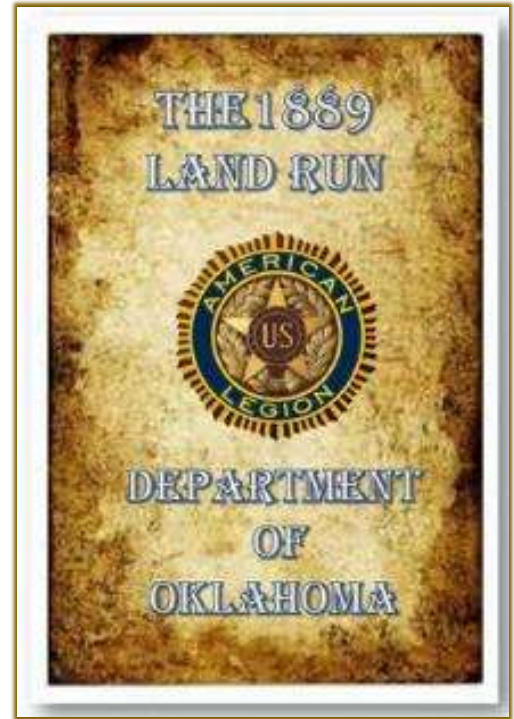


# THE 1889 LAND RUN DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA AMERICAN LEGION NEWSLETTER

24<sup>TH</sup> EDITION, JANUARY 1ST, 2024



*Happiest  
New Year!*

## **HUGE DONATION**

Department Commander, Brett Martin presents a \$2,000 check to **Toys for Tots** from Mohawk Post 308 (Tulsa). Also, eight full boxes of toys were donated by Post 17 (Sand Springs) and Post 1800 (Catoosa).

# FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

## Brett Martin

Team Oklahoma,

It is a new year and we as a Department of the American Legion have gotten our USS Department of Oklahoma back on course and we are picking up speed as we sail into the future together as a great American Legion family. Our future is very bright, thanks to your hard work and dedication. 2023 saw lots of change in our department but change that was necessary for us to stop the nosedive. To date we have not missed one National membership goal. We have 3 new revenue streams coming online in January bringing other revenue sources into our department. We have been operating on our portion of the membership dues and gun raffle profits, but we have been operating at a loss. Since I became your commander, we have completed the first line-item budget review in years and have been operating under our approved budget and only doing things **that benefit all blue hats**. Our 501 (3) (C), Four Pillars of Hope” will come online this January and will open other opportunities that we were not eligible to receive before. We have made lots of personnel changes, but that is a good thing. We will have a new Adjutant, Vice Commander West, and Admin assistant by the 8<sup>th</sup> of Jan. We are working with the Red Cross and are in the process of getting 2 full-time volunteers to work at Department Headquarters. As an example, the Red Cross volunteers currently run the Tinker Pharmacy and the Air Force has asked them to fill more vital roles across our state. This will ensure our Department Headquarters is on the top of everything and at no additional cost.

We will start the roll out of the new Post computers later this month which will put our department on the leading edge of connectivity! Oklahoma’s Boys State Program is ahead of schedule. Our goal of 400 is attainable and I encourage you to send one more boy than your Post sent last year! Our SAL is on the move heading to the top 10 in the nation and if your Post does not have a SAL squadron, please start one in 2024. Our new and improved VSO training will be offering more classes around the state as we push to get 41 Legionnaires their PIV card and put more qualified VSOs in our Post to cover our state!

I hope to see you at our midwinter conference, 25<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> of January, being held at the Embassy Suites located at 3233 Northwest Expy Oklahoma City, OK 73112 (for Reservations Please Call (405) 842-6633) With your room you will get free breakfast and hors d'oeuvres & cocktails. The cost of registration is \$25 for the conference or \$50 for the conference and the banquet. Friday night’s banquet will be a Western Themed, please wear your best jeans and boots. The menu consists of Garden Salad Bar with Ranch Dressing and Balsamic Vinaigrette, Creamy Shredded Coleslaw, Jalapeno Cornbread, Hickory Smoked Brisket, Char Grilled Sliced Chicken, Sweet and Spicy Baked Beans, Smokey Simmered Green Beans, Seasonal Cobbler with Ice Cream, Freshly Brewed Iced Tea, and Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee. There will be a Country Concert after dinner. At Mid-Winter we will be selling our new Legion Family Lapel pins and New Oklahoma 3” Coins, please help support your Department of Oklahoma and show you American Legion Pride.

Finally, the Mid-Winter conference brings on the announcements of candidates running for the various offices. I would ask you to carefully look at each candidate and check their qualifications to make sure they have the tools in their tool bag to keep our department moving forward. It is up to all of us to select the best, brightest, honest, and most qualified candidate so that they may continue to make our Department of Oklahoma one of the best departments in the Nation.

**Wishing you and your family a very blessed 2024**  
**For GOD, Country, and Service,**  
**Brett Martin**  
**Department of Oklahoma Commander**

# DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER - EAST

## Garry Gibson

Greeting Legionnaires,

As we have come to a close to the year 2023, I want to say THANK YOU for all your hard work and innovative ideas to keep things moving in the right direction for the American Legion. Even though we had several of our brothers and sisters that were called home to Glory. Let's always remember the hard work and sacrifice that they have given to us all. By this time, we have already completed Christmas and New year, hoping that it was a fun filled time with family and friends, with plenty to eat and lots of joy and laughter. Hoping that 2023 was a great year for all.

As we start the new year of 2024 let's keep the unity with one another and continue to operate on shared ideas to help each other. Our membership has been a big push. We have made the mark each time. Please don't stop now with your buddy checks and making yourselves known in your area and surrounding areas. I hope you will have a chance to make the 2024 Department of Oklahoma Mid-Winter conference this January 25th through 27th. I'm looking forward to meeting as many Departments and posts as time will allow. So, let's make the year 2024 an awesome year for the American Legion and for the Veterans, tending to their needs. Thank you for your dedication and hard work that you all do. Excited to meet you at the Mid-Winter Conference. God Bless and HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

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

## DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER – WEST

### *ELECTIONS IN PROCESS*



# The American Legion Family



The Department of Oklahoma

## Mid-Winter Conference

25 – 27 Jan 2024

Embassy Suites

3233 Northwest Expy

Oklahoma City, OK 73112

For Reservations Please Call (405) 842-6633

With your room you will get free breakfast and  
hors d'oeuvres & cocktails

### **Western Theme Banquet Friday night!**

~Wear your best jeans and boots

Garden Salad Bar with Ranch Dressing and Balsamic Vinaigrette

Creamy Shredded Coleslaw

Jalapeno Cornbread

Hickory Smoked Brisket

Char Grilled Sliced Chicken

Sweet and Spicy Baked Beans

Smokey Simmered Green Beans

Seasonal Cobbler with Ice Cream

Freshly Brewed Iced Tea

Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee

~ Country Concert after dinner



### **Afternoon Break**

Coffee, Tea and Water

Cookies and brownies

**Registration for Conference \$25**

**Registration for banquet \$25**







DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA AMERICAN LEGION  
MID-WINTER CONFERENCE TABLE REQUEST

1. Legionnaire Member tables \$75.00
2. Sponsorship tables \$100.00

\*\*\*\*Due back to Department by 18 Jan 2024.

