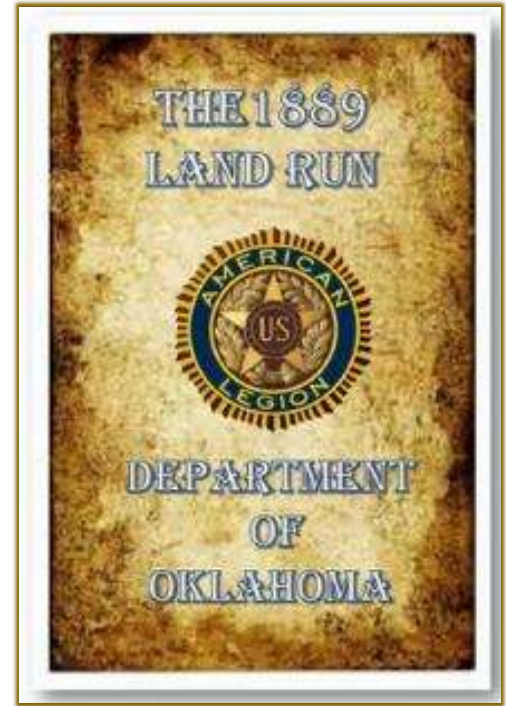


# THE 1889 LAND RUN DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA AMERICAN LEGION NEWSLETTER

See more Oratorical  
Winners on Page 23



27<sup>TH</sup> EDITION, APRIL 1ST, 2024

## *87th Department of Okla. Oratorical Contest*



**State Winner Advances:** On March 30<sup>th</sup>, American Legion Department of Oklahoma held its Oratorical Contest at the University of Oklahoma in Edmond, Oklahoma. First place winner was Nandini Patel from West Moore High School, a senior sponsored by Post 184 in Moore who will be attending University of Texas in Dallas next year. She won \$1,000 scholarship. Good luck Nandini!



# FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

## Brett Martin

Team Oklahoma, I hope this edition of the 1889 newsletter finds you and your family doing well and that you are enjoying some of this great weather we are having. Some interesting turn of events going on across our department. We just conclude our first online 50/50 Drawing and congratulations goes out to Past Department Commander Jim Quinn for winning \$500. This online drawing will happen once a month and you can enter just by going out to department's website or Facebook page. Good luck!

I had the opportunity to speak to National Legion officials 4 different times in the past two weeks. Seems that we have Legion members calling or writing National saying that I as your commander am not following our constitution and bylaws and that I and Miss Lorraine, my Executive Assistant, are stealing from the department when it comes to the Oklahoma Coins and Legion Family Lapel Pins.

Here is a letter I sent the National Judge Advocate General explaining our process with the dismissals.

- A. Senior Vice Lee Cathey passed away from cancer and never executed the role of his office.
- B. Both Vice Commanders East and West resigned rather than having their case go before the Department Executive Committee and be made public.
- C. Department Adjutant Robert Haugh was terminated by the Department Executive Committee at the 28 Oct 2023, DEC Meeting for loss of confidence due to not carrying out the duties of adjutant.
- D. Department Senior Service Representative Scott Tafoya was terminated by the Department Executive Committee at the 28 Oct 2023, DEC Meeting for loss of confidence due to not carrying out the duties of Senior Service Representative.
- E. Administrative Assistant Diane Doudna, who is the daughter of Past Department Commander and current ANEC Charlie O'Leary, was terminated for loss of confidence due to not carrying out the duties of Administrative Assistant. I terminated her after I conferred with Past Department Commanders, Department of Oklahoma Judge Advocate General, and our Department Lawyer. I was advised I could terminate her without DEC approval because she was not a Department Officer.

With Respect to Post 01, Tulsa actions resulting from our Mid-Winter DEC, The Suspension of Post 01's Charter and the expulsion of Adjutant Brian Davis and Commander Joe Meyer, has been completed on our end. The formal letters have been delivered to the post and individuals and the suspension and expulsion package has been sent to National for action.

I have developed passive income for the Department of Oklahoma and two of those items are our OK coins and Legion Family Lapel pins. Your department working with our Boys State Staff, ordered, and received 1000 coins which we are selling at \$20 each. The keeper of the coins are

Senior Vice Commander Woods and Adjutant Jamie Jennett. The coins are locked in a file cabinet drawer, along with the Legion Family Lapel Pins, in the department office of which I don't have a key. I ask for coins to sell and then turned in all funds from sales very much like our gun raffle.

A second stream of revenue is, Four Pillar Legion Family Lapel pens which are a product of L&B Marketing, (which is a limited Partnership Company of mine and Lorraine's). We sold the Department of Oklahoma the Legion Family Lapel pins at cost; we didn't make any profit. We did the same deal with Post 12 which sells all our products. We started this business to help fund me as your commander and this is strictly a commander's judgment call. Unlike commanders before me I haven't spent nearly the money that they have. I haven't stayed in one hotel room in Oklahoma or put one breakfast, lunch, or dinner on the commander's credit card. I have paid for all the gas going to and coming back from the National Convention and trips to Indianapolis. Commanders before me have taken pilgrimage to Kansas and Illinois to honor our past President, I admire them for doing that, I chose not to because I didn't see where it was any added value to the blue hatters across our great state. I also didn't take the trip to Washington DC this spring, because my representative contour part was not going to be there, and so far, this year, I have sent over 90 emails to her office on various subject since I have been your commander.

It should be noted that L and B Marketing has acquired all permissions needed from Emblem Sales to use The American Legion Logos and our Website is not illegal. Profits from the company not only help fund me as your commander but Post 12 also receives a percentage of our profits.

The last rumor is simply sad. It was brought to my attention that I have been accused of stealing funds from one of Post 12s past members. Back story, post 12 a had member who stated he didn't have any family and when he went into hospice, he called and asked me for my help. I took care of his finances, funeral service, mortuary, burial, and headstone. When he was still cognitive, he told me that Post 12 could have what funds were left over after I took care of everything. We had opened his funeral service up to the public and it was advertised on social media and TV after the funeral distant family members came of out the woodwork looking for their share of his wealth and ultimately came after me looking for the funds that were left over. They assumed I had taken the money for myself. I finally got subpoenaed to appear in court at that point Jarred are Department Lawyer, their lawyer the deposit slip from Post 12 showing the date and the account the funds were deposited in and they dropped the case.

If you have a question about me or my actions, please call me and ask me. I am an open book and transparent. Remember those who can't build, have no vision or tools, can only try and tear down.

***For GOD, Country, and Service,***  
**Brett Martin**  
**Department of Oklahoma Commander**



**DEPARTMENT SENIOR-VICE COMMANDER**  
*Hayden Woods*

**2023-2024 Oklahoma Membership Goals**

**03/17/2024**

Current Membership Percentage: **(87.61)**

Membership goal for 10 April : Nat.(95%)/Dept (100%)

2024 Membership Goals: **14,029**

Current Membership Total: **12291**

New Members Recruited: **605**

PUFL: **1982**

Renewals: **9418**

Required to Goal: **1036**

**ON-Time, On-Track, On-Target**

**BE THE ONE**

**DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER - EAST**

**Garry Gibson**

Greeting to Legionnaires

As we move into our Spring season, I hope everyone isn't fighting with their allergies as I am. I know it's time to do maintenance on the movers and start cutting grass once again. As I have already sent out an update on our membership for the month of March and it was our first miss for our benchmark. Regardless, this miss was only 2.39 % which tells us we are still in the race for it all. Your hard work and dedication mean we still can make April 13th a goal of 95% if we maintain the momentum and stay focused on the task at hand. I know our economy has created a lot of stumbling blocks to reach these National benchmarks, but your numbers are still very impressive. So, I want to send out a BRAVO ZULU to you all for an outstanding job that is well done. Please don't quit, there is more work to be done.

Also, I want to thank you for the hard work you are doing with Boys State registration for this year. Per the emails from our Chief Operating Officer, we are ahead of the game from last year and still have a strong chance to make the number of 400. Let's keep our foot on the gas and continue to visit your local schools and get our young men into this impressive program.

I have had a chance to reach across the aisles and attend District 7 Spring conference meeting where Chaplin Stewart was honored for his great involvement in repairing damages that was done to their Post. The fellowship and food that was served was excellent and encouraged others who have the chance to reach across the aisle to do the same. We all are one TEAM.

I want to thank District 3 for the invite to their Spring Conference in a very amazing and historic environment. There was a lot of good information that was shared for the good of the American Legion. There was a health issue that arose at the beginning of the meeting, and I ask you to put Robert Chislom on your many prayers lists for his health. I can't wait to visit the rest of the District Conference meeting that will be coming up soon.

As we approach Easter weekend and Easter Sunday, take time to spend with your families. This is a Holiday that is acknowledged throughout the world for a great sacrifice that was given to all mankind. Remember to love more, hate less and be a beacon of light to someone in need with hope and encouraging words. **EVEN IF THAT PERSON IS YOU.** Thank you for all you do to keep the American Legion strong and able to help our veterans and their families. God bless.



**Vice Commander East Garry Gibson  
For God and Country**

**Alternate National Executive (ANEC)  
Committeeman  
Charles S. O'Leary**

Greetings Legionnaires across the State!

I am announcing my candidacy for Department National Executive Committeeman [NEC] for upcoming election in July 2024.

I have completed my Legion Leadership duties through the “White Hat” positions in Department of Oklahoma and am now ready to move up to the next level.

Last year I successfully won election as Alternate National Executive Committeeman and completed one year of service. The elected terms of ANEC and NEC are staggered and this year the position of NEC is open. I feel I am ready to move up to the final level of Legion leadership in the Department of Oklahoma.

I am willing to step up to the next level as NEC, National Executive Committeeman, for The American Legion, Department of Oklahoma:

- As NEC in representing The Department of Oklahoma at National level and communicating back to Oklahoma veteran's National issues of concern, veteran's legislation, national fundraising efforts and focusing on veteran suicide prevention.
- As NEC in making The Department of Oklahoma's voice and vote heard at the national level.
- As NEC to choose wisely in voting on National financial and goal-setting issues that affect our Blue-Cap Legionnaires across the State.
- No leadership position in the State is carved in stone with one individual's name.
- I have no desires for a future National Office currently.
- Our Department was very honored when the current NEC, who is starting his sixth year as NEC, was selected as a possible Trailing Candidate for National Commander.
- It's ok to change horses; our Department will be stronger because of it.
- It is time to move on.

I want to thank all the Legionnaires who have supported me over the past eleven years I have been active in Legion leadership positions. I do not plan to stop. There is still work to be done. During my tour as Department Commander, we were able to overcome many obstacles along the way with new personnel at the Department. We were able to turn our organization and Department Leadership in a different direction, reaching out to younger Desert Storm, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Global War On Terrorism veterans, reaching out to women veterans, Native American, Black, and Hispanic veterans. We continued to support training more Service Officers to help our older and disabled veterans. We established Department Legion College to train new leaders in our Legion Family and began the process to establish a permanent Legion Family Headquarters in our State.

