



**NEWSLETTER
October 1, 2026**

Hello Pikemaster Members,

A bit late, but here is the October Newsletter. The month has flown by and we have had some tough times with one of our members. Roger Henry was hospitalized and had to have some different treatments, and he sounds like he is getting better. Gave us quite a scare. So please, keep Roger and Sharon in your thoughts and prayers.

At our September Meeting, we had to work to replace David Steiger Jr. as Vice President and we elected Billie Hatcher as our interim VP until elections next June. We also filled a position that has been unfilled for years. Paul Krezelek has been made our Advisor. It is a Board Level Position that is designed to be filled from someone who has extensive knowledge in our club and can advise the Officers and Board on matters for the Club.

We have now got to get ready for the Banquet next year, February 6, 2027. To help with this, I want to have a Banquet Committee Meeting next Thursday the 8th of October, at 6:30 PM in the Lounge or dining room at the BHCC center. Anyone who wants to help with the Banquet, has ideas for the Banquet or just wants to give some input can please attend. We will also have a Board Meeting, to be determined at the Oct. 1st Meeting. I want to be sure that everyone of the officers and board can attend.

On October 17th, we are celebrating all of the Volunteers that have made Montana Pikemasters successful. The Volunteers that have participated in events have been notified and should have responded back to the officers. If you want to come and have not responded, please let me know and we will get the head count right.

Paul Krezelek has also volunteered to give a presentation on ROD Selection and the differences in the different Rods. So this should just as interesting as his last presentation on hooks, that was VERY well received.

So please plan to attend our next meeting.

Our next events and meetings dates are as follows:

October 1st 7 pm Room 1001

October 8th, 6:30 PM Lounge BHCC Banquet Committee Meeting

October 17th, Volunteer appreciation meal at Montana Outlaw BBQ

November 5th 7 pm Room 1001

December 3rd 7 pm Room 1001

Take care and keep being safe and keep on fishing.

Eugene Friedrich

Club President 406-690-4044 • friedeugene@gmail.com



Montana Pike Masters Billings Chapter, Inc

September 3, 2026

Officers: Eugene P. Friedrich, Joe Waller, and Brooke Young were present.

I. Secretary Minutes:

Minutes were Waived, motioned by Paul and seconded by Chris.

II. Treasurer Report:

Checking account - \$5,958 as of 09/03/2026

Special projects - \$22,468 as of 09/03/2026

Scholarship - \$9,584 as of 09/03/2026

6 Month Savings Bonds \$ 81,474 mature in September

9 Month Savings Bonds \$ mature end of March

Accounts total: \$119,484

After many questions were asked, here is information from those questions:

The scholarship fund is planned to be restored to \$10,000 after a \$500 payment was made for the Gilstrap scholarship.

Bob Dolley Memorial Scholarship

Managed through Billings Clinic. We give them \$10,000 and tell them how much we want to give out of it. They will use that and invest it. Until it runs out, they'll keep it going.

The club will fill out what we want the scholarship to be for. Discussion on criteria for scholarships focusing on blue-collar career development and Montana residency.



Clayton suggested that we should investigate the rate of return before doing it. Gene assured him that we will not give the money until we get a better chance to sit down and talk with him.

It was also suggested that we go through Vern Gagnon with MSUB. Gene will contact Vern and see if he could come talk to us.

Gilstrap Scholarship

We funded it this year but we don't have to for next year.

Clayton informed the club that at least 12 years ago, the scholarship was set up through MSUB. The goal was to get to \$10,000. He did not know why it got switched over to Billings Clinic. Gene explained that the Gilstrap family has several scholarships. The club is 50/50 for one of them- the club pays \$500 and the family pays \$500.

The Special Projects account

It is just a checking account named "Special Projects". It had \$100,000 in it and Joe took \$80,000 and bought CDs with it. Investments in these CDs yield about 4%, significantly better than checking accounts. The club is tax-exempt but must report investment income.

The club is making more money than spending. A board meeting will be held in December to go over finances for the year.

It was motioned by Roger , seconded by Maryjane and approved to accept the Treasurer's Report.

III. Old Business:

The passing of David Steiger Jr on June 20th has left a hole in our group that is being something hard to address. We will need to look at either having the President, Me, fill the role, or to try and elect a new VP tonight. I want to try and have a new VP to help with things as we are going to get busy with the Banquet coming up and want to discuss this.

Also we have not had a true advisor position since I came on the scene and we have someone who would be willing to fulfill this role. So I want to look at these two things tonight.

VP - Nominations: Billy Hatcher was nominated by Eugene and Paul was nominated by Jeff and Paul wants to be considered for the Advisor.



Advisor - Nominations: Paul Krezelak was nominated by Maryjane, seconded by Jim. It was moved to close the nominations by Rosalee, seconded by Maryjane.