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NAME	# of TABLES	Description

Please review, fill out, and return to the Department of Oklahoma American Legion, 6101 NW 50th Street Suite A, Warr Acres, Oklahoma 73122-4017.

Make checks payable to (Dept of Okla. American Legion) (Memo Mid-winter 'Table).

Phone [\(405\) 942-1705](tel:4059421705)

Phone [\(800\) 281-7557](tel:8002817557)

Fax [\(405\) 949-5573](tel:4059495573)

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

### ANEC NEWS

#### BE THE ONE

As we start the new year this month, let us remember the message from our National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer is still the same:

#### WE CAN ALL BE THE ONE

- We must continue the mission of reducing veteran suicides.
- Talk with fellow veterans about how you are feeling.
- Ask for help when you think you need it.
- Know there are millions of people ready to help you.
- Remember your family and friends' care.



Veteran Crisis Line: 988 and press 1 for mental health assistance. Counselors are available 24/7. Can also text 838255 for help or visit the VA crisis line website [veteranscrisisline.net](http://veteranscrisisline.net) Continue to step up this year for our fellow veterans.

**Charlie O'Leary**  
**ANEC 2023-25**

## PAST COMMANDER'S CORNER

Greetings Legionnaires!

January is the time for New Year's Resolutions, and I've come up with a list that I like to follow and hope you will too:

1. Do the right thing, even if you don't want to.
2. Service Before Self-our words and actions should always be to help Legion Blue Caps and veterans across our State and not for personal ambition.
3. It's ok if someone else gets the credit.
4. Don't intentionally hurt other people.
5. Treat others as you would want to be treated, with respect and dignity.
6. Don't be a bully.
7. Tell both sides of every story.
8. Raising your voice and yelling at Co-Workers and Subordinates won't get you as far as you think.
9. As an old Army Special Forces Soldier I learned you should strive to be a Quiet Professional, it's more effective.
10. Run to the sound of gunfire but keep calm and return fire.



## Department Adjutant Section

**AMERICAN LEGION**

HENRY REPEATING ARMS GOLDENBOY 22 LR

CHARLES DALY 202 OVERSUNDER 12 GAUGE

HENRY REPEATING ARMS 45-70 GOVT

BERETTA GOLD RUSH PUMP ACTION 307 MAG

SIG SAUER P222 22 LR

REMINGTON 870 FIELDMASTER COMPACT

RUGER PISTOL CALIBER (PC) CARBINE 9MM

TALO EXCLUSIVE RUGER 10-22 LIGHT TARGET VARMINT

RUGER AR-556 SEMI-AUTOMATIC

AUTO GRDNANCE 1911A1

**LET FREEDOM RING!**  
**10 Gun Drawing**

Drawings will be held at The Mid-Winter Conference  
**JANUARY 26TH, 2024 \$10.00**

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



**New number, same support.**

| Dial 988 then Press 1.



**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**

### **Task Force Movement: Less than two years old and growing fast**

By [Laura Edwards](#)

DEC 19, 2023

On Dec. 12, Task Force Movement (TFM) conducted a board meeting at The American Legion's National Headquarters office in Washington, D.C., to get updates on the initiative's longstanding trucking and cyber components and its newest area of emphasis, health care. Updates came from industry, agency, military and veterans groups that have teamed up to close gaps in the labor market with men and women who have served in uniform.

Unions, from those representing public utilities to elevators, continue to be involved with TFM programs and advancing veterans quickly into well-paying career paths. New board member Frank Christensen, general president of the International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC), for instance, touted his group's long involvement with the Helmets to Hardhats program and the success the labor organization has had with veteran employees.

The board was updated on several pieces of legislation of interest to TFM and heard reports on each of the three main arms of the initiative.

**Trucking:** Teresa Watson, director of the Minority Professional Truckers Association, discussed what her group has been doing for independent owner-operators and farmers in the Southeast.

Through a partnership with Cargill, the drivers can access classes on topics like profit/loss statements and communicating with shippers. Watson related instances of owner-operators going into the fields themselves to help farmers bring out their crops, and in 2024 expanded town-hall meetings will include both groups.

Jason Turner, vice president of talent and growth initiatives at ArcBest, described the “tale of two environments” in the trucking field between owner-operators and employees, and announced that 1,000 veterans have been brought into trucking careers through the company’s involvement with the DoD SkillBridge program.

**Cyber:** New TFM Cyber Chairman Dr. Jack Dever, CEO of Lockhaven Solutions, described being “absolutely energized ... by the opportunity that’s out there” as he has gotten up to speed about veterans who may be coming out of the service with skills needed to fill a shortage of over 700,000 nationwide. He explained that cyber essentially equates to risk management, which touches many industries, including trucking and health care.

Dr. Yashika Neaves, chief of strategic plans and initiatives at the DoD Military-Civilian Transition Office, updated the group on the latest developments in SkillBridge. SkillBridge 2.0 is a combination of traditional training programs for the military-connected community and new ones. The focus is set to shift from credentialing to employment. Program approvals are moving again after a 60-day hold to catch up on the backlog, and Neaves said a new governance structure will bring SkillBridge more visibility, including at VA.

Health Care: TFM Healthcare Chairwoman Emily Haas said she has had many conversations with employers since this component’s inception in August, including such heavy hitters as Johnson & Johnson and Northwell. Staffing needs span the industry, from manufacturing and nursing to mental health and caretaking. Conversations with individual states have also begun, she explained.

State relations will be a focal point for TFM overall in 2024, according to Board Treasurer Brandon McPherson, senior vice president of strategy and operations for Warner Music Group. Another will be the pursuit of funding and scholarships from state and national sources; the next three to four months are “our time to shine,” he commented, adding that the initiative is “well-positioned” to take advantage of opportunities.

That position is thanks, in part, to board members’ involvement in these fields preceding the initiative’s introduction in the spring of 2022. TFM Executive Director Elizabeth Murray-Belcaster, president of EMB Consultants, Inc., says the genesis goes back to around 2010, when she and others first noted that servicemembers were coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan to an overall dismal job market – with one notable exception being trucking. That’s when the work began that has led to today’s TFM components. The American Legion has maintained a steady position of support for advancing veterans into specialized career fields and transferring military training time into credits for certification and licensure in those that require separate training.

TFM Chairman Patrick Murphy told the board that virtual Hiring Our Heroes job fairs, put on by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, are set for Jan. 31 and Feb. 21, specifically in the areas of technology, cybersecurity and health care. Military-connected applicants can register for them online. Information on the Jan. 31 event that will focus on technology and cybersecurity can be found [here](#). Information about the Feb. 21 event that will focus on health care can be found [here](#).

Among those serving on the TFM Steering Committee is American Legion Veterans Employment & Education Division Director Joseph Sharpe.