As ANEC I have increased the level and amount of communication from the National Commander and National Headquarters to the Department and Blue-Hat level through the monthly 89er newsletter, visiting numerous Legion Post and events and being active on social media such as Facebook. I have been an Instructor in the Department of Oklahoma Legion College and speak out at District meetings on National Veteran concern affecting the VA and Congress and funding legislation for our veterans.

We should carry on in these endeavors to help our Legion bluecaps across the State.

I would appreciate your support and vote at the July Convention.

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

**Charles O'Leary**

**Alternate National Executive Committeeman 2023-25**

**Past Department Commander 2021-22**

## **PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S CORNER**

Greetings Legionnaires!

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO WRITE A RESOLUTION!

Oklahoma Department of American Legion Resolution Process

1. Resolutions are the traditional method of initiating changes within the American Legion.
2. Resolutions may be initiated by individual members, a committee, a post, a district, or the Department Executive Committee.
3. Resolutions may be applicable to the post, district, department, or national level with approval at the appropriate level.
4. Members are encouraged to submit their resolutions through their posts and districts to preview the resolution and assure support throughout the process.
5. Resolutions presented through the post and district will be forwarded to the next higher level via a letter by the Commander or Adjutant certifying it has been reviewed and approved to include the date and type (regular or special) meeting.
6. All resolutions applicable at the Department or national level will be forwarded to the Department Adjutant to be recorded, filed, and forwarded to the Resolution Committee.
7. The Resolution Committee will review the resolution for grammar and format and coordinate suggested revisions with the originator with a corrected copy provided to the Department Adjutant to update the file.
8. The Resolution Committee will forward the resolution to the Department Executive Committee or appropriate committees to be reviewed for impact and comments.
9. The Resolution Committee will present the completed resolution to the Department Adjutant to be mailed to all posts within the Department for review at least 60 days prior to the next convention.
10. The Resolution Committee will present the resolution, along with comments from the Department Executive Committee or other committees, for consideration and a vote by the Department Convention Delegates

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

**Charles S. O'Leary**  
**Alternate National Executive Committeeman 2023-2025**  
**Past Department Commander 2021-2022**  
**American Legion Department of Oklahoma**



**The American Legion Family**



## American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma President Melissa Green

Greetings! I wanted to let everyone know that the Third Annual American Legion Auxiliary 5K Run/Walk held March 2, 2024, at Mitch Park in Edmond was a tremendous success! Twelve runners from the Thunderbird Challenge Program out of Pryor were able to participate – they took 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in their class. We hope to have them again next year. It was a beautiful day, and everyone had an exciting time. Hot chocolate, coffee, oranges, and bananas were donated to the runners, and everyone got their own T-shirt. We were able to raise more than \$2,800, which is not bad for a single day's fundraiser. Most of the proceeds will go toward our VA&R program assisting veterans in VA centers and hospitals across the State of Oklahoma.



Our National Auxiliary President, Lisa Williamson will be visiting Oklahoma from April 14<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup>. We will be posting her itinerary on our Facebook page very soon. Please try to attend some of the functions she will be attending while visiting.



April 15 afternoon Reception Post 12 Bethany/Warr Acres  
April 16 morning Oklahoma City VA Hospital  
April 17 afternoon Norman VA Center Bingo  
April 18 all day Ft. Gibson Post/Unit 20 & National Cemetery

**Deadlines for Awards and Reporting** are rapidly approaching.

**Poppy Poster Contest** - Due to Department Chairman by 4-01-24

**Poppy Day Recognized Nationally on May 24, 2024**

**Little Miss Poppy Contest** - Due to Department Chairman by 6-01-24

If you are not sure who or where to send your entries, please contact Department Secretary Sherree Cagle at 405/252-4143 or email at [auxdeptok@sbcglobal.net](mailto:auxdeptok@sbcglobal.net). You can download a summary of all the Auxiliary programs from our website at [www.OKAmLegionAux.org](http://www.OKAmLegionAux.org)

**REPORT – REPORT – REPORT -- Unit reports are due to the Department Chairmen by May 1, 2024.** Department Chairmen need to report to their National Chairman by May 15, 2024. The Unit Impact Report Form will be emailed to all units by March 29, 2024. If you need help filling out this form, please contact Department Headquarters. Let's put Oklahoma back on the map at National by reporting all of the wonderful things we are doing for our veterans, their families, and their communities.



Don't forget to send in a 2024 Recruit 10 form if your unit recruited 10 new junior or senior members this year. New members must have their dues paid by June 1<sup>st</sup>, and the forms must be sent to National by June 5<sup>th</sup>. The Department Secretary must verify the names on the forms so send them as soon as you reach that tenth new member!

The Unit Data Form, or "Remit To" form is due to department now please! This is the form your unit will use to tell National what your unit dues will be for 2025. It also tells them the name and address of the person in your unit that National will have printed on the membership renewal notices that are sent to members next year.

## **WHY MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

Why does membership matter? Every organization needs membership to grow. Members are the lifeblood of every organization. Membership is a year-round process, not just a one-time task. Every member is a membership chair. They keep the momentum going. The 3Rs that are key to growth in membership:

### **1. RECRUITMENT**

- Know the basics of eligibility
- Set up membership drives/tables in community events, schools, post office and large businesses
- Member benefits: what is available to them
- Reward members who sign up new members and recognize their efforts
- Make sure every member is a valued member

### **2. RENEWALS**

- Don't forget current and longtime members, they are all valued members
- Encourage attendance at monthly meetings
- Treat and show their value to the organization
- Provide tools for members success
- Buddy checks: remind your members about renewals.
- Ask them if they need help or what they can do to help.

### **3. RETENTION**

- As the saying goes "Make new friends but keep the old"
- Include them in planning activities
- Encourage them to find their niche and go for it
- It is easier to retain existing members if you give them a reason to
- Keep in touch! It takes an average of 7 personal touches for someone to engage
- Inspire others through your pride in the organization
- Most of all: **COMMUNICATION** is very important

Lastly, know you **WHY? WHY** did you join? **WHY** did you stay? **WHY** have a goal?

**HAPPY EASTER!!!**  
**REMEMBER THE REASON!**

# Oklahoma Boys State

## Delegates Registered as of March 29, 2023: **200**

Hello Legion Family!

So far this year we have talked a lot about recruiting and getting kids signed up for the 2024 Session of Oklahoma American Legion Boys State. There will be some more of that below, but first we wanted to say thank you. Thank you for all of your hard work and effort. Thank you for being willing to sacrifice some of your time and money to help the youth of our state. Thank you for the support of this amazing program.

As we always do, we look forward to getting to saying thank you in person during Legion Night. This year, Legion Night will be on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, on the amazing campus of Rogers State University. We are working hard to put together a great program for the evening and to have things setup in a way that will allow you all to enjoy each other's company, but also to be able to interact a little more easily with the delegates. As it always does, Legion Night will start with a cookout at approximately 6:00 pm at the Dr. Carolyn Taylor Center (DCTC). We will have staff available that day to direct you where to go and we will also be available to take you on small group campus tours so you can see the delegates in action. Following dinner, we will have our Pass in Review and our Legion Night Assembly. After the Assembly, we will have our Flag Retirement Ceremony, which is always very moving, and you are welcome to be a part of that as well. This is the best way we can say thank you and show you how all the work and effort is paying off!

Back to recruiting, as you can see above, we have 200+ delegates registered. If we can keep the current pace and register 25 young men every week until session, we will be able to hit our 400-delegate goal. The best news is that we have been able to obtain those kinds of numbers in the past. However, it will take all of us working together to make it happen. Our staff is working hard to connect delegates and Posts to make sure every young man that wants to attend Boys State has the opportunity to do so. If your Post can help sponsor additional delegates, please reach out so we can make sure to use those funds wisely towards another deserving young man.

Thank you again for your support of the Boys State Program!

For God and Country,

**Sen. Corey D. Brooks, Ret.**

**Director**

**Oklahoma American Legion Boys State**



**Multi-year Membership**

Take advantage of our online multi-year membership option to lock in your current dues rate for the next 3 years and avoid any potential dues increases.

# Washington Conference

The American Legion National Washington DC meetings were held in Washington, DC 2-25-28, 2024.



Attendees from the Department of Oklahoma were NEC Tim Smith, Alternate NEC Charlie O'Leary, Michael Taylor, Karen Cruice, John McNeil, ALA NEC Tracey Smith, ALA PDP Nancy O'Leary. Members attended National Committee meetings including VA&R and visiting Oklahoma Senators Mark Wayne Mullen, James Langford, offices of Representatives Frank Lucas District 5 including Osage County and Josh Brecheen District 2 and presented the 18 American Legion congressional legislative goals for this session.

- ANEC Charlie O'Leary on the ground at the Nation's Capital
- Members of Oklahoma Legion Delegation meeting with Senator Mark Wayne Mullen at his office in Washington, DC
- ANEC Charlie O'Leary and Post 17 Sand Springs Commander Karen Cruice with Representative Frank Lucas Staff Member Brooke Kramer at his office in Washington, DC.

## *From the desk of the Department Adjutant Miss Jamie Jennett*

As the world focuses on March Madness, world events and other things, let's return our attention to The American Legion Mission.

Post Data Reports are needed at the Department office as soon as possible to enable us to process and turn in to National by the 15APR2024 deadline. Thank you so much to those that have already turned theirs in!



April is **Children & Youth Month**. Posts should be focusing on:

- Coordinating Children & Youth activities and recognition with the post's Auxiliary unit.
- Obtaining a Children & Youth Guides and brochures from the [Legion website](#).
- Planning election of new officers, summer Scouting activities and Boys State.
- Putting American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Week on the post calendar.

For more than 80 years, The American Legion has supported today's young people as we observe April as Children & Youth Month. During this month of celebration, American Legion Family members are encouraged to show their local communities our dedication to young people by hosting youth activities or by becoming involved in programs and organizations that support young people.

**Department Eagle Scout of the Year** applications due to National Headquarters on 01APR24. This means you need to get them to the Department ASAP in order to make the deadline. The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year will receive a \$10,000 scholarship. Three runner-up scholarships will be granted in the amount of \$2,500 each.

### **Legacy Scholarship applications due Apr 10, 2024**

American Legion Legacy Scholarship application for 2024 is online. Click here for information on the American Legion Legacy Scholarship. The American Legion Legacy Scholarship is available to children whose parents died while honorably serving on active military duty on or after 9/11, as well as children of post-9/11 veterans with a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or higher.

### **Media & Communications Contest Deadline - Apr 15, 2024**

The American Legion Media & Communications Contest wants to recognize the hard work Legion Family members do to promote the good of the organization across media channels. The contest provides an opportunity for all Legion Family members – American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, Auxiliary and Legion Riders – to submit their work and be recognized. Ready to enter the Media & Communications Contest?

