

AMERICAN LEGION PREAMBLE

For God and Country we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the great wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and goodwill on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

The Definition of "Veteran"

A veteran - whether active duty, retired, national guard or reserve - is someone who, at one point in his/her life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America", for an amount of "up to and including my life."

That is honor, and there are way too many people in this country who no longer understand it. -- Author Unknown

American Legion - Post 4
P. O. Box 14
Pocatello, ID 83204-0014

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE
Pocatello, ID 83201
Permit No. 100

October 2007

American Legion Post 4
P. O. Box 14
Pocatello, ID 83204-0014
<http://www.americanlegionpost4.com>

Dear Post 4 Legionnaire:

We are planning to hold a Texas Hold-Em Tournament at the Memorial Building. Details will be forthcoming at the next meeting and distributed in the next newsletter. This will be a FUN event for all.

We still need all Post 4 members to send in their 2008 renewals. We are in a cut-throat competition with Post Falls for being **NUMBER ONE** in the state. We need you to get the renewal in as soon as possible. Please send in your renewal form with your dues check. We need your support for all we do in the community and to help all veterans in need of assistance of any kind.

Mike S. Schow
Commander, Post 4

Emails Wanted From American Legion Members and Family's And every one:

from: William H. Sloan, Assistant Director Internal Affairs and Membership, The American Legion

United States Marine Colonel Simcock, the commander of USMC Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 6 in Iraq, is asking for 6,000 positive emails to his Marines. That's one email for each Marine in his RCT command. COL Simcock is concerned about the effect of the negative barrage that those Marines are getting through the electronic media.

It takes only 30 seconds of your time. The email address is :

RCT-6lettersfromh@gcemnf-wiraq.usmc.mil <mailto:RCT-6lettersfromh@gcemnf-wiraq.usmc.mil>

It doesn't have to be the Gettysburg Address. Something as simple as "Hello, Marine. We thank you for what you're doing. You are in a noble task. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. Best wishes & get home soon" is more than sufficient.

DAV Van: There have been several instances recently of the DAV van leaving for Salt Lake City with empty seats that were reserved by veterans that did not show up or notify the DAV scheduler in advance. This situation is intolerable and individuals who miss the van will be identified and possible restrictions placed on their use of the van for any reason. If you must miss the van, contact the DAV scheduler as soon as possible so that the seat may be filled by another veteran needing transportation.

In Memorium: Robert E. Donicht, a World War II veteran, an 18 year member and Past Commander of Post 4. Died September 12, 2007. Funeral services were held on 9/18/07 at Inkom Cemetery, with the Pocatello Veteran's Honor Guard attending.

American Legion Post 4 Officers

Commander - Mike Schow 234-4914
1st Vice Commander - Winford Lomon 232-8919
2nd Vice Commander - Jim Keezer 232-4821
3rd Vice Commander - John Rogers 232-4843
Chaplain - Dave DeGarlis 238-1247
Sergeant At Arms - Bob Holden 406-7113
Adjutant - Al Gibson 201-0539
Newsletter - Al Gibson
Service Officer - Zach Rodriguez - 406-1068
Treasurer - Mike Schow
Sons of the American Legion Open
40&8 Voiture 451 Chef de Gare - Jim Keezer

American Legion Riders Officers

Director Frank Smith 317-1424
Ass't Director John White 681-0198
Secretary Al Gibson 201-0539
Treasurer Al Gibson
Historian Tom Janson 226-6653
Sergeant At Arms Bill Head 238-1467
Membership Wade Beery 223-6228
POW/MIA Liaison Phil Meek 241-3349
Purchasing Agent Jim Humble 237-0690
Road Captain Bill Head

EMAIL NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

TO; algibson@bulldogs.com

Meetings for Service Organizations

1st Mon. **American Legion 40&8**, 7 PM
1st Thurs. **Fleet Reserve Assoc.** 7 PM
2nd Mon. **Purple Heart 1PM / VVA** 7 PM
2nd Wed. **American Legion** 7 PM
2nd Thurs. **NCOA** 6:30 PM
3rd Mon. **BCVMA** 7 PM
3rd Wed. **VFW & Auxiliary** 7 PM
4th Wed. **MCL Det. 698** 7 PM
4th Thurs. **DAV** 6:30 PM
Last Mon. **American Legion Auxiliary** 4 PM
POW/MIA - Fri - Oct 12, 7 PM at Red Lion Inn
MAC - Fri - Oct 19, 1130 at Memorial Bldg
melissah@co.bannock.id.us for MAC info
DAV Van Schedule: Call 208-221-0362

