

THE 1889 LAND RUN



DEPARTMENT
OF
OKLAHOMA



American Legion Newsletter

40th Edition, November 1, 2025

American Legion Department Commander

Fellow Legionnaires of Oklahoma,

You all continue to do amazing things across this State for our communities and fellow Veterans. I have seen so many different Posts involved in civic events or being the catalyst of hosting them. Continue the amazing work as it is paying dividends in Veterans' lives, public relations and membership across the Family. On the topic of events, I have created an event and am being assisted by SAL Detachment Commander Chris Sherbourne to be held in Grove "22 A Day Vigil" that the details are posted on the Department Facebook. In basic we will be standing guard over a Flag draped casket for 22 hours in 22-minute shifts starting at 2:00 PM November 22nd through noon on the 23rd. For more information contact Chris or I or request to join the FB event at "22 a day vigil".

With these being the year of our semiquincentennial as a country I encourage you to create events based around this celebration. We just Chartered Post 1776 in West Tulsa as of October 29th and look forward to building on that with hopefully many other great 1776 or 250 themed events across the Department.

As part of the November schedule, National Vice Commander Landkamer(NE) will be joining us here in Oklahoma from November 21st-24th where the plan is to have a Charter Presentation and reception in Tulsa, details to be announced. He will then travel to Grove for the aforementioned 22 A Day Vigil where he will participate at his request.

The Four Pillars of Hope Inc 501(c)3 was finally approved and recognized officially as of October 6th and I extend a round of applause to every member that had a hand in this long process. Our newly formed VSO Committee and Department Leadership has a great meeting with ODVA Director James "Jay" Bynum earlier this week. It was a great meeting with a lot of positive coming out of it very soon. Stay tuned. Your newly formed Fundraising Committee will be meeting next week to discuss our next directions with working to put us in a much stronger financial situation for years to come.

Our membership drive continues to be doing phenomenal as we successfully surpassed the 65% membership goal about three weeks ahead of the November goal date which puts us 10% ahead of this same time the last couple years. As I write this, we sit over 7800 at 66.61%. Oklahoma as of now still sits in the 12th place Nationally but less than .8% (8/10 of a percent) or half a member per Post from jumping all the way up to 8th place. Our Mighty Midwest is the only Region to have every Department hit every goal thus far and NVC Landkamer has sent a

rousing round of kudos. We need to stay ahead of target as a little slip puts us playing catch up. If every post in the Department added just one new or renewal a week through June 30th, we would finish the admin year over well over 100% for the first time in quite some time. If we can take time to make genuine buddy checks, past members will naturally begin to return to the organization that they once strongly believed in.

Let's keep the momentum rolling!

Steve Thomas
Department Commander

American Legion Department-Senior Vice Commander

Greetings Legion Family!!

This has been a busy and exciting month. I truly enjoy going to the different District Conferences. It is always a great time with friends and exchanging information and/or ideas. I have visited multiple Posts this past month. Each Post is unique, but they all have similarities. We have 2 more District Conferences to go. I also have several upcoming visits already scheduled.

You have done a fantastic job with membership!! We are quickly closing in on 65%. You are working very hard to meet the goals that I keep sending out. We currently have 7 Posts who have reached 100%, and 7 Posts that are over 100%. Great!! There are 2 Districts who are above 70%. These numbers reflect the effort and dedication our members are putting in to continue to build the American Legion.

Please continue to keep up the positive efforts of retaining and recruiting members. Call, text, email, send a postcard, or even visit those who have not renewed yet.

I had the honor and privilege of presenting a Certificate of Service, from the Department of Oklahoma, and a Poppy Pin to a WWII Veteran who just celebrated his 100th Birthday, Edward Edmiston. Mr. Edmiston was very humbled and appreciative of all the accolades being presented to him that day.

Respectfully,
Shirley May
Senior Vice Commander

Department Vice Commander – East

Greetings Legion Family,

As we move into November—a month of reflection, gratitude, and service—I want to take a moment to share how truly proud I am of the Posts throughout our great state. During my visits across the East, one thing has become very clear: our Legionnaires are doing incredible work in their communities every single day.

What strikes me most is that many of our Posts don't like to "brag" about what they do. They quietly go about helping veterans, supporting youth programs, assisting families in need, and

strengthening their communities—all without seeking recognition. But make no mistake, the impact is powerful and far-reaching. Each Post, in its own way, is carrying forward the mission of The American Legion, and together, you're making a difference that truly matters.

As we approach **Veterans Day**, I look forward to seeing the many ways our Posts honor those who have served. Whether it's through parades, ceremonies, school programs, or community outreach, every effort reminds our nation of the sacrifices made and the enduring commitment of veterans who continue to serve. Please remember to share your photos and events—I'm always happy to highlight your hard work on my **Vice Commander East Facebook page**. It's inspiring to see and share how our Legion Family celebrates this important day.

November is also a time for **gratitude and unity**. I am deeply thankful for each of you—the officers, members, and volunteers who keep our organization strong. Your dedication, teamwork, and compassion are what make the American Legion such a remarkable force for good. Let's continue to lift one another up, celebrate each other's successes, and remember that together, we can accomplish even more.

As always, I remain committed to recognition, excellence, and empowerment. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside you as we continue to honor our veterans and strengthen our communities.

Be The One,

Karen Cruice

Vice Commander East

Department of Oklahoma

Department Vice Commander – West

Hello Legionnaires, the month of October has been busy. The one thing I've come to enjoy is the windshield time to the posts and catching up with my kids on the phone.

Enid Post 0004 coming into this year wasn't looking good. This year membership is almost 103% and going strong with new Commander Leroy Watkins kudos Sir. I want to say thank you to Senior Vice May and District Commander Wayne Flowers on this endeavor. We have two native American posts coming alive, Concho Post 401 is starting to roll again with

Jackie Turtle as commander, and the White Eagle post under new charter just south of Ponca City. Veterans Day is just around the corner may we all have something planned. Believe it or not the holidays are here, so have a safe Halloween and Jackie Sikes don't dress up, you have been all year LOL. Membership will start getting slow this time of year just keep doing what you have been doing and at the end of the day you will have made progress. May you all be safe and I'm proud of each and all legionnaires this year.

Vice-Commander West

Lance E. Larson

National Executive (NEC) Committeeman

Greetings Legionnaires!

In October we attended the TAL Fall Meetings at National HQ, attended the National Finance Committee meetings as I am a NEC Liaison and am happy to report that the American Legion is in the black financially for the first time in several years, mainly due to increased membership from Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans joining.

Also, all of the Department of Oklahoma recommendations for National Committee, Council and Commission positions were approved by the NEC and signed off by the National Commander.

Speaking of our National Commander Dan K. Wiley from the nearby Department of Kansas, I would like to share National Commander Priorities:

1. Be the One. The National Commander is continuing that program and expanding it. Legionnaires are encouraged to log on to Betheone.org to get more information and to share with others.