### **American Legion Family Day - Apr 27, 2024**

The National Executive Committee passed Resolution No. 7, American Legion Family Day at its Fall Meeting in October 2022. The resolution established an American Legion Family Day to be observed annually on the last Saturday of April.

**The 50/50 Raffle** drawing will be held Thursday, 28APR2024. If you have not purchased your tickets, hurry to the website! Sales End Wednesday, 27Mar2024

As a closing note, let us push differences aside and get back to focusing on The American Legion mission. Let us actively seek knowledge about all aspects of the Legion in order to make wise

decisions. It is good business sense to work with many differing opinions and viewpoints. It's what fosters company growth. Ask yourself, does "this" help our veterans? If not, let us get back on target.

How many of your post members and officers have completed Basic Training (<https://www.legion.org/alei>)? This is the best place to start. We're only as strong as our weakest link.

If you'd like more information about Legion learning resources, feel free to contact the Department office any time or visit <https://www.legion.org/training>.

Team Oklahoma - Let us join together and make April the best Legion April EVER.

**GREAT OUTDOORS  
10 Gun Drawing**

Drawings will be held at the 2024 Summer Convention  
**JULY 27TH, 2024 \$10.00**

Winners of the Drawing must be of age and pass background check IAW State laws

**SIG SAUER M18 21  
ROUND STRIKER  
FIRED SEMI-AUTO**

**AUTO-ORDNANCE  
911A1 GI SPECS**

**TRISTAR VIPER G2  
SEMI-AUTOMATIC 410 GAUGE**

**TRISTAR TRINITY O/U 20/28  
BLWD 20 GAUGE**

**SIG SAUER P226  
MK-25 DOUBLE/  
SINGLE ACTION**

**HENRY REPEATING ARMS  
BIG BOY X LEVER ACTION**

**SAUER 100 CLASSIC XT 7MM  
REM MAG RIFLE S1S7MM**

**HENRY REPEATING ARMS  
BIG BOY LEVER ACTION**

**HENRY REPEATING ARMS  
LEVER ACTION CARBINE 22LR**

**RUGER AR-556SEMI-AUTOMATIC  
223 REM/5.56NATO**

**AMERICAN  
LEGION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\***

**NEW DEPARTMENT  
MAILING ADDRESS**

*DO NOT SEND TO  
P.O. BOX*

6101 NW 50<sup>TH</sup> ST  
SUITE A  
WARR ACRES, OK 73122

PLEASE SEND **ALL**  
CORRESPONDENCE TO  
THIS ADDRESS

# Legion News



## Seehafer touches on Be the One, claim sharks and military quality of life during Washington Conference

By [Steven B. Brooks](#)

FEB 26, 2024

Addressing members of the American Legion Family on the eve of many of them heading to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress, National Commander Daniel Seehafer thanked the contingent for coming to the Legion's Washington Conference to advocate for the nation's veteran, military and their families.

And then he reemphasized that last word.

"I include families because it's so, so important to who we are and what we actually do," Seehafer said. "It's quite common for seriously wounded veterans to say on the battlefield, 'Tell my family that I love them.' Tell my family. Sometimes, these are their last words.

"And who is more impacted than the family, especially when a veteran makes that tragic decision to take his or her own life? That's why it's our No. 1 mission: to prevent veteran suicide. To yes, Be the One. And so, we have to Be the One for our veteran families, as well as the veterans themselves – especially in their times of crisis."

Seehafer said [Be the One](#), the Legion's veteran suicide prevention program, asked Legionnaires to look closely at whether a fellow veteran may be in crisis, even when the signs aren't always there

"That's why we must be pro-active, even when things appear to be going well," he said. "You see, veterans often keep their pain bottled-up, and when they do, their families suffer too."

That's why American Legion service officers play such a critical role in Be the One. "Our great American Legion service officers are often the first line of defense when it comes to reaching these veterans and family members," Seehafer said. "They not only work tirelessly to obtain benefits for those who have served, but also for their surviving spouses when their deaths are connected to their military service."

Also related to veterans' benefits what Seehafer's call to urge legislation that protect veterans while punishing agencies and businesses that charge veterans to file for their benefits, even when they are not accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

"Among our agenda items this year is a call for Congress to fight the sharks," he said. "We are calling for criminal penalties against any company that skirts the VA accreditation process in order to charge veterans and families outrageous fees to process claims and appeals. In fact, it's against the law to engage in these practices, and those who do should be prosecuted."

Seehafer noted the suicide crisis isn't just impacting veterans. "The rates have been high among the active duty ranks as well," he said. "By improving the military quality of life – that includes barracks, family housing, employment opportunities for spouses, and affordable childcare – we can eliminate some of the top sources of stress that service members and their families face.

"Not only must Congress act on these issues, but The American Legion is playing an active role through our [BASE Program](#) (Base Assessment and Servicemember Experience). Think of it as an extension of our highly successful VA&R [System Worth Saving](#) program, but this time, it's for the military."

Once a member of the military is ready to hang up his or her uniform, Seehafer said they need to be given the tools and guidance to move smoothly into the civilian world.

"Transition assistance is of paramount importance to military members wondering how to support themselves and their families once they leave service," he said. "We know that feelings of not fitting in, loneliness and isolation are common among those in suicidal crisis. The military must be directed to use every high-tech and data-driven resource possible to ensure separating servicemembers can transition smoothly."

Seehafer also addressed other issues during his address, including:

- Ensuring the U.S. Coast Guard gets paid in the event of a government shutdown. When budget lapses occur, Coast Guard pay isn't guaranteed because the branch falls under the Department of Homeland Security.
- Parity for National Guard and reserve members receiving GI Bill benefits for the time that they serve. "Military service is extremely challenging, and, at times, we all know it, dangerous," he said. "A day of service should equal a day of service, regardless of who issued the orders."
- Concurrent receipt. Seehafer said no veteran should have to fund his or her own disability compensation out of their military retirement pensions.
- Access to health care for military personnel and their families serving overseas.
- Implementing and overseeing the PACT Act.
- Access to alternative treatments and therapies for veterans.
- Allowing general but honorably discharged veterans to use the GI Bill.
- Protecting the U.S. flag.

# TRAILBLAZING WOMEN VETERANS



AMERICAN  
LEGION

TANGO  
ALPHA  
LIMA

SPECIAL PODCAST SERIES

#MILITARYWOMENWEDNESDAY  
LEGION.ORG/TANGOALPHALIMA



## Trailblazing women in the U.S. military: An all-voluntary service historic timeline

By Ashley Gorbulja

MAR 08, 2024

March is Women's History Month, a time to celebrate and honor the remarkable contributions of women in the U.S. military. Throughout history, women have played pivotal roles in shaping the armed forces, breaking barriers, and championing gender equity. This blog explores women's journey in the U.S. military from the early 20th century to the present, focusing on their transition to voluntary service.

[LISTEN HERE >](#)



## AGENT ORANGE NEWSLETTER

INFORMATION FOR VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



IN THIS ISSUE



### TOXIC EXPOSURE SCREENING

As a Veteran, during your military service, you may have been exposed to environmental hazards, such as Agent Orange. To learn more about your exposures, you can have a

toxic exposure screen (TES) during a routine health care appointment, which will allow your exposures to be documented in your record. The TES includes a series of questions

that takes about 5-10 minutes, and the potential exposures to various hazards are recorded. This screening is not meant for diagnostic purposes but can address concerns about your health and deployment.

Following the screen, you will receive information about benefits, environmental health registry exams and clinical resources to address any concerns.

If you have any questions about the TES, you can contact your local VA health care team via Secure Message or call [1-800-MyVA411](tel:1-800-MyVA411) and press 8. You can also inquire about the TES

during your next VA health care appointment or contact your local VA facility and ask to be screened by the TES Navigator if you want to be screened sooner. It is important to note that you will be screened at least once every five years, even if you do not have any concerns at

present. We recommend that you take advantage of this opportunity to better understand your health.

### VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS, THE PACT ACT AND THE AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY

Do you know the difference between the PACT Act and the Agent Orange Registry? The PACT Act, more formally known as the Sergeant First Class Health Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, was signed into law on August 10, 2022. It expands health care benefits for Veterans. The Agent Orange Registry helps Veterans understand possible long-term health problems that may be related to Agent Orange exposure. Learn more about the difference between these two initiatives.

#### The PACT Act

- The PACT Act is a law that empowers VA to provide expanded benefits and care to Veterans who were exposed to environmental hazards during military service.
- It ensures that every Veteran enrolled in VA health care can receive an initial toxic exposure screening at VA and follow-up screening at least every 5 years.



# Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (PCPG)

Helping you reach your education and career goals

## What is PCPG?

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is here to support you as you face education and career decisions or transition from military to civilian life.

The Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (PCPG) program is a critical VA benefit that provides career counseling, assessment, education planning and guidance resources unique to your needs, and can help you set and achieve personal, career and education goals. It provides you with one-on-one support whenever you need it – putting you in the driver’s seat of your education or career plan.

## How can PCPG help you?

Counselors can provide tailored career planning and guidance to include:

- **Career choice assistance** to understand the best career options based on your interests and skills.
- **Education/career counseling** and a tailored training, education or employment plan.
- **Academic and adjustment counseling** to help you find solutions and ways to overcome any obstacles to your success.
- **Benefits coaching** to help you use other VA benefits and resources effectively, including your VA education benefits.
- Assistance with resume writing, interview skills, and more!

## When should you access PCPG?

Consider using PCPG when:

- Considering job or career options or going through employment changes
- Facing obstacles in accessing education and employment opportunities
- Ensuring your education benefits are used in the best way possible
- Interested in, or currently pursuing, higher education
- Transitioning from military to civilian life

You may benefit from using PCPG benefits more than once when making important education and career choices. Follow up sessions are available for as long as you remain eligible for the benefit.

Eligible participants can get support in a variety of ways – through in-person counseling or remotely by use of tele-counseling.

## Who is Eligible for PCPG?



Transitioning Service members six months prior to separation



Veterans who have transitioned from active duty service in the last year



Any Veterans or beneficiaries eligible to utilize a VA educational benefit

## How can you access PCPG resources?

**APPLY ONLINE** – Visit [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) to complete and submit your application.

**APPLY BY MAIL** – Fill out the application located at <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-25-8832-ARE.pdf> and mail it to your local VA Regional Office.

**APPLY IN PERSON** at your local VA Regional Office or by visiting a VetSuccess On Campus (VSOC) office.

A representative will contact you once your application is received and you will be assigned a time to meet with a counselor.