American Legion Internet Addresses

American Legion Post 4, Pocatello, ID

<http://www.americanlegionpost4.com>

American Legion Riders, Post 4, Pocatello, ID

<http://www.idaholegionriders.com>

American Legion, Idaho State, Boise, ID

<http://idlegion.home.mindspring.com>

American Legion, National

<http://www.legion.org>

VA Contact Numbers

Bannock County Vet Svcs. Melissa J. Hartman
Courthouse Annex Cnty. Vet. Svcs. Coord
130 N. 6th, Pocatello 83201 Ph. 236-7411
melissah@co.bannock.id.us

Idaho Div. of Vet. Svcs. Deborah A. Harmon
Office of Veterans Advocacy SE Idaho Veterans
Idaho State Veterans Home Service Officer
1957 Alvin Ricken Dr. 208-236-6358
Pocatello 83201

Poc. VA Outpatient Clinic 208-232-6214

Pocatello Vet Center [Counseling] 208-232-0316

SLC VA Hospital 800-613-4012

Boise VA Regional Office 800-827-1000

Veterans Affairs Phil Clifton
Vocational Rehabilitation 208-478-9866
800-509-8547

We support the Yellow Ribbon campaign to recognize homecoming veterans. Contact John Rogers 232-4843

Dates Of Interest

October 10; Legion meeting at Memorial Building; 7 PM

October 13; Homeless Stand down; 8 AM to noon, Bannock County Fairgrounds. For more information, Contact Melissa Hartman 208-236-7411

October 19; 2:30 PM Idaho State Veterans Home; Volunteers and staff awards and presentations. See last item in newsletter

November 11; Veteran's Day celebrations at the Bannock County Veteran's Memorial Building and local cemeteries. Host VSO is the American Legion

NOTE: This newsletter plus attachments containing more information for veterans can be received electronically or viewed on our Post 4 web site.

PAID UP FOR LIFE (PUFL) MEMBERSHIP COST:

Below is the Life Membership cost for American Legion Post 4. Find the column with your age, then go down to the cost. You'll never have to worry about another dues increase by enrolling for PUFL Membership. Full payment is not required, just 10% down which includes the 2007 dues, and the balance is paid over one year and is ***interest free***. The table below is for the \$35 membership. Your age is on the top 2 lines, PUFL cost on the third.

NOTE: May 1st 2007 was the effective date for the new \$35 per year membership rate.

-24	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85+
\$35/yr	- 29	-34	-39	-44	-49	-54	-59	-64	-69	-74	-79	-84	
\$1219	1160	1095	1024	946	862	772	679	585	493	406	325	253	206

Membership Renewals: Membership renewals for 2008 have slowed down a bit now that we're all resting up from Summer and getting ready for Winter. Our recruiters have been doing a fine job in lining up new Legion members. There are still some Active Duty military who have not joined as yet. Please let them know that we have a "paid up" program for all those serving on Active Duty. **First year is FREE.** And for those of you who have **NOT** renewed as yet, **PLEASE SEND IN YOUR RENEWAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** or Santa might leave you a lump of coal in your old combat boot!

Newsletter Mailing: The October 2007 Post 4 newsletter will be sent out electronically in PDF format to all those members who've asked for it to be delivered in that fashion. Sign up for the electronic newsletter by sending an email to "algibson@bulldogs.com". All 2007 newsletters may also be read on the Post 4 web site.

Disabled Veterans Fishing Program; Web site is <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/>

New Items on EBay: This is a fund-raiser, which should be convenient for everyone. What would you like to see available on EBay? The web address is "<http://stores.ebay.com/americanlegionpost4>" or you can link to it from our web page.

