restricted Funds (Honor Guard)		(\$3,846.25)
	Restricted Funds (Coffee Fund)		(\$60.00)
	Restricted Funds - Veterans Recognition Event		(\$3,560.07)
	Total Liabilities		(\$13,220.81)
<u>Net Worth: (Unrestricted Net Worth)</u>			\$66,205.72
	Net Worth Last Month:	\$65,853.07	
	Difference:	\$352.65	

- Len Crosby, Finance Chairman

Legislative Chairman:

Veteran Mammography Bills Pass Senate: The Senate passed VFW-supported [S. 2102](#), *Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas Supporting Expanded Review for Veterans In Combat Environments (SERVICE) Act of 2021*, and [S. 2533](#), *Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act*. The SERVICE Act would require VA to provide mammography screenings to veterans who served in known toxic exposure locations. The MAMMO Act would require VA to carry out a mammography telescreening pilot program, upgrade VA mammography suites to 3-D digital screening, and develop a breast imaging strategic plan for veterans.

Month of the Military Child: April is a time to acknowledge and reflect on the sacrifices and challenges military children experience as a result of their parents' service to our nation. These children maneuver childhood like their civilian peers but with stressors that are unique to the military lifestyle. Separations from parents, frequent relocations, and missed milestones like birthdays are commonplace. Further still, some of them must care for service-injured parents while others experience the loss of a parent as a result of service.

Take Action Now on Toxic Exposure: Thanks to your action last month, the *Honoring our PACT Act* passed the House with a broad bipartisan vote. Now it is time for the Senate to do its job. This historic legislation would ensure toxic-exposed veterans receive the VA health care and benefits they need. It would provide a list of presumptive conditions associated with burn pits and establish a permanent presumptive framework to address any toxic exposure, foreign or domestic, past, present, and future. It would help Post-9/11 veterans, Persian Gulf War veterans, K2 veterans, Atomic veterans, and Vietnam veterans, including those who served in Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Contact your Senators and tell them to vote YES when the *Honoring our PACT Act* is brought to the Senate floor.

HVAC Markup Hearing: The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs conducted a full committee markup on legislation previously discussed in pending legislation hearings. The committee recommended that 17 bills be moved to the House floor. These bills would improve VA's claim process, extend VA work-study allowance, improve Office of Inspector General oversight, increase entrepreneurship opportunities, and offer medical foster homes to veterans who qualify for long-term care.

POLITICS: As we approach the May Primaries please remember:

No American Legion Post can support or assist any political party or candidate for public office.

No discussion of partisan questions is allowed at any American Legion meeting.

No Legion Post can recommend or endorse a candidate for political office.

No Legion Post can lobby for a candidate for political office.

If you are wearing ANY Legion apparel or apparel with a Legion logo (hat, uniform, etc.) you could be considered to be a "representative of the American Legion or your Post". Feel free to support candidates or issues, as you see fit, just take off any Legion apparel first.

House Resolution 7176: House Resolution 7176 will close a loophole that denies certain terminally ill Veterans their VA burial allowance if they do not pass away in a VA facility. Under current law, the "non-service connected burial and plot" benefit from the VA covers burial and funeral expenses up to nearly \$800 for the surviving family of a Veteran – only if they are hospitalized at the VA at the time of death. The Bill would expand eligibility for the VA benefit applying the burial allowance to terminally ill Veterans that were discharged from receiving care at a VA hospital or nursing home to pass comfortably at home under hospice care. (cont. below)

BE AWARE OF YOUR IDAHO VETERAN BENEFITS: Here are the Idaho Veteran Benefits you may not be aware of:

Idaho Veteran Housing Benefits: There are three state veterans homes in Idaho: Boise, Lewiston, and Pocatello. The fourth Idaho veterans home, in Post Falls is scheduled to open in November, 2022. Applicants may be peacetime or wartime veterans, with wartime veterans retaining priority admission status. Applicants must have been discharged under honorable conditions and be an Idaho resident. Applicants must be unemployable as a result of age, illness, or disability, and must apply for and be eligible for Medicaid benefits or must pay a monthly fee.

Income Tax: Military pay is tax free if stationed out-of-state.

Military retirement and SBP payments are tax-free for those over 65 or those disabled and over 62, as well as their unremarried surviving spouses.

Property Tax: Veterans with a 100% service-connected disability, or those rated unemployable by the VA may reduce the property on their home and up to one acre of land by as much as \$1,500. The program doesn't have an income limit.

Veterans with at least a 10% service-connected disability may reduce the property tax on their home by up to \$1,500 if they have income of \$32,230 or less for 2021.

Grocery Tax Credit: Veterans age 65 or older, or disabled and age 62 or older, may claim the Grocery Tax Credit even when not required to file an income tax return if VA disability benefits are the veteran's only income.