## How can you find out more?

For more information about the PCPG program or to access the eligibility wizard, hover your phone’s camera over the QR code:



Or visit: <https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/education-and-career-counseling/>

# From the Legion Officer's Guide

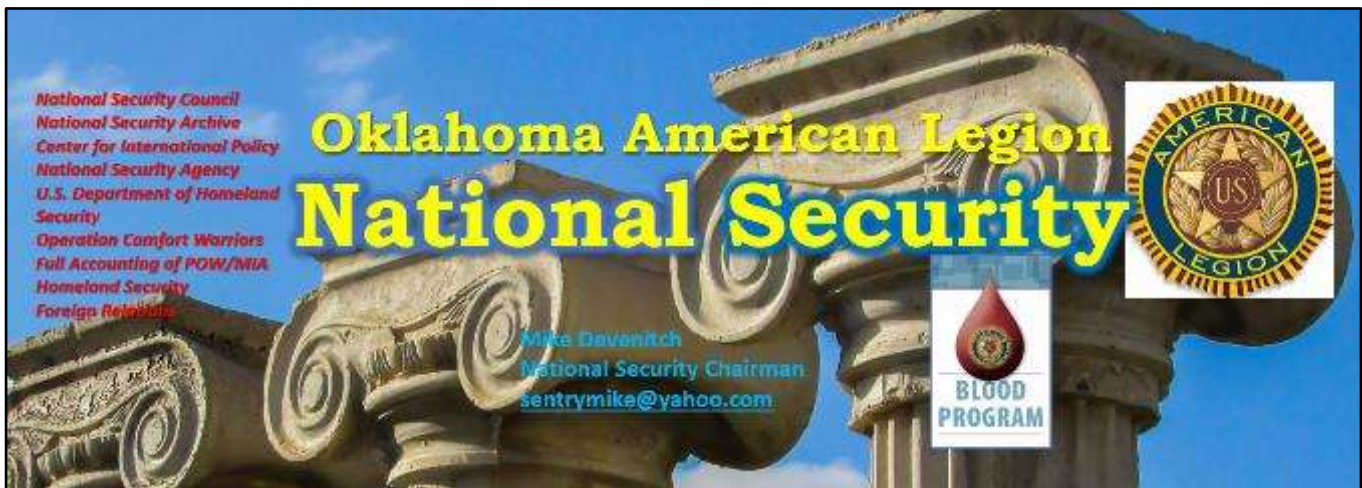
## Program reminders

*Post programs require intelligent planning. Each year the district and the department should conduct training on both general operations and specific American Legion programs.*

**APRIL (Children & Youth Month)** Coordinate Children & Youth activities and recognition with the post's Auxiliary unit. Obtain Children & Youth Guide from department headquarters. Plan election of new officers, summer Scouting activities and Boys State. Put American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Week on the post calendar.

**MAY** This month marks the anniversary of the St. Louis Caucus, where organization of The American Legion was completed in 1919. National Poppy Week, Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day and Mother's Day form the basis for good post programs and outreach to U.S. military personnel in communities nationwide. Consider honoring them with a Blue Star Salute. Honor veteran gravesites. Present school awards at the end of the 14 semester. Kick off American Legion Baseball and summer athletic programs. Ask school officials to approve American Legion activities and put them on the calendar for next year: Oratorical Contest, Boys State, school awards, American Education Week.

**JUNE** Start planning a membership drive for next year. Develop a plan engage veterans. June 14 is Flag Day, so consider surveying people and businesses in the community, asking who flies flags on patriotic holidays. The history of Old Glory would make an excellent program for a post meeting. Summer youth programs need members' support and attendance.



## The American Legion's National Security Policy

The American Legion believes national security must be maintained to fulfill the mandate for a strong national defense. As stated in the Preamble, "FOR GOD AND COUNTRY WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America... To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy."

The Legion is an organization of veterans who fought for freedoms, which they are dedicated to keeping and preserving. As one of the Four Pillars it was founded on, the Legion believes national security is upheld by keeping a well-funded Department of Defense, a good quality of life for troops and a sensible transition between service and separation.

Learn more at <https://www.legion.org/security>

### MORE ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY



**THE LEGION'S POLICY**  
Learn more about The American Legion's National Security Policy. >>



**THE LANDING ZONE**  
Visit The Landing Zone for featured national security news. >>



**PHOTO GALLERY**  
View national security related photo galleries. >>

### AWARDS & PROGRAMS



**NATIONAL LAW OFFICER**  
Apply for national law enforcement officer of the year. >>



**NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER**  
Apply for national firefighter of the year. >>



**BLOOD DONATION PROGRAM**  
Learn how to donate blood for those in need. >>


### MORE RESOURCES



**NATIONAL SECURITY LINKS**  
Find helpful links for more national security information. >>



**RESOURCES**  
Sample letters and memorandums. >>



**CONTACT US**  
Have a question? Contact us. >>

**Michael H. Devenitch**  
**National Security Member**  
(Blood Program)

## **\*\*\*OKLAHOMA LEGION SPOTLIGHT\*\*\***

### **Lorraine Hildebrant**

Commander Assistant



I was born in a foreign country, but I was born an American Citizen, the Department of Defense says I am.

I'm lucky, I received an excellent education. Luckier still that I earned degrees.

I come from a military family. 18 of 20 served. My family proudly earned some amazingly distinguished awards.

Our military and our veterans have always been a part of my heart.

That beautiful leather flag, Why We Stand, was created by my son who, by the way, is a veteran and a member of American Legion, Post 12.

I came to American Legion because I was looking for something. My husband of 48 years had passed away, I was searching for my new purpose. I came to deliver Toys for Tots boxes; Commander Martin of Post 12 invited me to come back for the Coffee meeting and offered me a "job", somewhere to go, people to hang out with; just like we do for any veteran. He learned that I have a marketing background and asked me to work with him. Truthfully, I thought he was going to create a little job like stuff envelopes. Little did I know that it was going to become an opportunity to help improve the Legion. Had no idea it would become so much fun and let me meet so many of our wonderful legionnaires from the state of Oklahoma. The commander asked me to be in charge of our calendar. He said he doesn't like the white space on his calendar. I make sure that there is no white space.



The position has provided me with several opportunities. I've traveled the state meeting my heroes, veterans, I've been allowed to participate and graduate from American Legion College, I've been given the chance to take and complete the courses to become a VSO/PSO ( just need to turn in that one last document). I have been given the opportunity to meet National Officers, Share meals with owners of businesses. Meet members of other veteran organizations.

It's been a great opportunity.

## **\*\*\* OKLAHOMA LEGION SPOTLIGHT \*\*\***

# SON OF THE AMERICAN LEGION NEWS



<https://youtu.be/dzuJiT9mW8w>

## Share your American Legion Family Day plans with your local media

In a new video, SAL National Commander Don “JR” Hall encourages American Legion posts to not only participate in American Legion Family Day, but to publicize the event at the end of April. “Get your local press to promote American Legion Family Day in advance and invite them to cover your event. We need to let the community know we are here to support them in addition to the veterans and their families,” Hall said.

A Legion Family Day press release template is available [here](#). Download the document, update it with your post’s details and submit it to your local media.

The National Executive Committee passed [Resolution No. 7, American Legion Family Day](#) at its Fall Meeting in October 2022. The resolution established an American Legion Family Day to be observed annually on the last Saturday of April — this year, that is April 27.

For Legion Family Day, posts are encouraged to open their doors to members of their community for the day to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of Legionnaires, Sons of The American Legion members, Legion Riders and American Legion Auxiliary.

“No two posts will do it the same,” Hall said. “Some may have cookouts, welcoming the community to come in and visit the post. Others may have blood drives, dinners, or other events within their communities.”

American Legion Family Day also is an opportunity to bring community awareness to the organization’s [“Be the One” initiative](#) to reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

### Share your event

American Legion posts are encouraged to share details on their Legion Family Day events, either in advance or afterward, at [Legiontown.org](http://Legiontown.org).

# Oklahoma State Oratorical Robert Willis

## Department of Oklahoma Scholarship Program

Legionnaires,

Thanks to those who supported the Oratorical Contest, which was held on March 30th, with their presents and those who helped make this a successful event. Commander Martin presented certificates to contestants and judges. The winner will be announced later and will travel to the 2024 National Finals, which will be May 17-19 at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan.

The 87th American Legion Department of Oklahoma Oratorical Contest was held at UCO in Edmond, Oklahoma. Great performances by all the participants and the winners were: First place winner with \$1,000 Scholarship went to a West Moore High School Senior sponsored by Post 184 in Moore who will be attending University of Texas in Dallas next year. Second place \$750 scholarship to Norman High School Sophomore sponsored by Norman Post 88. Third place \$500 scholarship to Choctaw High School sophomore sponsored by Post 127 in Choctaw.

Honorable Mention Awarded to first-time participant from Guymon High School Senior who already has a full scholarship to Columbia University in New York sponsored by Post 31 in Guymon. Special thanks to Rob Willis Department Oratorical Committee Chairman and all of the judges, Legionnaires helpers, and Post 111 for hosting and providing a great lunch for this annual event.



**Robert L. Willis**  
**Oratorical Director**

Phone: (405) 370-5331

Email: [rob.willis61@outlook.com](mailto:rob.willis61@outlook.com)

Web: [legion.org/oratorical](http://legion.org/oratorical)

# Awards Committee

## Paul Ray

I will be honest with you. This is last month's article. I probably didn't have to tell you that because it appears as if no one read it, so here it is again. This is your awards program; it is up to you to make it work.

It is time for Posts, to get busy on this year's awards, Legionnaires are the Posts sooooo that means it's time for you to get busy. I am not going to give you a timeline. I am going to tell you mine. And mine is carved in stone. There is no wiggle room. If your nominations don't make the Department deadline, they won't make the Department consideration list.

What needs to happen at the Post is the fun part. When the nominations hit the Department Awards Committee many specific things have to happen in order for the Awards and the Award recipients to be available at the Convention. Somethings take time.

We are looking for nominations from the Posts for

- 1. Law Enforcement Officer of the Year**
- 2. Firefighter of the Year**
- 3. Legionnaire of the Year**
- 4. VA Physician of the Year**
- 5. VA HealthCare Provider of the Year**
- 6. Employer Of Veterans (3 categories)**
- 7. There are others but these are the easiest to find if you have questions call me.**

The Post's responsibilities are to take nominations from the Legionnaires. Vote for and recognize the Post's Award winners at a Post meeting and forward the Post's nominations...one from each Post, for each Award category... to the Department. I understand some Agencies and some individuals don't want to be bothered with awards and recognition, even though they deserve them. We can't force them to be honored for their service. It's their decision. But surely every Post can find one person in their community that deserves recognition, at least at the Post level.

The Post's have the option to work their own timeline until the Department's "Gotta Have" date. May 1st. From that date the Departments sorts the nominations into voting categories and on May 15<sup>th</sup> sends the Nominations and voting ballots to the Awards Committee members by email. The Committee members have until June 1st to read, analyze, decide, vote and email the ballot back to the Department. The Department Awards Committee has to tally the ballots, and not later than June 15<sup>th</sup>, we have to order the trophies and notify the award winners, write the script, print and frame the certificates. There are some other things, but you get the idea. There is no wiggle room. This flow plan is based on the Department Summer Convention being in mid-July if that event is very much earlier the Department timeline may have to be adjusted.

Have a wonderful Spring.