Attendance Drawing; The drawing for the \$20 dinner prize is held at the end of each monthly meeting. You must attend to be eligible, and the entry form has been made a part of the Monthly Minutes distributed at each meeting, so you don't have to bring your newsletter and cut it up now.

American Legion Riders;

You must be a member of the American Legion to join the Riders, and you get a **FREE** email address of "[\(your name\)@idaholegionriders.com](mailto:(your name)@idaholegionriders.com)".

Some thoughts to help you through the next month as the cold weather approaches;

- . If you have a bad cough, take a large dose of laxatives, then you will be afraid to cough.
- . You only need two tools in life - WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.
- . Remember: Everyone seems normal until you get to know them.

Local Business Supporters In Pocatello;

Eclipse Printing at 156 S. 3rd Ave. will provide business cards for Legion members at \$35 for 500.

Grandpa's Coffee Shop at 3304 Poleline Rd. for coffee, food, conversations. Smokers welcome.

Inkjet Express at 3318 Poleline Rd. for supplies and printer cartridge refills.

Jones Guns & Antiques at 546 S. Main St. for military collectibles, uniforms, firearms, and antiques.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 24, 2007

VA Reaches Out to Former Prisoners of War

Department Enlists Public's Help in Contacting Former POWs

WASHINGTON - Do you know any former prisoners of war (POW) or their family members? If so, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) needs your help.

VA is once again reaching out to former prisoners of war not currently using VA benefits and services, urging them to contact the Department to find out if they are eligible for health care, disability compensation and other services.

"One of VA's highest priorities is meeting the needs of former prisoners of war," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. "They are extraordinary men and women who have endured captivity, suffered extreme deprivation and sacrificed their own freedom to preserve the freedom of all Americans."

VA estimates more than 25,000 former prisoners of war are alive today. VA is trying to contact the remaining POW's not receiving any benefits or health care through an outreach program that includes asking citizens to pass the word to veterans they know.

VA also extends a helping hand to the surviving spouses and family members of former POWs, who may be eligible for certain benefits and services.

In recent years, VA has expanded benefits to all former POWs with strokes and certain common heart diseases. More than a dozen other diseases were already covered.

The government's effort to inform former POWs about improvements in benefits faces a particular hurdle with older veterans who may not have been in touch with VA for decades.

A majority of former POWs are veterans of World War II, and their military service was before the use of Social Security numbers as military "service numbers." As a result, it is difficult for VA to track down those who have not been in contact with the Department in recent years.

During recent years through a nationwide outreach campaign that included direct mailings and the help of news media and veterans organizations, VA has added hundreds of former POWs to its compensation rolls, people who had not previously been receiving benefits to which they were entitled.

If you know a former POW, please ask him or her to contact VA at 1-800-827-1000. Details about benefits and services available to former POWs and family members are available at

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Benefits/POW/index.htm>.

For the latest news releases and other information, visit VA on the Internet at

<http://www.va.gov/opa>.

To receive e-mail copies of news releases, subscribe to VA's list server at:

http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/opalist_listserv.cfm.

POW/MIA Update: September 26, 2007

AMERICANS ANNOUNCED AS ACCOUNTED FOR: There are now **1,771** US personnel listed by the Department of Defense as missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. The remains of Major Perry H. Jefferson, USAF, were recovered in South Vietnam in 2001, and identified in April of this year. The remains of Airman First Class George W. Long, USAF, repatriated in 1993, were identified last May. The names of both servicemen were only recently announced as accounted for by DoD. The accounting for these two Americans brings to 812 the number of US personnel returned since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. 90+% of 1,771 still missing and unaccounted-for were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnam's wartime control.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ON RECOGNITION DAY: Secretary of Defense Bob Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Peter Pace, USMC, hosted the Pentagon's National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony last Friday. In his remarks, Secretary Gates stated, *"I would also like to thank the families and friends of those still missing. Missing-in-action status is marked by ambiguity and uncertainty - a severe test of spirit and resolve for anyone seeking closure. Your attendance today proves once again that the bond of love transcends the passage of time - that while our nation's heroes may remain missing in body, they are always present in spirit. We will neither forget our duty to bring home all POWs and MIAs, nor relent in our efforts to do so."* Though extemporaneous and not available (at least not yet), General Pace's remarks were relevant, informal and meaningful to those present, based on his many years of service in and commitment to our Armed Forces. Patricia Scharf, widow of Col Charles Scharf, USAF (MIA October 1, 1965 over North Vietnam, remains recovered December 16, 1992 and announced as identified August 10, 2006) was recommended by the Defense POW/MIA Office and reportedly selected by Secretary Gates to make remarks from her perspective. There were countless ceremonies held across the country and around the world, including in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