Financial Assistance: Provides up to a \$1,000 grant, in cases of extreme emergency, to wartime veterans in need of assistance. Must have entered the military from Idaho, or lived within the state for at least 5 years. The event or emergency must have occurred within 90 days of the request.

State Employment Preference:

Idaho state employment gives preference points for active duty veterans. Honorably discharged veterans get 5 preference points, disabled veterans get 10 preference points. Surviving spouses who have not remarried can get the same points as the veteran.

Occupational Licenses: Idaho offers military members and their families expedited processing for occupational licenses. They also accept credit for military training that is relevant to the occupational license/registration being applied for.

Idaho residents on active, reserve or guard duty do not have to pay any professional or occupational license or renewal fees while in the military. Also, service members holding an occupational or professional license will have that license's expiration date extended until six months after they leave the service.

The state of Idaho may accept your military education, training, and experience toward meeting the qualifications for a license, certification or registration. Idaho also expedites license applications of military spouses.

Idaho State Parks Veterans Pass: Idaho resident 100% service-connected disabled veterans get free access and camping at Idaho State Parks.

Hunting & Fishing Licenses: Resident disabled veterans may be eligible for reduced fees for licenses and tags. Nonresident disabled veterans with a VA disability rating of at least 40% are eligible for nonresident reduced fees for licenses and tags.

Idaho State Veterans Cemeteries: The Idaho State Veterans Cemeteries are located in Blackfoot and Boise. The eligibility requirements for burial at the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery follow the National Veterans Cemetery eligibility requirements and Idaho law. There is no requirement to be a resident of the state of Idaho.

Visit the [Idaho Division of Veterans Services](#) website for more information on any of these programs.

Alcohol Misuse Awareness: Alcohol is the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States. VA research indicates that veterans with PTSD who are over the age of 65 and have a drinking problem or depression are at a higher risk of suicide. Substance use disorder, commonly known as addiction, is a disease with which an individual cannot control the use of alcohol and/or drugs. VA offers a variety of both inpatient and outpatient care treatment options. [Read more](#) or [take the next step](#) if you need help for yourself or a loved one.

Parkinson's Disease Awareness: According to VA, it provides health care for approximately 400,000 veterans with Parkinson's disease. Risk factors for Parkinson's disease are: male, 60 years or older, familial connection to the disease, and exposure to herbicides or pesticides. Symptoms include but are not limited to tremors, rigid or still muscles, balance issues, change in speech, and reduction of automatic movements like blinking or smiling. VA established six [Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Centers](#) that provide clinical care, education, and research. [Read more](#). - Len Crosby, Legislative Chairman



Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154 Election Results

Commander Dee Sasse
1st Vice Commander Bill Kinder
2nd Vice Commander Mike McPhail
Finance Officer Len Crosby
Adjutant Bryan Bledsoe
Service Officer Ruth Aresvik
Historian Lonnie Morse
Chaplain Helen Kinder
Sergeant-at-Arms Todd Halvorson
Judge Advocate Bob Kernen
Training Officer Jean Bledsoe
3-year Committeeperson Ken Johnson
2-Year Committeeperson Rich Hannah
1-Year Committeeperson Pete Williams



THESE OFFICERS WILL BE INSTALL AT THE MAY 26TH MEMBERSHIP MEETING!

Chaplain's Pew:



Helen Kinder, Chaplain

A Prayer for Memorial Day

Dear God, We thank you for the freedom you have given to us, and for the price that was paid by Christ so that we could live free. We remember today. The cost of it all. The great sacrifice for freedom.

We thank you for the brave men and women who have fought, and continue to fight, so courageously for our nation. We ask for your covering and blessing over them and their families. We pray that you would be gracious and encircle them with your peace. We pray for your great favor and goodness to be evident in their lives.

Please be with all those who wear the uniform, who serve our communities and nation every single day. We ask that you provide your protection, that you would be their guiding force who leads the way, and their rear guard who keeps them safe from behind. We ask that you would draw them to yourself amidst the dangers they face in a dark world, for you are the Truth.

The annual Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by American Legion Post 154 and Rathdrum Park and Recreation was a huge success. We “hid” 18,000, yes eighteen thousand eggs. They were all “found” in a matter of a few short minutes. There were very very many children. I want to thank members of our Legion post for so graciously agreeing to volunteer to help when the call went out.