Awards Committee

**Awards Chairman**  
**Paul Ray**



# Legion Riders Oklahoma State Legacy Run.



July 19 -21, 2024



## OKLAHOMA



**“I Want You” To Be A Legacy Run Sponsor!**

**The American Legion Riders of Oklahoma need your help to ensure the children of our fallen heroes, wounded warriors, and disabled veterans have a chance at getting a higher education!**

**Our goal this year is: \$15,000**

**The American Legion Riders have a new mission. Beginning in 2024 the Riders will be supporting the Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF). This is an excellent opportunity to support our Veterans and their children. This program also helps to support the training for our much-needed Veteran's Service Officers to get the training for them to help our Veterans to get their benefits.**

For more information, please contact:

Mike Marxen, State Director American Legion Riders (405) 812-8987 [mkmarxen@gmail.com](mailto:mkmarxen@gmail.com)

You can also mail donations to the Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF)

PO Box 25592, Okla. City, OK 73123

[Http://www.alr1340.org](http://www.alr1340.org)



**Mike Harris  
Commander ALR Post 1340  
DEC 5A**

## From the desk of Mike Marxen Director, OKALR

It has been a while since I have submitted an article, so I thought I would like to get caught up on things.

There are 7 Posts that have submitted the required paperwork to establish ALR Chapters. Three of those have their Charters; Yukon Post 160, Haynes-Finley Post 153, Wagoner and Frazier-Boyd Post 301 Lexington. Recommendations for changes to their Constitution and Bylaws have been made to the other Posts and I am awaiting their updates. If you have a Chapter in your Post but have yet to be Chartered or your Post is interested in establishing a Chapter, please contact me and I will send you information to get things started.

Planning is happening for the 2024 Department of Oklahoma Legacy Run. This will be our 5th State Legacy Run. The route will be similar to last year's. As soon as the route is firmed up, information on hotels will be available. If you haven't heard of it, the National Legacy Run has a new mission. From the inception of this cross-country fund-raising effort, the mission was in support of the Legacy Scholarship Fund. Over the years enough money was deposited for the fund to be self-supporting. The new mission will be supporting The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. From the support for American Legion accredited service officers who help veterans get the benefits they have earned, to funds used for Temporary Financial Assistance grants for families in times of crisis, The American Legion provides help and hope. Your support can bring hope to veterans and children in communities across the nation. You can support our In State Legacy Run by participating in this Department wide event. At the Mid-Winter Conference, I suggested that if each of the 174 Posts in Department of Oklahoma were able to contribute \$100, the check to the National Commander would be way above what we were able to give in 2023. We are counting on your support.

For several years, Riders Post has assisted the Lion's Club with raising flags at Hefner Lake in northwest Oklahoma City. The Lion's Club sought and received permission to display flags on land near the Lion's Club playground. There are spots for 13 flag poles. Each pole displays an American Flag. On the individual poles a separate flag representing each branch of the Armed Forces, Oklahoma flags, POW/MIA, American Legion and the American Legion Riders. Recently the Lion's Club donated \$500 to Riders Post 1340 for our help.



# Oklahoma Legion College March 2024



*Picture: First Row: Sue Hathway Post 12 and Service Dog Waylon, OKLC Dean Hayden Woods, DPT CDR Brett Martin, Carrie Moore and Service Dog Ruger Post 12, Lisa Acevedo Post 12, Second Row: Charlie O'Leary, ANEC, OKLC Instructor, Jennifer Wheeler Post 12, Charlotte McIntire Post 12, Department Adjutant Jamie Jennett, Todd Greer Post 41, Dalton Matthews Post 55, Bobby Marshall, Post 55, Sal member Steve Sherbourne Squadron 20 Not pictured: Lance Larson OKLC Instructor*

Congratulations to American Legion Department of Oklahoma Legion College Class #3 who graduated Sunday March 24, 2024! The class was held March 22-24, 2024, at Post 12 in Bethany-Warr Acres in Oklahoma City.

Kudos to Legion College Dean Hayden Woods and Legion College Instructors Lance Larson and Charlie O'Leary for successfully completing another course of instruction.

This class was smaller, only 11 students, but 6 of the students were women veterans! Congratulations to all.

## District 1B



First meeting of Spring since the Winter Hibernation for Post 333, Ralston, the only American Legion Post in Pawnee County!

[L-R]; Front row: Visiting ANEC Charlie O'Leary from Post 142 in Hominy; Post 333 Adjutant Kristy Metzger, Post Commander Red Wilson

Back row: Post 333 members Chaplain Seth Harding, Sgt-at-Arms Richard Oldham and 1st Vice Commander Bill Jump



### Special cake cutting ceremony at Tulsa Post 1 - 105th Birthday of American Legion

- Special cake decorated with new Post 1 logo incorporating the logo from City of Tulsa flag, symbolizing a new beginning and moving on to accomplish new goals.
- ANEC Charlie O'Leary cutting cake "Army Style" with Post 1 Past Commander John Ward looking on
- NEC Tim Smith cutting Post 1 American Legion Birthday cake with ANEC Charlie O'Leary and Past Post Commander John Ward looking on with Post 1 member Alan Usry taking care of business in the background

## District 2A



- Post 15 Muskogee group photo after meeting with visiting ANEC Charlie O'Leary
- Post 15 Muskogee visitor Mike Kerr 1Vice Commander Post 64 Chandler who stopped by to visit with the Post 15 members and pass out information on spouse and Post 64 Commander Patricia Mathes-Kerr who is running for Vice Commander East.
- Post 15 Muskogee Legend and long-time Adjutant Raul Rizzo and Post 15 Commander Ronnie Chandler taking care of business at the Post 15 March meeting.

## District 2B District 3 Spring Conference



- ANEC Charlie O'Leary attending District 3A-3B with District 3A Commander Gary Pearson, Post 188 Heavener
- Post 145 Wilburton Commander David Seyler opens District 3A-B meeting held at Veterans Colony, Oklahoma.
- ALA PCP Nancy O'Leary with ALA District 3 President Mary Ganger at District 3 Conference held at Veterans Colony near Wilburton.  
Past District 3A Commander Robert Chisholm had a medical emergency and was hospitalized before the meeting but recovered.

## 4A District Commander's Corner

District 4 Spring Conference will be held Saturday, 13 April 2024. Seminole's Porter-Kelly Post 204 will be the host for the conference. Having a representative present from each Post in the District would be impressive. We must elect new District Commanders, adjutants, candidates for delegate and alternate to the National Convention, and other officers, as necessary. Keep in mind that we must be present to vote for the desires of our Post, absentee votes are not allowed. Also, those we want to represent us must be present to be elected.

2024 membership growth has slowed down for District 4A. Our membership goal this period was 90% and as a district we made it. 100% Post are Wellston, Oilton, Okemah, Bristow, Boley, McLoud, and Stroud, THANK YOU! Today we are only fifty-three members away from 100% as a district. Don't stop now, the secret is making Buddy checks using expired list from 2021, 2022 and 2023, home visits, maybe paying the dues of someone on a fixed income and finding new members in our community. Look carefully at your WWII and Korea veterans, if they are living and not renewed, do it for them.

If you have not completed and sent to the Department the annual Post Data Reports, they are due 15 April, please do so soonest. (Post Commander and Adjutant Report and the longer sheet, Post Data Report with names, addresses, phone numbers, dues for coming year, etc., Per Capita dues will be \$37.00 beginning 1 July 24) While you are at it, start working on the annual Consolidated Post Report. SAL Squadrons, all three Reports apply to you as well.

**John Bloxom**  
**District 4A Commander**

## 5A District



Post 157. We organized a S.A.V.E. training (Veteran suicide awareness) for all Veterans in the OKC, Midwest City, and Del City areas.

March 6, 2024, from 10am-12noon at Sunnyslane Family Church, Del City OK.

1st Picture Left to right: Melvin Hopkins (Commander), Kenneth McKnight Jr. VSO (Adjutant), Ezekiel Jenkins, Darlene Brickly, and Jeaneth Helton VSO (front)



Kenneth McKnight Jr receiving Accredited VSO Training Certificate

(Left to right: Brett Martin (OK State Commander), Kenneth McKnight Jr (Post 157 Adjutant), and Melvin Hopkins (Post 157 Commander)  
March 13-15, 2024



Jeaneth Helton receiving Accredited VSO Training Certificate  
(Left to right: Brett Martin (OK State Commander), Jeaneth Helton VSO, Melvin Hopkins (Post 157 Commander)  
March 13-15, 2024

American Legion Post 73 (Del City) will be hosting a Veteran Care Fair on Saturday, April 6, 2024, from Noon to 4:00 PM. There will be lots of information available to our Veterans. Open to the public and all Veterans alike. I have attached the flyer.







Jennifer Martin  
Executive Business Manager  
American Legion Post 73

## **5B District Commander's Corner *Dale Haynes***

We had our best turnout of posts for District 5 Conference on March 16 with all but four posts present. Thanks to all that were able to attend. Hopefully, we can make it 100% at the next one. We are looking forward to the Department Oratorical on March 30. As I stated last month, our two contestants for the Oratorical, Jesse Labahn and Nandini Patel, are excellent and it should be a real contest. We wish them both well. It is unfortunate only one can go to National.

## Lindsay Ball Smith Post 23

February 23<sup>rd</sup> the American Legion Auxiliary held a bake sale at the American Exchange Bank in Lindsay to raise funds for upcoming events.



The monthly meeting of Post 23 began with the “Healthcare in 5” presentation about fire safety, considering the numerous wildfires Oklahomans were experiencing at the time.

The Auxiliary had their meeting the same day with guests – Melissa Green, President of the Oklahoma American Legion Auxiliary, and Sherree Cagle, Department Secretary/Office Director, to give guidance with the new officers.

Legion Riders are planning a Poker Run “**Bikes and Rods**” the first Saturday of June with an alternate date being the second Saturday of June. They will be raising funds for the Riders in the

Honor Guard to defray the cost of uniforms used to lead the funeral processions in honoring veterans.

Sons of the Legion hosted a “Luck of the Irish” Bingo fundraiser on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Many came wearing their lucky green favorites.



**Maysville Post 194:** Congratulations to Post Commander Mike Brooks and welcome to the Adjutant Rocky Anderson as they assure their new positions. They are making plans for getting their building in shape, resume meeting there, and look forward to the future growth of the post. I am confident in their success.

**Lexington Post 301:** Lexington Post 301 is proud to announce they have received the first Legion Riders Charter in District 5B (Lindsay Post 23 and Washington Post 310 are finalizing their Constitution and By-laws). Lexington will have their organizational meeting at 10:30 am April 20 with a free breakfast at 9:30 am. It should be noted that members of posts that do not have Legion Rider chapters are welcome to be members of another chapter while maintaining membership in their home post. Legion Rider Department Director Mike Marxen is shown presenting the charter to Post Commander Glen Parker and Executive Committee member/Post Chaplain John Hobbs.



