

## Veterans Day Race

**1934** - When the clock hit eleven o'clock in the morning on November 11th, 1934 a loud bomb burst above the streets of Butte, Montana. Normally silence would follow as World War Veterans would remember Armistice Day. It marked sixteen years since the war to end all wars came to a close. This year right at eleven o'clock silence was replaced by the clatter of footsteps. The American Legion decided to hold a three mile foot race to commemorate the end of World War I. The race was organized by veteran C.Owen Smithers and Charles McAullife of the Montana School of Mines. McAullife directed the twenty two runners who elected to try and complete the rugged three mile course through the streets of uptown Butte. The race started on East Broadway at the Legion Hall. The athletes went west on Broadway to Hamilton, north to Granite, west to Excelsior, north to Woolman, west to Western and east to Broadway and the finish line at the Legion Hall. John Dougherty, a student at the Montana School of Mines, was the first to cross the line. In addition to the foot race a pushmobile event was held for small children. A number of teams competed in that event.

**1935** - The second annual Butte Veterans' Day Race produced a new course and the first close finish in the event. The course was changed when the runners headed west on Granite. Instead of going north on Excelsior to Woolman the runners kept going straight on Granite until they reached the Montana School of Mines. They raced around the campus buildings then down Park to Emmett, north to Broadway and east to the Legion Hall. Seven runners started the race which quickly developed into a two person duel between Butte High student, Jack Pachico, and former Christian Brothers High graduate, Jim Kearney, who competed for the Sky High Athletic Club. Kearney led most of the race with Pachico in close burst. Pachico outkicked Kearney on Broadway Street and won by a couple of strides. Pachico was later killed in World War II. A team plaque was named after Pachico. It eventually was won by his former school, Butte High.

**1936** - The third annual Butte Veterans' Day Race produced another exciting finish. The pack of nine runners was led by Andy Slatt of the Montana School of Mines and Henry Tyrand of Butte High who raced side-by-side for most of the race. When the two crossed the finish line in a time of 12:07 officials called the race a dead heat. It was the first and only time the race was declared a tie.

**1937** - The hard-luck loser of the 1935 race, Jim Kearney, was back to try and win the Veterans' Day Race in 1937. Kearney, competing for the Sky High Athletic Club, easily won by about a block in a time of 10:02. Larry Morgan of Butte High was second and Kearney's younger brother, Marty, a sophomore at Christian Brothers High School was third. The race had fourteen runners the largest turnout since the first race held four years ago.

**1938** - The annual Butte Veterans Day Race was captured by Butte High student Richard Parent. He became the third Butte High runner in four years to win the Veterans Day Race. The contest was run over a new two mile course that went over Park St. and came back on Broadway to the American Legion Hall.

**1939** - The sixth annual race had another close finish involving a Kearney. Marty Kearney, a senior at Christian Brothers High School, went toe-to-toe with Butte High senior runner, Walt Taylor. The two ran together the entire two mile course. Taylor outkicked Kearney at the line winning by a couple of strides in a time of 12:40 seconds. Four other runners competed in the event.

**1940** - The seventh annual Veterans Day Race saw the roses awarded to the tough luck second place finisher of the previous year's race, Marty Kearney. He won the event in a time of 13:00. Kearney, a recent graduate of Christian Brothers High School, was competing for the Sky High Athletic Club. It was the same athletic club that Kearney's older brother, Jim, competed for in winning the 1937 event. There were only five runners, the lowest turnout ever for the event, competing in the race.

**1941** - The 1940 winner Marty Kearney was back to try and repeat as champion of the Veterans' Day Race. Kearney's efforts came up five seconds short as he lost a close race to Joe Lynchehan, a senior at Christian Brothers High School. Lynchehan won in a time of 11:45. Lynchehan was the first student at Christian Brothers High School to win the race as a student of that school. Kearney came up two seconds short in the

1939 race, won the 1940 event and was five seconds off the pace in the 1941 event. He was seven seconds away from winning the event three years in a row. The race was held less than a month before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor to start World War II. The race was not held during the next four years while the world was at war.

**1942-1945** - There was no race held because of World War II.

**1946** - For the first time in five years the Veterans Day Race was back in Butte, Montana. The 1940 winner of the event, Marty Kearney, back in the United States after serving during World War II was the favorite in the race. He led the contest for most of the race. Kearney was passed by Claire Renouard with less than a half mile to go in the event. Renouard, a Christian Brothers High School student, went on to win the race in a time of 15 minutes 6 seconds. The first Veterans Day Race in five years drew a field of five runners. The order of finish was: Claire Renouard of Christian Brothers High School, Fred Harvey from Butte High School, Marty Kearney of the Sky High Athletic Club, Chuck Stears representing Butte High and Steve Reardon from the Christian Brothers High School.

**1947** - The Veterans Day Race was back on an annual basis by 1947 and the field increased to thirteen runners. Charles Twardus of Butte High was the winner of the two mile race in fourteen minutes fifty five seconds. This was the final year for the two mile course that went across Park to Warren, north to Broadway then west to the American Legion Hall. Twardus' winning time set a course record.

**1948** - The 1948 race would take place over a new three mile course. The foot race would start on Broadway Street in front of the Legion Hall. The runners would travel east on Broadway to Gaylord, south to Mercury, west to Wyoming, south past Butte High School to Gold, west to Idaho, north past Christian Brothers and Girls Central High Schools to Broadway, east on Broadway to the Legion Hall and the finish line. The first to travel across the three mile course was Butte High sophomore Lester Sodja who completed the route in 17 minutes 45 seconds.

**1949** - Lester Sodja became the first man to ever win the Veterans Day Race in back-to-back years. Sodja, a junior at Butte High School, won the race for the second straight year in a record time of 16:32. A team event was held and won by Butte Central High School.

**1950** - For the third straight year Lester Sodja won the Veterans Day Race. He completed the three mile event in 17:00.9. Sodja was the first man to ever win the race three years in a row. The field of 16 competitors also were running for a team event. Butte High won over Butte Central by a score of 11-10.

**1951** - Lester Sodja had graduated from Butte High which made for a wide-open field in the 1951 race. Leonard `Chuck' Smith, a junior at Christian Brothers High School, won the event in a record time of 16:47.6. Smith led his Maroons' teammates to a 14-7 team victory over Butte High. There were sixteen runners competing in the annual event.

**1952** - Leonard `Chuck' Smith became the second back-to-back winner of the Veterans Day Race in 1952. He joined Lester Sodja as the only multi-race winner of the event. Smith won with a course record time of 15:57.5. He led Butte Central to a 15-7 team victory over Butte High. It was the third time in four years that the Maroons had won the team trophy. There was a record number of 27 entrants in the 1952 Veterans Day Race.

**1953** - A record number of 37 runners took off in the 1953 Veterans Day Race. Ted Molthen of Butte High was the first to get back to the American Legion Hall in a time of sixteen minutes 52.8 seconds. Molthen led Butte High to an 11-10 victory over Butte Central. It was the Bulldogs first win over the Maroons since the 1950 race.

**1954** - For the first time since 1946 the Veterans Day Race did not see a back-to-back winner. Wendell Glenn, a student at Butte High, won the competition in a time of 16:05.5. The Bulldogs won a team competition against Butte Central for the second straight year by a score of 11-10. There were 32 runners in the 1954 race.

**1955** - A record 40 runners competed in the 1955 Veterans Day Race. Tom Monaghan, a senior at Christian Brothers High School, won the event in a time of 16:23.3. Despite Monaghan's win Butte High took team honors for the third straight year by a score of 11-10.