Volunteers included Bob & Leona Flowers, Mike & Sharron McPhail, Connie McGee, Ruth Aresvik, Rich & Angie Hannah, Pete & Barbara Williams, Bill & Helen Kinder, Rick & Patti Stills, Matt & Jeanette Schueller, Chris & Bridgette Murphy, Todd & Kelly Halvorson, Kelly & Keith McMahan, Holly & Daisy Gleaves, Dee Sasse, Dewey Berndt, Bob Kernan, Wayne Brewer, Tuck & Helen Calhoun, Len & Mary Crosby, Ken Johnson. WOW what a wonderful group of 33 volunteers. If I missed someone, I am truly sorry. Also, a shout out to all the Park and Recreation crew, the Rathdrum Police and Rathdrum Firemen.

And I cannot forget Nicole Miller, Rathdrum Boy Scout leader who was our committee chair.

THANK YOU ALL SO VERY VERY MUCH.

Helen Kinder— committee member



Service Officer:

It's MAY!! From a positive perspective, May Day is a joyous public holiday, usually celebrated on the first Monday of May. It is an ancient festival marking the first day of summer. Obviously, this does not apply to Northern Idaho. We appear to be in our third winter. At any rate, this celebration involves singing and dancing and cake. From a different perspective, (and considered a homonym), Mayday is an emergency word used internationally as a distress signal in voice procedure radio communications. I do not believe cake is involved.

HOWEVER...cake is definitely involved, as are many fine desserts, when you take advantage of meals offered by the Area Agency on Aging. Our generation is within that age of needing a variety of services. Before you have to cry MAYDAY!, check out this information and pass it on to someone you might know who can use it.

Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho is publicly funded to provide in-home assistance and community services to individuals aged 60 and older to promote independent living.

Home Delivered Meals

Home Delivered Meals provide up to 7 meals a week for each qualified person. Meals are prepared by local senior centers and are required to meet 1/3 of the required dietary allowance. Meals are provided at no charge, but a suggested donation is requested to help support the program. No senior can ever be denied from receiving meals for failing to donate.

Consumer **must** be:

- Homebound
- Age 60 or older
- Frail (physical or cognitive deficits)
- Unable to independently prepare meals

Homemaker Services

Homemaker Service provides light housekeeping to maintain a clean, safe environment to support independent living. Allowable homemaker tasks may include:

- Changing bed linens
- Assisting with in-home laundry
- Cleaning bathroom & kitchen
- Cleaning floors & dusting
- Taking out the trash

Consumer **must** be age 60 or older **and** have physical or cognitive deficits that prevent them from performing basic cleaning activities. Services may incur a co-pay and the consumer is responsible to provide all cleaning materials.

Family Caregiver Respite

Respite Service provides a break for unpaid caregivers living in the same home as the person they are caring for. The care recipient must need 24/7 care or supervision to qualify for adult day or in-home respite care, which is provided by trained respite staff.

In addition, if the care recipient is able to attend to their own personal hygiene, the **Senior Companion Respite Program** may be available.

Respite services are provided at no cost. The care recipient **must** have physical or cognitive deficits that prevent them from being left home alone or unattended.

Contact Information: AREA AGENCY on AGING of NORTH IDAHO

402 W. Canfield Ave, Suite 1

Coeur d'Alene ID 83815

EMAIL: infoassist@nic.edu PHONE: 208-667-3179 FAX: 208-667-5938

HOURS: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:00pm. Closed on State and Federal holidays.

- Ruth Aresvik, Service Officer

The Coeur d'Alene office of the Alzheimer's Association, in partnership with The Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho and Kootenai Health, are hosting a Community Forum to get input from our leaders, professional and family caregivers and our community on the needs of families and caregivers facing Alzheimer's or another dementia. We ask you to **join us on May 12th**, 5:30 at our host location, Lake City Center to take part in this important discussion so we can better serve our community, our families and better assist our first responders encountering individuals with cognitive impairment. Please see the attached flyer for more details and please share with any person or organization you feel would have valuable input to our discussion.

Register at: bit.ly/KootenaiForum

Please let me know if you would like more information about this event or if I can share more about the education and resources the Alzheimer's Association offers in North Idaho.

**Michelle Larson | Community Outreach Manager | Alzheimer's Association, North Idaho |
Office: 208.666.2996 | mllarson@alz.org | www.alzwa.org**



If you are planning on renewing your membership for 2022, you need to do it now! Anyone who does not renew for 2022 by the end of June and does renew after that date will lose their continuous years of membership status but will be renewed for 2023.

There are 13 members still not renewed, some of you have quite a few years continuous service. Please take the opportunity now to keep your membership up-to-date. Look at your ID card, if the date is for 2021, your membership is considered expired.

There are two ways you can renew:

1. Online by going to legion.org (easiest and quickest) you will need to have your credit card and have your Membership ID card ready.