**For God and Country**  
**Dale Haynes**  
**5B District Commander**

## **6A District Commander's Corner**

**Mustang Post 353:** Post 353 conducted their monthly meeting discussing post business and upcoming community events. With the post officer elections coming up the adjutant and the nominating committee started the process of nominations for each officer's positions. Nominations were received and the post has elected the officers for the 2024 - 2025 year. The post started their initial discussions for the upcoming Memorial Day Poppy Distributions, Flag Day and their Golf Tournament fundraiser. The post had approximately 23 Legionnaires that attended the monthly meeting that all joined in at the end to celebrate the American Legion Birthday with cake and refreshments. Barry Carrington, Mustang Post 353



Inspect the Legion Birthday Cake prior to presenting it to the membership to enjoy at the monthly meeting held Thursday, March 14, 2024. Post members and guests made short work of consuming the cake with ice cream and coffee. Here's to the next 105 years!!! Happy Birthday!!  
March 15, 1919 – Paris, France



**Yukon Post 160:** Yukon celebrates the 105th American Legion Birthday, recently the Yukon American Legion Post 160 celebrated with dozens of Yukon veterans. This year the post bought 2 full sheet cakes to celebrate the occasion. The Yukon post has been a part of Yukon for 81 years. Mike Devenitch, the post commander said, “It is great to visit the Dale Robertson Center and visit with seniors and veterans again this year. It is incredible that that a Legion post has been in  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the entire existence of the legion. We are making an impact with our Americanize programs, Boys and Girls State. We look forward to serving the Yukon veterans and community for another 80+ years!”



**El Reno, Post 34** Post 34 honored their 50-year-old members at our last board meeting.



From left to right. John Higdon, George Lerch, Joe Shumate, Eugene McClure, and 1st Vice Commander Cliff Cagle.

**Michael H. Devenitch**  
**District 6A**  
**Commander**



# 6B District Commander's Corner

## Dobbs-Adams Post 55:

On 3/14/2024 Dobbs-Adams Post 55 in Duncan held its 105th Birthday Celebration as well as the celebration for the 105th birthday of the American Legion. KSWO news report reported on the event. We appreciate your hard work in making sure this newsletter continues to thrive.

## Post 55 of American Legion celebrates organization's 105th birthday



Friday, the members of the Duncan post of the American Legion celebrated the organization's 105th birthday.

## ***American Legion Post 55 seeks to honor Korean War Veterans:***

By [Alex Rosa-Figueroa](#) and [Cole Brumbelow](#)

Published: Mar. 15, 2024, ABC 7 News

LAWTON, Okla. (KSWO) - Friday, the members of the Duncan post of the American Legion celebrated the organization's 105th birthday.

Post 55's celebrations were held this evening, with a special cake cutting to commemorate the anniversary.

The American Legion was founded in 1919, and since then members have tirelessly worked to serve the nation's veterans and their communities.

It's work Post 55 members excitedly look forward to seeing continued.

“This year, one of the reasons we’re celebrating so gloriously here at the Post is the fact we have drawn in some of the younger veterans this year who have taken us into the 21st century,” said Bobby Marshall the Commander for the Post. “We do a lot more online; we do a lot more digital broadcasts and it has drawn in the newer generations of veterans who are realizing yes we are still a great organization, and with them taking up the mantle they’ll be carrying us into the next century as well.”

And in addition to celebrating the Legion’s birthday, members also paid tribute to Post 55’s own 105th anniversary.



# 7 District Commander's Corner

Post 41 in Clinton held its first dance in 15 months. We had 34 guests, and everyone was really impressed with the improvements made since the flood in December 2022. We are glad to be back up and running. Still have a few minor tweaks to work out, but hey, nothing is ever totally finished.

**Post 41, Clinton** did an excellent job on the remodeling of their building after sustaining significant flood damage a year ago. Very nice facility. The Post has resumed one of their activities - a dance which is open to the public.



Final touches before the dance tonight. Come see the changes at The American Legion, in Clinton.



American Legion and auxiliary helping at bingo with Veterans of ODV.

## Post 121 - Mangum

Our Next meeting will be April 1 at 6pm. Generally, we have a potluck dinner before the meeting in April. So, everyone brings a dish for the potluck and will start at 5pm. We encourage all veterans to attend whether they belong to the post or not. The post needs your ideas.







Coffee With a Veteran continues on Tuesday mornings. Enjoy free coffee, snacks, and great conversations with veterans. On March 26<sup>th</sup> we had a nice group for coffee and even had some Turkish Delight hand carried from Istanbul. You just never know. Everyone is welcome whether you served it or not. We meet at 203 S Oklahoma here in Mangum. Support your local veterans by joining us.

I was able to recently attend the Post's meeting. A very informative meeting for the members with special guest - Vice West Commander Marv Sandbek, District 7 Commander Shirley May, and District 7 Vice Commander Elmo May attending. The pizza was enjoyed by all after the meeting concluded.



**Post 300, Corn** - continues on their preparations for Memorial Day and placing flags at the cemetery.

**Post 146, Sayre** has been busy with several activities in the community and surrounding areas.



Commander Elmo May presented a check in the amount of \$1650.00 to the Beckham County Junior Livestock program. This money is for the FFA and 4-H students in Beckham County and will assist them with future projects.



Post 146 had three members who recently completed the VSO training in Oklahoma City. All three are looking forward to the upcoming training at the State Summer Conference to finish and obtain their full accreditation.



*Pictured are: (Standing) 2LT Kem, Elmo May, Shirley May, OC Moreno, OC May (a member of Post 146), Walt Jackson, Larry Barker, SFC Clark. (Kneeling) OC Nowakowski, OC Suniga, OC Ortiz.*

Post 146 had the honor and privilege of being able to purchase 5 AirSoft Rifles to support the GOLD Program at SWOSU. These rifles will allow for more realistic training for the Candidates.

The Guard Officer Leadership Development (GOLD) Program at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOAU) is a prestigious leadership initiative designed for Oklahoma Army National Guard Soldiers who attend SWOSU. This program was established through collaboration between the Oklahoma Army National Guard (OKARNG) and SSOSU on November 8, 2007.

The GOLD program was re-established on the SWOSU campus in the fall of 2016. The purpose of the program is to develop future federal-commissioned officers. After completion of the program, the candidate becomes a commissioned officer in the United States Army Reserve and serves in the Oklahoma Army National Guard.

Other upcoming activities in Sayre include the Sayre High School Alumni parade, local Easter egg hunt, and preparation for Memorial Day.

**Post 91, Weatherford** - is presently conducting their annual "Poppy Board" fundraising. They created their own poppy board and change the picture and date each year. The Post has about 70 donors each year and local banks who donate. They will raise from \$5000 to \$7000 in donations each year.

**Post 143, Sentinel** continues to work memberships even though they are at 100%.

**Post 181, Elk City** - are looking to support part of the recreation program at the Clinton Veterans Center in the near future. The Veterans at the Center enjoy bingo, karaoke, and many other activities. The Post will also have a float in the Elk City Labor Day parade, being held on Labor Day weekend. Once again, the Post will have a beef raffle. They will start selling tickets at the end of June and have the drawing on Aug 5th.

**Respectfully,  
Shirley May  
District 7 Commander**

## 8A District

On Tuesday, March 5th, Noble County Sheriff Matt McGuire discussed with the American Legion Ellis-Jirous Post 53 questions they had about things that go on within the county. The topics discussed were funding for the department, our local crime rate, and possible illegal activities happening on I-35. He also explained about working with other agencies on high profile substance seizures.



**Tina Kilmer**  
**8A DEC**

### District 8A-8B Conference March 9, 2024, Woodward, OK



- Post 92 Alva attendees and visitors for nearby District 7 and Sayre, Shirley and Elmo May in attendance
- District 8A-8B Leadership in action, Vice Commander West Marv Sandbedk, 8A Commander Joe Kingery Post 71 Tonkawa, 8B Commander Wayne Flowers from Laverne Post 272

- Post 190 Covington Commander Melanie Kerr addresses the District 8A-8B Conference in Woodward on March 9th with District 8A DEC Tina Kilmer from Post 53 in Perry, looks on



- Vice Commander West Marv Sandbeck Post 259 Braman addresses the Conference
- Post 63 Freedom 1st Vice Commander and D-8B Vice Commander Valerie Brown addresses the D8 Conference
- District 8A-B Conference attendees and guests. Great to see Post 92 Alva attendees!





A great time was had by everyone at District 8A Post 343 Morrison ALA St. Patrick Potato Bingo Fundraiser March 15, 2024, in Morrison, America!

- Big announcement and it's GREEN!
- ALA Department President Melissa Green and her driver came all the way from Tishomingo for St. Patrick's Day Potatoes and bingo!
- Unit 343 hard workers Carolyn Christenson and Sue Heil manning the sign-in desk.



Serious bingo at the District 8A Post/Unit 343 Morrison ALA St. Patrick Potato Bingo Fundraiser March 15, 2024, in Morrison!



- Fellow 45th Infantry Thunderbirds CW4 Retired Larry Veit and ANEC Charlie O'Leary at the District 8A Post 343 Morrison ALA St. Patrick Potato Bingo Fundraiser March 15, 2024
- ALA Unit 343 Firebrand Janet Vincent and helper at the District 8A Post/Unit 343 Morrison ALA St. Patrick Potato Bingo Fundraiser March 15, 2024

American Legion Post 4 in Enid has been inactive for the past several years and was recently revitalized and restarted in new location at OK Military History Exhibit at Oakwood Mall in Enid March 26, 2024

Special Salute to new Post 4 Commander Mike Toon and new Adjutant Jonathon Watson for stepping up and kudos to District 8A Commander Joe Kingery, 8A DEC Tina Kilmer and Vice Commander West Marv Sandbek doing the legwork and community outreach to get this Post restarted



- ANEC Charlie O'Leary and ALA PDP Nancy O'Leary attending Post 4 Enid restart at OK Military History Exhibit Hall in Enid
- Group picture of most of the attendees at Post 4 Enid's second meeting of the year at OK Military History Exhibit in Enid
- Leadership in action at Enid Post 4 with 8A DEC Tina Kilmer, 8A Commander Joe Kingery, VCW Marv Sandbek, Post 4 Commander Mike Toon and Post 4 Adjutant Jonathon Watson

## **8B District Commander's Corner**

District 8B has been active this month with District 8 Spring Conference on March 9th, held in High Plains Technology Center in Woodward, Oklahoma. A meal was provided by Woodward Post 19, followed by the meeting, which was attended by many Department Officers. All District Officers from 8B were voted in to continue their positions, except Second Vice-Commander Valery Brown was moved up to Vice-Commander. A lot of discussions over how the Department is doing, questions about membership numbers were brought up, and Members running for Department elections in July, got to talk to the membership.

On March 18th, a special ceremony was held in Hooker at Post 137, for three members who have reached the milestone of 50 continuous years in the American Legion! The members were Kieth Harrold, Larry Hofferber, and John Metcalf. A barbeque meal was served, and certificates and pins were presented by Department Senior Vice-Commander Hayden Woods, Department Vice-Commander West Marv Sandbeck, and District Commander Wayne Flowers.

