THE 1889 LAND RUN



DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA

American Legion Newsletter

52nd Edition, November 2, 2026

Department Commander



Hello Legionnaires!!

I hope that you all are enjoying the cooler weather as we move into fall. There are so many events going on throughout the state at our Posts in the American Legion. I have been fortunate to attend some of the events and truly wish I could attend more.

The first part of November brings about elections, both state and local. Please get out and exercise your right to vote. Encourage your family and friends to do the same. If you have someone elderly in your neighborhood or Post, offer to pick them up so that they can vote.

We continue to have our fall conferences in the various Districts. Each District is unique both in their membership and the training that is conducted. I am always excited to see our members and enjoy hearing about the various recruiting methods being utilized. I look forward to the remaining District Conferences. We are starting to prepare for our Mid-Winter Conference, so be watching the schedule and items of interest.

Recently, I attended the fall meetings in Indianapolis and had a lot of interaction with other Department Commanders. Oklahoma is in the Mid-West Region with National Vice Commander Hugh Holmes. The Mid-West Region is leading the nation again this year. Oklahoma has been doing good meeting our goals to date. We still have lots to do to get back to the top 10 this year. I know that you can do it, because we did last year.

With the upcoming Holidays, it becomes a very busy time for everyone. Please remember that for some, the Holidays bring about extra stress and depression. Make sure that you do "Buddy Checks" for family, friends, and your fellow Veterans. Reach out and ask for help if you need to. We are all here for each other.
Thank you for all that you do for your Post, your community, and for the Veterans in your area.

"Legion Family Moving Forward As One"
Respectfully,

Shirley May
Commander
Dept of Oklahoma American Legion



Oklahoma Legion Family Polo Shirts

2026-2027
Legion Family,
The 2026-2027 Department of Oklahoma Legion Shirts are available NOW!
The store close date is on NOVEMBER 20, 2026
Just click the link below and order yours today!
https://faststitch-ba4285.printavo.com/merch/american-legion-store

All merch stores are setup as a preorder sale, this means we print everything AFTER the store closes. Once the store closes, all sales are final.

Department Senior Vice Commander

VOICE OF THE SENIOR VICE

District Fall meetings are in full effect! We began with District 7 Fall meeting September 12, 2026 and have completed District Fall meetings in District 2, District 3, District 6, and District 8. District 1, District 4, and District 5 Fall meetings are on the near horizon!

Honestly, I have felt quite welcomed at each District meeting! Great friends, amazing food, good business and an overall sense of camaraderie I just don't experience in other settings! Even having to miss District 2 and 8 due to my Greece escapades, each District ensured I was welcomed through effective communication! Thank you!



District 7 Fall Meeting family photo
#AmericanLegionFamily

Committees

As your Department Senior Vice Commander, I am ordered by C&BL to chair your Membership and Fundraising Committees. Both are on the run for the 2026-2027 session with great activities! Membership has the team competition (see our website and social media), and Fundraising currently has the FREEDOM 250 fundraiser (see our website and social media) ….AND (drum roll please!) we have been approved to host a Bingo fundraiser the Friday night of our Department Mid-winter conference! We will be sending out more information on this soon.

I am currently building the National Guard & Reserve Liaison Committee. If you are interested in serving, please let me know!

I am also building an AD HOC committee for Chaplain Stewart for the Post Everlasting Event to be held at the 2027 Summer Convention. Please let me or him know if you are interested in serving!

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Galatians 5:13 (ESV)
"You, my brothers and sisters, were call to be free But do not use your freedom to indulge in the flesh; rather, serve on another humbly in love."
Through our service we advocate for freedom. Through our love we serve each other.
Be The One.

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FYI:

1. 2027 Mid-Winter Conference will be held at the Norman Armed Forces Reserve Center Jan 15-17. Get your hotel now! Norman often has a lot of major activities during that time and will significantly raise hotel rates. There are many options. More information regarding the Mid-Winter Conference is forthcoming.