Or: 2. Mail your \$45.00 check to:

Rathdrum American Legion
Post 154 PO Box 1116
Rathdrum, Idaho 83858

If you have any questions regarding the renewal process, please give me a call and I will try to help.
Bill Kinder (208) 661-6850

Hoping this finds everyone in continued good health. - Bill Kinder, 1st Vice Commander, Membership Chairman



American Legion Boys State

*** Eight to attend from Rathdrum schools ***

by **Ruth Aresvik**

Veterans Help Net Correspondent

Neil Armstrong. Tom Brokaw. Michael Jordan. Garth Brooks. Bill Clinton. Jon Bon Jovi?? What possible common thread could these men possess? Based on the title of this article, of course - they all attended Boys State.

The American Legion Boys State (and Girls State) is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for U. S. high school students. Students become a part of the operation of local, county and state government. They learn the rights, responsibilities and privileges of their fellow citizens. Elected to various offices, the Boys State activities include legislative sessions, court proceedings, and law enforcement presentations. At the end of the program, two representatives from each state are elected to attend Boys Nation in Washington, D. C., where they learn the structure and function of the federal government.

Boys State was founded in 1935 and was the idea of two Illinois Legionnaires - Hayes Kennedy and Harold Card - who organized the first Boys State at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield. Kennedy and Card were concerned about youth attending political indoctrination camps in the late 1930's and felt the Boys State program would stress the importance and value of a democratic form of government; to preserve and perpetuate it. At present, Boys State programs exist in all Legion departments in the United States except Hawaii.

Legion posts select high school juniors or seniors to attend the program in their respective state capitals based on recommendations of teachers or guidance counselors. All expenses are paid by the sponsoring post. Selection can be highly competitive and the event can be an important achievement for college and/or military academy admissions. Many programs offer college credit or scholarships to those attending Boys/Girls State.

This year, Manuel Schneidmiller American Legion Post #154 in Rathdrum will send eight local young men to Boise the first week of June to attend Boys State. Good luck and congratulations!

From North Idaho STEM Charter Academy: Zachary McKenna, Taelor Stafford and Alexander Willis. From Lakeland High School: Bryce Lindsey, Cole Andres, Ryan Genteman, Jamison Elliot, and Cody Morse.



US Flags for Sale: These flags are available through Post 154 with the proceeds supporting Post 154 School Flag Program. This program provides flag education as well as free flags to the schools. If your flag needs replacement, you need a unique gift for a family member or friend, or a raffle item for your organization, contact Bryan Bledsoe through the post email at rathdrum154@gmail.com.

In stock are the following flags:

- A. 3'x5' nylon \$26
- B. 4'x6' nylon \$33
- C. 5'x8' polyester \$60
- D. 3'x5' **Idaho state** nylon flag \$30

Submitted by Bryan Bledsoe

Post 154 Honor Guard:

Our Honor Guard is very active. They march in parades, present the colors at ceremonies, and most importantly, provide a rifle salute to honor Veterans at their funerals. However, more members are always needed to serve in this capacity. If you are interested in participating in this very fulfilling activity, contact Todd Halvorson at keltod11@gmail.com or by phone at 509-226-5355.

This month there were 11 Military Honor ceremonies for 5 Army veterans, 4 Navy veterans, and 2 Marines. There was also a training session sponsored by the Washington State Veterans Cemetery that was attended by 5 of our members.

These ceremonies and training collectively required 58 volunteers who drove 1414 miles and spent 243 hours of their time.

The Honor Guard consists of three women and twelve men. They range in age from 52 to 90 years old with an average age of 72 years.

Each ceremony draws from the following pool of Post 154 Honor Guard volunteers:

Lew Allert, Paula Atwood, Bryan Bledsoe, Jeff Broadhead, Len Crosby, Hal Donahue, Todd Halvorson, Ken Johnson, Bob Kernan, Harold Markiewicz, Kelly McMahan, Roy Murdock, Bud Nutterville, Al Ogram and Margaret Ogram

If you would like to find out more about volunteering as an Honor Guard member, please contact Todd Halvorson. - Bryan Bledsoe, Honor Guard Member



Members of Post 154 & 143 Combined Honor Guard. In front, Todd Halvorson. From left: Len Crosby, Mike Pettit, Hal Donahue, Bryan Bledsoe and Harold Markiewicz.

Editor's Note: Post 143 no longer has an Honor Guard. Our Post Honor Guard is truly in need of more members. Train for free. Contact Todd.

Training Officer: This month's training is on how to register for **MyLegion.org**. This site is a member only destination full of really good information. The next in-person training will have more detail on this site.