(note: the full text of this report from Ann Mills Griffiths, Executive Director, National League of POW/MIA Families can be found on the Post 4 web site in the electronic newsletter version for October 2007)

AMERICAN LEGION PROGRAMS - POST 4

1. The "**I GOT ONE**" club is growing stronger by the day. All you need to do is get one new membership in the Legion, Auxiliary or Sons of the Legion. It is that simple. You can say you've done your best to keep our organization growing. You will also receive a pin designed especially for members of this Club. If you get one person for each, you will receive the TRIFECTA pin.

WE CAN DO IT!! THERE ARE OVER 9,000 VETERANS IN BANNOCK COUNTY!!!

LET'S FIND THEM AND SIGN THEM UP!

IF YOU NEED HELP, CALL ANY OFFICER LISTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.

2. **40/8 CLUB** - This is a group that has fun!!! Contact the Commander for an application.

3. **WESTERN CAVALRY HATS**: Black hats with gold trim and insignia. \$35. Worth a salute anywhere! This is very helpful as a conversation point in recruiting. Contact any Officer to order one. Lots of Black Hats showing at Wed. Meeting. Looking Good!

CONTINUOUS COMMUNITY AND VETERANS PROGRAMS:

4. **FLAG EDUCATION,**

5. **EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS,**

6. **FOOD CONVOY,**

7. **BOYS STATE,**

8. **BOY SCOUTS,** and

9. **AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL.**

If you see a program that you would be interested in, **PLEASE VOLUNTEER** to help. We need your help and community support in these very worthwhile activities.

SEN. BURR ENCOURAGES DEFENSE DEPARTMENT AND VA TO SPEED UP MEDICAL RECORD INTEGRATION

-- GAO report critical of VA computer security, but VA says progress has been made

September 20, 2007

(Washington, DC) U.S. Senator Richard Burr, the lead Republican on the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said today that he is pleased that federal officials have made progress in protecting the computerized records of the nation's 24.5 million veterans.

But while praising that progress, the North Carolina legislator also encouraged federal officials to take swift action to make more active duty military health records accessible to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"I would like to see VA and DOD work harder to make this transition happen more quickly," said Burr at a hearing held Wednesday on VA information technology.

Under the current plan laid out by VA and DOD officials, the integration of the two different medical records systems will require a six-phase transition which is not scheduled to be completed until 2015.

"There is no louder cheerleader for what you're doing than the Congress of the United States, and we all hope that you're successful in the rollout of this new information technology structure," said Burr. "I just want you to know that we're watching and keeping the pressure on."

Burr directed his remarks to the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, General Robert Howard. He was appointed to the agency last year after the theft of an external hard drive containing the personal information of approximately 26 million veterans was stolen from the home of a VA researcher.

Howard told the committee that his agency has made significant progress in protecting information about veterans.

"VA has encrypted over 18,000 laptop computers, and has implemented procedures for issuing encrypted portable data storage devices. This month, the Department is procuring software to address the encryption of data at rest. And just last week we awarded a contract for an extensive port monitoring capability which will help us better control what devices can access our network," Howard said.

Despite those achievements, a witness from the Government Accountability Office warned the committee that veterans' personal data and health information remain at risk of identity theft because VA has yet to implement several safety measures.

But Howard noted that VA computers now have software which prevents the Social Security numbers of veterans from being sent via e-mail, unless it is encrypted. He told the committee that in the first month after the new software was installed, about 7,000 e-mails containing Social Security numbers were stopped before being sent in an unencrypted manner.