Also, everyone should consider participating or attending Columbia Protocol Training that teaches you what to do if someone calls you about committing suicide. You download the app on your smartphone, even a flip phone, and all the questions to ask are right there. [We all have a smartphone so we can talk to our grandchildren]. Eliminate the stigma of admitting you have a secret problem. It's ok to be non-ok and ask for help.

2. The National Commander's motto this year is BETTER TOGETHER. The American Legion Family, Posts, Units, Squadrons and Chapters do better working together as a family. We got your back/We got your six are lessons all of us learned during our time in military service

3. Legislative Agenda is how we get things done in the Legion to help veterans and hold the VA accountable. Every day go to legion.org/action and sign up to send an email to our national senators and representatives to support pending congressional bills backed by the Legion. Also go to legion.org/advocacy/legislative to sign up for grassroots notifications you can respond to help veterans.

4. The 3 C's: Communication: What method do you use? Communicating with Vietnam, Cold War, Desert Storm and Iraq/Afghanistan vets are all a little bit different.
Community: What is your Post known for? Should be more than just a bar with Post attached. How do you help the community?

Camaraderie: Buddy Checks especially on week of Veterans Day and week of Legion's Birthday March 15.

5. Veteran and Children Foundation. Donating to the VCF helps fund accredited VSO Training [now available on-line] and Temporary Financial Assistance for veterans and Posts in need.

6. American 250 is the National Commanders new project for this year's 250th anniversary of founding of the USA. Legion family members are encouraged to pursue goals of 250 hours, miles, buddy checks or other activities this year. Go to: legion.org/usa250/challenge for more information.

Looking forward to a great year ahead with our new National Commander Dan Wiley!

Charlie O'Leary, NEC
Department of Oklahoma

Alternate National Executive (ANEC) Committeeman

American Legion Riders

Greetings, Team Oklahoma Riders,
Team Oklahoma, Great News!

We have officially kicked off our In-State Legacy Run Campaign with a goal of raising at least \$15,000 this year and I'm proud to report that we've already raised \$6,300 toward that goal!

The In-State Legacy Run will roll from May 15th through the 17th, and the route is currently being finalized. As soon as it's confirmed, we'll get it out to everyone so you can start planning to join in.

A challenge has been issued to every Post, Unit, and Squadron across Oklahoma: Donate \$100 toward the In-State Legacy Run.

By doing this, we can stand united and proudly represent Oklahoma when we walk across the stage in Louisville, Kentucky this August presenting a check worthy of the great state of Oklahoma to the National Veterans & Children Foundation.

I want to sincerely thank all the volunteers and Riders across the Department who continue to step up and make this possible. The dedication, teamwork, and passion being shown across Oklahoma are nothing short of incredible.

As the weather cools and we start breaking out the leathers, please remember to bundle up, check your gear, and ride safe.

If your Post is interested in starting a Riders Chapter, please reach out to me. The Department team will gladly help guide you through the process.

Together, we are stronger.
Ride safe, stay proud, and always remember, we ride for the cause, not the applause.

For God, Country, and Service,
Brett Martin
Director, American Legion Riders
Department of Oklahoma

Past Department Commander's Corner

Hello Everyone! Have I got a deal for you! Let's talk about National Commander Dan Wiley's new program the USA 250 Challenge!

What: The American Legion's USA 250 Challenge is a yearlong celebration of the nation's 250th birthday. It offers participants three categories: community service, physical activities and mental health awareness-to pursue goals such as 250 hours, miles, Buddy Checks or other measurables.

When: now through July 4, 2026

Who: American Legion Family members and anyone else. Participants may pursue their goals individually or as part of a team.

Why: In addition to celebrating America, proceeds from the \$30 registration fee and all donations go to the Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation, which supports disabled veterans and military families in need.

How: Scan the QR Code [I was able to do this, and I even have an Android phone] to learn more and register. Or visit: legion.org/usa250/challenge
Make it happen people!

Charlie O'Leary
PDC 2021-22
No One Left Behind

Department Adjutant - Rick Redden

Adjutant's Corner

I have enjoyed attending the District Conferences in October and have just two left in November. From my perspective, the District Conferences give me an opportunity to pass along information useful to Post and our Members.

The programs I highlighted at the District Conferences follow and reach out to Department for assistance with these programs.

Temporary Financial Assistance (from legion.org)

Since its establishment in 1925, The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program has awarded cash grants to minor children of current active duty or American Legion members. These grants help families in need meet the cost of shelter, food, utilities and health expenses, thereby keeping the child or children in a more stable environment.

Who is eligible for a grant?

The minor child must be under the age of 18 and still in high school, however TFA may be extended until the completion of high school provided the child has not reached the age of 21. The minor child must be the biological child, stepchild, or in the legal custody of, a qualifying veteran. A qualifying veteran is defined as a member of the United States Armed Forces serving on federal orders current under Title 10 of the United States Code, inclusive of all components, OR any veteran possessing an up-to-date membership in The American Legion. Active duty applicants can be considered without being a member of The American Legion. A single onetime non-repayable Temporary Financial Assistance grant of up to \$2,500 will be permitted for the minor child(ren) of a qualifying veteran.

No child is considered eligible for Temporary Financial Assistance until a complete investigation is conducted at the post or department level, a legitimate family need is determined, and all other available assistance resources have been utilized or exhausted. Additionally, the TFA application must originate and be filled out by someone at the local level.

National Emergency Fund

Established after Hurricane Hugo in 1989, the National Emergency Fund has delivered over \$11 million in aid to Legionnaires and Legion posts, helping prevent post closures and support recovery. With grants of up to \$3,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for posts, the NEF ensures rapid relief when it's needed most.

Eligibility

Membership in The American Legion must be active when the disaster strikes and when the application is filed.

What's covered: An NEF grant may be considered when the applicant:

- ☐ Has been displaced from his or her primary residence due to damage sustained during a declared natural disaster.
- ☐ Provides copies of receipts of items required to meet immediate needs (such as temporary housing, food, water, clothing, diapers, etc.) during the period immediately following the disaster.

Legionnaire Insurance Trust

LegionCare

LEGIONCARE NO COST TO YOU ACCIDENTAL DEATH INSURANCE PROTECTION GUARANTEED ** TO LEGIONNAIRES

As a member of the Legion Family, you're eligible for up to \$5,000.00 in NO COST To You coverage. But your Confirmation is REQUIRED for activation.

\$5,000.00 ACCIDENTAL DEATH PROTECTION MEMBER-ONLY BENEFIT: Your beneficiary will receive a check for \$5,000.00 if you suffer a fatal covered accident while you are traveling to or from or participating in any covered event conducted for Legion business, or \$1,000.00 for all other fatal covered accidents. You pay nothing for this coverage.

Your Department of The American Legion endorses this coverage to stand by your family with up to \$1,000.00 cash benefits paid straight to your beneficiary, if you suffer a fatal covered accident at home, on the job, in your car, on vacation, while traveling, wherever you are. You must activate this benefit by going to www.thelit.com or calling 800-235-6943.