BEFORE YOU REGISTER, PLEASE READ

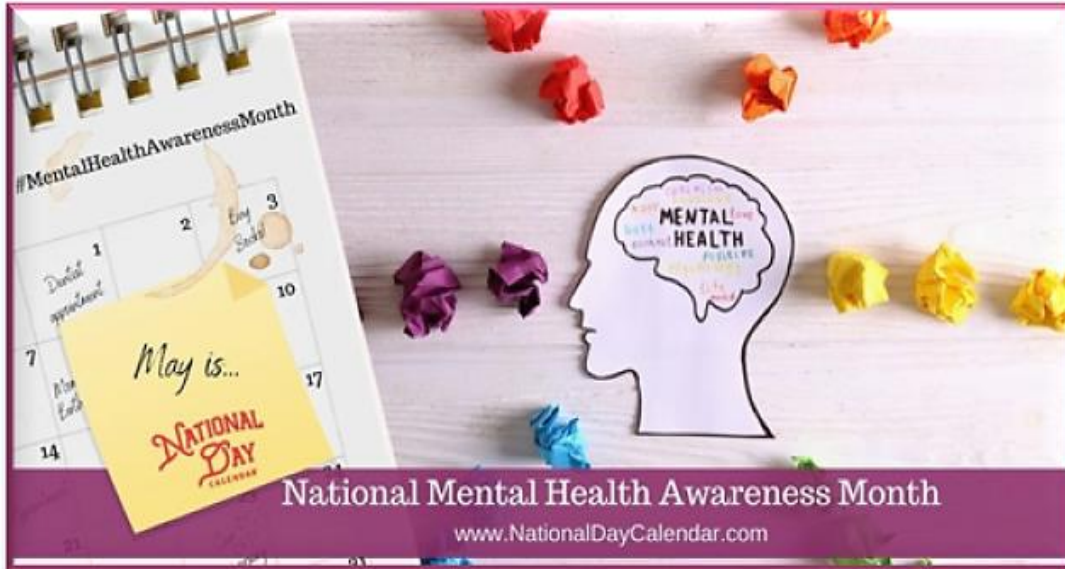
- Register using the email on your membership record. Registering with a different email will not include membership details or officer/committee activity.
- Do not register with a post, squadron, county, or district account. All MyLegion.org accounts are individual member accounts. Access to post and squadron membership management and online membership processing, reports and rosters are provided to members that hold an Adjutant or Commander position.
- Do not share e-mails. Only one email can be registered. The same email on multiple records will allow only one registration. Other accounts with the same email will not be allowed to register.
- To update or verify the email on your membership record contact your department headquarters.

REGISTER A NEW ACCOUNT

1. Go to myLegion.org and select "Register"
2. Enter email in the [Register window](#) and click "Next". Register with the email address on your membership record. Registering with an email other than the one on your membership number will not include membership details or officer/committee activity.
 - i. Mobile No (Optional) – no functions at this time. Future enhancement.
 - ii. Two-Factor Authentication –not recommended unless you wish to add extra security each time you log in. Setting two-factor authentication requires the password and a security code emailed with each log in.
3. Enter your Last Name, First Name and check consents and click "Next". [View](#)
4. Create your password in the [welcome window](#). - The email entered must be verified. The email is verified one of two ways.
 - i. Enter the OTP [sent to your email](#) and click "Finish Registration". This is sent after step 2.
 - ii. Do not enter OTP and click "Finish Registration". An [email will be sent](#) with a link to confirm and returns to the login page.
5. Click My Account from your myLegion home page view your membership information. Officers registering for post and squadron access will find that information on the My Account window.

VERIFY ACCOUNT - USER REGISTERED MESSAGE

1. Go to myLegion.org
 2. Click "Register"
 3. Enter your email in the [Register window](#) and click "Next". A [Verify Account](#) window opens.
 4. [Leave this page open](#). Go to your email and retrieve the OTP (One Time Password).
 5. Enter the OTP and click "Verify"
 6. Create and verify your new password, be sure to include:
 - i. Uppercase Letter
 - ii. Lowercase Letter
 - iii. Number
 - iv. Symbol (!@#\$%^&*)
 7. Click Next and you will be logged in and your name displays in the upper right.
 8. Go to My Account to view membership details.
- Jean Bledsoe, Training Officer



A Healthier You:

Helping a Loved One with Depression

If someone you care about is depressed, you may feel helpless. Maybe you're watching a formerly active or happy person withdraw from others or you're seeing a good friend lose interest in favorite activities. The change in your loved one's or friend's behavior may be so big that you feel you no longer know the person.

Here are some things you can do to help:

- Help the person get treatment or stay in treatment. This is the best thing you can do.
- Support and encourage the person.
- Learn about depression. Know the facts and myths about it.
- Be aware of your own and other people's negative attitudes (stigma) toward depression. Do what you can to fight stigma and teach people about depression.
- Be aware of other health problems the person may have.

For more practical information, continue reading [HERE](#).