ADDITIONAL PAGES FOR ELECTRONIC VERSION OF NEWSLETTER FOLLOW

IDAHO STATE VETERANS HOME – POCATELLO FOOD CONVOY WISH LIST 2007

Canned Goods:

(#10 cans are especially helpful)

Peaches

Pears

Apricots

Applesauce

Pineapple, crushed

Carrots

Spinach

Corn

Pineapple Tidbits

Apples

Cherries

Fruit Cocktail

Soups

Peas

Green Beans

Pork & Beans

Frozen Food Products:

Vegetables

Frozen Fruit Juice Concentrate

Fruits

Potato (especially: French Fries, Hash Browns, Tater Tots)

Fresh:

Potatoes

Squash

Dry and Other Grocery Goods:

Flour

Sugar

Powdered Sugar

Brown Sugar

Cereals: instant, dry bulk, cold

Rice (if possible, converted is preferred)

Powdered Milk for cooking

Pepper, black

Pancake Mix

Muffin & Bread Mixes

Bottled Juices

Syrup

Cake Mixes

Frosting Mixes

Salt, iodized

Thank you for supporting our State Veterans Home through the American Legion sponsored Food Convoy Program. This generous food drive assists us in keeping costs as low as possible for the veteran. It allows us to prepare special meals, offer in-house activities, and snacks/meals on outings. These quality of life blessings are made possible through the continued dedication and loyalty our volunteers and donors have for our veterans.

For additional information, please contact Brent or Carey by calling: 208-236-6340.

Thank you for all that you do!

(Please note: Federal and State regulations require that all food products in the Veterans Home food storage area are labeled as to product, and show current dates. Dented cans and out of date products must be forwarded to another location. Thanks for helping us keep your generous donations within our Veterans Home by being aware of the food standard requirements that we must comply with. Compliance failure on our part can result in serious citations and possible fines. Thank you for your understanding.)

From: "Public Relations Division" <PR@legion.org>
Subject: American Legion Blasts 9th Circuit's Cross Ban
Date: Mon, 10 Sep 2007 16:34:25 -0400

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Legion Blasts 9th Circuit's Cross Ban

INDIANAPOLIS (Sept. 10, 2007) - The leader of the nation's largest veterans organization criticized last week's decision by the 9th Circuit Court to remove a cross from a World War I veterans memorial in California's Mojave Desert as the beginning of the "slippery slope of extreme secularism."

"This is one more prime example of wrong-headed political correctness and one more critical reason why the current Congress must pass the Public Expression of Religion Act," said American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser. "This is not about freedom of religion. The First Amendment also says Congress shall pass no law 'prohibiting the free exercise' of religion. The cross is an important symbol to millions of veterans, some of whom had to make the ultimate sacrifice for this nation."

Referring to the federal Court's September 6 decision, Conatser said that across the nation litigation is being brought by the ACLU and other groups attacking the Boy Scouts, the public display of the Ten Commandments and other symbols of America's religious history. "Today's lawyers and judges are outlawing the values and religious symbols that the Founding Fathers revered and proclaimed as the very foundation of the American republic," he said. "Today it's a memorial. Tomorrow, these same judges can order the removal of crosses on veterans gravestones, the dismissal of military chaplains and the closure of base chapels."

Conatser pointed out that a loophole in the current law allows the ACLU and other groups to collect millions of dollars in attorney's fees from the taxpayers, who, by and large, support the memorials. Congress, in 2004, passed legislation that transferred one acre of the Mojave Desert Memorial on which the cross sits to private ownership, in exchange for five acres of land and thereby effectively removing it from federal jurisdiction. But the circuit court decreed that the federal government couldn't exchange federal lands for private lands in order to maintain the cross that has been the center of the Mojave Desert Veterans Memorial for three quarters of a century.

The American Legion is spearheading a nationwide effort to develop a grassroots groundswell of support to pass legislation in Congress that would amend federal law to prevent the use of the legal system in a manner that extorts money from state and local governments.