Veterans Day

Veterans Day is just around the corner. Please support your Post efforts to honor veterans. Attend Veterans Day ceremonies. Help with Poppy distribution. Participate in Buddy Checks. Take the Be The One suicide prevention training.

Post Adjutants

Don't forget your invitation to join the monthly Zoom meeting for Adjutants. Here is the information about the November Zoom call

Time: Nov 12, 2025, 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87501622889?pwd=I3Vf3wS1jsaaaWmDE1SC0vEPiYc7ZX.1>

Meeting ID: 875 0162 2889

Passcode: 112017

A good soldier never quits

Endorsed by Your Department of the American Legion You've done a good job.

You've served America during times when freedom and liberty were threatened. You've served when the bulwarks of defense needed to be fortified to preserve peace. You were there. But America needs you still. Your American Legion Department supports worthwhile national and local community causes. It looks after your interests by championing your case in Congress.

It supports your efforts to get involved in the running of America. It offers affordable insurance to over 1,700,000 Legionnaires nationwide. You're entitled to the best for what you've done for your country. Renew your Legion membership promptly when you receive your dues notice, and you can activate your No-Cost-To-You Accidental Death Insurance Offer when it's mailed to you in August.

Remember to pay your dues early. That way you can activate your No-Cost insurance at www.TheLIT.com. The Legionnaire Insurance Trust continues to serve your country by uniting us together for the benefit of one and all. We're inspired by the community of veterans still serving in America. For over 50 years, the Legionnaire Insurance Trust has been delivering peace of mind and financial support for veterans, their families, and the Departments of The American Legion. We craft benefit programs that help veterans protect what they value most.

VA Burial Benefit Fact Sheet, click on icon to access



VA Burial Benefit
-1.pdf

Oklahoma Veterans Commission – Brett Martin

Sons of the American Legion

Women Veterans Outreach

Contact Karen Ritter at RitterK4505@gmail.com or Tina Kilmer at TKilmer2003@gmail.com for suggestions.

American Legion Auxilliary

What an exciting year it's been for the American Legion Auxiliary here in Oklahoma! We're off to a strong start, and I couldn't be prouder of the incredible work happening across our units. Thanks to your dedication, our membership numbers continue to grow — we're currently ranked in the top 15 nationally, and with everyone's continued efforts, I'm confident we'll be back in the top 10 very soon!

This fall, we also hosted a very successful Fall Conference in Tecumseh, where members from across the state came together for a weekend of training, collaboration, and camaraderie. We held seven different round table sessions covering topics such as fundraising, membership, Constitution and Bylaws, and many more of our important programs. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and it was wonderful to see so many members eager to learn and share ideas to strengthen our organization.

This year has also brought exciting growth through new charters. We recently welcomed a brand-new unit in Madill, and we have two more in progress — one in Tulsa and another in Edmond. Several Posts have reached out asking how to start an Auxiliary unit of their own, and that's something we love to hear! Remember, it only takes 10 members to charter a new unit and bring the Auxiliary's mission to your community.

If your Post doesn't yet have an Auxiliary, now is the perfect time to start one. Membership is open to grandmothers, mothers, sisters, granddaughters, and spouses (including male spouses of female veterans) of eligible veterans. You can also join if you are a woman eligible for membership in The American Legion based on your own military service. Together, we honor our veterans, strengthen our communities, and build the future of our organization.

Stay connected with us on our Facebook page at facebook.com/auxdeptok. We'll be holding our Paid Up For Life (PUFL) drawing the first week of November — one lucky member will win a lifetime Auxiliary membership!

Thank you for all you do to keep our mission moving forward. Your energy, compassion, and commitment make the Department of Oklahoma shine.

Kim McInnis

ALA Department President

BE THE ONE

Department of Oklahoma is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Please pass along this invitation to any VSO that you know.

Topic: Weekly VSO Zoom Meeting

Time: Oct 18, 2025, 09:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87271092410?pwd=fheyQUkzEwM68acJNHcvTH8rSqZxVe.1>

Meeting ID: 872 7109 2410

Passcode: 891971

Weekly zoom for all interested in VSO work/questions.

Jack Sikes

443-271-5545

Legion News

Awards

Let me begin by announcing Allen Usry, of Post 1, is the new Co-Chair of the Department Awards Committee. Allen, Thank You for Standing Up.

New Award Certificate for Educators

The Committee on Youth Education (COYE) is reviving The Americanism Commission Certificate of Appreciation for Education.

This program is to recognize individuals, in our Department and communities, that promote the four pillars of the American Legion, core values and educational goals of The American Legion by advancing the principles of Americanism, supporting the education programs, and helping to instill a sense of pride and civic responsibility in our nation's youth.

Each Department can nominate up to 3 individuals (members or non-members) each year. A list of Nominations to the COYE will be due to the Americanism National Headquarters before the Fall Meetings by September 26th. That means our Department must have them no later than September 15th.

Individuals that are nominated by each Department and approved by the Committee on Youth Education will receive a Certificate and a letter from the Americanism Commission that can be presented by the Department at their choosing.

We got this very late and the timeline is short because we expect many more than 3 nominations for the Awards Committee to evaluate. You must make the September 15th suspense date. The nominations must go through the Department Headquarters.

VA Healthcare Provider and VA Physician of the Year packages have been forwarded to National. They have a deadline of Sept 7th.

We are working on the National nomination packages for LEO, Firefighter and Employers of Veterans, we have a little time on those.

It is time for all of the Post to start talking to your Police and Fire Departments looking for nominees for next year. Give some thought to the VA Physicians and Healthcare Providers that serve you. There are many very good ones in the system that deserve recognition. A "Healthcare Provider" includes "ANY" VA healthcare provider; Xray tech, audiology tech, psychologist, Social Worker, and all of the other skills that are involved in direct patient care.

Take care of the people that take care of you. Recognize their excellence.

I am not going to steal the Auxiliary's thunder but Congratulations Clarise.

Find someone to recognize.

Paul Ray: 405-921-5819 plainoldpaul@yahoo.com awards@mustangpost353.org

Additional information from Paul Ray

A little more on the CPRs this month.

Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy Description:

This award is presented to the department with the greatest percentage of accredited schools participating in the American Legion School Award Medal program. It consists of a large silver-loving cup-style trophy with engraved detailing and a wooden base. The engraved inscription reads: "Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy, awarded to the department with the highest percentage of accredited school participation in the School Award Medal program." A laminated image of the trophy mounted to a suitable plaque is provided for the department. This award is named in honor of Past National Commander Ralph T. O'Neil.

