

Meridian Moose Family Center

7405 Old Highway 80 West

Meridian, MS 39307

APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER



MOOSEHEART CHILD CITY & SCHOOL - www.mooseheart.org

Two Mooseheart students will attend the Moose Youth Awareness International Congress April 16-19 in Phoenix, AZ. This program offers teenagers a chance to win up to a \$12,000 Scholarship and provides them with real world experience speaking and educating their peers. This has been a pillar of the Moose Fraternity for 38 years and counting.

Every year, the Moose organizes high school students who have applied to the program into a “speakers’ bureau” to educate preschool and elementary school-aged children on critical issues, such as “stranger danger”, Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Bullying, Peer Pressure, Etc.

How to get involved? First, High School students engage children in their respective communities through Moose KidsTalks about a topic of the student’s choice. After perfecting their curriculum, the students compete at Association Youth Awareness Congresses using those educational curriculum. The winner of these Congresses receives a chance to attend the International Youth Awareness Congress to compete for a chance to win five potential Scholarships, including the top \$12,000 Bob Neff Scholarship, the other awards include \$8,000, \$6,000, \$5,000, \$4,000.

More information can be obtained by a discussion with your Lodge or Association Youth Awareness Chairman.

All lodges are required to donate a minimum of \$100 to this program as well as propose qualified candidates to this program. Sadly, the Meridian Lodge has not had a student in either the Association or International Youth Awareness Congresses for some time. Many Moose Members are not aware that this program exists and how it can benefit their children in the long run.

Moosin' Around Meridian
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MOOSEHAVEN - CITY OF CONTENTMENT -moosehaven.org

Like Mooseheart’s Sunshine Child Program, Moosehaven offers a Sunshine Grandparent Program that allows Moose Members to essentially adopt a grandparent.

The Sunshine Grandparent Program

Moosehaven residents come from all over the United States, as well as Canada and England! This means that they may be far from their families, friends, Lodges, and Chapters. Lodges and Chapters, State Associations, Council of Higher Degrees, other Moose affiliated groups, and even individuals are encouraged to “adopt” a Moosehaven resident under the Sunshine Grandparent program. This program works in several ways to enrich, not only the lives of the Moosehaven seniors but the lives of those who adopt them. Simple gestures, such as sending a card for birthdays and holidays, exchanging emails, and sending gift cards to celebrate special occasions, such as holidays and birthdays, are always welcome and can make a big difference in the life of a Moosehaven resident. Sharing stories and life’s journeys build strong and lasting relationships plus, the joy of giving extends both ways.

Moosehaven residents are very fortunate to live in the beautiful community that is supported by The Moose. You contribute to their needs and help provide friendship and support that extends well beyond the Moosehaven campus.

For more information, please contact:

LeeAnn Robbins lrobbins@moosehaven.org
[\(904\) 278 1212](tel:9042781212)

Always Active At Moosehaven Project Update

On the exterior, we’ve completed the sidewalks, courtyard, fire pit, and the courtyard coating. Landscaping and grassing are now finished, so the outside of the building is nearly complete and really coming together beautifully.

Inside the building, we’ve reached several major milestones:

- Final coats of paint are in place
- Millwork and countertops are installed
- Ceiling trim and lighting are nearly complete
- Flooring is down in most areas
- Mechanical equipment is installed

One of the most exciting updates – **the bowling alley is installed!**

The pool builder is back on site completing the final preparation work, with plaster scheduled for next week. P weeks.

MOOSIN' AROUND MERIDIAN

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Heart of the Community

The Meridian Lodge has achieved a score of Excellent on the Heart of The Community Award for the first three Moose Quarters, which is now a requirement for lodges to remain in good standing with Moose International. We would like to have reach the Superior Award level, but our membership participation has been down as of recent, which limits the ideas on how best to help our communities. What have we done this year for the community? Here just a few things as of 3/12/26

Donated to Moose Charities Endowment Fund \$569

Donated \$100 to the 5k Rudolph Run for Mooseheart

Donated \$100 to the Youth Awareness Program.