"Passage of 'The Veterans Memorials, Boy Scouts, Public Seals, and Other Public Expressions of Religion Protection Act of 2007' (PERA) would prevent the ACLU from mugging America's taxpayers in this manner," Conatser said. "I hope all Americans who are angry about this, write their senators and representatives and demand that they pass PERA. The bills, H.R. 725 and S. 415 are languishing in the Judiciary Committees of both chambers. It's time for Congress to make this public law, before other veterans' memorials are literally desecrated at the whim of judges."

The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and patriotic youth programs. The Legion's 2.7 million wartime veterans work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.

- 30 -

Media Contacts: Ramona Joyce, 202/263-2982; Cell, 202-445-1161 or Joe March/John Raughter, (317) 630-1253; Cell (317) 748-1926 or (317) 441-8847. This text and a high-resolution photo of Cmdr. Conatser can be downloaded at www.legion.org

Giving deceased veterans their due

Rich Cesler starts a national organization to find unclaimed ashes of vets for proper burial.

Idaho State Veterans Cemetery Director Rich Cesler places the cremated remains of veterans John and Helen Donovan into a vault at the veteran's cemetery near Eagle after receiving them from a funeral director in Gooding.

Edition Date: 09/08/07

Sgt. Richard Trueman earned two Purple Hearts in Korea.

He and his wife, Martha, died in the late 1990s. Despite Trueman's sacrifices and honors, the couple's ashes sat unclaimed, without proper burial, in a Meridian storage unit for five years.

Discovery of the ashes was a fluke. A member of the Boise Valley POW/MIA Awareness Rally Corp. won an auction on the locked storage unit after its payments had gone delinquent. She found the Truemans' urns and military records inside.

That's when Rich Cesler got involved.

For the past two years, the director of the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery has been on a mission to find Idaho veterans' "cremains," or the ashes left after cremation, and give them the rites they deserve.

In just two weeks in 2005, Cesler located the neglected remains of 13 veterans. A quest

Cesler's quest started when a member of the Ada County United Veterans Council asked him what he was doing about all the veterans' cremains that were still sitting unclaimed in funeral homes.

"I couldn't answer the question," Cesler recalls. "The idea sounded incredible to me."

The notion of a Purple Heart recipient like Trueman and other veterans being forgotten is an outrage to Jack Harp, director of the Boise Valley POW/MIA Awareness Rally Corp, and the man who helped get the Truemans' remains to Cesler.

"Being a combat vet myself, for the life of me, I can't imagine someone doing something like that, whether you're military or not. To be left in storage sheds, garages, basements. What in the hell are you thinking?"

Korea "was some tough fighting," added Harp, who served in Vietnam.

He described severe Korean winters as something like "going up to Bogus Basin in the winter in your summer clothes, then having to fight for your life on top of that."

"The Truemans are the kinds of people who are out there," Cesler said. "To think of them sitting on a shelf, gathering dust is heartbreaking."

Finding cremains

After meeting with the veterans who first told him about lost cremains, Cesler started doing his own research.

He found that over the years, the federal government has started a number of initiatives around the country, some with coroners' offices, to locate veterans' abandoned remains. The efforts had all been voluntary and had foundered.

Cesler sent a letter and a stamped response post card to the more than 90 funeral homes in Idaho, asking them if they were holding veterans' remains.

As a representative of the Division of Veterans Services, Idaho Code gives him authority to claim the ashes of any honorably discharged veteran from a funeral home.

Since he's started his search, he's recovered the cremains of 33 veterans and three of their spouses, who are also eligible for military burial.

Besides funeral homes, he's learned of veterans' ashes sitting in nursing homes and coroners' offices. He found the ashes of one Navy man, a Vietnam vet, that had sat in a local funeral home for 27 years.

Cesler served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. He grew up in Virginia, a childhood that translated into a love for collecting Civil War memorabilia.

Early this year, he founded the Missing in America Project, a registered nonprofit group whose mission is to find, identify and inter the unclaimed cremains of American veterans.

Most states in the United States now have Missing in America chapters. Many, said Cesler, are still working out the legalities of how veterans organizations can take possession of remains in order to bury them in veterans' cemeteries. The Idaho State Veterans Cemetery gets financial help from the Veterans Administration to inter cremains — \$300 per veteran. But the federal law only provides money within two years from a veteran's date of death, or date of cremation.