Veterans, transitioning service members and military families, please join us on Jan. 17 at noon and 3 p.m. ET for “First Steps to Financial Freedom” to learn the basics of budgeting, understanding debit and credit cards, and establishing a banking profile.

This virtual session will present information to help you develop strategies for short and long-term financial security, such as minimizing debt by borrowing carefully, identifying ways to build wealth and more.

This class is the January installment of the Wellness Wednesday Financial Education series hosted by VA in partnership with Prudential Pathways. VA has conducted more than 70 virtual Wellness Wednesday Financial Education classes. These seminars connect Veterans and military community members like you with important information about relevant financial issues.

Wellness Wednesday Financial Education classes are offered online on the third Wednesday of each month at noon and again at 3 p.m. ET. These sessions walk you through useable strategies to take control of your finances, manage various sources of income, start a small business, protect your financial assets, spend purposefully, save intentionally and more.

Recent class topics included:

- The basics of saving and investing
- Strategies for college funding
- Managing employment change
- Steps to buying and selling a home

Feedback from past participants include comments such as “quality information” and “great points and suggestions to help me manage my money and ways to save and build an emergency fund...”

Future planned Wellness Wednesday Financial Education classes will include information on forming trusts, creating legal wills, estate planning, starting a small business, understanding Social Security benefits, protecting your retirement savings from inflation and more. Beyond simply managing money, planning for your financial future can offer peace of mind for you and your loved ones in the coming years.

Financial literacy produces better personal economic outcomes, housing stability, improved mental health and overall well-being. To support this effort, VA holds other types of events to help you learn about your resources and benefits, such as claims clinics, and benefits and job fairs.

Learn to take control of your finances and enhance your economic success. Register for the Jan. 17 class today.

Event Details:

- Date: Jan. 17, 2024.
- Time: Noon and 3 p.m. ET.
- Event Location: Live virtual class.
- Register: <https://cvent.me/yqnnrr>

## 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.*

**JANUARY** Initiation ceremonies are good membership stabilizers. Keep working on membership, especially by contacting those who became delinquent Jan. 1. January is a good time to present flags and copies of the flag code to local schools. Check dates for post, district/county and state Oratorical contests. March is Community Service Month, so now is the time to plan initiatives and projects. A community assessment can reveal areas where additional effort is needed most.

**FEBRUARY** (Americanism Month) Host a Four Chaplains Day program. Plan school awards with local educators. Sponsor religious emphasis activities. Start planning the upcoming American Legion Baseball season. Invite a local veteran employment representative to speak at a post meeting. Consider hosting observances of Abraham Lincoln's and George Washington's birthdays. Plan an American Legion birthday program for March.

**MARCH** (Community Service Month) Give priority to Boys State selection by this month. Close out the membership campaign, and mail per capita fees and cards to the department. Recognize the anniversary of The American Legion's founding March 15-17. This is an occasion for post officers to focus on projecting the vision and image of The American Legion in the community, in the programs sponsored and services provided, and also on the appearance of the post home and surrounding grounds. The post should be a stakeholder in the community, conscious it represents the national organization to local citizens. Renewed attention to appearance doesn't require a capital improvement project, merely attention to detail and routine maintenance, from signage to inside and outside improvements.

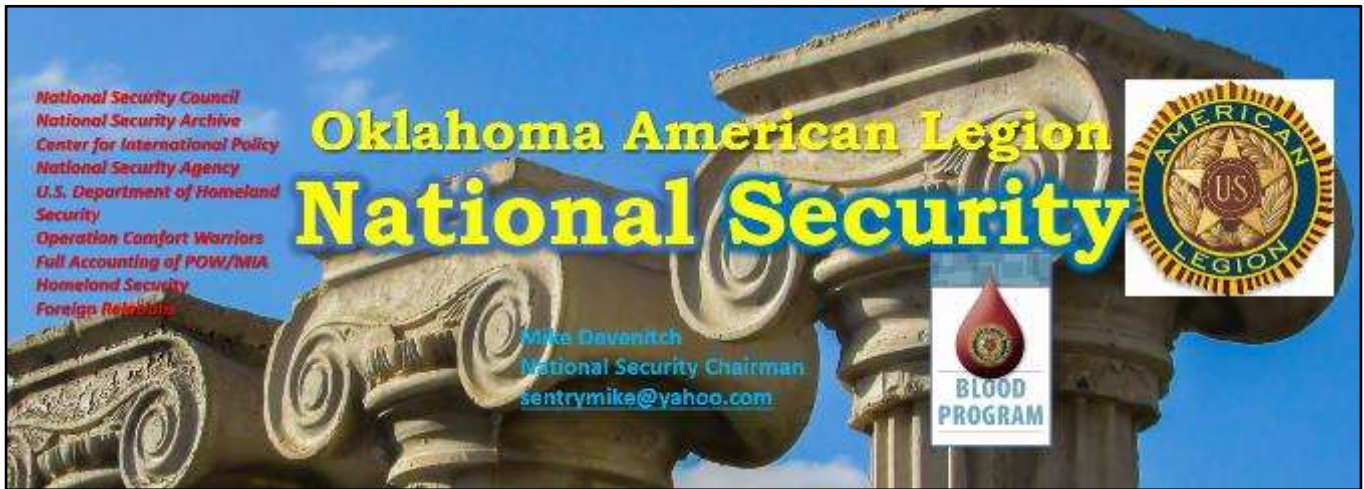
**APRIL (Children & Youth Month)** Coordinate Children & Youth activities and recognition with the post's Auxiliary unit. Obtain Children & Youth Guide from department headquarters. Plan election of new officers, summer Scouting activities and Boys State. Put American Legion Child Welfare Foundation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



## **Be a part of the campaign celebrating America's blood donors.**

President Richard Nixon proclaimed January 1970 as the first National Blood Donor Month on December 31, 1969, as requested by Senate Joint Resolution 154, to pay tribute to voluntary blood donors and encourage new donors to join.

This month continues to be celebrated each year to thank America's blood donors and encourage more people to donate blood.



The infographic consists of 15 individual statistics arranged in a grid. Each statistic is presented with a unique icon or graphic and a clear headline. The statistics are: 1. 25% of the blood supply is used by patients battling cancer (orange circle with purple ribbon). 2. 25% of the blood supply is used by patients battling cancer (orange circle with purple ribbon). 3. 25% of the blood supply is used by patients battling cancer (sun with colorful ribbons). 4. About 1 in 13 African-American babies are born with the sickle cell trait (13 icons, 1 highlighted). 5. About 1 in 13 African-American people are born with the sickle cell trait (13 icons, 1 highlighted). 6. 1 in 3 African-American blood donors are a match for a patient with sickle cell disease (3 icons, 1 highlighted). 7. One donation can help save more than one life (blood bag icon). 8. On average, pediatric patients use 1,800 units of blood daily (baby icon). 9. On average, pediatric patients use 652,000 units of blood, annually (baby icon). 10. Transfusions are needed in 1 in 83 infant deliveries (heart icon). 11. On average, 3% of the population donates blood each year (gauge icon). 12. Nearly 42,000 blood components are used by patients every day (gauge icon). 13. Every 2 seconds someone uses blood (clock icon).