**1956** - Once again the number of competitors increased to a record 47 for the 1956 Veterans Day Race. The event was held on Saturday, November 10th rather than hold the contest a day later on Sunday, November 11th. Robert Morgan, a student at Butte High School, won the race in a time of 16:34.2. Morgan's Bulldogs easily beat Butte Central in the team competition by a score of 18-6.

**1957** - The 1957 race had entertainment prior to the event provided by the Butte High School pep band. The race produced 36 runners with Geoffrey Chance of Butte High winning one of the most dramatic races of all-time. Chance was battling toe-to-toe with Butte Central's Mike LaVelle as the two neared the finish line. LaVelle fell just before the tape then got up and fell again. He would fall two more times before crawling across the finish line to place sixth. Chance's winning time was 16:40.2. His Bulldogs won the team competition over Butte Central 14-7.

**1958** - Butte High senior Geoffrey Chance became only the third back-to-back winner of the Veterans Day Race in 1958. Chance won the event in a time of 16:25.0. There was more than 500 people at the finish line, in front of the American Legion Hall on Broadway Street, to greet the 43 runners as they completed the three mile event. Butte High won the team competition over Butte Central 13-8. 1958 marked the final year in the eleven year competition for the Jack Pachico Cup. Butte High won the trophy with 132 points while Butte Central had 99. Pachico, the 1935 winner of the race, was killed while serving his country in World War II.

**1959** - The 1959 race saw the two Butte schools battling for the new C.Owen Smithers Cup. The trophy was named after one of the founding fathers of the event. Butte High easily won the first year of the competition by a score of 18-4 over Butte Central. The Bulldogs were led by junior, Stewart Stadler won the three mile event in a time of fifteen minutes fifty eight seconds. He became only the second runner ever to break the 16 minute mark for the three mile course. Stadler was a half a second off the course record set by Leonard `Chuck' Smith in the 1951 race. There were 25 runners in the annual foot race.

**1960** - Stewart Stadler became the fourth back-to-back winner of the Veterans Day Race in 1960. Stadler joins Lester Sodja, Leonard `Chuck' Smith and Geoffrey Chance as the only two-time winners. Stadler's winning effort was 16:01.0. Stadler's Bulldogs easily won the team event over Butte Central 17-3 with Anaconda picking up 1 point. There were 28 runners competing in the event.

**1961** - The first winner of the Veterans Day Race not living in Butte at the time of the contest was Fred Martin of Anaconda High School. He won the race in a time of 16:00.0. Martin led a field of 32 runners to the finish line. Butte High won the team event with 16 points, Butte Central was next with 10 following by Anaconda with the six points. Martin scored for the Copperheads. The scoring went six for first, five for second, four for third, three for fourth, two for fifth and one for sixth.

**1962** - The event was held on Saturday, November 10th so it would not conflict with Sunday church services. The high school event was won by Don Brunell, a junior at Butte High School. Brunell's winning time was 16:10.1. His Bulldogs won team honors with 10 points. Anaconda was second with 7 and Butte Central third with 4 points. Montana School of Mines student, Calvin Strobel from Terry, Montana, ran unattached to the high school event. His time of 15:56.0 would've been good enough to win the event and also break the course record of 15:57.5 set by Butte Central's Leonard `Chuck' Smith back in the 1950 race.

**1963** - Bob Davis, a sophomore at Butte High School, shattered the twelve year old record of Leonard `Chuck' Smith of Butte Central. Davis' winning time was 15:21.0 seconds. That was 36 seconds faster than Smith ran the race in 1951. Davis beat teammate Don Brunell, the previous year's winner. For Brunell it was his first defeat of the fall running season. Behind Davis and Brunell the Bulldogs easily won the team competition with 15 points. Anaconda was second with 5 and Butte Central third with 1 point. There were 33 racers who competed in the annual event.

**1964** - Butte High junior, Bob Davis smashed his own record in the 1964 event. His time was 14:45.3. Davis beat his previous year's record by 36 seconds. In two years Davis had lowered the course record time by one minute twelve seconds. Davis led his Butte High team to victory with 13 points. Anaconda was second with 6 and Butte Central third with 1 point. There were 30 runners in the 1964 event. Davis became the fifth two-time winner of the race. Prior to the race the first-ever state high school cross country championship was held with the Bulldogs win the state title.

**1965** - Bob Davis' attempt to win three Veterans Day Races and join Lester Sodja as the only three-time winner of the event vanished before the school year. He moved with his family to Minnesota. The absence of Davis left a wide-open field. The race was dominated by Butte High teammates Terry Eamon and Gary Keltz. The two ran side-by-side until Broadway Street when Eamon pulled away to win in a time of 15:15.3. For the first time event one school, Butte High, took the top six spots in the race and collected all 21 points. The Bulldogs were also awarded the C.Owen Smithers trophy which was completing its seventh and final year of competition. The outstanding performance by the Bulldogs capped the brilliant career of Butte High coach, Swede Dahlberg, who retired the following spring. There were 31 runners in the 1965 event.

**1966** - The 1966 race was the 19th and final time the race was held through the uptown business district. The ever expanding Berkeley Pit forced race officials to alter the course slightly. Instead of going all the way east on Broadway to Gaylord the runners were forced to go down Atlantic to Park, east on Park to Gaylord and then continue with the regular course route. Gary Keltz, a senior at Butte High and a tough luck second place finisher the year before, won the race in a time of 15:16.9. Keltz's Butte High team won the first year of competition for the Swede Dahlberg trophy with a 26-38 margin over Butte Central. This was the first time the scoring system was based off the new rules set up by the National Federation of High Schools. There were 33 runners who competed in the three mile foot race.

**1967** - A new Veterans Day course was created for the 1967 race. Two factors for the change was the Berkeley Pit's expand west which had swallowed up a portion of the course plus the large crowds attracted to the foot race. Organizers felt it would be more appropriate to finish inside Naranche Stadium next to Butte High so spectators could sit in the stands. The new course started next to Butte High School on Gold Street. Runners would travel west to Montana, south to Front, east to Wyoming, north to the east entrance to Naranche Stadium then make a loop of the stadium to the finish line. The new course produced one of the most dramatic finishes in the history of the race. Butte High senior, Ralph Sorenson, led favorite Howard Johnson of Anaconda, the state cross country champion, into the stadium. Sorenson led until the final 20 yards when he was caught and past by Johnson who won the race in a time of 13:00.3. Sorenson fell down when past by Johnson. He quickly got up and staggered across the finish line in second place. The finish was similar to the one in 1957 when Butte Central's Mike LaVelle fell just short of the finish line allowing Butte High's Geoffrey Chance to win the race. Butte Central was the team winner with 28 points. Butte High was a distant second with 62 and Libby was third with 92 points. There were 44 runners, the largest turnout in 11 years, competing in the race.

**1968** - Butte Central's Tim Finley became the first Maroons' runner to win the event in 13 years. The last Central harrier to cross the finish line first in the Veterans Day Race was Tom Monaghan in 1955. Finley, the state cross country champion, won the event in a time of 13:29.1. Butte Central won the team event by a margin of 20-52 over Butte High. There were 31 runners in the two and a half mile race.

**1969** - For the second time in three years and third time this decade a runner from Anaconda High School won the Butte Veterans Day Race. Dave O'Brien won the contest in a time of 13:08.0. Butte High won the team competition with 31 points upsetting the state cross country champions from Anaconda who had 34 points. Butte Central was third with 69 points. There were 32 runners in the event.