Donated \$950 to the Uniting Hearts; Expanding Horizons Project

Donated a \$500 Sponsorship to the Lean on Me Jubilee as well as donated 300 Bottles of Water, 300 Labeled Keychains, & 25 Tommy Moose Coloring Books

Donated \$337.44 worth of winter clothing items to the Gulf Coast Veteran Affairs Healthcare System

Donated \$441.06 worth of Food Items to the Gulf Coast Veteran Affairs Healthcare System

Donated use of the Swimming Pool to the Lauderdale County Emergency Management Agency for their Rescue Diver Training Program

Donated \$300 in cash and \$326 in toys to the Bikers United Toy Run for Children

Volunteered and donated care items to the Run for the Wall to honor Veterans

Donated Four Dozen Tommy Moose Plush Dolls to the Meridian Police Department

Donated \$185 to the Cradle Fund

Donated \$330 to the Rocker Fund (\$30 Lodge, \$100 Moose Riders, \$200 from Others)

Volunteered at the Southeast Regional Marching Band Competition to raise funds for the Southeast High School Marching Band, which was the only 3A Band in Lauderdale County to make it to the State Marching Evaluations in 2025 and has reached the State Marching Evaluation level three times out of the past four years.

The Meridian Moose Riders also donated \$250 to the Bell Woodall Benefit to help defer the cost of her cancer treatment.

Members can obtain membership rewards points for any donations to Moose Charities by adding the project and their Moose ID Number to the memo line of checks or by visiting [Moosecharities.org](https://moosecharities.org) and paying via ACH/ Credit Card. Members can also receive rewards points for their logged volunteer hours.

Elections to be Held April 14th at the General Membership Meeting

The Elections for the 2026-2027 Meridian Moose Lodge Term will be held at the first membership meeting of the Month on April 14th at 6:30pm. Any member wishing to run on a petition for an office must have their petitions completed and returned to the Administrator no later than Tuesday April 7, 2026. Any petitions submitted after this date will not be accepted.

The Nominating Committee has received signed Request for Officer Considerations from the following candidates:

Lisa Downing for President

Keri Allen for Vice President

Carolyn Jones for Chaplain

Mark Moore for Treasurer

Wade Smith for Trustee (with a Third Term Dispensation)

Gary Minchew will automatically be moved to the Jr. Past President.

Being that there are no opposing candidates for these offices, Moose General Laws section 33.8 allows the lodge to proceed with the elections by using the voting sign of the The Moose, provided there is a vote to approve this method at a general membership meeting prior to the election.

During the March 24, 2026, the General Membership voted to proceed with the upcoming Election using the voting sign of the order.

Be sure to attend the lodge membership meeting with your Moose Membership Card on April 14th to cast your vote. The Installation of Officers will be conducted on April 19, 2026 alongside the Meridian Women of the Moose Chapter Installation with a potluck for members afterwards. Please feel free to bring your favorite potluck dish and let's make it a party!

GREETINGS MOOSE LEGIONNAIRES

Thank you to everyone who attended our March 2026 meal & meeting. Our Next Meal & Meeting will be on April 7, 2026 at 6:30pm - thank you to everyone who brought food. We encourage members to attend and invite others interested in becoming Moose Legionnaires to join us. Our mission is to have fun while serving the Moose Fraternity, and our goal is to encourage qualified members to join the Moose Legion and do good deeds daily. If you'd like to become a member, dues are \$20 per year; just contact any Moose Legionnaire to join. The only qualification be a male member of the Moose be sponsored and attend an enrollment.



On April 24-26, Meridian will host the Moose Legion Celebration with Official Visitor International Moose Legion President Helton Shaw and his wife Jackie from North Carolina. So make plans to attend if possible.

Thanks to everyone who helps and supports the Meridian Moose Legion Committee and Magnolia Moose Legion #67.

Moose Legion Code of Rules Changes Approved by the Moose International Board of Directors These amended Code of Rules, which are the first changes since July 2022, will go into effect May 1, 2026. Each Moose Legion will Receive eight copies and they will be posted on the Moose International website.