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



## Oklahoma Boys State

Delegates Registered as of December 29, 2023: 58

Hello Fellow Legionnaires!

As we begin 2024, I think it is important to look back at 2023 and look at the work that has been done by the Boys State Team to prepare for the 2024 Session of Oklahoma American Legion Boys State.

Planning for the 2024 Session began the minute that the 2023 Session was concluded. Our staff starts by conducting an AAR of the just completed session as well as reviewing evaluations from the delegates from the session. That guides our team down the path of how we can improve our already amazing program. The vast majority of the team then takes a short break until August when the recruiting season and planning meetings begin in earnest. This break also allows several of our staff members the opportunity to serve on the Boys Nation Staff. Our executive leadership group then begins the process of rehiring returning staff, planning marketing messages, and deploying systems to do our best to make the process of selecting delegates to attend Boys State as simple as possible for you. We hope you have seen those efforts pay off in the timing of receipt of your Post Packets, the marketing you see on social media, and our ability to respond to your questions and requests quickly. This all sets us up to hopefully take advantage of the start of the new semester of school to recruit the next group of delegates for Oklahoma American Legion Boys State.

Now that the calendar has turned, while we will continue to focus on operational matters, we want to make sure that our primary focus is helping in recruiting. We all know that it is difficult to get in the door in some schools or hard to explain exactly how the program is important. If what you are doing now is working, we'd encourage you to share those processes with your fellow Posts. If what you are doing isn't as successful as you'd like, we'd strongly encourage you to start focusing on working closely with school principals and counselors in your area to have them help "select" delegates instead of simply asking the students to volunteer. By doing this, you can also work to be able to more easily reach out to the potential delegate's family to make sure they also understand how great of an honor it is to be selected to attend Boys State. This is a subject we hope to be able to discuss with you at the upcoming Midwinter Conference and also to be able to show you a few places where this process has worked incredibly well!

As we continue our push to OKBS 2024 and 400 young men on campus with us at Rogers State University, we can't stress enough how important it is for all of us to work together! Only by working as a team can we ensure that the message of Boys State is spread across the state, thereby helping make sure that the next generation is prepared to continue the American experiment for many years to come!

**For God and Country!**

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

**Director, Oklahoma American Legion Boys State**

# Oklahoma State Oratorical Robert Willis



The official rules and other information on the Oratorical Program can be found at [www.legion.org/oratorical](http://www.legion.org/oratorical)

## **Assigned Topics for the 2024 Oratorical Contest**

All Posts and District Legionaries, the Oratorical Constitution Speech Program District contest should be held in January 2024. The Oratorical Department contest is tentatively scheduled for February 17, with an alternate date of February 24, 2024. The location is the W. Roger Webb Forensic Science Institute on the campus of UCO in Edmond, OK. The 2024 National Finals will be May 17-19 in Hillsdale, Mich., at Hillsdale College. The quarterfinal and semifinal contests are scheduled for Saturday, May 18, with the finals scheduled for Sunday, May 19.

**Rob Willis**  
**Oratorical Chairman**

## **Awards Committee** **Paul Ray**

December is gone. **It is time for you to put away your new toys and rewards for being good last year and start thinking about “Awards”.** It is time to talk to your Police Chiefs and Fire Chiefs, to your City Managers and Mayors. You know you didn’t recognize your VA Health Care Givers last year, so you need to make up for that oversight this year.

I know there are many very good employers out there that qualify for the Employer of Veterans Award. Someone in District 8B needs to put Kingery Electric in for the Small Employer category. There are more, and we have 3 size categories. Just look around. After a Post selects an Employer of Veterans nominee they can do a press release to the local press, and the Post’s nominee gets free publicity for their business. Use a carrot on a stick. Let Employers know that it takes 10% Veterans employees to qualify for the award and if they want the free recognition but don’t qualify for the award, they need to hire more Veterans.

There is an award for Media Support. If you want some notoriety, nominate a local media professional or outlet for the Media award. They will do their own press release.

These are recognition of excellence awards. Those awards listed above don’t require the nominee to be a Veteran. They just need to be deserving of recognition for excellence.



We have Veteran Awards; Legionnaire of the Year is one. Every Post has someone; probably many, that goes the extra yard, and honestly deserves a little recognition.

We have an award for Post Service Officer of the Year. The Department VSOs do the selection in that category, but they need a local picture of what the PSO is doing for Veterans outside of the number of claims. How many Volunteer hours does the PSO give in support of Veterans, does the PSO go to the Veterans...homes, nursing facilities or hospitals) to assist them? Does the PSO facilitate goods and services for disabled Veterans? There are many little things a PSO does outside of claims. Recognize them.

Enough for now, you'll get more next month.

Get Busy.

**Awards Chairman**

**Paul Ray**

## District 1B



**American Legion Post 142** in Hominy members attend funeral for Navy Veteran Jerry Gray, a Radarman from nearby Cleveland, Oklahoma. Jerry was a Petty Officer 2nd Class and served four years active duty in the 1950's. He was assigned to a destroyer in the Pacific. Destroyers are known as "Tin Cans" because of their thin metal hull which makes them more maneuverable at sea. Jerry let everyone know the crew's motto was: "I'm a fighter and lover and a Tin Can Rider", apparently often said in bars during Port Call probably just before the fight with Marines took place, possibly over some woman!

*Picture: Post 142 members line up for final salute as casket is moved from Funeral Home Chapel to hearse for transport to cemetery.*

*[L-R] Bob Taylor, Phil Fero, John Hamilton, Charlie O'Leary, Don Rainwater, Steve Swinford, Jim Hale, Russel Hanoach, Jim Evans and Lou Hale*

**American Legion Post 17 in Sand Springs** conducted a Wreaths Across America Ceremony and wreath laying at Memorial Cemetery in Sands Springs, Saturday December 16, 2023.



*Picture #1: Department ANEC Charles O'Leary was the guest speaker for the Wreaths Across America Ceremony for Post 17 in Sand Springs and exhibits classic Army "knife hand" gesture technique during his speech.*

*Picture #2: Post 17 Commander Karen Cruice makes remarks during the Post 17 Wreaths Across America Ceremony at Sand Springs.*

*Picture #3: Post 17 Vice Commander and Department 1B DEC Ron Bunch places the US Army wreath during Wreaths Across America Ceremony at Sand Springs*

*Picture #4: Placing wreaths at base of Service Flag Poles during Post 17 Wreaths*

Mohawk Post 308 raised \$2,000.00 in cash and with Post 17 and 1800, we had 8 full boxes of toys. The toy drive started on December 1 with a dollar dance by the Marines. They raised \$500 that night. The Marines are (from left to right): Lance Corporal Jim Traver, Corporal Caleb Bruer, and Corporal Cole Horner. These photos were taken at Post 308 (the kickoff to Toys for Tots). Post 308, the Whole family, donated a check totaling \$1500 to the cause.