2. I have weekly office hours Wednesdays 1030-1530 at the Oklahoma Department HQ in Warr Acres. Come by and see me if you're in town! I am available via email, text, and phone on other days of the week.

3. In the next two weeks, I will be sending out a survey to capture data on members who leave the organization. Please prepare to help me capture this data, which will help us identify how to keep our members engaged. Clarifying instruction will publish when the survey is sent out.

4. Look for more to come as we start the race toward an outstanding membership year in the coming month, prepare for District Fall Meetings/Conferences, and begin planning for the 2027 Summer Convention!

For God and Country!



Patricia Mathes-Kerr, CPT(ret), MSW, MABC, LCSW
Oklahoma Department Senior Vice Commander
PPC, Post #64 Chandler, OK

Department Vice Commander – East

From the Desk of the Vice Commander East
November 2026 | The American Legion Department of Oklahoma

As we move into November, we have just three Fall District Conferences remaining before we turn our attention toward preparing for the Mid-Winter Conference. It is hard to believe how quickly this Legion year is moving! With Veterans Day just around the corner, I hope each of us takes a moment to reflect on why we serve and the importance of the work we do as Legionnaires.

As we travel across Oklahoma, I continue to be amazed by the projects our Posts are undertaking to support veterans, their families, and their communities. From small acts of kindness to major community initiatives, our Posts are making a difference every single day. These efforts may not always make headlines, but they are the heart of The American Legion and deserve to be celebrated.

I hope everyone is enjoying our Department leadership's new twist on the membership drive — The American Legion League! What started as a friendly little competition has become something much bigger. The camaraderie, challenges, and opportunities to get to know Posts throughout the state have brought a new level of excitement to membership. Keeping score of the activities and accomplishments of our Posts each month has given those of us in leadership even more reasons to celebrate the great things happening across Oklahoma.

As Vice Commander East, I can honestly say that the greatest joy I have found in this new challenge has been the bridges it is building across our state. Last year, I had the opportunity to witness the amazing work happening throughout Districts 1–4. This year, I am discovering that it gets even better when you add Districts 6–8 into the mix! The conversations, friendships, and exchange of ideas between Posts that might never have connected otherwise are becoming one of the greatest rewards of this competition.

If you aren't spreading your wings and traveling across our great state, you are missing out on some truly wonderful people! Every Post has a story, every District has something to offer, and every Legionnaire has an opportunity to inspire someone else. We are stronger when we share our successes, learn from one another, and remember that although we may wear different Post numbers, we all serve the same mission.

As Veterans Day approaches, I encourage every Post to find a meaningful way to recognize those who have served. Whether through a ceremony, a school program, a community event, or simply reaching out to a fellow veteran, your efforts matter. Remember, Veterans Day is not just about honoring those who served in the past. It is also about standing beside those who continue to need us today.

Let's finish our Fall District Conferences strong, keep the momentum going in our membership efforts, and begin looking forward to a successful Mid-Winter Conference. Most importantly, let's continue building those connections that make our Legion Family so special. Different Posts. Same Team. A Stronger Oklahoma!
For God and Country,

Karen Cruice
Vice Commander East
The American Legion Department of Oklahoma

Department Vice Commander – West

Wayne Flowers
Vice-Commander West
580-623-3262
Cdrpost273@yahoo.com

National Executive (NEC) Committeeman

Greetings Legionnaires!

October was a busy month for the NEC and Oklahoma Senior Leadership attending the National Fall Meetings. Our new Commander Shirley May and new Adjutant Stark Davis attended three days of meetings including new Commander and new Adjutant training and were inducted into the Ye Steivos Society of Department Adjutants and their Department Commanders. This group also raises funds for Legion Charities including the Veterans and Children's Funds and others.



Department of Oklahoma Candidate for Future National Commander Steven Thomas did quite well after only 5 weeks on the National leadership scene with personal one-on-one interviews with the three Senior Past National Commanders [known as the "Godfathers" in Legion leadership circles], Dan Dellinger of Virginia, Dave Rehbein of Iowa and Paul Morin of Massachusetts during a reception for National Commander Jay Bowen the first night of the meetings. A day later PDC Thomas and I as the Department NEC met with the Godfathers in the infamous Room 210 on second floor of National headquarters [attached picture] for more discussion and outlining what had to be done as far as paperwork for background checks and future National Committee assignments.

