

District 3A Legion Leaders,

Good afternoon. I hope this email finds you, your families, and your fellow Legionnaires safe and doing well as we roll past the first half of the year.

The American Legion Department of Oklahoma Summer Convention is complete. I want to personally thank the Legionnaires from Post 48 (Atoka), Post 68 (Clayton), Post 145 (Wilburton), and Post 222 (Spiro) for attending and representing District 3A as we conducted statewide business.

Below is an overview of key updates, achievements, and upcoming requirements from the convention:

National & Department Successes

- **National Convention Host:** For the first time, the Department of Oklahoma has been selected to host a TAL National Convention! We will host in the OKC area in 2032, which also marks the 100-year anniversary of the Sons of the American Legion.
- **Membership Milestones:** The Department of Oklahoma reached 97.2% of its membership goal for 2026, placing us 1st in the Region and 8th in the Nation. Thank you for your hard work.
- **Resolution Passed:** A Resolution of Support nominating Past Dept. CDR Steven Thomas II for National Commander was brought before General Membership and successfully passed (see attached).

Boys State & Boys Nation Updates

- **OK Boys State 2026:** We filled every single seat this past year—thank you for your incredible support! Furthermore, 6 out of the 25 staff members at Boys Nation will be chosen from our OK Boys State staff.
- **Boys State 2027:** Packets were provided to each post. Registration opens today (July 13, 2026).
 - 1st Vice Trish Shaw will coordinate packet delivery to Posts 79 (McAlester), 188 (Hartshorne), and 250 (McAlester).
 - Adjutant Brooks or I will coordinate delivery for Posts 75 (Bokoshe), 188 (Heavener), 210 (Poteau), and 222 (Spiro).

Fundraising & Programs

- **Membership Cards & Renewal:** Renewal for 2027 is currently open. Posts in attendance secured their 2027 membership cards; others will be forwarded by the Department soon.
- **Drawing Updates:** The 10-Gun drawing earned the Department approximately \$6,000.
 - The upcoming Freedom Drawing (to be drawn at the Mid-Winter Conference in Norman) is a cash raffle with ten prizes ranging from \$500 to \$3,000.
 - As a reminder, you sell tickets for \$10, and your Post keeps half (\$5). The Department bears all expenses, making this free money for your Post. While they ran out of tickets at the Convention, more have been ordered and will be available for pickup at the District 3 Fall Conference.
- **American Legion Riders (ALR):** Two new chapters (Sayre and West Tulsa) have chartered since the last Mid-Winter Conference. The OK ALR is presenting a check for \$20,600 raised during this year's Legacy Run to the Veterans and Children's Foundation (VCF) at the National Convention in Louisville.
 - Next year's goal is set at \$120,000. If met, National Riders Chairman David Heredia has offered to start a National Legacy Ride in Oklahoma in the coming years.
 - To start a chapter at your Post, email me or contact Director Brett Martin at 1forgodandcountry@gmail.com or (405) 818-1607.

Committee & Community Action Items

- **Constitution & By-Laws Revision:** Work is ongoing, and revisions will be voted on at next summer's convention. David Seyler (Commander Post 145 and 3A DEC) is our current representative. Let me know if you or your members want to participate.
- **Blood Drives:** District 3A did not have any Consolidated Post Reports showing blood donations. The Oklahoma Blood Institute and Oklahoma Red Cross will handle all the setup, advertising, and operations at your location or in a mobile site. Your Post just needs to help spread the word and assist with sign-ins to receive credit for pints donated. You can contact John Bishop (Dept Blood Drive Chairman) at jbishop22@cox.net if you have specific questions.
- **1889er Newsletter Submissions:** Please get your Post represented in the Department newsletter. Share pictures and write articles about your local veterans' events, parades, ceremonies, and outreach. Send submissions to: TALOK1889@gmail.com.

- **Legislative Advocacy:** The Take Care of American Veterans Act (TCAVA) and our national position have raised questions. Please visit Legion.org TCAVA Advocacy to learn about the potential outcomes of this legislation. I also found this video overview very informative: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/Nl9IFiyQQ1s>.

Training Opportunity: Department American Legion College

The next iteration will be held at **Post 222 (Spiro) from September 25–27.**

- All Legionnaires are encouraged to attend, with special emphasis on leadership.
- Attendees should complete Basic Training online at <https://register.legion.org/alei> prior to arriving.
- **Only 30 spots are available**, and it may be a couple of years before this training returns to SE Oklahoma. Application details will follow.

Leadership & Service Support

- **Congratulations:** I would like to congratulate District 3A 1st Vice Commander Trish Shaw (48, Atoka), District 3A 2nd Vice Commander Quinton Phillips (68, Clayton), and Post 68 Commander Rebekah Hilgenberg on their installations during the Summer Convention.
- **Upcoming Installations:** I will be traveling to Post 222 (Spiro) soon to install Commander Alexander Brooks as District 3A Adjutant and Buddy Jones as District 3A Chaplain. If your Post has had a change in leadership and needs an officer installation, please let me or 1st Vice CDR Shaw know so we can schedule a visit.
- **Veteran Service Officer Support:** If your post needs VSO support, please contact 1st Vice CDR Trish Shaw to coordinate.
- **Department Of Oklahoma Officers for 2026 - 2027:** **Department Commander Shirley May **Senior Vice Commander Patricia Mathes-Kerr **Vice Commander East Karen Cruice **Vice Commander West Wayne Flowers **Department Treasurer Sam McPherson **Department Judge Advocate Dale Haynes **Department Sergeant-at-Arms Ed Lager **Department Chaplain Bobby Stewart **National Executive Committeeman: Charlie O'Leary **Alternate National Executive Committeeman Michael Taylor **Department Surgeon John Loose **Department Adjutant Stark Davis **Administrative Assistant Katie Mounce **Department Representative to the Oklahoma Veterans Commission Brett Martin

Upcoming Important Dates

- **04 August 2026:** Dept of OK Senior Leader Meeting (Location TBD)
- **10 October 2026:** Dept of Oklahoma Executive Committee Meeting (Location TBD)
- **24 October 2026: District 3 Fall Conference (Post 39, Durant)**
- **January 2027:** Dept of OK Mid-Winter Conference (Norman - Date TBD)

Please share this information with your Legion Family. Thank you again for your continued dedication, engagement, and invaluable commitment to our Veterans and the Legion community.

For God and Country,

Scott Hilgenberg

District 3A Commander

Post 68 Vice CDR | SAL Squadron 68 | ALA Unit 68 | ALR Chapter 68 Secretary