**1970** - Butte High senior, Dick Hofacker, won the 1970 race with a time of 12:47.0 to set a new course record. He received the Marty Kearney Memorial Trophy. The plaque was named after the 1940 winner of the event and also a long time organizer of the Veterans Day Race. Hofacker's Bulldogs easily won team honors with 19 points. Butte Central was second with 55 points and Anaconda third with 69 points. There

were 35 runners competing in the two and a half mile course.

**1971** - Butte Central sophomore, Dave McDougall, was the 1971 winner of the Veterans' Day Race with a new course record time of 12:42.9. It eclipsed the mark set the previous year by Dick Hofacker of Butte High. McDougall's victory propelled the Maroons to a 30-32 edge over Butte High in team competition. There were 33 runners who competed in the two and a half mile race.

**1972** - For the first time ever a separate race for high school girls was held during Veterans Day in Butte. The first winner was Butte Central junior, Rose McCormick. she covered the one and a half mile course in 9:57.9. McCormick was given the Martin P. Kearney trophy named after the 1940 winner of the race and long-time organizer of the event. The male winner for the second year in a row was Butte Central's Dave McDougall. He won in a record time of 12:30.0. McDougall joined Leonard `Chuck' Smith as the only two-time winner of the race from Butte Central. McDougall was awarded the Swede Dahlberg Trophy in memory of the long-time Butte High coach. The final year of the seven year Swede Dahlberg plaque went to Butte High. The Bulldogs beat Butte Central 27-29 in team competition. Butte High won four of the seven races held for the Swede Dahlberg Plaque. The ultimate determination came down to total team score over the seven years. Butte High won by a count of 235-264.

**1973** - Butte Central senior, Dave McDougall, became only the second man to ever win the Veterans Day Race three years in a row. He joins Lester Sodja of Butte High, who won the race in 1948,49 and 50 as the only three-time winner. McDougall's winning time over the three mile course was a record for the third straight year 12:12.8. Twenty five boys competed in the high school boys event with Butte Central beating Butte High 19-39. The winner of the high school girls race for the second straight year was Butte Central senior, Rose McCormick. Her winning clocking over a mile and a half was a record 9:39.5. There were twenty three high school girls who competed in the event. In addition there was a separate race for both the junior high boys and girls. Tim Curry of West Junior High was the boys winner over a mile in 6:16. The girls junior high champion was Liza Merrifield in 6:12.5. There were four junior high boys and ten junior high girls participating in the first event for them. Overall 62 athletes competed in the various events which was a record turnout breaking the mark of 47 set back in 1956. For the first time ever the Veterans Day Race was held in October on the 22nd of the month. The event coincided with the U.S. Congress declaring the third Monday in October as Veterans Day for 1974. It was the first and only time that occurred.

**1974** - Butte High sophomore, Mike Houlihan, was the 1974 winner of the Veterans' Day Race. His winning time was 12:27.4. Houlihan led the Bulldogs to a 20-37 team victory over Butte Central. The winner of the girls high school race was Butte Central's Mary Whelan. Her record winning clocking was 8:28.4, a new record for the course. Andy Kautzman of West Junior High was the boys champion in the junior high division with a time of 5:55 while Liza Merrifield won the junior high girls race for the second straight year in a clocking of 6:08. In addition to the high school and junior high competition an open college race was held. Rob Resson of the University of Montana led the field of five across the finish line in a time of 12:09.6.

**1975** - Liza Merrifield became the first female to win a Veterans Day Race three years in a row. Merrifield captured the high school girls event in a time of 9:31.5. The two previous years Merrifield had won the girls junior high race. The high school boys winner for the second straight year was Butte High's Mike Houlihan. His winning time was 12:54.5. The junior high boys champion was Mike Williams of West Junior High in a time of 6:12.4 while Jenny Pascoe of West Junior High took first in the girls division with a time of 7:01.6. This was the ninth and final time the race was held at Naranche Stadium. The sports complex had been closed a couple of years earlier because of unsafe bleachers in the complex.

**1976** - The 1976 Veterans Day Race marked a milestone year for the annual event. For the first time since the very early years of the event the race was opened up to all competitors. A record 120 runners competed on a two and a half or five mile course that started on Continental Drive went down to Grand Avenue then into the newly completed East Junior High Stadium and the finish line. Despite the open event a high school student, Bill Kearney, a junior at Butte Central High School, won the five mile event in a time of 29:30. He beat Ed Foley, a Butte teacher, by seven seconds. Kearney's father Martin won the race in 1940

and was also a long-time organizer of the event before passing away in 1970. Martin's brother, James, won the race in 1937. The winner in the female division was Mary Whelan, the 1974 girls high school winner and a student at Butte Central High School. Her time was 40:42.0 for five miles. There was also a two and a half mile race for kids fourteen years old and younger. Chuck Richards was the boys winner in a clocking of 16:16, while Laura Callahan took the top spot in the girls race in a time of 19:07.

**1977** - After finishing second the previous year Butte teacher, Ed Foley, came back to win the 1977 Veterans Day Race in a time of 31:00. Rose McCormick, a student at Montana State University, and a former two-time winner of the race in 1972 and 1973 won the women's portion of the race in 35:32. McCormick became only the second female, joining Liza Merrifield, as a three-time female winner of the Veterans' Day Race. Scott Fitzpatrick won the boys 14 and under 2 and a half mile contest in a time of 17:38, while Tina Diebold of Butte was the girls champion in 20:24. There were 91 competitors in the 1977 race which again finished at East Junior High Stadium.

**1978** - Bone-chilly temperatures keep the number of runners down to only 50 for the 1978 Veterans Day Race. Mike Houlihan, a student at Montana State University student, won the male portion of the race for the third time in his career in a record time of 28:49. Houlihan had previously won the race as a high school student in 1974 and 1975. He joins Lester Sodja and Dave McDougall as the only three-time winner of the event. The women's winner was Laura Callahan in a time of 39:25. Dave Wulf was the victor in the two and a half mile race for boys 14 and under. Wulf's winning time was 15:45. The girls winner was Linda Kearney. Her clocking was 20:07. Kearney is the younger sister of 1976 men's winner Bill Kearney. Linda's father Martin won the race in 1940 and uncle James took first place honors in the 1937 event. Linda and her brother Bill were the first brother-sister team to win the Veterans Day Race. This was the third and final time the five mile course along Continental Drive was used as the footpath for the Butte Veterans' Day Race.

**1979** - A new four and a half mile course was established to start and end at the American Legion Hall just off of Harrison Avenue near the Bert Mooney Airport. Mike Houlihan successfully defended his men's title in a time of 23:06. Houlihan became the first four-time winner ever of the Veterans Day Race. His previous wins were in 1974, 1975 and 1978. Houlihan surpassed Lester Sodja and Dave McDougall who were the only three-time winners. The female winner was Deirdre Caughlin of Butte in 32:22. The victor of the two and half mile fourteen and under boys race was Bob Whalen in a time of 14:50. Whalen's older sister, Mary, had previously won the race in 1974 and 1976. The Whalen's join the brother-sister combination of Bill and Linda Kearney as the only siblings to win the race. Bill's father Martin and his brother James were the only brother-brother winners. Martin took top honors in 1940 and James in 1937. The fourteen and under girls winner was Kelly Peck of Butte in a clocking of 16:31. There were 52 runners competing in the annual race.