May is Melanoma Awareness Month, the deadliest form of skin cancer, and veterans are at higher risk due to their service connection.

Here are ABCDE signs to watch for:

- A is for Asymmetry: One half of a mole or birthmark does not match the other.
- B is for Border: The edges are irregular, ragged, notched, or blurred.
- C is for Color: The color is not the same all over and may include different shades of brown or black, or sometimes with patches of pink, red, white, or blue.
- D is for Diameter: The spot is larger than 6 millimeters across (about ¼ inch – the size of a pencil eraser), although melanomas can sometimes be smaller than this.
- E is for Evolving: The mole is changing in size, shape, or color.

Our local VA Dermatology Department is a few months behind on appointments. But if you can't get in, there's an alternative. According to a specially trained RN at the VA, you can get photos taken at CBOC which will be sent to Boise VA for analysis. If things look questionable, you'll get a quick appointment at Spokane VA.



National Poppy Day®

May 27, 2022

The American Legion brought National Poppy Day to the United States by asking Congress to designate the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day. The red poppy is a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice worn by Americans since World War I to honor those who served and died for our country in all wars. It reminds Americans of the sacrifice made by our veterans while protecting our freedoms. Wear a poppy to honor those who have worn our nation's uniform and did not come home.

On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, May 26, 27, 28, members of American Legion Post 154 will be passing out poppies at the Super 1 Foods in Rathdrum and Athol from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Please take the time to visit with us and get your poppy. - Bill Kinder, 1st Vice Commander



Mark Your Calendar:

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, National Melanoma Awareness Month & National Stoke Awareness Month

May 1st - Silver Star Service Banner Day

May 4th - Bird Day - see Bits & Pieces

May 6th - Military Spouse Appreciation Day

May 8th - Mother's Day

May 8th - V-E Day (Victory in Europe 1945)

May 12th - Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting Lions Club at 6 pm

May 15th - Peace Officers Memorial Day

May 15th - National Law Enforcement Week

May 17th - National Idaho Day

May 21st - Armed Forces Day

May 26th - Post 154 General Membership Meeting Lions Club at 6 pm (potluck 5:30)

May 27th - National Poppy Day

May 30th - Memorial Day – ceremony at Pinegrove Cemetery at noon

Bits & Pieces:

- **Every May 1st**, Americans honor the sacrifices of the combat wounded, ill, and dying service members on Silver Star Service Banner Day. The day also recognizes service members awarded the Silver Star Medal.
- **May is Nation Stroke Awareness Month.** Act FAST in an emergency. Here is what you should check.
 - Face: Smile and see if one side of the face droops.
 - Arms: Raise both arms. Does one arm drop down?
 - Speech: Say a short phrase and check for slurred or strange speech.
 - Time: If the answer to any of these is yes, call 911 right away and write down the time when symptoms started.
- **May 4th is Bird Day.** Celebrate our feathered friends by downloading this app: Merlin Bird ID from Cornell University [HERE](#). ID by appearance, location, and sounds!
- **Two High School Scholarship Opportunities**
 - **2022 THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF IDAHO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

This scholarship is for the benefit of all deserving students who desire to advance in higher education or skills. Only applicants of current paid up American Legion members and/or American Legion Auxiliary members who have been active members in the Department of Idaho American Legion and/or Auxiliary for a period of two (2) years may apply for a scholarship. For complete information and scholarship application, go [HERE](#)
 - **THE DEPARTMENT OF IDAHO AMERICAN LEGION GREG and BETH GARATEA ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

The mission of this scholarship program is To provide educational assistance to Veterans and the children of Idaho Veterans in the pursuit of an education and/or trade school regardless of age. For complete information and scholarship application, go [HERE](#)
- **Aviator Cancer Bill** Would Push VA to Study Toxins Air Crews Faced, Assess Links to Cancers Ground crew and flight crew cancers would be reviewed. So would the fuels, chemicals, and emissions they were exposed to. For more information, go [HERE](#).
- **TAPS Seeks Veterans to Serve as Mentors to Grieving Military Children**

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), a national organization providing compassionate care to those grieving the death of a military loved one, is looking for active duty, reserve, National Guard and Veteran community members to serve as supportive companions to children of America's fallen military at the 28th Annual National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp, May 26 – 30 in Arlington, Virginia. For more information, go [HERE](#).
- **Vietnam War mass grave found thanks to US veteran tip-off.** Read the story [HERE](#).
- **Five Ways to Access VA Care Virtually During and After COVID-19 Pandemic**

Here are five ways Veterans can access VA care safely and easily from home. These virtual resources are available to anytime, whether it's related to COVID-19 or not. Find info [HERE](#).