Post 17 and 1800 collected additional toys which were picked up at Post 308.



## District 3A Commander's Corner

Privileged to present Basic Training Completion certificates to Tyler Moore, Post 180 Sergeant at Arms and Justin McLemore, Squadron 180 Judge Advocate/Chaplain.



Tyler

Justin

Robert

Justin

Every Post meeting, I attend, I press their membership to complete this course with the value of completion improving their American Legion IQ by 50%+. These two gentlemen jumped all over it and have only been members for a year, maybe two. I am very proud of their enthusiasm. The course is a requirement for District Leaders and above. However, it is suggested for every Post Leader to complete the course. Have mine? Have Yours? Another selling point is that the course is FREE to all Our Legion Family and can be taken leisurely as it is a self-paced course. Of course, you know all this. Sorry to rant... well, no I'm not.

OK, enough of my pet peeve! *Enjoy Your Families and be safe traveling throughout the holidays. Regards –*

**Robert Chisolm**

**District 3A Commander**

## 4A District Commander's Corner



Department ANEC Charlie O'Leary and spouse were invited guests of Post 64 in Chandler's annual Christmas Dinner and Party at the Methodist Church in Chandler on December 21st. O'Leary, along with five other Vietnam and Vietnam Era veterans were presented with the "Vietnam War Veteran" pin in recognition of active-duty service from 1955 to 1975 by Post 64 Commander Patricia Mathes-Kerr and assisted by Post 64 1st Vice Commander Mike Kerr, This was a special honor for all involved and sincerely appreciated.

*Picture #1: Post 64 Dinner guest Department ANEC Charlie O'Leary*

*Picture #2: Vietnam and Vietnam Era veterans from Post 64 and guest await presentation of Vietnam War Veteran pins by Post 64 Commander and Vice-Commander.*

## 5A District

Post 108 Cushing, OK, led the Drumright, OK, Christmas Parade on 12/2/23.



It also led the Cushing Christmas Parade on 12/9/23.





On 12/16/23, the Post 108 Honor Guard provided a three-volley salute at the annual Wreaths across America ceremony held at Fairlawn Cemetery, Stillwater, OK.



In the Payne County, OK, area there are numerous Veterans confined to their homes or other facilities. Many of these Veterans do not have living relatives and those who do are often geographically isolated. With this in mind, American Legion Donaldson/Walker Post 108 in Cushing, OK, created “*The Payne County Forgotten Warriors Program.*” It helps to address the isolation, loneliness, and confinement of the disabled and/or ill veteran. It also allows us to address and resolve issues discovered during our interaction with individual Veterans. On 12/20/23, we were able to provide hygiene items, blankets, and sweat suits to Veterans in three area facilities.



**American Legion LeBron Post 58 Guthrie** has had another busy month assisting Veterans, Active-Duty Service Members, their families, and the children & youth and their families in the community.

Our biweekly Peer to Peer group will meet January 1<sup>st</sup>. The group is in the planning stages of attending various community activities monthly. In February the group will attend a flag making workshop held by a local Veteran owned non-profit where Veterans will make a flag to take home. In March, the group will venture out to visit the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Museum in Oklahoma City. As per the VA, check out the Quick Start Guide for Veterans Socials at [Veterans Socials - Fostering Community Connections - Mental Health \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/vetaffairs/quickstartguide/) Building social support systems with Veterans in the community is an important part of ensuring Veterans' overall health. In addition to our main goal, including Veterans socials to continue to enhance communication and foster bonds among Veterans and others in the community, they may meet friends, find resources, and have fun with other Veterans and community members.

Weekly donuts, coffee, and comradery are shared Thursday mornings from 0930-1130. All Veterans are invited.

The Post held its annual dinner with the Guthrie Police Department, in support of their Christmas Shopping with a Cop program. Post Commander Downs presented Guthrie FOP with a monetary donation and toys. Adjutant Vincent presented the FOP with the Fuel and Food Frenzy fundraiser proceeds and conducted the drawing for the three winners. Dept Commander Martin and his Executive Assistant Lorraine joined us and presented challenge coins and certificates to the FOP President and Officers in attendance.



Members of the Legion family were blessed to prepare 14 Veteran Christmas Gift Bags for those living in long term care and assisted living homes. Santa Claus joined us and brought cheer to everyone. Thank you to our Legion Family for supporting our mission and one of the four pillars – Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation!







Members of the Post family delivered 10 Christmas food baskets for Guthrie families (over 35 kiddos and 25 adults), identified by school counselors. We also gave food baskets to a couple Veteran families. We accomplished this with Legion family support, Walmart, and Pastor John Rumsey III & the congregation at Our Savior Lutheran Church. Thank you to our Legion family for supporting our mission and two of the four pillars - Children & Youth and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.



Members of the Post family joined together to prepare care packages for the youngest member of our Post and other forward deployed Troops with the 138th Fighter Wing out of Tulsa. Our Troops will certainly enjoy some Christmas joy from others who have been in their boots! Thank you to our Legion Family for supporting our mission and one of the four pillars – National Security.





We continue to recognize Veterans who served in the Korean War with The Ambassador for Peace Medal, awarded by the Korean Government. Questions (405) 282-2589. Adjutant Kim Vincent and Jaeho Yi, with the Korean American Association, recognized two living Veterans and the daughter of a deceased Veteran, for their service in the Korean War.



Members of the Legion family collected donations of coats and school supplies to deliver to Vance Air Force Base Eisenhower Elementary students. Thank you to Hats for Homeless Oklahoma, Daughters of the American Revolution Samuel King Chapter Edmond, and our Legion Family for supporting our mission and one of the four pillars – National Security.



The Guthrie JROTC holiday greenery fundraiser was a success. Junior William Secondi, along with his grandfather, James Vaughn, and American Legion Adjutant, Kim Vincent, delivered donated wreaths to Veterans in our community. We are grateful for these great Americans.



Santa (Junior Past Commander Beranek) and Mrs. Claus (Post Adjutant Vincent) were blessed to bring Christmas cheer to some of our local families in partnership with the Guthrie Police Department.



Legionnaires, it is our duty to work the Four Pillars of The American Legion: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our Veterans, Active-Duty Service Members, their families, the children & youth of America and its citizens.

Legion family members and volunteers who take the time to accomplish the programs, are what allow The American Legion to make a difference at the community, state, and national levels.

TAL LeBron Post 58 Guthrie had a year of cheer. Wishing y'all a blessed, healthy, and prosperous 2024. Please visit and like our newest Facebook page to see more photos of our happenings at LeBron Post 58 American Legion.



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

I trust all had a Merry Christmas and look forward to a prosperous and happy New Year. We are thankful to live in a land that remembers the reason for the season, and the blessings we have received and look forward to in the future. I am blessed in many ways and one of which is the opportunity to work with the posts in District 5B. Each is unique and all are dedicated to serving the needs within their communities.