**1980** - Once again the name Kearney topped the list at the Veterans Day Race. Bill Kearney, a student at Montana State University, won the race for the second time. He had previous took top honors in the 1976 event. This time he made it to the line first in a clocking of 24:20. He beat his first cousin, Glenn Metz, to the line by thirty seconds. Bill's older brother, Marty, was fifth in the race. Kearney's father, Martin, won the race in 1940, uncle James Kearney took top place in 1937 and Bill's sister, Linda, was the girls winner in 14 and under in 1978. Meanwhile history was made in the ladies race when Liza Merrifield became the first four-time women's winner. She crossed the line in a time of 32:01. Liza had previously won the race in 1973, 1974 and 1975. The first place winner in the fourteen and under boys race was Bill Sage. His victorious time was 14:50. The girls winner was Rhonda Ferkovich in a clocking of 16:38. There were 99 runners competing in the annual event.

**1981** - For the first time since the race was contested as an open event in 1976 both the men's and women's winners were from outside the Butte area. Stanley Zezotarski, a former Butte High runner, of Helena won the men's race in a record time of 23:02. The female victor was Charlene Clark of Dillon. Her winning effort took place in 29:56. The fourteen and under event was dominated by defending champions Bill Sage and Rhonda Ferkovich both of Butte. Sage took boys honors in a record time of 13:56 while Ferkovich's won with a record clocking of 15:41. There were 98 runners competing in the 1981 Veterans Day Race.

**1982** - The 1982 Veterans Day Race was dominated by a pair of runners from Helena. Jim Hatcher of the Capital City took top honors in the men's division in a record time of 22:46. Ann Danzer of Helena was the ladies victor with a clocking of 28:43. It was the second straight year that both the men's and women's winners were from outside the Butte area. For the third straight year Rhonda Ferkovich took the race for girls fourteen and under. She became the first girl to ever accomplish the feat. The only other multi-winner of the young girls race was Liza Merrifield in 1973 and 1974. Merrifield went on to win the high school girls race in 1975 and the women's open division in 1980. The only other three-time ladies winner was Rose McCormick in 1972, 1973 and 1977. Ferkovich's winning clocking was 16:53. Meanwhile the boys winner was Jim O'Neill in a time of 13:59. There was 89 runners in the 1982 event.

**1983** - Tony Banovich of Butte took the 1983 Veterans Day Race in a time of 23:47. Banovich was the first Butte runner to win the event in three years. The women's winner for the third straight year was a runner outside the Butte area. Debbie Raunig of Missoula took top honors in a record clocking of 27:23. in the women's division. The boys fourteen and under champion was Eric Allen of Butte in a record time of 13:07. The victor for the girls race was Shelley LeMere of Butte in a time of 18:33. There were 82 runners in the 1983 event.

**1984** - The 1984 Veterans Day Race was again dominated by two runners from Helena. Both were winners two years earlier in the 1982 race. Jim Hatcher took the men's race for the second time in a clocking of 24:58. For the second time in three years Ann Danzer of Helena won the women's race in a time of 30:03. Mark Comba was the boys fourteen and younger winner in a clocking of 14:49, while Heather LaFontaine of Deer Lodge was the girls champion in 17:31. LaFontaine was the first girl outside of the city of Butte to win the young ladies division two and a half mile race. There were 72 contestants in the 1984 race. In was the sixth and final time the race would start and end at the American Legion Hall.

**1985** - A new course would greet runners in the 1985 Veterans Day Race. The five mile course started at Stodden Park. The runners left the park out to Dewey Blvd. then traveled west to Kaw Ave., north to Chula, west to Montana St., south to Hansen Road, south to Holmes Ave., east to Western Ave, south to Four Mile View, east to Warren, south to Waterline, east to Hope, north to Motor View and the finish line at the American Legion Hall. The first to travel the new course was Matt Rothermel of Bozeman. He won the event in a time of 27:58. The women's champion for the second time in three years was Debbie Raunig of Missoula in a clocking of 31:50. Raunig took top honors in the 1983 event when she set a record on the American Legion Hall course. For the second straight year Heather LaFontaine of Deer Lodge won the girls fourteen and under race in 18:15. The top boys runner was Don Foley of Butte in a clocking of 19:06. There were 63 runners in the 1985 event which was run on a snow-covered course.

**1986** - Bone-chilly temperatures and four inches of snow greeted runners for the 1986 race. Jim Hatcher of Helena became the fourth man to event win the race three times. He took top honors in 1982 and 1984. Hatcher won the 1986 event in a clocking of 30:11. Debbie Raunig of Missoula accomplished the same thing as Hatcher by winning the women's race for the third time. She had previous won the event in 1983 and 1985. Raunig joined Liza Merrifield, Rose McCormick and Rhonda Ferkovich as the only three-time women's winners. Her winning effort was timed in 33:31. Three was also the magic number in the girls fourteen and under race for Heather LaFontaine of Deer Lodge. She won the race for the third straight year. She joins Rhonda Ferkovich as the only three-time winner of the young girls race. LaFontaine's winning effort was clocked in 18:45. The boys fourteen and under winner was Mike Clark of Butte in a time of 16:18. There were 49 competitors who braved the cold, snowy conditions.

**1987** - The 1987 Veterans Day Race was dominated again by Raunig, but this time it was Tom not Debbie who crossed the finish line first. Debbie's brother, Tom, from Bozeman set a new course record in a time of 26:17. Tom and Debbie Raunig become the third brother-sister combination to win the Veterans Day Race. The others were Bill and Linda Kearney, plus Mary and Bob Whelan. The female winner of the event was Jacque Stingley of Great Falls in a time of 34:23. The boys fourteen and under winner was John Castner of Butte in a time of 17:58. The girls winner was Wendy Lutgen of Helena in 17:04. There was also an event of two and a half miles for boys 15-18. It was won by Tom O'Neill of Butte in 14:37. There were 74 runners in the 1987 event.

**1988** - A family connection was back in the winner's circle in 1988. This time the connection was the Stingley family of Great Falls. Bob Stingley won the men's portion of the race in a time of 28:35.9. The previous year his wife, Jacque, took top honors in the ladies race. Bob and Jacque Stingley became the first husband-wife team to win the Veterans Day Race. For the first time in eight years the women's race was captured by a Butte runner. Susan Kuluza was the first to cross the line in 34:52.5. Russ Erickson of Butte was the top boys runner in the 14 and under category with a clocking of 15:30, while Cassie Floras of Great Falls took the girls division in 22:03. There were 65 runners in the annual event the most participants in four years.

**1989** - The annual Butte's Veterans Day Race went international in 1989. Ted Calchpole of Australia was the first to the finish line in one of the closest races in the history of the event. Calchpole edged Helena High sophomore runner Joe Roberts by a second with the third place finisher Pat Kearney just eleven seconds off the pace. Calchpole's winning effort was 30:05. For the second straight year Susan Kaluza of Butte took the women's race in a time of 34:19. Jeremy Hamma of Butte was first in the boys 14 and under division with a clocking of 15:57, while Jennifer O'Connell from Bozeman was first in the girls race with a time of 19:26. There were 69 contestants who competed in windy conditions.

**1990** - The 53rd annual Veterans Day Race saw another close finish. Ray Matteson of Butte beat Marty Kearney of Great Falls to the line by eight seconds. Matteson, the first Butte male winner in six years, was timed in 29:52. It was a complete sweep for Butte runners as Mary Dean of the Mining City took top honors in the women's division with a clocking of 36:07. Bob Miller of Butte was the 14 and under boys winner in a time of 17:28. The top girl runner was Shylobh Steffan of Hardin in a clocking of 24:31. There were 42 participants in the race which was contested on a Sunday morning.