Daniel J. O'Connor Americanism Trophy Description:

This award is presented to the department that has excelled in promoting Americanism through post-level activities as measured by the Consolidated Post Report and supporting narrative. The award consists of a large gold champion cup-style trophy topped with a U.S. flag and eagle, mounted on a two-tiered wood base. The upper tier bears a gold metal plate engraved "Daniel J. O'Connor Americanism Award (year)." The lower tier bears an additional engraved plate that reads: "Awarded to the American Legion Department of (state), American Legion (number) National Convention, (city and state)." This award is named in honor of Daniel J. O'Connor and was previously known as the "William Randolph Hearst Americanism Trophy."

Department Award for 100% Post Children & Youth Reporting Description:

This award is presented to departments who achieve 100% post submission rate of the Children & Youth report. It consists of a certificate signed by the national commander, national adjutant, National Americanism Commission chairman and Committee on Children & Youth chairman

AND of course, something about membership.

Department Retention Award Description:

This award is presented to the departments in each category with the highest membership retention rate for the membership year. It consists of \$2,000 check by national headquarters

Be That Legionnaire.

Something to brag about, I stole this from the October 2025 National Magazine: "NEW POST" section. Oklahoma State Reformatory Post 30, chartered April 14 th . That's a pretty good reason to smile.

Also, in that same magazine there was an article titled "Public Law NO.119-31: VA HOME LOAN REFORM ACT". That law will help as many as 70,000 Veterans with delinquent mortgages to avoid foreclosure. If you are one of those 70,000 talk to your VSO.

The National Awards nominations application are on the Department webpage under Awards. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the one you are interested in. If it 'isn't there call or email me.

Paul Ray: 405-921-5819 plainoldpaul@yahoo.com awards@mustangpost353.org



**92nd Anniversary (1935-2026)
Of the
Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage
To the
Tomb of Abraham Lincoln**

Post 32 – OPEN HOUSE – 4:00pm to 1:00am

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Springfield Post #32, The American Legion

1120 Sangamon Avenue, Springfield, Illinois – Phone 217/523-3415

**Home of and originator of the National American Legion Pilgrimage to the
Tomb of Abraham Lincoln**

+++++

Our Mess Hall Restaurant presents, from 4-9pm Wednesday, Feb 11th.

All you Can Eat Spaghetti or All you Can Eat Chilli Mac - \$10.95 + tax

Chicken Parmesan - \$13.95

the following salads will also be available:

Chicken Strip Salad w/choice of dressing \$9.95

Taco Salad \$9.95

Chef Salad w/choice of dressing \$9.95

Italian Dinner Salad or Dinner Salad w/choice of dressing

By itself \$3.95 – w/dinner - \$2.50

Reservations suggested 217/523-3415 or email us: spfldpost32@outlook.com

Visit our website: www.springfieldamericanlegion.com

--Free Juke Box 8:00pm to Midnight

Video Gaming & Complete Bar Service

FREE Shuttle Service to the hotel until 1:00am

National Shooting Sports Foundation

**Matthew E. Herndon | Director
Internal Affairs & Membership**

Department Blood Program Chair

<https://ourbloodinstitute.org/>

Does your post have a Blood Donor Program? Are you including Blood counts in your CPR? Our Blood Institute and the American Red Cross (in some areas) need YOUR individual and organizational support. For assistance to start a program, call the not-for-profit blood collection agency serving your area hospitals. For additional information about successful blood programs, call me. I can talk to you about our past results; upon invitation I can visit your post to discuss the Legion Blood program. Save a life. Serve your community.

JOHN G. BISHOP

405-414-2515, jbishop22@cox.net

DEPT OF OKLAHOMA BLOOD DONOR CHAIR 2025-2026

District Conferences

District 5--November 15—Post 88 Norman

District 7--November 8--Post 146 Sayer

If you have any updates to this list, please contact Adjutant Rick Redden.

**Post Everlasting is placed after 8B,
please forward me your obituaries.**

District 1A

Post 178 – Grove



Kent Kirkham, Susan Engstrom, Karen Ritter, and Lenny Vorisek had a membership drive booth at the annual Pelican Festival in Grove, Oklahoma on 4-6 October 2025. We gave out lots of information for the American Legion, as well as recruited a few more members to Post 178. Susan was also able to make some contacts with some veterans and their spouses to start the process to get their benefits, being the VSO of our Post, Unit, Squadron, and Chapter. It was a good weekend of giving back to our local veterans and their families.



Susan Engstrom, Karen Ritter, Tracey Smith, and her daughter Katie Smith all attended the ALA National President Pam Ray's homecoming 22 October-26 October 2025 in Springfield, Illinois. These pictures are from her banquet on 25 October 2025. We toured President Abraham Lincoln's tomb, visited Casey, Illinois, where we got to see some of the largest items ever made

and some that carry a Guinness world record for, like the World's largest working mailbox that I have attached below.

Post 147 – Miami



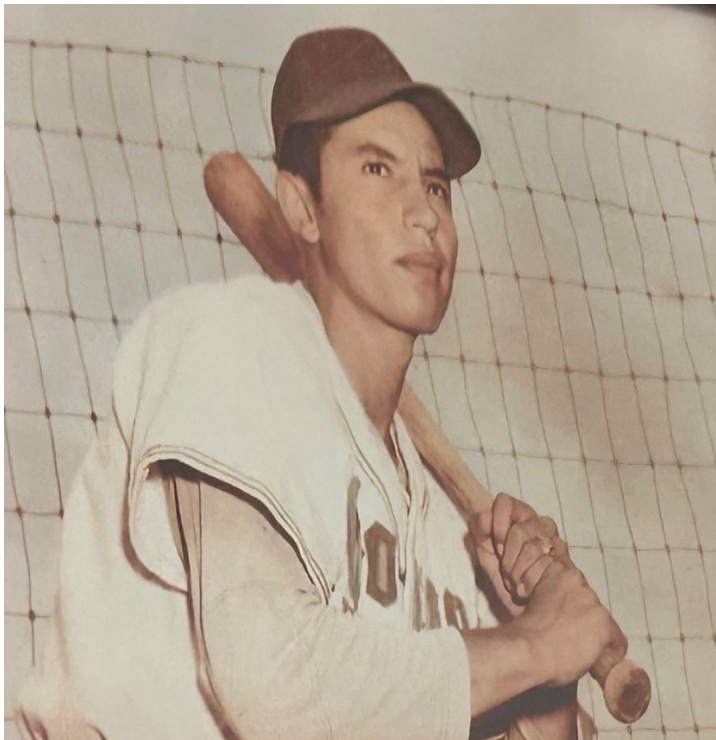
After hearing about the flags that were cut last month, United States Senator James Lankford visited American Legion Post 147 in Miami on Monday and brought with him three flags that have been flown over the United States capitol to start the process of replacing the damaged flags.

The community has so far donated over \$1,200 to the American Legion to help replace the flags that are flown around town on holidays.



District 1B

Post 1-Tulsa





Jose Perez played his first American Legion baseball game way back in 1949. He was just 15 years old, and he already knew that baseball was going to be an important part of his life. After being told he couldn't play on the high school team because of his age, the American Legion provided just the opportunity he was looking for.