Also, please remember to send your volunteer hours to Len Crosby so he can compile them. These include hours devoted to Veterans, Youth, Honor Guard and Community. His email is: crosbylenmary@frontier.com

-Jean Bledsoe, Editor

THE STORY OF A DANGEROUS, TOP-SECRET VIETNAM WAR MISSION IS TOLD BY VETERANS IN “THE MISTY EXPERIMENT”

Elite U.S. fighter pilots risked lives to stop weapons from North Vietnam.



*20+ veterans give first-person accounts of triumphs – and human tolls –
of “the most innovative air operation of the war.”*

*Produced by Floor 1 Productions and Spirit Productions;
presented by Maryland Public Television.*

[Photos, trailer and other assets available here.](#)

BALTIMORE – March 29, 2022 – Presented through first-person accounts from veterans who risked their lives during a time of escalation in the Vietnam War, the documentary **“The Misty Experiment: The Secret Battle for the Ho Chi Minh Trail”** tells the largely unknown story of the U.S. Air Force pilots who volunteered for top-secret missions to stop the flow of weapons and supplies traveling south from North Vietnam. Produced by Floor 1 Productions and Spirit Productions, and presented by Maryland Public Television, the film airs on public television stations across the country in time for Memorial Day (check local listings).

By 1967, American forces in the Vietnam War had entered a stage of expanded air and ground battles throughout Southeast Asia during a time of increased southward flow of weapons and supplies from North Vietnam. Convoys of trucks carrying Chinese- and Russian-supplied weapons traveled on newly carved or expanded roads through the jungles of Cambodia and Laos, known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Traditional intelligence flights, the Air Force’s Forward Air Controllers (FACs), were hobbled by slow aircraft that made them easy targets; it became clear the U.S. needed to fly closer and faster to gain the advantage.

Quietly, an elite squadron of combat-seasoned pilots was recruited, supported by on-the-ground intelligence and ancillary personnel. Referred to by their radio call sign, the so-called “Mistys” would spend months flying into danger knowing they had a 30 percent chance of being shot down, killed, or taken as prisoners of war.

The film chronicles how decisions by American military leaders resulted in not being allowed to hit ports where supplies to North Vietnam were coming in. The decisions were made to keep Chinese forces from moving into the battle but left open routes that the North Vietnamese exploited. Eventually the government was convinced a new approach was necessary; Air Force commanders designed an experimental approach that needed pilots with steely resolve. As seen in the film, Misty pilot **Don Shepperd** (r., inspecting battle damage to his plane) who flew 58 missions, and later became Major General and Head of the Air National Guard from 1994-98 says “when the nation wasn’t willing to take that risk (bombing the harbors), we were the ones who had to pick them off, truck by truck.” (cont. below)



“These were a bunch of guys who would do anything to accomplish the mission we were given...an impossible mission to stop the flow of arms and material coming south,” Shepperd said.

Unlike today’s automated drones, and satellites that pinpoint target areas, Mistys relied on human observational skills to root out enemy movements. They describe developing “Misty eyes” -- the ability to spot signs of enemy troops such as dust accumulations on tree leaves indicating nearby movement, tell-tale splash patterns on creek beds pointing to truck traffic, or too-perfect canopies that suggested man-made camouflage. “We became masters at finding anything,” Sheppard says.

Mistys flew hours-long daily missions from Phù Cát Air Base, putting their bodies through extreme physical stress from G-forces during quick evasive maneuvers known as “jinking,” while also taxing their eyes and brains to identify and remember enemy locations. Immediately upon their daily

returns – and often finding their planes riddled with battle damage – the pilots would debrief for hours with intelligence officials who created detailed maps with the crucial information they recounted. “There was an

atmosphere of innovation,” says Misty Intelligence Officer **Roger Van Dyken** (l.) in the film. “One flight reconnaissance fed into the next. The next day’s group of pilots tested the theories from the day before. There was constant pressure.”



The missions began showing results after just a few weeks. And the thrill of flying high-octane sorties proved undeniable to the pilots. But the physical and mental strains of flying F100s through enemy territory were real; Mistys were limited to flying 100 missions in 120 days.



“There were a few of us who thought ‘gee, this is so much fun...how can I go back to South Vietnam? This is where the action is...this is where I want to be,’” says Misty pilot and military history author **Dick Rutan** (r.), who appears in the film and was himself shot down (then rescued) on an unprecedented 105th mission.

Veterans in “The Misty Experiment” recount other hard losses; stories of pilots shot down, and the harrowing lengths others took to save them or recover their bodies; bailing out of a damaged plane over the ocean and waiting hours to be rescued; leaving behind buddies who just can’t be found. Of the 157 Misty pilots who served during the Vietnam War, 34 were shot down; eight were killed and four became prisoners of war. “Joy and sorrow, intermixed...that became part of the Misty story...and part of the Vietnam story,” says Van Dyken. “Wanting to have individual successes, and yet, leaving so many good people behind.”