**1991** - Jim Hatcher of Helena became only the second four-time male winner of the Veterans Day Race in 1991. Hatcher won the event in a time of 28:29. The Helena racer had also taken top honors in the 1982, 1984 and 1986 races. The only other male to win four times is Mike Houlihan of Butte in 1974, 1975, 1978 and 1979. The only female to capture the race four times is Liza Merrifield in 1973, 1974, 1975 and 1980. Meanwhile Susan Kaluza of Butte won her third women's title in four years in a time of 33:45. Jim Miller of Butte was the fourteen and under boys winner in a clocking of 17:40. The girls champion was Katrina Loushin of Butte in 38:36. A number of boys also went two and a half miles in a 15-18 year old division. Jeremy Hamma of Butte was the first to hit the tape in 14:36.

**1992** - Susan Kaluza of Butte became the first four-time women's open division winner of the Veterans' Day Race. Kaluza won the event in a clocking of 33:44. Kaluza joins Liza Merrifield as the only four-time women's champion, however Merrifield captured two of her titles in the girls fourteen and under division. All of Kaluza's four victories have come in the women's open division in 1988, 1989, 1991 and 1992. The overall winner of the race held in cool conditions in the low twenties with light snow showers was Ray Matteson of Butte. Matteson also took top honors in the 1990 event and was second a year ago. Matteson's winning time was 28:31. He was followed by Butte High student Bob Miller who ran side-by-side with Matteson for the first two miles of the race. Jim Miller, Bob's younger brother, was the boys fourteen and under winner for the second straight year. His winning effort over two and a half miles was 17:27. There were no girls fourteen and under who competed, but the winner of the girls race 15-18 age group was a tie between Kristin Hill and Trish Burby both students at Butte High School. There were 40 runners who competed in the 55th annual event.

**1993** - Tony Banovich, the 1983 men's winner, came back to his native town from his home in Billings and took the top spot in the 56th annual Veterans' Day race. Banovich's winning time was 27 minutes 19 seconds. It was the fastest clocking the men's division since 1987 when Tom Raunig set a course record mark of 26:17. Susan Kaluza took top honors in the women's race for the third straight year and the fifth time in the last six Veterans Day Races. Her winning effort was 33:44. For Suzie it was her fifth Veterans' Day win. She also won the race in 1988, 1989, 1991 and 1992. Mitch Cunningham won the boys fourteen and under race with a time of 18:09. For the first time since grade school girls were allowed to run in 1973 there were no female contestants in the girls division.

**1994** - Jim Hatcher of Helena became the all-time men's open champion winning the 57th annual Veterans' Day Race in a time of 30:10. Hatcher took top honors for the fifth time. His other victories were in 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1991. Hatcher and Mike Houlihan each had won the Veterans' Day Race four times prior to the 1994 event. Hatcher won the race in a dense fog and cool conditions over Mike Walsh of Helena who had a time of 30:48. The women's winner for a record sixth time was Susan Kaluza of Butte. Her winning time of 33:04 was Kaluza's best time ever in the event. Kaluza has captured the top spot four straight years and five of the last six times the event has been held. Mitch Cunningham successfully defended his fourteen and under boys title with a winning effort of 17:25. For the second straight year there were no contestants in the girls fourteen and under division. The 35 runners who competed represented the lowest number of participants since 1971, which was the last year the event was strictly held for boys high school runners.

**1995** - Patrick Judge of Helena beat two former winners, Jim Hatcher and Tony Banovich, to capture the 58th annual Butte Veterans' Day Race. Judge ran the five mile course in 28:24.20. Hatcher was the defending champion and Banovich won the race in 1983 and 1993. Banovich was second in the race while Hatcher took first place honors in the men's 45 to 54 age group. The women's winner was Butte High runner Katie Green. Her first place time was 41:09. Green became the first high school girl to take the women's race since Laura Callahan of Butte High back in 1978. Mitch Cunningham took top honors in the kids 14 and under boys race. It's Cunningham's third straight Veterans' Day race victory. For the third straight year there were no girl racers in the 14 and under age group race.

**1996** - Patrick Judge of Helena became the first back-to-back winner of the men's race on Veterans' Day since 1978-79 when Mike Houlihan of Butte captured back-to-back titles. Judge won the race with a time of 28:38. He beat Helena High senior runner Tom Roberts by 45 seconds. It marked the second time a Roberts from Helena has finished second in the race. Tom's older brother, Joe, was just edged out by two seconds at the finish line by Ted Calchpole of Australia in the 1989 event. The 1996 race was dominated by Helena runners. In fact the first five runners to cross the line were all from the Capital City. Third place went to Helena High runner Scott Schoer, fourth was taken by Helena High freshmen Rowdy Sargeson while Helena's Mike Walsh took fifth place honors. The first non-Helena runner was Don Sundberg of Butte who was sixth. The women's race was the best in the event's history. Six-time women's winner Susan Kaluza of

Butte battled Butte's Nicole Murray the entire five miles. The two ran side-by-side the whole course. A sprint to the finish line would find Murray edging Kaluza by two seconds to win her first Veterans' Day race. Murray's winning time was 34:18. The shorter 2 1/2 mile race for kids was won by John Lovshin of Butte in a time of 19:57. The girls winner was Natasha Kearney of Helena. Her time was 33:25. It marked the first time there had been competitors in the girls division since 1992. Natasha joins a long list of Kearney's who have won the Veterans' Day race. Her father, Bill, won the event in 1976 and 1980. Her grandfather, Martin, took top honors in 1940. Natasha's aunt, Linda, won the girls' 14 and under race in 1978 and Natasha's great-uncle, Jim Kearney, won the Veterans' Day race in 1937. The race was held in pleasant conditions with cloud cover and 40 degree temperatures. The ideal running conditions produced the best turnout at the event, 49 runners, since the 1989 race.

**1997** - Sunny skies with temperatures in the low 30's greeted 67 runners for the 60th annual Veterans' Day Race. It was the largest turnout for the race since 1989. Jason Hamma of Missoula was the overall winner with a time of 29:19. He beat Clark Christensen of Dillon by 26 seconds. Hamma was a former cross country runner at Butte High and also competed for the University of Montana. It was his first Veterans' Day win. On the women's side a familiar face came across the line first, Susan Kaluza of Butte. It was the seventh time she has captured the race and her first win in the event since 1994. Suzie has previously won the event in 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994. The winner of the boys' 14 and under division was Jake Sorich of Butte with a winning time of 17:23. The girls winner was Anaconda cross country runner Mariah Heaney who posted a time of 17:57. She is the first female runner from Anaconda to win at the Butte race. Mariah is also the first Anaconda High runner to win the race since Dave O'Brien captured the top spot in 1969. Only four Anaconda runners have ever won the Butte Veterans' Day Race, Fred Martin in 1961, Howard Johnson in 1967, Dave O'Brien in 1969 and now Mariah Heaney in 1997.