Remember to: DO SOME GOOD THING FOR SOMEONE EACH DAY.
Fraternally, Ted Burton
International Moose Legion Councilman, Area Manager, MMA Secretary
Meridian Moose Legion Committee Chairman,

Updates from the Mid Year Conference:

Congratulations to Michael Ray Johnston for receiving the Mississippi Moose Association Lifetime Achievement Award!!!

Congratulations to Shane Guy from Meridian and Grayson Allen from Brookhaven for receiving the MMA John Fitzgerald Scholarship.

The Gulf Coast VA Healthcare System received so many donations that they were unable to retrieve them in one vehicle.

Since May, the Moose Fraternity has raised over 6 Million toward our 3 Year 12 Million Dollar Goal for the Horizons Project with plans to open the first Horizons home this July!

The Annual MMA Convention will be held September 24-27, 2026 at the Best Western Seaway Inn in Gulfport, MS. Remember, all lodges must be represented by their Presidents and Administrators.

OFFICERS & STAFF

MOOSE LODGE 1628

Gary Minchew	President
Vacant	Jr. Past President
Mike Johnston	Vice President
Lisa Downing	Chaplain
Michael Minchew	Administrator
Bunny Burton	Treasurer
Wade Smith	Trustee
Mark Moore	Sergeant-at-Arms
Carolyn Jones	Inner Guard
Glenn Nutt	Outer Guard

MOOSE LEGION COMMITTEE

Ted Burton	Chairman
Larry Richards	Vice Chairman
Roy Johnson	Assistant Secretary
John Mozingo	Marshall

WOMEN OF THE MOOSE CHAPTER 1441

Dora Moore	Senior Regent
Carolyn Jones	Jr. Past Regent
Mitzi Minchew	Secretary
Rhonda Scarborough	Recorder
Mary Nutt	Guide

STATE OFFICERS

Glenn Rasberry	President
Gary Jones	Jr. Past President
Shirley Cook	Vice President
Gary Minchew	Chaplain
Rob Erman	Treasurer
Ted Burton	Secretary
Tony Lowman	Asst. Secretary

INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

Tony Lowman	Supreme Forum
	Assistant Territory Manager
Ted Burton	Intl Moose Legion Councilman
Gary Jones	Int'l Moose Legion Ambassador
Sandra Richards	Chapter Advocate
Lisa Downing	Chapter Advocate (Interim)

SOCIAL QUARTERS STAFF

Marie Blackburn, Manager
Nickie Farmer
Abby Horne

MOOSE RIDERS ACTIVITY GROUP

Hello Moose Riders,

Thank you to everyone that attended our March meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday April 12 at 2:30pm.

In March, the Meridian Moose Riders donated \$250 to the Bell Woodall benefit to help assist her with her cancer treatment and other related expenses.

Saturday April 25th, 2026, the Lodge will host a Blessing of the Bikes to be performed by the Christian Motorcycle Association. There are already a group of motorcyclists planning to attend this event; the Meridian Moose Riders, Moose Lodge, Moose Legion, and Women of the Moose Chapter encourage everyone to attend as this event will coincide with the Moose Legion Celebration being held at the Meridian Lodge. You do not have to ride a motorcycle to attend this event or any Moose Rider event.

On May 23, 2026, the Meridian Lodge will host 14 members of the Copperas Cove, TX Lodge 2029 Moose Riders Activity Group, who will travel through Meridian in route to the "Tail of the Dragon". We encourage all Moose Riders and Moose Lodge Members to come meet our Fraternal Family. We are excited to announce that we have secured the same hotel rates for these riders as those provided for the Moose Legion Celebration in April. We intend to have food and other activities for these riders when they arrive.

The Meridian Moose Riders will soon begin accepting preorders for the 8th Annual Hog Cooking to be conducted in November.

Fraternally,

Michael Minchew,

Meridian Moose Rider Treasurer & Interim Secretary

Officers:

James Seward	President
Mark Moore	Vice President
Patrick Kirby	Chaplain
Michael Minchew	Secretary (Interim)
Michael Minchew	Treasurer
Wade Smith	Sergeant at Arms
Gary Minchew	Road Captain
Mike Minchew	Jr. Past President