The discipline of being a groundbreaking pilot translated into other successes after leaving the mission. Two Mistys, **Merrill Anthony “Tony” McPeak** and **Ronald Fogleman**, became Air Force Chiefs of Staff; two more became astronauts. Many became industry CEOs. One Misty alumnus received the Medal of Honor for his service, and another became the first man to fly non-stop, unrefueled, around the world.

“The story of the Mistys has never been told in-depth and on-camera” says **Executive Producer Dean Echenberg**, a Misty veteran who was the squadron’s first Flight Surgeon and remains the group’s ad-hoc historian. (cont. below)

About half of the men who served as Mistys are living; many are in their late 70s and 80s. Echenberg says the film is “a testament to an amazing group of brave men who jumped at the chance to change the course of a devastating war.”

Producer Ian M. Adelson of Floor 1 Productions says the film was more than 14 years in the making, having been started in the late 2000s by former KQED San Francisco television producer **Danny McGuire** who interviewed numerous squadron members. Adelson says when health problems forced McGuire to step away from the project, McGuire turned over the footage to Echenberg, who brought Adelson in.

“One day he showed me the interviews and an early rough cut of the film that Danny did,” Adelson says. “We knew this story needed to be told in a way that honors the vets who served and gives a human perspective of a conflict that’s been subjected to animosity for five decades.”

TUNE IN INFORMATION

“The Misty Experiment” will be available to public television stations across the country starting May 2, 2022, in time for Memorial Day commemorations. Viewers should check local listings or contact local public television stations to find out when the program will be shown in a particular market. Information about local stations is available [here](#).

- Submitted by Len Crosby, Story Finder Extraordinaire

Did You Know...?

Department of Veterans Affairs officials announced Monday that it has added nine rare respiratory cancers to the list of illnesses considered to be related to exposure to burn pits and other particles in the air encountered overseas, a designation that will expedite affected veterans' access to health care and benefits.

The move follows a [White House announcement last November](#) that it planned to establish presumption for the illnesses that have become more common among veterans in the past 32 years, with advocates and health experts zeroing in on burn pits used to dispose of trash and industrial waste in Iraq and Afghanistan as a likely culprit.

1. Squamous cell carcinoma of the larynx
2. Squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea
3. Adenocarcinoma of the trachea
4. Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea
5. Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung
6. Large cell carcinoma of the lung
7. Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung
8. Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung
9. Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung

To read the full article about this change in presumptive illnesses, go [HERE](#)

-Jean Bledsoe, Editor

Here is the calendar for Post 149 in Athol. Our members are welcome there. In fact, one of the benefits of Legion membership is that your card gets you into any legion post as a visitor wherever you travel!

AMERICAN LEGION
POST 149
ATHOL, IDAHO
208-683-2614

May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>EVERY SUNDAY 3:30 PM BLACK-OUT BAR BINGO POTLUCK—bring a dish to share for \$1 off 1st drink</p>	2	<p>3 6:30 PM POTLUCK 7 PM LEGION MEETING</p>	4	<p>5 2 TO 4 PM FIBER FRIENDS</p> 	6	<p>7 9 A AUXILIARY MEETING</p>
<p>8  8 to 11 AM BREAKFAST (moms free)</p>	9	10	11	<p>12 2 TO 4 PM FIBER FRIENDS 6 PM PREP & PISTOL CLASS</p>	<p>13 NOTE!!! BINGO CANCELED TONIGHT</p>	14
15	16	17	18	<p>19 2 TO 4 PM FIBER FRIENDS 6 PM PREP & PISTOL CLASS</p>	20	<p>21 </p>
22	23	24	25	<p>26 2 TO 4 PM FIBER FRIENDS 6 PM PREP & PISTOL CLASS</p>	<p>27  6 PM</p>	<p>28 LADIES HOME GATHERING 10 TO 12 P. 6 PM AUXILIARY DINNER</p>
29	<p>30 </p>	<p>31 6:30 PM HOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING</p>				

A great opportunity for 15–21-year-olds of all backgrounds to get involved in the community and give a different perspective to our fair board. As our state fair consists of the northern 10 counties of Idaho, we certainly are interested in reaching out more and getting other areas more involved.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY!



JUNIOR FAIR ADVISORY BOARD

MEMBERSHIP AGES 15-21 AS OF JAN 1

LOOKING FOR ALL BACKGROUNDS:
-AGRICULTURE
-LEADERSHIP
-EVENT/PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
-MARKETING/SOCIAL MEDIA

TO ASSIST WITH:
-FAIR CONTESTS
-PARADES/PROMOTION
-COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



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