**1998** - Race organizers decided to take some steps to attract more runners, especially younger runners to the annual Veterans Day Race. Montana Technologies-MSE became involved as a sponsor of the race. Each contestant was given a tee shirt for their participation in the event. There were also four new trophies were established: the C. Owen Smithers Trophy to the top male runner at five miles. Smithers was one of the co-race founders. The Martin Kearney Trophy would go to the top boy in the fourteen and under age group at 2 1/2 miles. Kearney was the 1940 winner and a longtime race coordinator. The top women runner at five miles would get the Mary Whelan Trophy named after the first open women's winner in the 1976 race and the top girl fourteen and under in the 2 1/2 mile race would receive the Liza Merrifield Trophy named after the first girl junior high winner in 1973. There was also high school team trophies added to the event this year. It is the first time high school team trophies were to be awarded since 1975 which was the last year the event was held as a high school only race. With the emphasis on youth it seems only fitting that a youngster would win the race. Helena Capital junior Rowdy Sargeson won the five mile race in a time of 30:12. He is the first high school student to win the open race since 1976 when Bill Kearney of Butte Central captured the event in the first year the event was open to everyone. Sargeson covered the snow covered slippery streets 42 seconds faster than 46 year old Donald Sundberg of Butte who was second. The women's open winner was a familiar face, Susan Kaluza of Butte. She won the event for the 8th time. Her winning mark was 34:49. Sherry Vassel was second in a time of 38:58. In the shorter 2 1/2 mile race Michael Crowe, a freshman at Butte Central, won the race in 16 minutes 49 seconds. Michael is the son of 1976 women's open winner Mary Whelan Crowe. It is the first mother-son combination to both win the Veterans Day Race. The only other parent-sibling pair to win the race was 1940 champion Martin Kearney and his son Bill who won the race in 1976 and 1980. The girls winner was Marnee Worley of East Middle School with a clocking of 20:37. The high school team trophy went to Anaconda. The Copperheads were led by J.D. Anderson who was third overall in the event. The 61st annual race attracted 63 runners with 13 coming in the 14 and under category in the shorter 2 1/2 mile race.

**1999** - Defending champion Rowdy Sargeson pulled away from course record-holder Tom Raunig to win the 1999 Butte American Legion Veterans Day race. Sargeson, a senior at Helena Capital and Raunig, the cross country coach at the University of Montana, blazed stride-for-stride through the first two miles of the race in 10 minutes. Sargeson started to pull away just past the midway point of the race going up Western Avenue. Sargeson beat Raunig by 19 seconds. His winning time was 27:42 for the 5.2 mile-event. It was the third fastest time recorded on the current course. Raunig set the record back in 1986 at 26:17. Butte native Tony Banovich ran the same course in 27:19 in 1993. Another former champion, Patrick Judge, the 1995 and 1996 winner was third in a clocking of 28:50. Vance Twitchell of Helena was fourth with Hugh Murphy of Butte fifth. The women's event was won by Susan Kaluza of Butte. Her winning time was 35:34. Kaluza was well ahead of second place finisher Sherry Vogel who posted a time of 39:47. Kaluza's win marks the ninth time she has captured Montana's oldest road race. She has won the women's division in nine of the past twelve years. In the shorter 2 1/2 mile race for kids 14 and under Clint Choquette, a student at East Middle School, won the boys division with a time of 16:50. Jonathan Rowe was second in a clocking of 17:48. The girls' winner was defending champion Marnee Worley of East Middle School. Her winning time was 18:52. Stephanie Kirkpatrick was second with a time of 19:28. Helena Capital won the boys high school team trophy. It marks the first time a Helena school has ever won the team trophy at the Butte race. Perfect weather conditions produced 85 runners which is the most for the event since the 1982 event.

**2000** - Helena runners and frigid conditions dominated the 63rd annual Butte's Veterans' Day race. Patrick Judge and Jennifer Pearson both of the Capital City were the overall male and female winners in the five-mile run. The two competitors won Montana's oldest road race in temperatures hovering around eight degrees above zero with snowy, icy streets. Judge, a two-time winner of the event in 1995 and 1996, won the race easily with a time of 28:22. He beat second place Mitch Cunningham of Whitehall by just over two minutes. Dave Roberts of Helena was third. The 29-year old Pearson won the Veterans' Day race in her first attempt. She won an amazing duel with nine-time winner Suzie Kaluza of Butte. The two ran side-by-side for five miles before Pearson pulled away at the end to win by fifteen seconds. Her winning time was 36:23. Sherry Vogel of Butte was third. In the kids 14 and under race, 10-year old Colt Everly of

Butte won the 2 1/2 mile race with a time of 19:42. The girls' winner was Caitlin DiGoivine, a freshman at Butte Central. Her winning time was 19:18. There were 65 runners who braved the cold conditions to compete in Montana's oldest road race. MSE-MERDI, the sponsor of the race, provided each competitor with a commemorative hat following the race. MSE-MERDI also donated five dollars for every runner who finished the race. The donated money went to the local United Way.

**2001** - A Deer Lodge husband and wife team, Ray and Nicole Hunt, won the men's and women's divisions at the 64th annual MERDI/MSE Butte American Legion race. Montana's oldest road race was run in ideal conditions with sunny skies and temperatures in the 40s. The weather helped produce a new course record by Nicole Hunt. She crossed the finish line in 31:46. The mark broke a record set back in 1985 by Debra Raunig of Missoula (31:50). Raunig set the mark during the first year the course was run from Stodden Park to the American Legion Hall, a distance of 5.2 miles. It's the second time Nicole Hunt has won the Veterans' Day run. She last won in 1996. Hunt beat nine-time champion Suzie Kaluza of Butte, who finished second. Defending champion Jennifer Thomas of Helena was third. Ray Hunt took the men's overall title, running the course in a time of 28:57. It was his first entry in the annual Butte race. Hunt held off two-time winner Ray Matteson of Butte who took second with a time of 29:53. Casey Lofthouse of Helena High was third at 30:17. Lofthouse's efforts helped Helena High win their first-ever boys' high school team trophy. The Butte High girls won the girls' high school trophy thanks to a fifth place finish by Marnee Worley. Butte High freshmen Clint Choquette took the 2 1/2 mile race honors for runners 14 year old and younger. Choquette's winning time of 15:33 was three seconds shy of the course record set in 1988 by Russ Erickson. The girls' fourteen and under winner was Melissa Bogert of Butte. Her winning time was 21:08. There were 84 runners who completed the race. It was the second largest turnout for the event in the last 18 years.

**2002** - Defending men's champion Ray Hunt of Deer Lodge breezed to victory in the 65th annual MERDI/MSE Butte American Legion Veterans' Day race. Hunt led from the start and easily won with a time of 28:17 over the 5.2 mile course. Marv Speece of Melrose was second with a clocking of 30:07 while Mitch Cunningham of Whitehall was third. Casey Campbell, a junior at Montana Tech won the female race with a time of 34:01. Campbell, a member of Tech's women's basketball team, trailed nine-time winner Suzie Kaluza and 2000 champion Jennifer Thomas of Helena through the first mile. Campbell, from Lincoln, Montana passed both former champions just before the second mile mark and never looked back. Thomas was second with a time of 35:38 while Kaluza came home third in 36:13. Hunt received the C. Owen Smithers trophy for his win, while Campbell got the Mary Whelan trophy. The Butte Central boys' won the high school team trophy while the Helena Capital Bruins took home the girls crown. In the 2 1/2 mile race, Hobie Biegler of Butte won the race with a time of 18:17. Brandon Kearney was second while Casey Nichols was third. The first girl across the line was Keli Dennehy. She was followed by defending champion Melissa Bogert and Sara Bogert. Biegler was given the Martin Kearney Trophy while Dennehy took home the Liza Merrifield Trophy. Keli is the daughter of Liza Merrifield Dennehy. Liza along with her parents Charlie and Betty Merrifield presented Keli with her award. This year's race attracted 68 runners who competed in near ideal weather conditions with temperatures in the mid 30s.