I know each post has been involved in many local veteran activities in addition to enjoying many family and religious gatherings. I did not ask for input this month knowing all are busy, but Lindsay Post 23 provided the update below. Historian Sheryl Kochert does an excellent job. We look forward to the activity reports from other posts next month

The holidays are a busy time and most of us are looking forward to slowing down a bit. I look forward to seeing you at the Midwinter Conference.

## **LINDSAY: Ball Smith, Post 23**

The doors to the offices of Post 23 have now been updated to showcase the artwork received from the Lindsay Elementary students during the Veteran's Day recognition/appreciation program.

Post 23 had three members who attended the meeting on December 4<sup>th</sup> for Service Officer Training – Commander David Hardin, Adjutant Buddy Adams and Finance Officer Annie Fitch.

“Healthcare in 5” program for the December 5<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting covered Handwashing to prevent the spread of illness in the community and at home.



Post 23 is responsible for the lowering of the large American on Main Street of Lindsay to half-mast for those special dates set aside for that purpose. Before the sun sets, the flag is returned to its full height.

Members of Post 23 Legion and SAL rode a float in the Lindsay Christmas parade on December 7<sup>th</sup> and fired off a 21-gun salute at the midpoint of Main Street. Other members handed out sacks of candy to the youth lining the street.

ALR member, William Crosby, preceded both floats on his motorcycle decked out with festive colored lights for the occasion.





Post 23 Auxiliary had prepared their float earlier in the day with assistance from Legion and SAL members to gain 2<sup>nd</sup> place recognition with their theme. The front half of the float was a cozy scene of a mother reading a book to her children in their home while dad is serving military duty. The back half of the float depicted dad and one other service man on a bleak winter night in the woods with their weapons trying to stay warm around a small campfire. Because of their duty, families enjoy the blessings of freedom at home.



The Bingo fundraiser had the largest crowd yet, with participants vying for one of 10 turkeys and each included a Fields pecan pie. Turkeys were provided by member Michael Ethridge and pies by Annie Fitch. A special Christmas gift was also drawn from the participants' tickets prior to the Black Out game. Both young and old enjoyed a night of fun and socializing for the holidays.



Finally, the veterans residing at the local nursing home facility were recipients of gifts and needed items from the Auxiliary and two Legion members, Annie Fitch and Linda McDaniel. On December 19<sup>th</sup>, Auxiliary President, Radena Chambers, and Secretary, Delaney Fitch, along with veteran, Annie Fitch, visited with each veteran as the gifts were shared with the men.

Have a very Merry Christmas and Blessings to all!

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



## 6A District Commander's Corner

**Mustang Post 353:** Mustang Post 353 has had a busy December. Right after Thanksgiving the post has been busy with supporting the Salvation Army program. John Bishop and several post members with some Mustang high school students have been logging a lot of hours ringing the bell in front of the Mustang Walmart for community donations. The community has been very gracious and supportive.

Every December Post 353 supports the Clinton Veterans Home by working with the Mustang Community Senior Center to setup a collection barrel for item to be collected and sent to the Clinton Veterans Home. Such items as pajamas, house shoes, socks, T-shirts, toiletries, sweatpants/tops and cash donations. John Sears oversees this program and him and other post member right before Christmas deliver these items to the Clinton Veterans Home. The staff and veterans are very grateful for the items and the cash donations, which allows the home to support other internal programs for the veterans.

Mustang Post 353 conducted a blood drive during the month and the pictures are of the annual post-Christmas Party. The annual Christmas Party is open to all active duty, veterans, retirees, service members and their families.



**Anadarko Post 24:** Exciting times in Anadarko! The post is moving into a new building located at 907 West Central Blvd, Anadarko. It has been a lengthy process working with the city and getting the building back up to code and working order. Glen Price, Cmdr Post 24



Marine Charles Taylor was aboard the USS Oklahoma during Pearl Harbor and was classified as MIA until last year when the disinterred remains were identified through DNA. According to recent information, there is a graveside ceremony at Carnegie Cemetery at 1:30 pm Thursday Dec. 7, 2023, the 79th anniversary of the loss. Members of Post 24 and VFW Post 1015 are attending.



**Yukon Post 160:** Yukon/Mustang Blood Drive challenge was a huge success!

From OBI to Post 160: Team Yukon! A *HUGE* thank you and shout out to each of you for your hard work and help in our very successful blood drive yesterday at the Dale Robertson Center. I asked our volunteers to ask donors how they heard about the blood drive & why they came and each of your organizations were mentioned as a reason donors came to donate.

*I'm pleased to say we had 53 successful donations impacting the lives of 159 local patients! We had about 15 more donors sign in this year vs. last year which is great growth for our Yukon Community blood drives, unfortunately we had several unable to give due to medications, travel or other variables that might cause us to be unable to have them donate. Mustang did win the community competition with 28 more donations, but they did have fewer deferred donors.*

*We truly could not save lives without you and your support! Thank you for the partnership in our life saving mission and committing to this special Christmas community challenge with OBI! I look forward to working hard with you & your community to help you win the 2024 challenge, please let me know of opportunities to reach members of your community and educate them on the need for blood donation.*

**El Reno Post 34:** El Reno High School's Gifts to the Yanks project was an enormous success at the OKC VA hospital again this year. FROM VA: A proud tradition. Gifts for the Yanks began in 1945 with the American Legion Auxiliary, who made care packages during WWII for men and women overseas. The program was a real group effort, involving hundreds of schools delivering presents and hand-written cards to say 'thank you' to veterans during the holiday season. Over the decades, El Reno High School has continued the tradition when all other organization stopped.



**Concho Post 41:** We are working hard on recruiting, retention, and overall organizational growth says new Post Commander Kerry Norman.

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



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

Whew, December just seemed to blow by! I hope everyone had a safe and merry Christmas. As the Holidays pass, we'll be gearing up for a quick start to 2024. I'll be making rounds of the posts, planning at least two a month. Of course, I hope to see all of you at the Mid-Winter Conference. Registration is open. We'll also be wrapping up the gun raffle. Best of luck to all who bought tickets. I'm getting reports of some great activities and fundraisers coming up and look forward to joining in on some. I'm most excited to hear of so many new members. Our voice is growing!

To dispel the rumors, yes, I have placed my name in the hat for Vice Commander West, in hopes I can do more...for more. Regardless of the hat, I remain committed to preserving the legacy of the American Legion and embracing the four pillars.

I want to challenge each of you to get more involved and, together we can make 2024 the District's best year ever! No doubt there will be much celebration over the coming days. Everyone, especially those who are still traveling, please be safe as we usher in the New Year.

Happy New Year!!

**Larry Watson**  
**6B Commander**



## 7 District Commander's Corner

District 7 has been busy this past month, from continuing to rebuild a flooded building, to participating in multiple Christmas activities across Southwest Oklahoma. Post 146 Commander took time to be Santa for various groups, including the Clinton Veterans Center. Mangum has started doing *Coffee with a Vet* on Tuesday mornings.