On March 25th, Laverne Post 273 held their annual election meeting, where all officers were re-elected to continue their duties. We had 2 members receive 5-year certificates, 2 received 30-year certificates, and one received a 35-year certificate, with corresponding pins for years of membership.

And last, but certainly not least, I am currently working with Vice Commander West, and all posts in the district, to get members who have been in the Legion for 50 years or more, the recognition they deserve!







**Wayne Flowers**  
**District 8B Commander**  
**Post 273 Commander**  
[cdrpost273@yahoo.com](mailto:cdrpost273@yahoo.com)

# LEGION

FastStitch Merch Stores are designed to help get your merch into the hands of your organization. All merch stores are setup as a preorder sale, this means we print everything after the store close date. Once the store closes, all sales are final.

We do not accept any returns or exchanges.

**\*\*If you want to purchase with a tax exemption, please email [Sales@Faststitch](mailto:Sales@Faststitch) before placing your order.\*\***



American Legion Hat  
\$20.00



Be The One Hat  
\$20.00



American Legion Polo  
\$40.00 - \$50.00



Sons of American Legion Polo



American Legion Auxiliary Polo



American Legion Riders Polo



# TIM SMITH

I ask for your vote for  
**National Executive Committee**

## WHO IS TIMOTHY W. SMITH?

Tim earned his eligibility in the American Legion by serving 20 years in the United States Army as a Communications Specialist, retiring as a Sergeant First Class. Tim is the youngest of six boys in the Smith household. He graduated from Southside High School, Fort Smith, Arkansas, in May of 1989 and joined the U.S. Army in September of that year 1989 attending Basic Training in Fort Jackson, South Carolina and Advanced Individual Signal Training in Fort Gordon, Georgia.

### MILITARY EDUCATION

- Basic Training: Fort Jackson, South Carolina
- Advanced Individual Training(Signal Corps), Ft. Gordon, GA
- Primary Leadership Development Course, Vilseck, Germany
- Basic Non commissioned Officer Course, Ft Gordon, GA

### AWARDS & DECORATIONS

- Bronze Star
- Meritorious Service Medal w/2 Oak Leaf Cluster
- Army Accommodation Medal w/2 Oak Leaf Cluster
- Army Achievement Medal w/5 Oak Leaf Cluster
- Various other decorations

### DEPLOYMENTS

- Desert Storm: Sept. 90-Apr 91
- Operation Joint Endeavor: Mar 96-Sep 96
- Iraqi Freedom: 1st Tour: Mar 04-Dec 04
- 2nd Tour: Oct 06-Dec 07

### DUTY ASSIGNMENTS

Over his 20-year career in the United States Army he served at Fort Hood, Texas, Mannheim, Germany, South Korea, and Fort Gordon, Georgia.

His last duty assignment was as a Platoon Sergeant at Fort Gordon, GA, where he retired as a Sergeant First Class (E- 7) in 2009.

Why do I not travel to Posts ?  
The truth is I do and I will.

State officers and higher must follow proper etiquette and protocol, *visiting upon request.*

The other option is to notify the Post of my desire to visit at their meeting or event. They accept or decline the request and I respect their wishes.

**I hope to talk with you at a event in the near future, Or call me at 918-577-8738**

**FROM THE DESK OF**  
**TIMOTHY W. SMITH**  
**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN**

I hope you are doing well and enjoying the Legion programs you participate in. I am not a writer so my participation in any news letter will be limited but I will always try and provide information.

**Unwritten rules and common courtesy's**

1. Handel all issues and complaints at lowest level possible. If the Post can handle the issue that's most likely best for all members. Please do not send complaints to National until you have exhausted all course of action at Department level. We have two complaints sent to National since December that the Department Executive hasn't had a complaint about.
2. If you have intentions of campaigning for Department offices wait until Mid-Winter Conference to announce and begin the campaign cycle.
3. When elected to District office or higher office never go to a Post uninvited or unannounced. If a Post has told you that are welcome anytime please call them ever time you plan visit.
4. Lastly when seeking advice from leaders DO NOT seek advice just because the title they hold. Look at results and experience they have. For example I am very effective in following areas. Membership recruiting and retention; Fundraising and sponsorship; Building programs and Leadership. There others areas I am good at but many cases I may recommend another leader to help because they subject matter expert in the area.

Respectfully,

Tim Smith

9185778738

[timsmith1226@sbcglobal.net](mailto:timsmith1226@sbcglobal.net)



VOTE FOR CHARLIE O'LEARY  
AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF  
OKLAHOMA  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN  
2024-2026



**DOUBLE THUNDERBIRD**

179IN, 279IN, 180IN, 160FA

C-MED CDR 700 SB, 45BCT SURG

**1980-2007**

# **Department of Oklahoma Senior Vice Commander Candidate**

**ELMO MAY**  
**POST 146 COMMANDER**  
**The American Legion**

## **Department of Oklahoma Senior Vice Commander Candidate**

Elmo May joined the American Legion in 2010. He has been a Post Vice Commander and a Post Commander on numerous occasions as needed to keep the Post strong. Elmo was also selected to the position of District 7A and 7 Commander and as Vice Commander West. Elmo is a PUFL member of the Department of Oklahoma. Elmo has completed the Department of Oklahoma American Legion College, and National American Legion College. He is working toward being fully accredited Veterans Service Officer, he enjoys going the different Post in the Department to hear their thoughts and the stories of the Post. The main job of the SR. Vice Commander is to encourage the Post to process membership as his main job. If elected as the I will be excited to work with the next Commander and the Department Headquarters, but I will work for you the blue hats. Our membership is shrinking every year, and with us all working together and sharing ideals we can change this direction. My goal is to keep moving the Department forward and making the Department of Oklahoma the best in the Nation. When people talk about the Department of Oklahoma it should always be in a positive light. Let all of us put our minds together and put our differences aside to strive to be the best in the Department. Hopefully I can have your vote to be your next SR. Vice Commander for the Department of Oklahoma.

## **Candidate For Vice Commander West Lance E. Larson**

My name is Lance Larson Post 129 Stillwater. We have a lot of vets that have taken the VSO course, but got looked over afterwards for whatever reason, and they have their OGC numbers. This is one of the very first tasks that needs straightened out mostly in the Northwest part of state. I went through the course March 3-5, 2020, got a number, and heard nothing else. This is a problem that needs immediate attention. The other is the state says posts need to work harder on membership. My solution is when we quit being divided and come together as one at Posts, District, and State then membership will take care of itself. Before volunteering at headquarters, I had never realized all the arguments between one and another. So, no matter who you vote for let's all work hard on coming together. I know I will work hard on this endeavor.

I know we are no longer in the military, but when we have a problem at post level, we should go to District Commander, District goes to Vice West, and Vice West to Senior Vice. If we take these steps just think how much smoother things will go and get taken care of in a timely manner. Remember we are all volunteers and want to have an enjoyable experience.

Lance E. Larson



# POST EVERLASTING



**William "Bill" Paul Helton**  
**May 7, 1943 — February 21, 2024**  
**Post 2020, Claremore**

Services for William "Bill" Paul Helton will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 1, 2024, at the MMS-Payne Funeral Home Chapel, with burial following at 2:30 p.m. at Ft. Gibson National Cemetery with full military honors. The procession from the MMS-Payne Funeral Home to Ft. Gibson National Cemetery will begin at 1:00 pm. The family would be honored by your attendance at the service and the military ceremonial event at Ft. Gibson National Cemetery. Friends may pay their respects at the funeral home on Thursday, February 29, from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with the family receiving visitors from 6pm-8pm. Bill passed away on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at the age of 80.

William Paul Helton, affectionately known as Bill, was a remarkable individual whose life was a tapestry of service, dedication, and love. Born on May 7, 1943, in Poteau, Oklahoma, to Luther Paul and Vera Levita (Huggins) Helton, Bill's journey was defined by a commitment to God, family, country, and community.

Bill's devotion to service began early as he graduated from Poteau High School in 1961 and later enlisted in the US Army in 1964, where he served honorably until 1967. His dedication to the nation extended through his service in the Army Reserve before transitioning to the Air Force Reserve in 1981. Bill's military tenure spanned an impressive 39 consecutive years, culminating in his retirement as a Senior Master Sergeant in 2003. Alongside his military service, Bill pursued higher education, earning a master's degree in mathematics education and school administration from Central State University.

On April 11, 1968, Bill married Dorthy Jewel Dickson, with whom he shared a life of love, companionship, and mutual support.

Bill's professional journey was diverse and impactful. From his early teaching career in Wellston, Oklahoma, to his role as an educator in Grove, Sequoyah, Tulsa, and Catoosa, Bill inspired countless students with his wisdom and passion for learning. His career took unique turns, including a stint with Walmart where he collaborated directly with the retail giant's founder, Mr. Sam Walton, in opening stores across Oklahoma, including the one in Claremore. Additionally, Bill pursued ministry, studying at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and becoming an ordained minister in 1979. He served in various churches across Oklahoma, embodying his faith through acts of compassion and guidance.

Even in retirement, Bill's dedication to service remained steadfast. He joined the Rogers County Sheriff Department as a reserve deputy, contributing to the community through roles in the K-9 unit and mounted patrol, aiding in search and rescue missions.

Bill found joy in the simple pleasures of life and spending time with his horses, particularly Jaz, and participating in therapy dog activities with his canine partner Judge Judy Helton. However, his greatest source of happiness was found in supporting his children and grandchildren, whom he cherished as his greatest blessings.

Bill is survived by his loving wife, Dorthy Helton; his children, Franklin Paul Helton and wife Carol and Timothy Stephen Helton and wife Lindsay; his grandchildren Jacob Bates, Ashton Bates, Jaime McClure and husband Connor, Hailey Bates, Zayne Bates, Tori Helton, Rebekah Thomas and husband Johnathan, Joshua Helton, Emily Helton, Bryanne Carr and husband Jacob, Brendon Barnes, Heidi Helton, and Hollyn Helton; great grandson Will Carr; siblings James Helton, Kay Romine, and Cookie Crawford. Bill was preceded in death by his parents, his daughter Cindy Helton Bates, and his brother Luther Helton.



## **Amos Manuel Welliver**

**March 30, 1937- February 27, 2024**

**Porter Kelly Post 204, Seminole, OK**

Shawnee resident, Amos Manuel Welliver, passed away Tuesday, February 27, 2024, in McLoud.

Amos, the son of Frank and Mary (Barrett) Welliver, was born March 30, 1937, in Seminole. He graduated from Varnum High School, with the class of 1955. Following high school, Amos entered the US Army, proudly serving 20 years including tours in Vietnam, before retiring in 1977. On September 17, 1960, Amos married Mildred Yvonne Sikes, in Seminole, Mrs. Welliver passed away September 10, 2017, one week prior to their 57th wedding anniversary. After retiring from the Army, Amos continued his education, receiving his

master's degree in business. Amos then took a job at Tinker, where he worked until his second retirement. He was an avid history buff, which he not only studied outside his family, but inside as well, as a family historian and genealogist. He also enjoyed crosswords, but his favorite thing in life was spending time with this family, particularly his grandkids. Amos was a 32nd Degree Mason, he was also a member of the VFW, the American Legion, and Disabled American Veterans.