**2003** - A third generation member of the Kearney family from Butte won Montana's oldest road race, the 66th annual Butte American Legion/MERDI-MSE Veterans' Day race. Butte Central senior Ryan Kearney pulled away from two-time defending champion Ray Hunt of Deer Lodge over the final half-mile to capture the event. Kearney's winning time over the 5.2 mile course was 28:34. He beat Ray Hunt by 17 seconds. A former three-time winner of the race Patrick Judge from Helena was third with a time of 31:09. Kearney's grandfather, Martin, won this same race back in 1940. Martin's brother Jim took top honors in the 1937 race. In more recent times, Ryan's uncle Bill took the first place trophy in the 1976 and 1980 Butte Veterans' Day race. Kearney became the first male runner from Butte since Ray Matteson in 1992 to win the 5.2 mile event. He also became the first high school runner to win the race since his uncle Bill competed for Butte Central in 1976. The Maroons' boys team took the high school team honors. The women's open division run went to former two-time champion Nicole Hunt from Deer Lodge. She won with a time of 32:28. Defending champion Casey Campbell of Lincoln was second with a clocking of 35:04. A former nine-time winner Susan Kaluza from Butte was third, while the 2000 winner of the race Jennifer Thomas from Helena was fourth. The Butte High girls won the girls high school trophy led by the fifth place showing of Marnee Worley. The shorter 2 1/2 mile race went to Ryan Kearney's first cousin,

Brandon Skocolich. The freshmen from Butte High won the race with a time of 16:50. Kearney beat defending champion Hobie Biegler of Butte. The 2 1/2 mile girls race was the closest one of the day. Defending champion Keli Dennehy of Butte nipped Butte High freshmen Kaci Hockiday at the line for the victory. Dennehy's winning time was 19:04. She edged Hockaday by one second. There were 77 runners in the two races. The race was held in breezy conditions with temperatures in the upper 20s.

**2004** - A pair of former race winners, Tony Banovich of Billings and Nicole Hunt from Deer Lodge, took top honors in the 67th annual Butte American Legion MERDI/MSE Veterans' Day race. There were 67 runners who completed one of two races under perfect weather conditions with sunny skies and temperatures in the low 40s. Banovich, a 1980 Butte Central graduate, won this year's event with a time of 28:44 over the 5.2 mile course. Banovich beat Ray Matteson, a former two-time winner of this event in 1990 and 1992, by over a minute. Matteson crossed the line in 30:15. Banovich became the first runner to ever capture Montana's oldest road race in three different decades. He won previously in 1983 and 1993. Banovich received the C. Owen Smithers trophy as the top male runner. The perfect weather conditions proved to be ideal for Nicole Hunt. She sizzled through the 5.2 mile course in a record time of 31:09. Hunt broke her own record of 31:46 set back in 2001. Hunt has won this event four times. She previous took top honors in 1996, 2001 and 2003. Hunt beat a nine-time former winner of this event, Susan Kaluza. She was second in the female division with a clocking of 35:57. Hunt received the Mary Whelan trophy as the best female runner. Tim Dick and Keli Dennehy of Butte were the top runners in the 2 1/2 mile event for kids 14 and under. Dick was the boys winner with a time of 17:46. He received the Marty Kearney trophy for being the first boy across the finish line. Dennehy was the overall winner of the 2 1/2 mile race. Her winning time was 17:20 just 14 seconds off the course record set by Wendy Lutgen of Helena back in 1987. For the third straight year Dennehy who the Liza Merrifield trophy for being the best female runner. The trophy is named after her mother. This year's race marks 70 years since the event was first held back in 1934. It was also the 20th time the event was held on the Stodden Park course to the Legion Hall, making it the most continuous course in race history. The previous record of 19 times from 1948 to 1966 was set on a course that started and ended in front of the Old City Hall on Broadway Street.

**2005** - Two former race champions, Ryan Kearney of Butte and Nicole Hunt from Deer Lodge, dominated to easily win the 68th Butte American Legion MERDI/MSE Veterans' Day race. Kearney, a former star track performer at Butte Central and the 2003 winner of this race, breezed to victory with a time of 28:54 over the 5.2-mile course. He beat second place finisher Jeff Thomas of Helena by 85 seconds. Don Sundberg from Butte was third. Kearney follows a long family tradition of winning this event. His grandfather, Martin Kearney, won the event in 1940. His great-uncle, Jim Kearney, took home first place honors in 1937 and his uncle Bill Kearney was the first place winner twice in 1976 and 1980. Nicole Hunt won the women's open division with a record setting time of 30:54. It broke a new record she established last year by 15 seconds. Nicole has won Montana's oldest road race five times in 1996, 2001, 2003, 2004 and 2005. Susan Kaluza of Butte, a former nine-time winner of this event, was second with a clocking of 35:55. In 2.5-mile event for kids 14 and under, Josh Panasuk and Keli Dennehy of Butte with the boys and girls winner. Panasuk had a winning time of 17:31. Dennehy took top honors for girls for the fourth straight year. Her winning time was 17:39. The event started in 1934 was run in near-perfect weather conditions with temperatures in the lower 30s. The nice weather produced 85 participants, the highest number since the 1982 event. All participants received shirts thanks to corporate sponsor MERDI/MSE. The top three place winners in each age division received trophies with the other finishers receiving ribbons.

**2006** - A pair of Helena runners, Peter Dan Sullivan and Michele Bazzanella, took first place in the 69th annual Butte American Legion road race. Sullivan was the first to cross the line in the 5.2 mile event in a time of 31:20. Bazzanella's winning mark as the top female was 34:34. Temperatures were in the 30's for Montana's oldest road race, but competitors had to battle through a stiff head-wind from the one-mile mark to past the five-mile mark in the race. In the shorter 2.5 mile event for kids 14 years old and younger, Butte High freshmen Keli Dennehy set a new course record with a time of 16:52. She set a record that had been held by Wendy Lutgen of Helena since 1987. Lutgen's former record was 17:04. It was the fifth time Dennehy has won the 14 and under girls division. The boys winner was Josh Panasuk of Butte. His winning mark was 16:59. Panasuk also won the race in 2005. Overall there were 81 competitors in the event.

**2007** - Ideal weather conditions with temperatures in the low 40s and no wind greeted runners in the 70th

annual Butte American Legion Veterans' Day race. Montana's oldest road race, started back in 1934, was won by Helena runner Thomas Jodoin. He covered the 5.2 mile course in 29:25. Former Butte Central runner Colin O'Neill was second with a clocking of 30:22. Defending champion Peter Dan Sullivan of Helena was third with a former three-time winner Patrick Judge coming home fourth. The women's race was won by Butte High sophomore Keli Dennehy. Her winning time was 34:50. Dennehy had previously won the 14-and-under 2.5 mile run five times. Dennehy beat former nine-time winner of the event Suzie Kaluza who clocked in at 36:47. The top runner in the 2.5 mile race for kids 14 and under was Josh Panasuk. He set a new course record with a time of 15:26. Panasuk, an eighth grade student at East Middle School, bested the mark put up by Russ Erickson in 1988 by four seconds. The winner in the girls 14-and-under 2.5 mile race was Brittany Rafferty from Helena. A new award given out this year is the John Wulf Lifetime Achievement Award. Wulf a former runner and race committee member died this past year. The first winner of the award was the longtime chairman of the event Jack Whelan.