It all paid off as the last day of NEC meetings Steve Thomas was confirmed as Chairman of National Health Administration Committee, Ex-Officio Member of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission and Member of VA&R Commission Executive Committee. PDC Thomas was later appointed along with District 1B Commander and Post 1776 Adjutant Andrew Fisher to serve on the Legion E-sports Ad Hoc Committee chaired by Past National Commander Daniel Seehafer of Wisconsin.

Not bad for Oklahoma after only 5 weeks into the new Legion year. I guess the extra visits by then Leading Candidate Jay Bowen to NE Oklahoma were a positive one and led to these unexpected later appointments.

All the Department of Oklahoma National Committee Appointment Recommendations submitted by the Oklahoma NEC were unanimously approved by the National Executive Committee and appointment emails were sent the next day signed by National Commander Jay Bowen.

<u>Americanism Council to expire 2027:</u>
Clay Ballenger, Post 1 Tulsa
Robert Epperly, Post 17 Sand Springs
Derrick Shelton, Post 1 Tulsa
William Teel, Post 105 Bartlesville

Allen Usry, Post 1 Tulsa

Media and Communications Council to expire 2027
Michael Kerr, Post 64 Chandler
Lori Campbell, Post 1 Tulsa

National Security Council to expire 2027
Elmo May, Post 146 Sayre
Carrie Moore, Post 184 Moore
Kimberly Vincent, Post 58 Guthrie
Hayden Woods, Post 39 Durant

Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation Council to expire 2027
David Schacher, Post 261 Blanchard
Jack Sikes, Post 164 Tishomingo

Veterans Employment and Education Commission to expire 2027
Scott Hilgenberg, Post 242 Clayton

Veterans Employment & Education Council to expire 2027
John Bishop, Post 353 Mustang

National Cemetery Committee to expire 2028
Justin Adair, Post 15, Muskogee

Membership and Post Activities to expire 2029
Karen Cruice, Post 1776 West Tulsa

Foreign Relations Committee to expire 2029
David Horn, Post 73 Del City

Law and Order and Homeland Security Commission to expire 2029
Travis Johnson, Post 184 Moore

Previous National Committee Appointments:
Expire 2027:
National Security Commission, John Bloxom, Post 126 Bristow
Expire 2028
National Cemetery Committee, John McNeal, Post 306 Fletcher
Legislative Commission, Rex Ice, Post 111, Edmond
Unconventional Forces & Intelligence Committee, Wayne Flowers, Post 273 Laverne
Conventional Armed Forces Committee, Jim Rees, Post 306 Fletcher
Constitution and By-Laws Committee, Karen Ritter, Post 178 Grove

Congratulations to all the selectees from Oklahoma who received National American Legion Appointments!

V/R,
Charlie O'Leary
NEC DPT OK
NEC DPT OKLAHOMA

American Legion Riders

Come Ride with Our Tribe
A Message from the Director

The American Legion Riders of Oklahoma have had a busy and meaningful few months. Across our state, chapters continue to serve veterans and their families, support our communities, and build the bonds that make our Riders family strong.

One of our happiest recent moments was welcoming Little Axe Chapter 247 into our Oklahoma family. We were proud to celebrate the charter at Post 247 on October 22. Little Axe is now part of our 23-chapter Department.
To our new members: welcome aboard. We're glad you're with us and look forward to riding and serving alongside you.

Congratulations also go out to Mike Harris on his selection as a consultant to the American Legion Riders National Advisory Committee.
Mike's commitment to our Riders and our mission is greatly appreciated, and we are proud to see him bring his experience and dedication to the national level. Congratulations, Mike!

We're also looking ahead to the 2027 Oklahoma In-State Legacy Run, May 14–16. This year, we're heading west for a Wild Wild West ride in support of the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation.
The schedule will be released soon.

