



**American Legion**  
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## **AMERICAN LEGION, POST 60 YEAR-IN-REVIEW FOR 2009**

As 2009 fades away in our memory it is time to reflect on the events that occurred at the American Legion. Besides being a non-profit Veterans organization run by volunteers, Post 60 is the Valley County War Memorial dedicated to the service of citizens who have answered our nation's call to duty, and we also have the privilege of serving as the community center for Southern Valley County. The Legion Hall is provided free of charge for numerous events, some events we charge a lease and catering fee in order to raise money to meet our operating expenses, and there are many occasions where members of the Legion participate in community events.

This past year the following events took place at the Legion Hall where no fee was charged to use the facility. There were three Red Cross Blood Drives. The Legion is a proud sponsor of our local Boy and Girl Scout Troops, the boys meet at the Hall each Tuesday and the girls gather on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month. The Annual Pioneer Days gathering where history is served with a pot-luck luncheon. We hosted lunch during the Mountain Home AFB Family Retreat to Cascade. The Cascade Mayoral recall ballot and the subsequent Cascade City Council Members election. There was an estate sale to benefit the family of a deceased Post member. Our only fundraiser of the year, "Hot August Nights" featuring restored autos; we hope this year we can increase the number of cool cars significantly. And sadly, we coordinated with families to conduct six funerals or memorial services for local Veterans who left us last year.

One of our missions as a Veterans organization is to support local Veterans who need assistance. A portion of our budget is dedicated to our "Veterans Assistance Fund" where money is donated to local Veterans with a specific need. In partnership with Post 119 of McCall we donated a significant sum of money to help them sponsor a Salmon River rafting experience for a group of Idaho Veterans with disabilities, we hope to make this an annual event. We helped facilitate a generous donation from the "Ride to the Wall" Foundation to a New Meadows Veteran who has been homeless. One of our Post's members currently serves as the Valley County Veterans Service Officer where he is responsible for helping local Veterans receive their rightful Veterans Administration health benefits and service-connected disability claims.

The following events were charged a lease fee and/or a catering fee for meals provided. These events are what we need in order to raise funds just to keep the Legion Hall open. We use this revenue for general maintenance and cleaning, insurance costs, payment of utilities, snow removal, liquor licenses, improvements to the building and to support community events. There were six Valley County Planning and Zoning public hearings and one Valley County Commissioners public hearing. The annual Chamber of Commerce "Fun Run" and their annual "Desert Auction" fundraisers and dinners. There was the Republican "Lincoln Day" luncheon, Governor Otter's "Capitol for a Day" luncheon and public meeting, and one candidate for City

Council met voters at the Hall to discuss his platform. We catered the “Persons of the Year” awards dinner. There was one tool sale event and later a tool auction. There was a “Pampered Chef” affair and several arts and crafts classes held at the Hall. There was one joyful wedding and a festive birthday party. The BSU Biomass information meeting and the Idaho Transportation Department’s presentation on the south bridge replacement project. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation’s catered dinner and auction. We leased and catered two dinners and lunch for the Idaho Association of Counties Annual Conference. There was one Homeowners’ Association meeting.

The American Legion is strongly committed to our community and we are proud to participate in the following patriotic and service related projects. The Color Guard and contingent of Post 60 members in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade. Veterans’ Day ceremony at the Hall, and Memorial Day ceremonies at Alpha, Crown Point and Margaret cemeteries plus the placing of flags on the gravesites of all Veterans. Formal retirement of all unserviceable American flags gathered during the year. We are grateful to provide the Honor Guard, Rifle Salute Squad, bugler and flag-folding for the families of deceased Veterans. Working with the Cascade School District to conduct our annual Oratorical contest and competition for Boys and Girls State selection, where cash prizes and scholarships are available. Members of the Post spoke with history classes and participated in the School District’s rousing Veterans’ Day Salute. We hosted our annual free Thanksgiving Day dinner open to everyone, and we’d like to thank again all those who donated to this worthwhile endeavor. We lost all of our lights on the trees down Main Street due to a lightning strike. Thankfully, Idaho Power Company is offering a rebate on old incandescent Christmas lights so we were able to get a rebate of over \$5300 for the old lights and have used this rebate to purchase LED Christmas lights. The Chamber of Commerce and the Legion have joined forces to make sure that Main Street is “lit-up” for the Holidays. Our most joyful event was Santa Claus’s visit to Post 60. Around 145 children got to visit with and sit in Santa’s lap where a free photo was taken and they each received new wrapped toys to place under their Christmas tree. Hot chocolate, candy and cookies were consumed with gusto. Additional presents and candy were distributed to children through local churches and our friends at WICAP.

For every good man there is always a strong woman at his side, and Post 60 is no exception. The women of the Ladies Auxiliary have been exemplary in their dedication, most of the above could not have been accomplished without their strong commitment and selfless service. They established “The Kids Project” oriented to providing winter clothing for children in need, coordinated through the School District. This past year 8 pairs of boots, 9 coats, 6 pair of snow pants, 13 pairs of gloves, 6 sweaters/sweatshirts, 2 hats, 3 pairs of trousers and 2 packages of socks have been distributed. They also made 26 hand-made fleece blankets that were given out during Santa’s visit and a few were given to the Sheriff’s Department. Hand-knitted shawls were created and given to the mothers and daughters of local servicemembers on active duty. Our ladies have supported local Veterans and the Veterans at the Idaho State Veterans Home with the proceeds raised during their “poppy sales” each Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Their efforts have also been funded by our pie raffles (from you know who) during our Friday night dinners at the Legion Hall and the generous donations of Legion members and members of our community.

The following improvements to the Hall were made this past year: installed ceiling fans in all rooms; replaced all of the ceiling fluorescent lights with energy efficient lighting; finished installing our audio-visual system and purchased needed kitchen equipment to enhance our catering abilities.

We hope no one reads this and thinks the Legion is “tooting our own horn”. It is very important that folks understand that each and everyone of us here in the Cascade area have contributed something to support those organizations that have held fundraisers at the Legion Hall, donated toys for Santa’s visit, donated blood to the Red Cross, given their time and labor to support community events and a host of many other actions too numerous to list here. Members of the Legion are acutely aware that without the support of individuals, civic organizations, city and county officials we would have a very difficult time keeping Post 60 open. The American Legion with humility and deep appreciation extend our heartfelt thanks to all who make this a truly great place to live and call home. Remember, Freedom is not Free—Support Our Troops!! We welcome you to join us on Friday nights for a good meal and great company.