**2008** - Thomas Jodoin of Helena successfully defended his title in winning the 71st annual Butte American Legion/MERDI Veterans Day race. The 27 year old Jodoin held off a former two-time winner of the event, Ryan Kearney of Butte, to repeat as champion. Jodoin had a winning time of 28:31 over the 5.2 mile course. Kearney's time was 29:17. Jodoin received the C. Owen Smithers Trophy as the top male runner. Smithers was a co-founder of the race back in 1934 with Charlie McAullife. The top five male finishers all had won this race in previous years. Dan Sullivan and Patrick Judge both of Helena were third and fourth respectfully, while former two-time winner Ray Matteson from Butte took home fifth place. Nicole Hunt of Deer Lodge was the female winner. Hunt, who recently had a baby, finished the course in a time of 32:52. Hunt had won this event five times previously in 1996, 2001, 2003, 2004 and 2005. She beat Ann Sorenson of Bozeman who finished second with a clocking of 34:07. Defending champion, Keli Dennehy, a junior at Butte High was third with nine-time champion Suzie Kaluza of Butte fourth and Liz McGoff from Bozeman placed fifth. Hunt received the Mary Whelan Trophy for being the top female. Whelan was the first female winner of the open division race in 1976. In the shorter 2.5 mile race for kids fourteen and under Michael Cooney, a student at Butte Central elementary was the winner. His time was 18:41. He beat Jamey Richardson of Dillon who completed the course in 22:00. Cooney received the Martin Kearney Trophy as the winner of the shorter race. Kearney was the 1940 winner of the annual event and later served as co-chairperson of the race for over three decades. A new award created a year ago was to honor a former co-chairman of the event John Wulf. Its called the John Wulf Lifetime Achievement Award. The award is given to someone who embodies the spirit of the race. This year's recipient was Bruce Robinson of Butte.

**2009** - Defending champions ruled the day at Montana's oldest road race, the 72nd annual Butte American Legion Veterans' Day race in Butte. Thomas Jodoin of Helena and Nicole Hunt from Deer Lodge took the men's and women's titles in the 5.2-mile run while Michael Cooney of Butte retained his boys' title in the 2.5 mile event for kids fourteen years old and younger. Jodoin ran away from the field on a near-perfect day for running with no wind and temperatures in the mid 30s. JoDoin was clocked in 28:12 seconds. He beat 2006 winner, Peter Dan Sullivan of Helena, by over two minutes. The next three runners were all from Butte. Jeff Braun was third followed by Matt Choquette and Marvin Speece. The twenty-eight year old Jodoin became only the third male runner in the history of the event to win the overall title three years in a row. He matches the record of Lester Sodja 1947-49 and Dave McDougall 1971-73. Sodja was a former Butte High runner and McDougall competed for Butte Central when the race was for high school students. Jodoin received the C. Owen Smithers award as the overall male winner. Smithers was one of the co-founders of the race along with Charlie McAuliffe back in 1934. Hunt won the Veterans' Day run with a winning time of 33:17. She easily beat nine-time champion Susie Kaluza of Butte who crossed the line in 36:14. Sarah Slangon of Helena was third followed by Amber Wood-Jensen from Butte and Leigh Holleman of Bozeman. The victory for Hunt is her seventh at Montana's oldest road race. She trails Kaluza who has won a record nine times. Hunt received the Mary Whelan trophy as the overall female winner. Whelan was the first female winner in the open division in 1976. Michael Cooney just edged Connor McGee by 16 seconds to win the boys' title in the shorter 2.5-mile run. Cooney's winning time was 19:18. He also won the race in 2008. Cooney received the Martin Kearney trophy for being overall boys' winner. Kearney was the 1940 winner of the race and a long-time organizer of the event. In addition to the overall winners' trophies, a special plaque called the John Wulf Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Eddi Walker of Butte. Walker has worked on registration for the event for a number of years. She also completed her 21st Veterans' Day race, the most by a female athlete. Two other runners, Susie Kaluza and

Jim Lester, both finished their 20th Veterans' Day race. Lester, who is 73 years old, completed the course more than four minutes better than he did one-year ago. The event attracted runners from four different states, Montana, Minnesota, Oklahoma and Washington.

**2010** - Thomas Jodoin of Helena and Nicole Hunt from Deer Lodge repeated as the male and female winners at the 73rd annual Butte American Legion Veterans' Day race. Montana's oldest road race took place in chilly temperatures in the lower 20s. Jodoin became the first runner to win the event four straight years. Two other runners, Lester Sodja from Butte High in 1947-49 and Dave McDougall from Butte Central in 1971-73, had captured the event three straight years. Jodoin's victory was aided by a gesture of sportsmanship from a fellow runner. Patrick Judge, a former three-time winner of the race, trailed Jodoin throughout the event. Less than a mile from the finish line, Jodoin missed a turn. Judge yelled at Jodoin to come back which he did, but he now trailed Judge. Prior to the finish line, Judge pulled up at the finish line so Jodoin could pass him and win the race that he had led throughout. Officially Jodoin beat Judge across the line by one second. Jodoin's winning time was 29:17. Kyle Strode finished in third place 14 seconds behind Judge. The female race was never really in doubt. Hunt won the event for the eighth time with a winning time of 32:51. It is her third straight year winning the event. The 2006 winner, Michelle Bazzanella from Helena, was second almost three minutes behind. She was followed by Amber Wood-Jenson from Butte. The 2.5 mile race for kids fourteen and under was won by Connor McGee of Butte. His winning time of 17:41 edged out Theron Nelson by six seconds. There were 83 runners who competed in the two races. It was the largest turnout since the 2005 event. The top three runners in each age division in the longer race received trophies. All other runners who finished the race received a ribbon. A special award handed out every year is the John Wulf Award for someone who has helped the race both running and contributing to the event. This year's winner was 73-year old Jim Lester who was competing in the race for his 21st time. The oldest person in the race was 76-year old Kay Neuman from Bozeman.

**2011** - Two former winners both from Helena, Patrick Judge and Michelle Bazzanella, took top honors in the 74th annual Butte American Legion Veterans Day race. There were 68 runners who ran one of two courses in ideal weather conditions with temperatures in the low 30s with no wind and plenty of sunshine. Judge edged four-time defending champion Thomas Jodoin of Helena by thirteen seconds. Judge had a winning time of 28:49 seconds over the 5.2-mile course. Matt Choquette of Butte finished third with Butte High student Josh Panasak taking fourth and a former winner Peter Dan Sullivan placing fifth. This is the fourth time Judge has won Montana's oldest road race started back in 1934 by C.Owen Smithers and Charlie McAuliffe. Judge also took top honors in 1995, 1996 and 2000. In addition to winning the C.Owen Smithers trophy as the overall winner, Judge was also honored with the John Wulf Lifetime Achievement Award. It is given to an individual who embodies the spirit of the Veterans' Day race. Bazzanella won the women's race for the second time. She also won top honors in 2006. Bazzanella's winning time over 5.2 miles was 35:29. Elaine Dahl of Helena was second. She was followed by two Butte runners, Shawna Gibson and Charrissa Bisch, with Elizabeth Rehmer of Livingston taking fifth. Bazzanella received the Mary Whelan Trophy as the top female runner. Whelan was the first open division women's winner back in 1976. The winner of the boys' 2.5-mile race for kids fourteen and younger went to Butte Central elementary student Shannon Tempel. He had a winning time of 18:03 seconds. Tempel edged Central student Theron Nelson. Quinn Sullivan took third and Jasper Ueland was fourth. Tempel received the Martin Kearney Trophy as the 2.5-mile champion. Kearney was a former winner of the race in 1940 and longtime race organizer. The winner of the girls' 2.5 mile race for kids fourteen and younger was East seventh grade student Joby Rosenleaf. She had a winning time of 20:29. Abby McGee of Butte took second. Rosenleaf was given the Liza Merrifield Trophy as the overall winner. Merrifield was the first junior high student to win the race for kids in 1973.