As we prepare, I'm asking every post, squadron, Riders chapter, and Auxiliary unit to consider donating $100 to support this year's Legacy Run.
Every contribution helps us move closer to our goal and support the Foundation's work for veterans, children, and military families.

Thank you to every Rider, chapter, supporter, and family member who gives time and heart to this mission.

Let's keep growing, serving our communities, and welcoming new members into the fold.

One Team, One Mission, One Oklahoma.
Ride for the cause, not the applause.
For God, Country, and Service,

Brett "Skipper" Martin
Director, Department of Oklahoma American Legion Riders

Past Department Commander's Corner

Greetings Legionnaires,
What a difference a year makes!

Last year at the we were thrilled to find out our presentation by the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce to the American Legion Conference Selection Committee was successful, beating out presentations from Reno, Nevada and Spokane, Washington.

This year we were surprised at the American Legion Conference Selection Committee to find out that after conferring with the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and getting their approval the Convention Selection Committee decided to move the OKC American Legion Convention date to August 23-29, 2030, from 2032. We were supposed to go to Salt Lake City, Utah in 2030, but some problems came up with the convention site when the owners decided to build a hockey rink at that location at the same time as the Legion Convention and had to cancel the contract. The Convention Selection Committee was so impressed with the convention site presentation by the OKC Chamber of Commerce and support and hospitality from the Department of Oklahoma that the National Convention site was moved from Salt Lake City to Oklahoma City for 2030.

Another positive representation from the Department of Oklahoma on the National American Legion scene and kudos to our Department Leadership for this positive representation of our State and Department!