Sen. Larry Craig introduced the Veterans' Dignified Burial Assistance Act of 2007, which would waive the two-year limit for burial assistance. The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs approved Craig's bill. It's waiting on action in the full Senate.

Ada County also provides burial assistance for all indigent citizens, regardless of who they are.

But to take care of every veteran, those who died long ago, or outside Ada County, Cesler realized he couldn't rely on federal or county money.

He joined with other members of the community to form a fundraising group separate from the cemetery called the Indigent and Hardship Committee.

Father Timothy Ritchey is one member.

"It's about dignity," said Ritchey, explaining the committee's work. "Our veterans got such a lousy reception when they came home from Vietnam. They're getting to be that age when they're dying. Many suffered from post-traumatic stress, alcohol abuse. Lots have 'neither the pot nor the window.' We want to give them a good send off."

Randy Arnzen, another member of the committee, owns Accent Funeral Home in Meridian. He held one veteran's ashes for a short time. Luckily, that veteran's family eventually came to retrieve them.

"Some families think that once the cremation is over with, everything's over with. It's not. That's when the service starts," said Arnzen.

The committee raises funds by selling bricks in the memorial walkway at the cemetery. The walkway leads to the POW/MIA flag assembly area of the cemetery. Members of the public can buy a brick for \$100. A few dollars pay for the brick. The rest goes into the fund for veterans' burials.

Cesler's efforts continue. He's urging funeral homes to provide him with lists of names from any ashes they may have in storage so he can run them through military data bases to identify veterans.

He's trying to get the word out, as well as remind funeral home directors that even if the veteran's cemetery takes possession of ashes for interment, it

won't cost them. Families or individuals are still obligated to pay whatever cremation fees they may owe to the funeral homes.

Cesler said he hopes that one day the Missing in America Project will become a nation-wide initiative with its own centralized, federal office.

Later this month, he'll leave Idaho after his two-year stay at the veterans cemetery to start a different job in Washington State — building a new veterans cemetery in Medical Lake. He'll continue the Missing in America Project in Washington, and said that whoever takes over his position in Idaho will continue it here.

He said that by the time the job's finished, the ashes of as many as 1,000 Idaho veterans may be recovered.

"We've just scratched the surface," he said.

Final Service

The Idaho State Veterans Cemetery held its first interment of recovered ashes— 21 veterans and one veteran's spouse, Martha Trueman — Nov. 9, two days before Veteran's Day. Cesler didn't want to take away from the annual Veteran's Day ceremony at the Idaho State Veterans Home.

The cemetery will hold its second service for recovered ashes this year, again, on Nov. 9.

"It was very touching to see that many found at one time and taken care of," said Ricky Helsley, state adjutant for the American Legion department of Idaho, who attended the first ceremony.

Cesler placed each of the urns in a velvet bag. Each bag was festooned with dog tags that Cesler had specially made up.

Representatives from each of the veterans' branches of service were present. They picked up the urns one by one.

"They placed their own comrades in the wall," said Cesler.

Anna Webb: 377-6431



Saturday, October 13, 2007

8:00 a.m. to NOON

at the

Bannock County Fairgrounds

10560 N. Fairgrounds Road

Pocatello, Idaho

8:00 a.m. to NOON

Breakfast available at 8:15 a.m.

Services include: Clothing, Haircuts, Free Phone Calls, Hot Meals, Sack Lunch to go, Job and Veterans Claim Information, and more.

No cost transportation is available through the Pocatello Regional Transit System (PRT).

Clients within the PRT Service Area who are unable to access a regular route may make arrangements for a pick up by calling: 232-0111 BEFORE 3 p.m. on Friday, October 12th.

**For more information,
Contact Melissa Hartman 208-236-7411**

(all meeting minutes are unofficial until approved at the Post meeting)

**The American Legion
Pocatello Post 4
Meeting Minutes For September 12, 2007**

Officers Present: 5

Members Present: 26

Guests: Family of Sgt. Blake Stephens (3)

Total Present: 34

Bingo Report: Going very well. Need more people at 7 PM each Tuesday

BCVMA Report: Had a short meeting. Bannock County has kicked in \$30K (thousand) for roof repairs. Ted Pharis has retired as keeper of the rifles and a secure safe and location has been found in the Bannock County Memorial Building. Kay Obray has access.