Starting at 15, Jose's love affair with baseball would become a life-long passion. After starting in the Legion's baseball program, Jose went on to play in high school, college, at the semi-pro level, and internationally. He went on to play in fast pitch and senior slow pitch softball, finishing his career at 78 years old.

Throughout his adult life, service to others has been an important part of who Jose is. He served in the Army with the 10th Mountain Division, and then became an Air Force civilian, working

maintenance on aircraft at Vance Air Force Base. Work eventually brought him to Tulsa when he was hired at American Airlines, a place where he worked for over 30 years until retirement.

After 63 years of playing baseball and over 30 years at American Airlines, Jose didn't just go home and retire, he remained active through community service in Tulsa, a place he's called home for 60 years. He served as an ordained deacon in his church for 44 years and he founded the Tulsa Hispanic Lions Club in 1982, an organization he served with for 18 years.

Throughout his years of baseball and community service, Jose's wife of 70 years, Gloria, has been right by his side, starting as a cheerleader for Jose's baseball team and later serving as the church choir director while Jose served as a deacon.

Before our visit with Jose, he took the time to set up much of his memorabilia, a truly impressive collection of photos, uniforms, bats, rings and more. We can't thank him and Gloria enough for their hospitality and for taking the time to talk with us.

We hope to be able to make a YouTube video out of our interview with Jose and we'll let you know when it becomes available.

Thank You Jose! We can't wait to see what you do next!





Honoring WWII veteran Edward Edminston on his 100th Birthday

District 2A

District 2B

District 3A

District 3B

District 4

District 5A

Fellow TAL, SAL & ALA members,

As we enter the holiday season, let me first say how thankful I am to have Post's in my district that care about the veterans and the people in all our communities. Reaching out to our veterans and supporting them in any way we can is one of our four pillars. Sending our young

men & women to Boys & Girls State is supporting our youth in America and helping them get a good foundation is another one of our pillars with Americanism. Let me take this time to congratulate each and every one of you that are working and striving to get our past members back into the Legion. I also want to say a huge Thank You to the posts that are sponsoring young men and women this year for Boys & Girls State.

With every one of us going into the Holiday season; let us all be thankful for what we have and what we can do for others. Please take some time this season to reflect on what God has given us and how we can give back.

I hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving with all family and friends. I have mentioned this in the past; if there is anything I can do to help or assist you and your individual Post's do not hesitate to reach out to me.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

For God & Country.

Mike Harris
Commander, District 5A

Post 58-Guthrie



The Korean War Armistice is on July 27, and in 2023 The American Legion LeBron Post 58 Guthrie, OK, teamed up with Jaeho Yi, President of the Korean American Association, to

recognize and present the Ambassador for Peace Medal to Veterans who served in the Korean War.

Please read this email in its entirety to learn about Captain Charles Graham Gibson Jr being repatriated and the opportunity we had to honor his service with the medal. During the 2018 Singapore Summit when President Trump met with Kim Jong-un, 55 boxes of remains were released. Captain Charles Graham-Gibbons Jr was in Box #48 [Recovery of U.S. human remains from the Korean War - Wikipedia](#) Read more below.

At our first ceremony in July 2023, our goal was to identify 12 Korean War Veterans, we were humbled by the response we received with 31 medals and had another wonderful turnout for our November ceremony. We recognized several deceased Veterans, those Killed In Action, and several who were still living, including several Legionnaires from Guthrie, Chandler, Perry, and Edmond, Oklahoma, however, membership of The American Legion is not a requirement. Those families with deceased Veterans accepted the medal posthumously. Family members attended from as far away as California, Missouri, and Kansas. And since our first ceremony, we have recognized over 120 Veterans and their loved ones with the Ambassador for Peace Medal.

This recognition continues across the department, as many Posts have showed interest in honoring their Legionnaires and community Veterans, furthering our mission with Posts in Duncan, Tulsa, Skiatook, Seminole, Salina, Sayre in partnership with the Clinton's Veterans Home, Providence Place in Woodward, as well as several home visits.

Our next ceremony in Guthrie is scheduled for Sunday, November 16, with the Meet and Greet at 12:30, ceremony at 1 p.m. and a Korean style lunch to follow. The ceremony will take place at a local church. Korean War service is verified by reviewing the Veteran's DD-214 (military discharge paper) and then review of the application (attached) with the Veterans information. We have other options though and can discuss further if necessary. These two items are sent to the Korean Consular to confirm and award the medals. Guthrie Post 58 is honored to assist Jaeho Yi facilitate this recognition for our Korean War Veterans.

Veterans and their family members can submit a Release form to Senator Lankford's office at the following link to request a copy of their DD-214 from the National Archives. [Help with a Federal Agency - Senator James Lankford](#)

The year 2023 was the 70th anniversary of Armistice Day (July 27, 1953) of the Korean War, known as the Forgotten War, which has never been forgotten and never will be forgotten by the Koreans, Veterans, and their families. As this is a special day to recognize our Veterans, the Korean government commemorates the day with a special thank you by awarding this medal for those who risked their lives to preserve and protect the freedom and democracy for their home country, The Republic of Korea (aka South Korea).

I received a text a few weeks ago from a man in Arizona who was in Washington DC with a Korean Veteran on an Honor Flight. Apparently, there was a man at the Korean War Memorial who suggested they call me and gave my name and number. We submitted his documents for his medal. Two days later I received a call from a woman in Texas, she was also at the Korean War Memorial in DC when a man gave her a cup of coffee while in line, and he then suggested she contact me. She at least asked where he was from and he responded Oklahoma. So, thank you whoever you are, you have blessed these Veterans and their family members.

BUT, more about the Texas woman's cousin. KIA/MIA Korean War. [Capt. CHARLES GRAHAM GIBSON JR. - Service Member Profile](#)

After his remains were identified in March 2025, his remains were flown home to Michigan Saturday, October 11th, and he will be laid to rest tomorrow, Thursday, October 16th at Fort

Custer National Cemetery in Augusta, Michigan. I have been in contact with the Next of Kin and the cousin, coordinating the direct delivery of Charles' Ambassador for Peace Medal from the Korean Consulate General Houston, Texas. In addition to DPAA coordinating his Memorial Service with the Armed Forces, I was able to contact Battle Creek Mayor Behnke to present a Certificate of Recognition to the family. My desire is to have every Korean War Veteran receive the same recognition as if they were here in Guthrie.

Learn more about DPAA and how WE NEED TO SPREAD THE WORD to family members of those MIA/KIA to submit DNA in hopes of identifying their loved ones [Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency \(DPAA\)](#) THIS!!! Our mission, we need to share the info and educate our communities.

Please feel free to share with friends and family members and be sure to call, text or email with any questions. The application process takes about two weeks after we submit the forms which allows time to review, verify and ship the medals from the Korean Consular. **Deadline to submit applications for the Guthrie ceremony is Wednesday, October 29th.** Look over your rosters and make calls, Buddy Checks work well. Thank you!

