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# SENIOR NEWS & LIVING

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## Retired Marine Gives Back

Read Angie's story on page 2

Photo by Sal Cenicacelaya



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# Angela Maness

Currently training to become a certified Post Veteran Service Officer at American Legion Post in Norman.

*Story by Van Mitchell, Staff Writer*

(Retired) U.S. Marine Corps SgtMaj Angela Maness joined the Marine Corps in 1987, graduating as the platoon honor recruit from Parris Island, S.C.

Her journey includes duty stations across the globe, from Camp Lejeune to Okinawa, Japan, and multiple combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Recognized for her outstanding service, Maness holds multiple personal awards including the Meritorious Service Medal (2 stars), Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal (3 stars) and more.

Maness is currently training to become a certified Post Veteran Service Officer through the American Legion Post in Norman.

"I've been a member of the American Legion for five or six years, but when I came up here in 2020 because of COVID, I saw the Norman (American Legion) Post and decided to check it out," she said.

Maness walked through the front door of the Norman American Legion and saw they had just two service officers, and only was credentialled.

Accredited American Legion service officers are specially trained to provide expert assistance, free of charge, to veterans and their families. While the majority of a service officer's work involves application for VA disability benefits, these compassionate professionals also provide information, referrals and resources on education, employment and business, death benefits and other important topics.

The American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veteran's organization. Focusing on service to veterans, servicemembers and communities, the Legion evolved from a group of war-weary veterans of World War I into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States. Membership swiftly grew to over



(Retired) U.S. Marine Corps SgtMaj Angela Maness joined the Marine Corps in 1987

1 million, and local posts sprang up across the country. Today, membership stands at nearly 2 million in more than 13,000 posts worldwide. The posts are organized into 55 departments: one each for the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines.

Maness is engaged to her fiancé Sal Cenicacelaya, a US Marine Veteran who served from 1983-1989 as a 0311 Infantryman.

The duo was asked by Master Chief Petty Officer Larry Van Schuyver, the State Commander of the Department of Oklahoma Military Order of the Purple Heart, to become Ambassadors to the MOPH.

"He invited Sal and I to become Ambassadors to the MOPH and we gladly accepted about six months ago," Maness said. "He later informed us that we were also nominated for volunteer 'Veteran of the Year' and female 'Veteran of the Year.' Master Chief has informed us that we will receive the plaque and official recognition sometime early August 2024 when they have their organizational meeting."

Maness is also working to become a certified motorcycle rider instructor.

"I'm taking this course to become certified as a coach here in the state of Oklahoma," she said. "It's a rider's coach course teaching the coaches

themselves how to prepare the class for the basic rider course, and we're in the advanced portion of it. It takes a lot of my time, but it's worth it to me."

Maness and her fiancé help give back as members of the Flag Poles Honors our Veterans (FPHOV) which erects flagpoles for veterans around the state of Oklahoma.

"It's just so much fun," she said. "If you've never had the privilege to witness what these outstanding Patriots do every Sunday, you're missing out."

FPHOV installs 5-10 flag poles around the state of Oklahoma and arrive at each home with a parade of motorcycles.

"The majority of the 'Red, White and Blue Team' are civilians who just happen to own motorcycles and have a deep appreciation for Veterans who have sacrificed for this country. The best part - it's all free for the veteran," Maness said.

"Maness continued 'Every Sunday they go out and they pick a town or region in Oklahoma, and they all ride to the veteran's home. They show up on 10, 12 Harley's making loud noise through the neighborhood, so it wakes everybody up and they park in front of the home. They go and place the flagpole. It's an amazing process to watch. It's about the ceremony that

See MANESS Page 4

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# MANESS I ♥ MY DADDY

Continued from Page 2

they perform, about the prayer service that they actually do right there in the Veterans front yard."

Maness said the flag pole ceremony becomes a community affair.

"All the neighbors usually come out to watch and ask questions," she said. "They are usually very excited to be part of the process and some actually participate in helping us dig the hole and perform the dedication. We always explain why we are here, why we are honoring this veteran, his service, his family, and his dedication to this country. Then, we recite the 13-folds of the flag and we hand it to him while the cement dries and we ask him to fly the flag the very next day. At this point, there is usually not a dry eye

- so we get back on our bikes and make our way to the next home. It is an honor to give back in this fashion and I hope to continue as much as my schedule will allow."

Maness comes from a military family. She and several of her siblings followed suit and joined the military. Her father was a Marine for 27 years, and her mother was in the United States Navy.

Maness said her parents both met while serving at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in 1960.

"There are five kids in my family. One has already passed. Of the four left, three of us have served in the Armed Forces (two Marines and one Army) while the other is a military supporter who works with Marines as a government employee," she said. "This is just something that my family takes pride in doing - serving our country in some fashion."

## SNL PUBLISHERS NOTE: APRIL WINNERS!

### OUR MAY'S MOTHER DAY TRIBUTE HUNT WINNER IS...

1st place - SANDY RYAN (19 tributes - 1:37 am 05/10/24). SORRY, NO ONE ELSE CAUGHT 19 TRIBUTES. **WINNERS - BE SURE TO TEXT YOUR MAILING ADDRESS TO 405-631-5100 FOR YOUR PRIZE(S)!**

## SNL PUBLISHERS NOTE: Let's have some fun!

### Happy Father's Day! Find the Father's Day Tributes!

Readers are paying attention. June is often associated with Father's Day in honour of Fathers is a holiday honoring one's father, as well as fatherhood, paternal bonds, and the influence of fathers in society. In Catholic countries of Europe, it has been celebrated on 19 March as Saint Joseph's Day since the Middle Ages. In the United States, Father's Day was founded in the state of Washington, United States, by Sonora Smart Dodd in 1910. The day is held on various dates across the world. Your job is to locate the Tributes in this issue! You already know the routine. Tributes are scattered throughout this issue. Count the Tributes and TEXT the total number, with your name and phone number, to **405-631-5100**. **1st and 2nd** texter with correct number, **WINS** a free one year subscription to SN&L (\$43.75 value each) **PLUS** a **\$25 gift card!** 3rd place wins a **\$25 Gift Card!** All entries will receive a free copy of our digital *Flip Page Edition* of SN&L each month (you must provide an email address)! Everyone's a winner! Father's Day Tributes are not hidden, but look in stories, ads and features! **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Contest begins **JUNE 6th** and ends **June 30!** No entries will be accepted prior to 06/06/24.

This one counts!



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