Elk City attained their 100% membership renewals earlier this month, joining Corn and Gage in the 100% group. Several other posts in the district are 75% or above, with 2-3 close to reaching their 100%. We are continuing to push hard to reach out to the Veterans in Western Oklahoma.

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and was able to be with family and friends. Looking forward to the New Year and continuing to work with and help other Veterans.

**Clinton, Post 41** One year ago, Clinton suffered significant water damage in their building due to frozen pipes that broke. On Dec 18th and 19th, several Post members and Legion members from Sayre worked unloading all the sheet rock for the building. There was a crew that came in and out up all the sheet rock. The building is really coming together and hopefully will be completed in the near future.



**Corn, Post 300:** Elmo and I were invited to the Corn Post 300 Christmas dinner. Well attended by the members and families. It was a great time to socialize and visit with fellow Legionnaires and their families. Corn has obtained a 100% membership before the December deadline.



**Gage, Post 223:** I also attended the meeting at Post 223 in Gage. Very informative meeting with great discussion amongst the members of the Post. I was able to recognize the Post as being the first in the State of Oklahoma to reach 100% this year.



**Mangum, Post 121:** I had the pleasure of attending the Mangum meeting and Christmas dinner. We discussed membership renewals, activities going on at the post, and several members were preparing to assist with wreath laying at Fort Sill cemetery. The Post was also preparing for the Mangum Christmas Festival. Post 121 has several activities coming up in the near future.



**Post 146,** Commander Elmo May and Adjutant Shirley May presented \$1000.00 to the Clinton Veterans Center to help purchase much needed items for the Veterans at the Clinton Center. On the left side is the Administrator Stephanie Taylor. Also pictured is Tamra Haskell, Recreation Director.

**For God and Country,  
Shirley May  
District 7  
American Legion**



# 8B District Commander's Corner

January 6, 2024, 1400 hrs. High Plains Technology Center, 3921 34<sup>th</sup> St. Woodward, OK

## Notice of District 8B Meeting

### Purpose

1. District Oratorical Contest
2. Hearing and go/no-go on resolutions being proposed by Post 92 (Alva)

### Announcements

We have a rare chance this year, to hear at least two students competing for a spot in the State Oratorical competition, with a chance to move on to the National Oratorical competition!

- Judging requirements are being sent to the District
- Judges will be announced internally before the competition

### Discussion/Vote

We will be hearing 1 to 2 resolutions being put forth by Post 92 (Alva). If the resolutions pass District vote, they will be presented to the DEC at Department Level for approval.

### Roundtable

We will have a roundtable meeting at the close of voting on resolutions, to discuss any issues that the District may be able to help the posts with.

Wayne L. Flowers

District 8B Commander/ Post 273 Commander

45379 S. County Road 192

Fargo, OK 73840

[Cdrpost273@yahoo.com](mailto:Cdrpost273@yahoo.com)

(580) 623-3262

**Wayne Flowers**  
**District Commander 8B**



# 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 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

## 10 Gun Drawing.

The drawing will be held January 26th, 2024 at the Department Mid-Winter Conference.

**AMERICAN LEGION**

HENRY REPEATING ARMS GOLDENBOY 22 LR

CHARLES DALY 202 OVERUNDER 12 GAUGE

HENRY REPEATING ARMS 45-T0 GOVT

BERETTA GOLD RUSH PUMP ACTION 357 MAG

SIG SAUER P322 22 LR

REMINGTON 870 FIELDMASTER COMPACT

RUGER PISTOL CALIBER (PC) CARBINE 9MM

TALO EXCLUSIVE RUGER 19-22 LIGHT TARGET VARMINT

RUGER AR-556 SEMI-AUTOMATIC

AUTO ORDNANCE 1911A1

**LET FREEDOM RING!**  
**10 Gun Drawing**

Drawings will be held at The Mid-Winter Conference  
**JANUARY 26TH, 2024 \$10.00**

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

**Get your tickets today!**

# **Department NEC: Tim Smith Is Running for National Commander**

Let us support Tim in his bid for National Commander, please donate from your Post or as an individual Legion Member.

**For God  
For Country  
For Us  
For National Commander!**

With your help, we can have an  
Oklahoman at the helm  
of  
The American Legion!



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



NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

CHARLES O'LEARY  
ALTERNATE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN  
2023-2025



**PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER  
DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA 2021-2022**

January 1, 2024  
TIME FOR CHANGE!

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. It’s time for a change.

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. There are several Legion Leaders much younger and smarter than me, who may be good future National Leadership candidates from our State.
- Many Legion Departments, Virginia comes to mind, have a four-year limitation on length of service for ANEC and NEC. I think that is a good idea.
- 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, but for whatever reason, has not happened.
- National could still select a future National Commander from National Committee appointment at a future time, or it might not happen.
- 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.

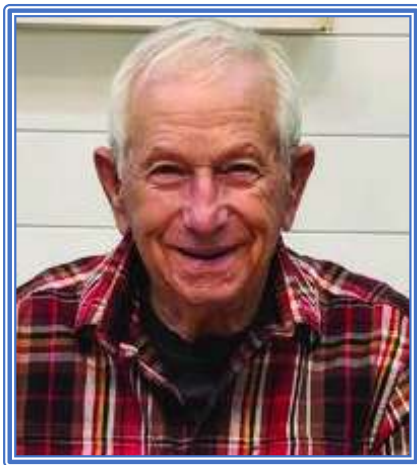
NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

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

-----**REMEMBER**-----



# POST EVERLASTING



**Jesse W. Wilson**  
**2/28/34—11/20/23**  
**Post 108, Cushing, Oklahoma**

Jesse W. Wilson passed away Monday, November 20, 2023, in Joplin, Missouri at the age of 89.

Jesse was born to John Willis “Cracker” Wilson and Clara (Retherford) Wilson on February 28, 1934, on a farm north of Mehan, Oklahoma, the place his grandpa homesteaded. Jesse attended Ripley Schools and was a graduate of the 1954 class of Ripley High School. Jesse enjoyed playing all sports and was a 4-year letterman in both basketball and baseball. His favorite

subject was math.

Jesse met his wife, Greta McVay, at Dunkin Theatre in Cushing, Ok. Their first date was a squirrel hunting trip on the river. Jesse and Greta united in marriage on March 19, 1955, in Cushing.

In 1956, Jesse joined the U.S. Navy, and was stationed at Moffet Field Air Station in Mountain View, California. He later transferred to the USS Renville APA Attack Transport Ship as a technical radioman during the Korean War.

Following his service in the Navy, Jesse returned to his wife in Cushing, where he worked various jobs until he later became a maintenance foreman for Shell Pipeline for 27 years. Jesse and Greta lived in Oklahoma, Ohio, and Missouri during his Shell career until he retired in 1996.

After retirement, Jesse enjoyed spending his time fishing with his grandkids, gardening, and woodworking. He loved spending his days out in his barn and took serious pride in his yard work. Jesse was awarded "Yard of the Week" multiple times, where it became talk of the local barbershop. He was a proud member of Cushing, Oklahoma's Donaldson-Walker American Legion Post 108, where he served as part of the honor guard.