But we are strong, each in our purpose, and we are all more strong together.

Kim Vincent, Commander
TAL LeBron Post 58 Guthrie
Website: [Homepage \(lebronpost58.org\)](http://lebronpost58.org)
Facebook: LeBron Post 58 American Legion
Cell: 619-807-8431

AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE MEDAL

Information we would need about the Korean War Veteran to request an Ambassador for Peace Medal:

A clear and legible copy of the DD-214 (or any other verification of service in the Korean War)

Name

Date of birth

Address

Phone number

Email address

Military Branch

Time that the veteran served in Korean War (month, year, and actual dates if possible)

Any other medals the veteran received from the U.S. government or the Korean government

Has the veteran revisited Korea? If so, when?

Eligibility criteria for Ambassador for Peace Medal recipients:

Veterans must have served in Korean territory during the Korean War from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953, or have participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations until the end of 1955. U.S. Navy members also are eligible, if they served abroad in a naval vessel that was assigned to Korean waters from 1950 to 1953. The Medal may also be awarded posthumously. The next of kin, such as the spouse or descendants, may apply for the Medal on behalf of a deceased Korean War Veteran.



The American Legion LeBron Post 58 Guthrie, Oklahoma, is working alongside Guthrie JROTC for the Annual Wreaths Across America Ceremony on Saturday, December 13, 2025, at Summit View Cemetery. Sponsor a wreath or sign-up to volunteer. Remember, Honor, and Teach about the sacrifices made by Veterans.

We have an Opportunity Drawing for a custom Firepit Ring with the Legion Family – perfect for your backyard gatherings! Only 100 tickets available. Drawing will be held on December 15, 2025. Donation of \$10 / ticket.

All proceeds support the SAL program at LeBron Post 58, funding general operations and community programs that make a difference for veterans, their families, and our community. To make a donation for a Brick Paver or the Firepit Fundraiser please contact the office at 405-2828-2589

CashApp [https://cash.app/\\$TALnALALebron58](https://cash.app/$TALnALALebron58)

Venmo <https://venmo.com/u/TALPost58Guthrie>



Post 108 Cushing



Festival in the Park



Homecoming parade



Walmart re-opening

Recent activities of District 5A, Post 108, Cushing, Oklahoma, include: posting the flag at the annual Cushing Festival in the Park (9-27-25), leading the parade for the Cushing High School homecoming (10-23-25), posting the American and Oklahoma flags at the Cushing Walmart Grand Re-opening (10-24-25), and conducting a flag retirement ceremony at the Post 108 building with the help of the local DAR Chapter (10-25-25).





Flag Retirement Ceremony

District 5B

Post 184 – Moore



We were thrilled to welcome some new faces (and happy to see our familiar ones too!) as we learned all about the incredible opportunities Boys State has to offer. From earning free college credit to gaining life-changing experiences and a deeper understanding of how our government works, it was an inspiring session. US

A special thank you to our guest speaker, Bart Looper, Boys State National Administrative Director, for sharing their insight and passion. You truly inspired us all!

American Legion Post 184 in Moore had a ribbon cutting ceremony today. Good community fellowship

It is with great pride and excitement that I share some outstanding news with you. Our very own Commander Moore has been appointed to the **National Security Council of the American Legion**. This prestigious appointment was made **unanimously** by the National Executive Committee — a truly remarkable honor!

Please be sure to congratulate Commander Moore when you see her at our next meeting. It is almost unheard of for a young Legionnaire to advance directly from Post to National Committeeman, bypassing both District and Department levels. Let's all take a moment to celebrate this incredible achievement and the recognition it brings to our Post!

District 6A

Post 353-Mustang

Most recent activity included a highly successful golf tournament to gain support funds for our contributions to NEF, TFA, CWF, School Awards, Recognition and Awards for our City, Police, Firefighters, and Teachers, as well as support of Special Olympics and other activities throughout our community, state and nation.

Post 353 hosted the Department Executive Committee on 11 October - it's always a pleasure to show off our Town Center - great partners that provide so much support to veterans and our Post activities.

Our bi-monthly blood drive took place on October 14th. Again, a great post activity by our Blood Committee Chair, John Traffanstedt and his team of volunteers. Again, kudos to our Town Center for always providing Post 353 and the Oklahoma Blood Institute, their facility for this program. Our next Blood Drive will be on December 17th, 1-6pm and will be our yearly battle to defeat Post 160's December blood collections. Looking forward to it.

Our Veterans Day Poppy distribution will be held on December 7th and 8th at Mustang Walmart, another great community and veteran supporter. Poppies and Poppy stickers as well as flyers and handshakes are given friendly. Our community supports us well and their contributions provide us with the opportunity to support our veterans, our military, throughout the area, including hospitals and veteran homes. We're blessed.

Happy Thanksgiving to all. Remember Those Deployed, those in uniform, those who have served. BE THE ONE.

District 6B

Post 55 – Duncan



It has been a slow month, but we are getting things done!

We are continuously doing Flag Raisings through the month of October for Duncan High School home football games. Our last home game is on October 31st and is also Senior Night.

We are working continuously to get the post renovated. We are at a point that we have most of the building is gutted and are planning out our next steps.

Judge Advocate Bobby Marshall and District 6B and Post 55 Adjutant attended the District 6 Fall Conference on October 25th, 2025.

District 7

Post 146-Sayre



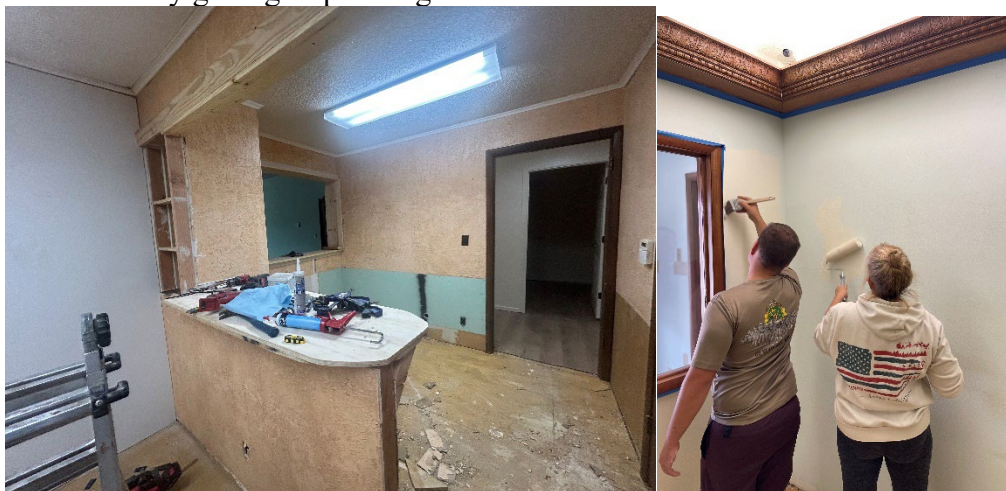
This has been a busy month, with meetings and as Post 146 Commander.