Amos' family wishes to extend a special thanks to his sister-in-law, Doris Gale Morland, for the care she extended to Amos and Yvonne for so many years.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife; and several siblings.

Amos is survived by three sons and daughters-in-law, Adam and Rebecca Welliver, of Shawnee, Tracy and Kitty Welliver, of Durant, and Jason and Paula Welliver, of Shawnee; eight grandchildren; four great grandchildren; and many other family members and friends.

Services with full military honors will be Saturday, March 2, 2024, at 10:00 A.M. at Swearingen Funeral Home in Seminole. Interment will follow at Little Cemetery. Services are under the direction of Swearingen Funeral Home in Seminole.



**Billy Eugene McKee Obituary**  
**May 5, 1937, - March 3, 2024**  
**Dale Peace Post #40, Vinita**

Billy Eugene McKee, 86-year-old Vinita resident, passed away on Sunday, March 3, 2024, at his home, surrounded by his loving family. He was born on May 5, 1937, in Phoenix, Arizona to Cecil Bryant McKee and Lillie Mae (Olinger) McKee. Billy was united in marriage to the love of his life Goldie Marie Crisler McKee on July 7, 1962, in Arvin California. He served his country from 1955 to 1959, in the United States Air Force in Korea. Billy was a truck driver and retired from Air Products out of Pryor. He was a member of

the Dale Peace Post #40 American Legion in Vinita. Billy was a member of the Big Cabin Baptist Church, where he served as the Sunday School Director for several years. He loved to go golfing, gardening, fishing, watching football, NASCAR racing (Kyle Busch was his Favorite), and mowing the yard. Billy loved his children and grandchildren; above all he loved his Lord and Savior.

Preceding him in death were his parents, a son Danielle Eugene McKee on September 26, 2022, brothers, James Doyle McKee on May 19, 2004, Douglas Ray McKee March 13, 2017, Louie Dee McKee, and Eula Alfred McKee.

The family includes his wife Goldie Marie McKee of the home, son, David Bryant McKee, daughter, Terry Jean (McKee) King, sisters, Berniece Laura Arnold, Evon Elaine Powers, grandchildren, Jennifer Rutherford, Becky Hobbs, Billy Brown, Russell Brown, Brandon Brown, Amanda McKee, Dylan McKee, Brianna Rowley, Morgan Schmidt, Kaley McKee, Heather, Kyle, Kylie, Danielle, Kevin McKee, and 17 great grandchildren.

The celebration of life will be held on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. at the Big Cabin Baptist Church in Big Cabin, Pastors Tom Teel and Tanner Shoop will officiate. Interment and military honors will follow at the Big Cabin Cemetery. Online condolences may be made at [www.highsmithfh.com](http://www.highsmithfh.com) or on the funeral home Facebook page. Arrangements are in the care of the Burckhalter-Highsmith Funeral and Cremation Services of Vinita.



**Clifford Lee Case**  
**December 7, 1940 - March 22, 2024**  
**Posy 108, Cushing**

Clifford Lee Case passed from this life on March 22, 2024, in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Clifford was the youngest son of Johnie and Juanita (McConnel) Case. He was born on December 7, 1940, in Cushing, Oklahoma where he remained a resident all the days of his life. After graduating from Cushing High School, Clifford went into the Army where he worked in radio communication stationed in Germany during the Vietnam War. Clifford

received the rank of Sergeant before being honorably discharged in 1967. He was a member of Post 108, Cushing, Oklahoma.

Clifford began working for Cushing Lumber, driving a truck, working in the lumber yard and eventually moving to sales. He spent 20+ years with Cushing Lumber before retirement in the early 1990's. Clifford married Vickie Franklin and being privileged to combine families, they spent many wonderful years together. Clifford was an avid golfer, winning a few tournaments and even getting to play in Orlando, Florida, during a finals tournament. He was a huge fan of Cushing sports, especially when his grandchildren were playing, rooting, and cheering for his hometown team.

Clifford was dedicated to his family, always willing to help anyone who needed it. You could always see a gleam in Clifford's eye when he was ready to play a joke on someone, loving to find a reason to laugh and joke with those he was around.

Clifford is preceded in death by his parents; daughters, Kimberly Case, Brenda Case and Dana Matthews; brothers, Kenneth Case and wife Mary, Glenn Case, and Harold Case and wife Pansy.

He is survived by his wife Vickie; son, Gunner Clemons; eight grandchildren, Karly Clemons, Aleah Clemons, Josh Matthews, Jaylee Matthews, Nathan Case, Matt Farley, Alissa Farley and Tosha Grivois; and sister, Sharon Randolph and husband Eldon, plus a host of nieces, nephews, friends and relatives that will miss him dearly.

A visitation will be from 3PM – 7PM on Tuesday, March 26, at Palmer Marler Funeral Home in Cushing, Oklahoma. Funeral services will be at 10AM on Wednesday, March 27, at Freewill Baptist Church in Cushing, Oklahoma. Interment will be at Parkland Cemetery. Pastor Collin Finch will be officiating.



**Jerry Linn Thompson**  
**July 26th, 1939- February 24th, 2024**  
**Elk City, Post 181**

Jerry Linn Thompson was born July 26th, 1939, in Carter, Oklahoma to Florene Alma (Embry) and Bert Oliver Thompson. He passed away in Elk City on Saturday, February 24th, 2024, at the age of 84 years.

Jerry, known by most in his later years as "Mr. Thompson", grew up in the Carter, Oklahoma area. He attended Carter Schools where he graduated in 1957. He continued his education at Cameron and Oklahoma State University where he received an undergraduate degree in Agriculture communications. While at OSU, he was a member of ROTC and the National Society of

Scabbard and Blade. He met the love of his life, Sharon Kennemer during his time at OSU. They were married at the home of Sharon's parents in Retrop, Oklahoma on January 23rd, 1962. Shortly after, he was commissioned into the United States Army where he obtained his fixed wing and rotary wing certifications. Throughout his career, Jerry and Sharon spent time at Ft. Riley Kansas, Ft. Rucker Alabama, Ft. Wolters Texas, and Landstuhl, Germany. After 3 years in Germany, Jerry was deployed to Vietnam where he was a Dust-Off pilot in the 57th Medical Detachment Helicopter Ambulance Unit. During his time in Vietnam, he flew 460 combat missions and transported 1,263 patients. He received multiple awards, medals and accolades including the Silver Star (Valor), Bronze Star, the Combat Medical Badge, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal. He was honorably discharged as a Captain in January 1968.

Jerry and Sharon then returned to western Oklahoma where they continued to grow their family. He helped with the family farm in Retrop and began his new career teaching high school biology in Sentinel, Oklahoma. In 1971, they moved to Elk City where he taught biology for 10 years until he was given the opportunity to be the high school guidance counselor. Jerry flourished in this position and enjoyed helping students make decisions that positively impacted them throughout their lives. Jerry retired from education in 1992. He continued to farm wheat, cotton, and hay; raise cattle, work in his yard, was an avid reader, and loved puzzles. His favorite way to spend his time was attending the activities of his 10 grandchildren. From sporting events and ballet recitals to choir and band concerts, he was always there for them. He was a faithful member of the 2nd and Adams Church of Christ where he loved helping with Vacation Bible School.

Jerry held a special place in his heart for the American Legion. He was instrumental in the reopening of the local chapter by encouraging high school kids to attend Boys & Girls State to represent Elk City. He is preceded in death by his parents; and one sister, Rheba Clifton.



## **Marvin Jay Anderson**

**April 21st, 1933 - February 21st, 2024**  
**Sayre, Post 146**

Marvin Jay Anderson was born April 21st, 1933, to Marvin and Leona (Self) Anderson in Erick, OK. He passed on February 21st, 2024, in Elk City, OK at the age of 90 years and 10 months.

Marvin grew up in Texola, OK. He attended Texola schools and graduated with the class of 1952. After graduation, Marvin enlisted in the Army on August 22, 1952. He was stationed in Darmstadt, Germany until he was honorably discharged in July 23, 1954. In 1955 Marvin enlisted in the United States Air Force. He served 3 years and was honorably discharged. On July 9, 1955, Marvin married Sue Hink in Clovis, New Mexico and to this union four children were born Michael Dean, Larry Marvin, Patricia Jonette, and Richard Irven.

While in the Air Force, Marvin lived in Dayton, OH and then moved to Pampa, TX where he worked for Cabot Oil and Gas Carbon Black Plant. After Pampa, TX, he moved to Beaver, OK and continued to work as a pumper for Cabot. In 1977 the family moved to Sayre, OK and Marvin became an insurance agent with American Trustee selling life insurance. He also worked at the Department of Corrections in Sayre for 17 years and the City of Sayre for 4 years before he finally retired in 2010.

Marvin served as the senior counselor for 18 years and athletic director for 4 years at Oklahoma Boy's State. He also served as a basketball official in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas for 15 years. Marvin was a servant to the community. He was a member of the Lion's Club, Booster Club, and American Legion Sayre, Post 146. Marvin's number one pastime was watching basketball. He never missed a game of his kids and grandkids. He was an avid fan of OU sports. He also enjoyed fishing. Marvin was a faithful member of the First Baptist Church in Sayre. He participated in the First Baptist Church Senior Choir. Foremost Marvin loved the Lord but just as important was his love for his family and the time he could spend with them.

Marvin is preceded in death by his wife Sue Anderson, parents Marvin and Leona Anderson, 3 sisters Joy, Elizabeth, and Linda (Obruni), brother-in-law Bob Hink.

He is survived by his four children Mike Anderson of San Antonio, TX, Larry Anderson and wife Kay of Samnorwood, TX, Patti Wheeler and husband Wayne of Sayre, OK, Richard Anderson and wife Kim of Morgans Point, TX; 6 grandkids Kristie, William, Boz, Brittany, Brook, and Maeli; 17 great grandkids; 4 sisters Le Alta Smith, Sallie Chamber, Pat Wollitz, and Kathy Mayernick; many nieces, nephews, extended family and a host of friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at [www.cff.org](http://www.cff.org), or you can visit the link below.

***From the 1889 Oklahoma Land Run Newsletter Editor  
Due to my wife's terminal cancer, this is my 16th and last newsletter.***



***Tell your Post story, do the good things in your community, state and nation and your post will grow... Help, educate, mentor and be a leader by example. Honor those who served and sacrificed. Stay non-partisan and do it with integrity, ALWAYS. And if you need assistance - please reach out and we will help.***

Michael H. Devenitch – 1889 Land Run Newsletter  
(Commander: Post 160, Yukon & District 6A)  
[sentrymike@yahoo.com](mailto:sentrymike@yahoo.com)

**The Legion: "Veterans Strengthening America."**