Montana Board of Veterans Affairs

“The people declare that Montana servicemen, servicewomen, and veterans may be given special considerations determined by the legislature”

Article II, Section 35, Montana Constitution

Biennial Report – July 1, 2010

Prepared by: Joe Foster, 324-3741, jofoster@mt.gov
Administrator – MT Veterans Affairs Division
Montana Board of Veterans Affairs
- Mission and Composition -

**Mission:** Oversee the State of Montana’s provision of veterans services, as provided by the Montana Veterans Affairs Division.

<> 20 members; 11 voting, 9 non-voting.
  
  + **11 voting members:** 10 appointed by Governor, 1 appointed by Montana’s eight Tribal Councils (consensus).
    
    - 5 represent geographic regions of the state. *
    - 1 is an “at-large” veterans’ representative. *
    - 1 is the Native American veterans’ representative. *
    - 1 is Montana’s Tribal Councils’ consensus appointee. *
    - 3 have training, experience or education related to veteran issues.
    
    * Must be an honorably discharged veteran.

  + **9 non-voting members** representing: Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs / State Dept. of Military Affairs / State Dept. of Public Health and Human Services / U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs / U.S. Dept. of Labor / Montana’s Congressional delegation (3) / State Administration and Veterans Affairs Interim Committee.
Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- Mission -

Promote the general welfare of Montana veterans and their families.

THRU:

• Establishment of a statewide network of service for discharged veterans and their families.

• Provision of services and assistance for all Montana veterans and surviving spouses and dependents; in coordination with associated federal and state agencies, veterans services organizations, private organizations and individuals.

• Management, operation and maintenance of Montana’s state veterans cemetery program.

• Assist and advise the general public, governmental agencies, and elected officials regarding veterans services, programs, initiatives and policy.
Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- Major Program Accomplishments in 2009 Biennium -

Veterans Services Outreach:
- **Board of Veterans Affairs** – Meetings conducted in Billings, Helena, Great Falls, Glendive; and two via video-teleconference in support of the Governor’s “20x10” energy conservation initiative.
- **Wolf Point Veterans Service Office** – Office closure effective July 1, 2010 due to mandated budget reduction; as well as, determination that veterans services to NE Montana can be improved by: closing Wolf Point office, moving FTE to Miles City, and modifying Billings, Havre and Miles City outreach areas of responsibility.
- **Public Service Announcements (PSA)** – 30-second radio PSA developed and distributed statewide; features information about Montana Veterans Affairs Division services and contact information.

State Veterans Cemetery Program:
- **Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Missoula)** – Operational Oct. 6, 2009 (FY10).
- **National Cemetery Administration** – All three state veterans cemeteries inspected Spring 2009; all passed with commendations.

Veterans Services Operations:
- **Website** – Veterans service office contact information and outreach schedules, Board and Advisory Council meeting minutes, and “feature” items.
- **Veterans Service Officers** – Stationed three legislatively-authorized veterans service officers in areas supporting highest veteran demographics – Billings, Great Falls and Missoula; and reorganized supervisory structure to enhance the agency’s command and control.
- **Security Training** – Veterans service officer staff VA-certified in computer/information management security, required to access protected VA data bases.
Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- Organization -

Organizational Personnel and Facility Locations

30 FTE:
- 1 - administrator
- 1 - office manager
- 1 - administrative/veterans services assistant
- 22 - veterans services officers
- 5 - veteran cemetery program

10 Veterans Services Offices:
- Belgrade – Billings – Butte – Great Falls – Havre – Helena
- Kalispell – Lewistown – Miles City – Missoula

3 State Veterans Cemeteries:
- Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Fort Harrison (Helena)
- Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Miles City
- Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Missoula

Administration Office: Fort Harrison (MT National Guard HQ)
## Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- Veterans Service Offices and Cemeteries -

### Veterans Service Offices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgrade</td>
<td>350 Airport Road</td>
<td>388-4601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre</td>
<td>48 2nd Ave, #209</td>
<td>265-4225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewistown</td>
<td>505 West Main, Ste. 217</td>
<td>538-3174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billings</td>
<td>2795 Enterprise Ave.</td>
<td>248-8579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Ft. Harrison VA Center</td>
<td>495-2080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles City</td>
<td>VA Primary Care Clinic</td>
<td>874-5869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butte</td>
<td>600 Gilman Ave.</td>
<td>533-0910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalispell</td>
<td>2989 Hwy 93 North</td>
<td>755-3795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missoula</td>
<td>1911 Tower Road</td>
<td>542-2501</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State Veterans Cemeteries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cemetery</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montana State Veterans Cemetery</td>
<td>Ft. Harrison (near Helena)</td>
<td>324-3742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery</td>
<td>Miles City</td>
<td>853-6963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery</td>
<td>Missoula</td>
<td>531-1105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- Montana Veterans and Family Members -

Statistics as of 2000 census –
*U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs*

#2 Per Capita – Montana’s veteran population national ranking.

Montana

| Veterans | 108,000 |
| Family Members | 162,000 |
| Total | 270,000 |
Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- Economic Impact of Agency Work Effort -

For every $1 of state General/Special Fund budget investment, MVAD veterans services operations attain $81.62 in federal VA monetary payments to Montana veterans.

FY10 MVAD Budget (blue) = $1,407,891  FY10 Federal VA Payments (green) = $147,175,835
Montana Veterans Affairs Division
- State Veteran Cemeteries -

**Montana State Veterans Cemetery** – Fort Harrison / Est. 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Burials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total since 1988: 2686

**Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery** – Miles City / Est. 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Burials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total since 2002: 293

**Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery** – Missoula / Est. 2008 (FY10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Burials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total since 2009: 290