October 2nd made a trip to visit Post 223 in Gage. It is always a pleasure to visit the Legionnaires in Gage. They are always working on ways to improve the activities they are involved in. They continue to work on their membership.

On October 4th had the honor to attend the 100th birthday of Edward Edmiston, WWII Veteran. Found out he was not a Legionnaire, so paid for his investment and made him a member of Post 146.

October 6th I was invited to attend Post 41 regular monthly meeting. They always conduct their meeting the way an American Legion meeting is to be conducted. They had a young man that came to the meeting asking for Post 41 to support him for Boys State. They were asked to fold the American flag for a fallen comrade.

On October 6th, I was asked by one of the members that I served with to meet with the Legion members of post 340 in Ames. I had a really good meeting and camaraderie with some of the Legionnaires that have been around a very long time. Just some good down-home conversations. Really good group of Legionnaires.



Post 146 is still working on their building, trying to make sure everything is finished before District 7 conference.

District 8A

Post 53-Perry



Mayor Lawrence Wortham spoke at the regular monthly meeting, spoke on city issues and new businesses that are investing in Perry.

Post 4 – Enid

OCT 14 TH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

We had 14 people attend the meeting. Items of discussion included letting the city label the old building as dilapidated. This process was approved by the post but there were a few questions still needing answered. Another topic was getting the 501c and that process as well as the financial accountability of the post is back under the post and there are no issues.

Other topics of discussion were membership, fundraising ideas, open leadership positions, and the post by-laws and constitution. What to expect next month, November 11th @ 6 P.M.

WE WILL HAVE A SHORT MEETING!!!! 15 minutes tops!

There is a veteran's program at the Stride Bank Center at 6:30. One top to discuss: the old building in more detail after further discussion with the city manager.

MEMBERSHIP

If you have not paid your dues, please reach out to our adjutant, Jonathon Watson. He also has your new membership card for the 2025-2026 year.

LEADERSHIP

Post Commander: LeRoy Watkins

1st Vice Commander: Mike Toone

2nd Vice Commander Brandon Buntin

Post Adjutant: Jonathon Watson (temporary)

Post Chaplain: Rick Haines

Sergeant-At-Arms: Joshua Avants

All other positions need to be filled (as well as the adjutant)

FUNDRAISING

We currently are doing a 10 Gun Drawing to raise funds. The drawing will be held at the Mid-Winter conference. Tickets are \$10 each and are due by Dec 31st.

The post will receive half of OUR ticket sales.

FOR GOOD OF THE POST

If you are available, the 1st of Nov is the Ride to Remember benefiting the Woodring Wall of Honor. This is part of Freedom week! There are events all week long, be sure to check out their Facebook page or website. Our meeting will be cut short due to the celebration on the 11th at 6:30 at the Stride Bank Center.

NEW MEETING LOCATION

Beginning on August 12th ,2025, we started holding our meetings at 202 W. Oak, the same building that the DAV Chapter 66 meets at. This allows us the ability to meet in a climate-controlled building and some accommodation that we otherwise could not have at the museum in the mall. Be sure to join us on the 2nd Tuesday of Each month at 6P.M.

District 8B

Veteran Quality of Life

These are items that have been identified as quality-of-life improvements for Veterans.

- 1) VSO's to get eligible Veterans their disability rating.
- 2) Vet Centers scattered throughout the state.
- 3) Adaptive Housing solutions.
- 4) Major residential repairs.
- 5) Emergency Supplies on hand.
- 6) The TFA system is broken and needs to be revised.

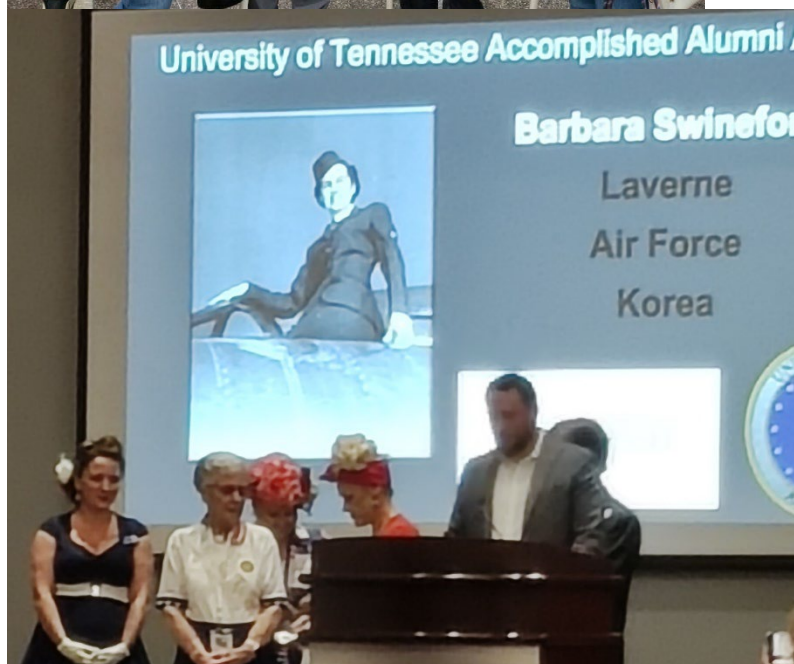
If there are more issues, please let me know. Brad Perot Co-Chairman of Veteran Quality of Life.

bulegionair@gmail.com

Post 273 Laverne



The last few months have been CRAZY busy in District 8B! District Commander Wayne Flowers started out the month with escorting Post 273 member Barbara Swineford to Tulsa, for an Honor Flight to Washington D.C., with a Police Escort and community showing for her sendoff from Laverne. Her son met her in Catoosa, to be her guardian for the flight. At the sendoff ceremony before the Flight, Barbara was presented with a Prestigious Accomplished Alumni Award, from the University of Tennessee!



I followed that up with 2 Honor Guard details for military funerals, one of which was Post 273 member Tommy Rogers, who passed in a car accident. 3 days of Fall-A-Days Expo in Woodward, in which Post 63 Freedom, Post 19 Woodward, and Post 273 Laverne, set up a booth to promote fundraisers, talk to veterans about becoming members, and hand out 3"x5" Flags to the Youth in attendance. It rained all weekend, so attendance was low, but we did get seen out in the community and showed the community that there is no longer any conflict between the VFW and The American Legion, by having our booths side by side, and with no wall put up between us. I mention this, because there has been a longstanding conflict in Woodward, between the two service organizations, that we have all been working together to eliminate. In good fun, and as a

side fundraiser for the Posts, we had a competition through donation jars, that whichever Post Commander got the most donations in their jar, would get a pie in the face on the last day of the Expo. Post 273, and District 8B Commander Wayne Flowers, got the pie in the face!