Jesse is survived by his wife, Greta, of the home. Two children, Erin McMullen (Jeff) of Joplin, Mo. and Samantha Fowler (Steve) of Webb City, Mo.; four grandchildren, Daniel Judy of Joplin, Mo., Jessie McMullen of Joplin, Mo., Matthew McMullen of Denver, Co. and Hannah Woodcock of Springfield, Mo.; one sister, Darlene Kinzie of Arkansas City, Ks.; numerous nieces and nephews and beloved sisters-in-law.

Jesse was preceded in death by his parents, Cracker and Clara; brothers, Winfred C. Evans, Lang Allen Wilson and Gary R. Wilson; sisters, Peggy Murlin and Lydia Ann Minton; his in-laws, Willard and Ruth McVay; cherished brothers and sisters-in-law; and a nephew and many cousins.

Graveyard services will be held at a later date at Mount Hope Cemetery in Ripley, Ok.



**Cornell D Brown**  
**November 4, 1948 – December 19, 2023**  
**Vinita, Post 40**

Cornell Brown was born in Vinita, Oklahoma, on November 4, 1948, to Arstella and Buster Brown. Cornell was one of seven children. Cornell resided in Vinita, OK. Cornell was retired from the U.S. Air Force. He held many titles, Husband, Dad, Papa, Uncle, and Friend. Cornell passed away peacefully Tuesday evening at 11:00 pm with family by his side. Cornell was a strong man of faith, who's last word on this earth were "help me Jesus". Cornell was a very private man who cherished his family. His favorite hobbies

were fishing and spending time with family. Cornell was preceded in death by; His wife of 43 years, Carmen Brown ('23); His parents, Rev. Buster Brown ('79) & Mrs. Arstella Grimmett Brown ('10) His daughter, Angel ('72) His son, Martel Luper Jr. ('90) His Siblings: Fred D. Ryder ('88), Earl B. Ryder Sr. ('12), Augustine J. Littlejohn ('06), Teletha A. Thompson ('95), Lewis E. Brown ('96) & Gary L. Brown ('01) Cornell is survived by; Son - Corey Daughters - Shannon & Crystal; Cousin (Brother) - Stevie Grandchildren - Mike, BJ (Tiffany), Jolaunda, Christina (Jay), Jemil (Genielle), Cori (Malik), Tiara (Leng), Codell, Chrishaun (Daisy), Chabryan (Amanda), Chrishaun (Daisy), Caderian, Careesha; Great-grandchildren - Maria, Levi, Sekani, Zipporah, Ezara, Aaron, Jackson, Jemil Jr, Noah, Natalie, Janae', Ayana.





**Betty Joe Worley**  
**October 29, 1938 – December 16, 2023**  
**Blanchard Post 261**

On December 16, 2023, Betty Joe Spruce-Worley died peacefully in her sleep. Betty was born on October 29, 1938, in Granite, Oklahoma to parents Joe Henry and Betty Lou (Roberts) Spruce.

Betty Joe graduated from Capitol Hill High School. Graduated from Central State with a Bachelor of Arts Degree. She retired after 20 years of working for the State of Oklahoma. She was in the Air Force Reserves and served during Desert Storm from Nov 27, 1990-Jun 30, 1991. She retired after 20 years as a MSGT.

Betty was a loving mother, grandmother, and friend. She cared about helping others, gave her time and helped many people. She was very proud to be a member of DAR.

Betty Joe Spruce-Worley is survived by her daughter Lauren Beth Worley-Coleman, her son-in-law Randy Coleman, and her grandchildren Gabriel Marshall Huerta and Kamryn Marie Ramsdell.

A graveside service for Betty will be held Saturday, December 23, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens, 8701 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73162. A visitation for Betty will be Friday, December 22, 2023, from 4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. at Chapel Hill Funeral Home



**Amber Walton Obituary**  
**April 29, 1989 - November 5, 2023**  
**Corn, Post 300**

Funeral Services for Amber Walton, formerly of Custer County resident, now of Canute, OK, will be held 11:00 AM, Tuesday, November 14, 2023, in the Kiesau Memorial Chapel, officiated by Mark Haney. Burial will conclude in the Shiloh Cemetery near Butler, OK under the direction of the Kiesau-Lee Funeral Home.

Amber Dawn Walton was born April 29, 1989, to Donald Richardson and Vicki (Kauk) Richardson in Clinton, OK and passed away very unexpected on Sunday, November 5, 2023, in the Great Plains Medical Center in Elk City, OK.

Amber was raised in Clinton until the 8th grade and the family moved to Custer City, OK and she graduated from Thomas High School in 2007. She enlisted in the U.S. Army soon after high school. She was honorably discharged on December 29, 2015, at the rank of Private First Class. She returned to Clinton and worked for Hutch's Convenient Store. She has most recently been employed with the Washita County Jail as Jailer.

She was married to Mitchell Walton on February 29, 2020, at Foss Lake. They resided in Canute, OK since that time.

She was a member of the American Legion, she enjoyed being with her daughters in their dance routines, working small piece puzzles.

She is preceded in death by her father Don Richardson, sister, Kristi Gray, Paternal Grandparent Effie Richardson, and Barabara Richardson, maternal grandparents, Sonny Kauk and Joyce Metzler-Kauk, and her grandfather Ovie Richardson.

She is survived by her husband, Loren Mitchell Walton, three daughters, Heidy Dawn Richardson, Raelynn Skye Walton, Kristen Grace Walton, Wyatt Donald Richardson-Barry, and her mother Vicki.

She is also survived by several aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and extended family.



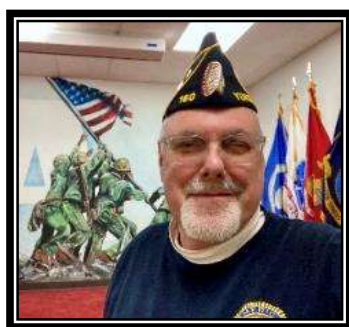
## **Donald White Obituary November 12, 2022 Guthrie, Post 58**

Donald White's passing at the age of 83 on Saturday, November 12, 2022 has been publicly announced by COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME LLC. - Guthrie in Guthrie, OK.

According to the funeral home, the following services have been scheduled: Visitation, on November 17, 2022 at 12:00 p.m., ending at 4:00 p.m., at Community Funeral Home, 1624 N. Pine, Guthrie, OK. Visitation, on November 18, 2022 at 10:00 a.m., ending at 6:00 p.m., at Community Funeral Home, 1624 N. Pine, Guthrie, OK. Funeral service, on November 19, 2022 at 10:00 a.m., at Community Funeral Home, 1624 N. Pine, Guthrie, OK.

*February Newsletter inputs due Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, please set up a reminder for successful inputs. : )*

*From the 1889 Oklahoma Land Run Newsletter Editor*



***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. And if you need assistance - please reach out and we will help.***

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

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