American Legion Riders Report: Two bikes went to Reno for the Legion National Convention. There were 400 bikes that rode into Reno on the last leg of the overall trip from Indianapolis IN. Many things to discuss at Rider's meeting (after the General mtg.)

Funeral Report: 7 this month, and 62 YTD. 63 counting Ray Cuning's funeral in Clearfield UT with several Post members attending, 3 of which were part of the Pocatello Veteran's Honor Guard; Bill Head, Ralph Lillig, Al Gibson. The 3 PVHG members helped out with the local group veteran's burial ceremony by firing rifles.

Sick Call Report: None to report.

Membership Report: Lots of work in sending out membership requests to veterans who have dropped out of the Legion for some reason. We have shirts for the Membership Team. Four members get shirts. Recruiting for Active Duty military continues, with a FREE one-year membership offered. Full benefits come with this FREE membership; like the accidental death policy.

Veterans Home Report: Had the Veteran's Olympics at the Veteran's Home. Some veterans were escorted to the State Fair. That was a fun event for everybody involved.

Baseball Report: Local teams lost in the playoffs, but Bear Lake went to Alaska and won

Finance Report: Current report is that the Post has \$18,696.12 total assets. Details available.

Service Officer Report: Zach Rodriguez is the local Service Officer, and he is leaving to take a position with the State Of Idaho to head the Idaho Veteran’s Cemetery office. Zach has been one of the 4 representatives on the Governor’s Veteran’s advisory council and with this promotion, he is moving to Boise and he will be missed.

Old/Unfinished Business Report: We did get the death certificate and now we can access the lock box at the bank. The Fishing Derby had 78 kids and lots of parents and grandparents too. We ran out of food! All kids at the Derby got a button, and there were 8 awards given out. We have to limit awards in the future to 1 per kid. We got lots of good publicity in the papers before and after the fact. We had some new arrivals to Pocatello who read about it in the paper. The Homeless StandDown is scheduled for the Fairgrounds. Another reminder about cancelling DAV van appointments to try to cut out all the empty seats going to SLC. The VAMC in SLC is expanding their hours to 8 to 8.

New Business Report: Mike Schow gave a report on his trip to National in Reno NV. He had quite a time with room problems and ended up getting kicked out of his suite by the President’s party, but he still kept a suite. There were 110 riders who showed up for the Freedom Appreciation Rally last Saturday. There was a big celebration on 9/11 at Courtesy Ford. Guests at that celebration included the Stephen’s (at the meeting) and some members of Nick Gummersall’s family. There was a good crowd and the POW/MIA group made a good show by riding in with a police escort.

Good Of The Order: Mike Schow presented a Veteran’s Memorial brick and a letter to the family of Blake Stephens, KIA in Iraq. Dr. Stephen’s thanked all present for supporting the family. The Legion Color Guard was at the State Fair with the Blackfoot Legion post. Coordination of a softball tournament will be done by Bill Head.

Awards were handed out from the POW/MIA group to the Riders. Frank Smith accepted the award for our group’s help with handling the parking. Other awards handed out (with recipient) were Post 4 (Mike Schow), American Legion Baseball (Kermit Morrison). Individual awards were handed out to several Post 4 members also. A letter was received from the National Commander Paul Morin thanking Post 4 and all it’s members for both hosting the state convention, and making him feel so welcome here in our community.

Boyd Packer is offering instructions in getting a Utah Concealed Carry license. This license is good for a concealed carry in 31 states. A memorial service will be held at 5 PM Sunday for Ray Cuning at the Veteran’s Memorial on S. 4th St. Two members of the Post are running for public office in the upcoming election. Ralph Lillig in Pocatello, and Kermit Morrison in Chubbuck. Both asked for member support in their efforts.

The winner of the \$20 dinner prize was Frank Smith

Meeting Closed At: 2012

Attendance Drawing. You must be in attendance at 2nd Wed. night meeting.

Prize: Dinner for two. Name