Post 63 Freedom



Also, during the expo, 3 members of Freedom Post 63 got presented quilts, by Quilts of Honor. Philip Holland, Commander, and Jamie Lepsch (Vice Commander) along with his wife.

PLEASE SEND ALL
SUBMISSIONS TO
TALOK1889@GMAIL.COM

POST EVERLASTING



Dallas Ray Moore



<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/dallas-moore-obituary?id=59639674>

Robert Allen Kimball

Robert Allen Kimble, lovingly known by all as Bob, passed away peacefully on September 26, 2025 at the age of 80. Bob was born August 8th, 1945 to Marjorie and Homer Kimble. As the middle child of five,

Bob had an independent spirit, often choosing to do his own thing. Some of his fondest memories were spending the summer at his Uncle Jake and Aunt Virgie's farm. Bob was a proud Air Force veteran, serving his country in the Vietnam War from 1963-1967. Once his service ended, he explored different trades-working as a welder and trying his hand at plumbing-but it was under the hood where he found his true calling. Specializing in transmissions, Bob became a dedicated mechanic, pouring his heart and skill into the work he loved.

Bob was known not only for his skill with cars but also for his big heart. He never met a stranger—everywhere he went, he found a friend. Bob loved a good joke, an ice cold cherry coke, and his daily visits to the coffee shop, where he shared stories and laughter with anyone who would join him. He would also frequently visit his girls at All America Bank, most likely telling the same stories with every trip.

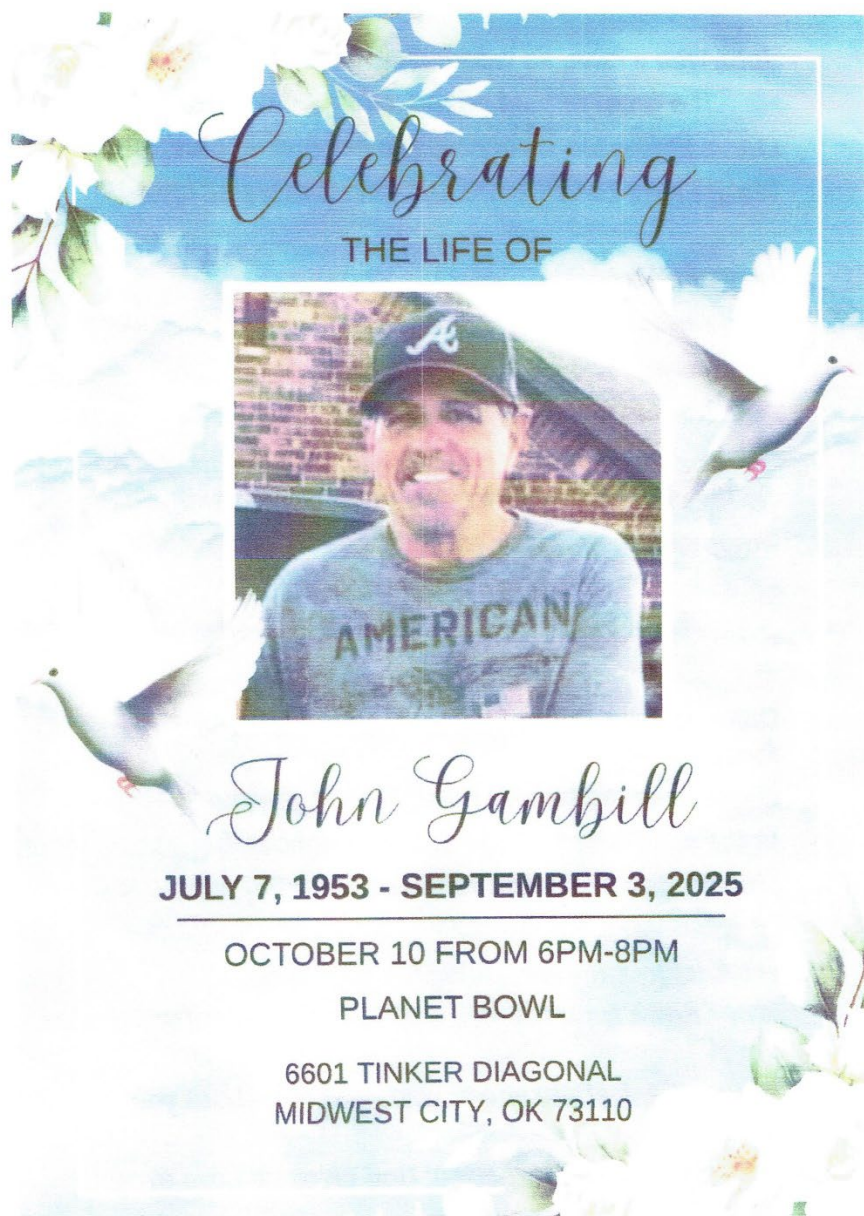
Those who knew Bob will remember his kindness, his humor, and the way he brightened every room he entered. Bob shared his love, guidance, and support with many others. He became a father figure to anyone who needed one, an uncle to an entire generation, and grandpa to every one of his grandkids' friends. Bob was simply that guy—that dad—who always showed up, lent a hand, and made a difference. His legacy lives on in the love of his family and in the countless lives he touched with his generosity and warmth.

Bob was married to the love of his life, Linda, for 55 years and together they built a family full of love and laughter. He was the proud father of three children: Bobby Whitney and wife Sheri, Tammy Kimble Millus and husband Terry, and Becky King and husband Warren; grandfather to four grandchildren: Sydney, Larry and wife Aubrea, Mary and husband Austin, and Wyatt; great-grandfather to two great-grandchildren: Oakley and Sunny

Bob's life was not just lived, but shared, and the impact of his love will continue to ripple through every life he touched. The measure of his life is found in the love he gave so freely. His presence will be missed but his love will never be forgotten.



John Gimball



John was a man, so wonderful and true!

He left a great impact on me, and many others too!

Let us praise his presence, and not feel so blue,

We are here to celebrate, the man that we all knew!

He retired from the awesome Tinker,
He definitely was a great little STINKER!
He Worked hard for every penny,
And, he was loved by oh so many!

He loved to bowl and threw a great curved ball,
Competitive, funny and moody, he displayed it all!
Like an old car running w/out all its parts,
A special place he had, in oh so many hearts!

Come Rain or Shine, his mood appeared upon his face.
Never knowing he was riding to that glorious place!
In the saddle he was spiritual and unbound,
Listening to his cycle's rumbling sound!

His final journey was riding his true love,
When down from the sky, God sent a beautiful white dove!
We will think about you always, and talk about you too!
You will never be forgotten; God gives us Love to remember you!

Hal Edward Easley



<https://www.johnirelandfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Hal-Edward-Easley?obId=43794516>

Thomas Alan Hrubik



<https://www.tribute.care/obituaries/thomas-hrubik>

Charles Albert Foster



<https://obits.criswellfh.com/obituary/charles-foster-jr>

Tex Bayouth



<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/tex-bayouth-obituary?id=59645848>