We also lost another member on July 3rd. 2026. Doug Whitney passed and I want to thank again, the people who attended his funeral and showed support to his family. We also donated \$100 to the Joliet Food Bank in his honor.

Pikemaster Tournament

As mentioned in the July Newsletter, we did not have a great turnout, had bad weather on Sunday, but we still had a lot of good feedback from those who did attend and participate.

Expense report from Joe: Total revenue (entry fees collected, raffle ticket sales, donations, cook book, etc.) was \$11,690. Total expenses were \$12,539. The cost of the event was \$849.

We would have sold more raffle tickets but we sold out. There were nice prizes (three guns, a nice rod donated by George, door prize deals for fisherman

Discussion on changing tournament location to increase participation by breaking away from Rock Creek and going to the dam. Members at the meeting brought up the point that Rock Creek supports the club so much.

Jeff mentioned that he had a great time however he says it shouldn't cost the club money. He thinks we should make 20%. Gene says we need to plan to increase sponsorships with visible recognition at events.

It was reminded by Paul of the importance of club representation and uniformity at events. Gene said we will talk about it at another time.

Colstrip Kids Day

Joe also did the Colstrip Kids day and it was a success and we provided about 100 poles and reels and he said it went well. However, they did not have very many toys for the kids afterwards. Suggested to discuss at the board meeting and to be put on the budget for the following year. Joe has an expense report if anyone wants to see.

Eagle Mount

We had several outings with Eagle Mount, including two Evenings at Lake Josephine and one all day trip to Wild Bill Lake at Red Lodge. These were good outings and they are very appreciative. Had 6



volunteers. It was a great time.

IV. New Business:

We have had some good news on memberships with some new members, but we have lost a lot of old members.

44 new members joined this year; 54 members have been lost.

Joe and Brooke addressed this with sending out letters to help get people back.

Clayton suggested handing out more cards in public. Gene has given away 500 cards in the last year.

We have a Volunteer Supper on October 17th at Montana Outlaw BBQ. This will be in place of a FUN Day and we want to thank everyone who has volunteered for any of our events. So please let us know if you can make it and how many you will be bringing.

It will be discussed at the September board meeting to discuss the details, including expenses for it.

Invitations are going out via email and the club would like an RSVP response to make sure there is enough food for everyone.

Clayton brought up the printing of the magazine and Karen Klement Design will put out the magazine. He also wanted to know who is going to the FWP Fishing Forum. Unfortunately it is on our next meeting in October. We will discuss trying to get to the Forum.

Clay gave a brief report from the FWP Anglers Forum. He shared that Montana Pike Masters had previously requested that crappie be stocked in Tongue River Reservoir and discussed the challenges with the crappie population and survival rate. FWP has continued stocking crappie, using larger fish this year in hopes of improving survival. The group also discussed changes to the reservoir habitat, increased predators, and the current walleye, pike, bass, and perch populations.

Sharon brought the quilt that she has put together for the Banquet and it was beautiful.

A fellow quilter gave her the blocks that she's had for several years and didn't think they'd ever get used. So Sharon used them for her quilt.



Paul Krezelek will provide us with a demonstration on what hooks to use when. This will be the first of fishing tips that will be at every meeting going forward. So if you want to provide a FISHING MINUTE, please let me know and we will work you in. I want to have something for different aspects, like ICE FISHING, how to fish with SPOONS< CRANK BAIT, Surface Spinners, things like that.

A few items from Paul's presentation on fishing hooks and lures:

Single hooks preferred over treble hooks for catch and release, reducing fish injury.

Treble hooks are cheaper and used for snagging but can cause more harm.

The most important tool you can put in your boat is a mini bolt cutter.

Importance of crushing barbs on hooks to facilitate easier release.

Use of swivels and snaps discussed; swivels may not be necessary on crankbaits.

Matching spinning reels to rods and proper drag settings emphasized to prevent line breakage.

Be on the lookout for information about storage unit clean up. We will wait until the board meeting, but Gene wants to spend some money on some shelving for the storage unit. It would be about \$100-\$130 a rack. It would really help with organization.

At the Laurel fishing outing, Jeff carried the tables and said he will never again due to how heavy they were. We will discuss it later.

Our next Monthly Meeting is in October 1, 2026, at 7:00 PM Room 1001,

Here are the monthly meetings going forward.

October 1st 7 pm Room 1001

November 5th 7 pm Room 1001

December 3rd 7 pm Room 1001

January 7, 2027 7 pm Room 1001

February 4, 2027 7 pm Room 1001

Banquet February 6, 2027 3:00 – 10:00 pm

Adjournment:

Adjourned the meeting @ 9:00 PM.