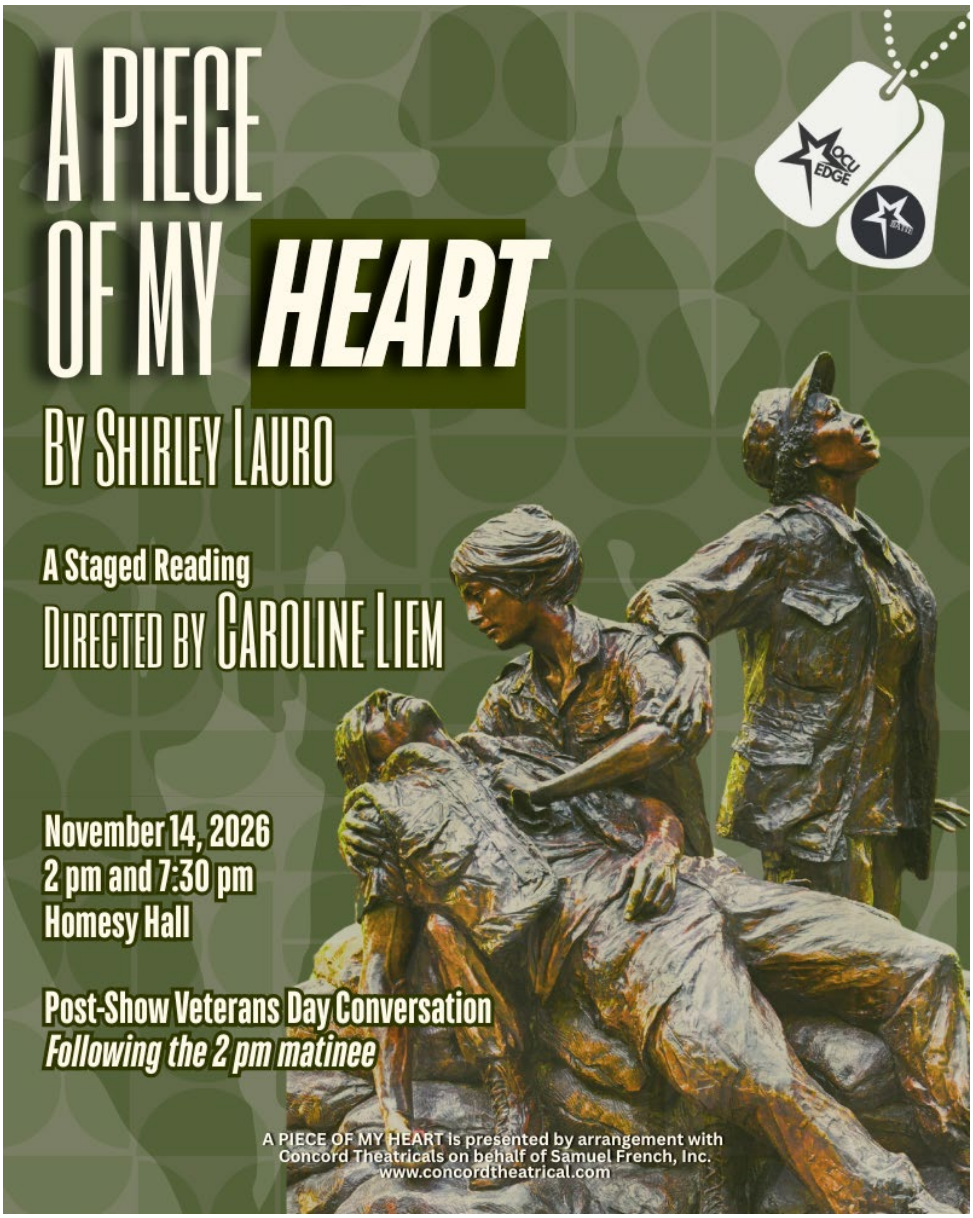
V/R,
Charlie O'Leary
PDC 2021-22

Department Adjutant

Oklahoma Veterans Commission & ODVA Update

Sons of the American Legion

Women Veterans Outreach



Oklahoma City University's School of Theatre with an invitation to *A Piece of My Heart* by Shirley Lauro, a staged reading honoring the experiences of six American women who served in Vietnam as nurses, officers, and entertainers.

We'll present two free readings on **Saturday, November 14, at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**, in Homsey Hall, inside the Sarkeys Science and Math Center on the OCU campus, at the corner of NW 23rd Street and N. Kentucky Avenue.

Contact Caroline Liem for more information concerning the above showing.cliem@okcu.edu

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

Child Well-Being Foundation

Established in 1954, The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation is to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being of children and youth; to aid progress in the field of child well-being; and to the sum total knowledge of children and youth through research, studies, surveys and projects, or in other ways, including but not limited to activities and programs benefiting the children and youth of this nation.

Banner Order Form
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1FktMBOH6aSTX8TXDstlW_FBhUsz1p3dI

American Legion Auxilliary



A Message from Your Department President

Honoring Our Veterans: More Than a Day of Remembrance

Each year on November 11, communities across our nation pause to recognize and honor the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States. Veterans Day is more than a date on the calendar. It is a time to say thank you to those who answered the call to serve our country.

Veterans Day gives us an opportunity to remember the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families. Behind every uniform is a person who left behind family, friends, a job and the comfort of home to serve something greater than themselves.
But honoring our veterans should not happen just one day a year.

The American Legion Family is committed to making sure that gratitude becomes action. Through The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion, our members work together in communities across Oklahoma and throughout the nation to support our veterans, active-duty military, their families and our communities.

Our mission is carried out in many ways—supporting veterans and their families, providing assistance to those in need, honoring our military traditions, supporting youth programs, promoting Americanism and giving back to the communities we call home.
At the heart of it all is a simple belief: we are family.

The American Legion Family brings together people from different backgrounds and generations, united by a common purpose—to serve those who served and to make sure the sacrifices of our veterans are never forgotten.

This Veterans Day, I encourage everyone to do more than simply say, “Thank you for your service.” Take a moment to listen to a veteran's story. Visit a local veteran’s organization.

Attend a Veterans Day ceremony. Support a veteran-owned business or a local program that serves veterans and military families.

Most importantly, remember that freedom comes with a price, and generations of Americans have been willing to pay that price so that the rest of us can enjoy the freedoms we sometimes take for granted.

To every veteran—past and present—thank you for your courage, your sacrifice and your service to our great nation.

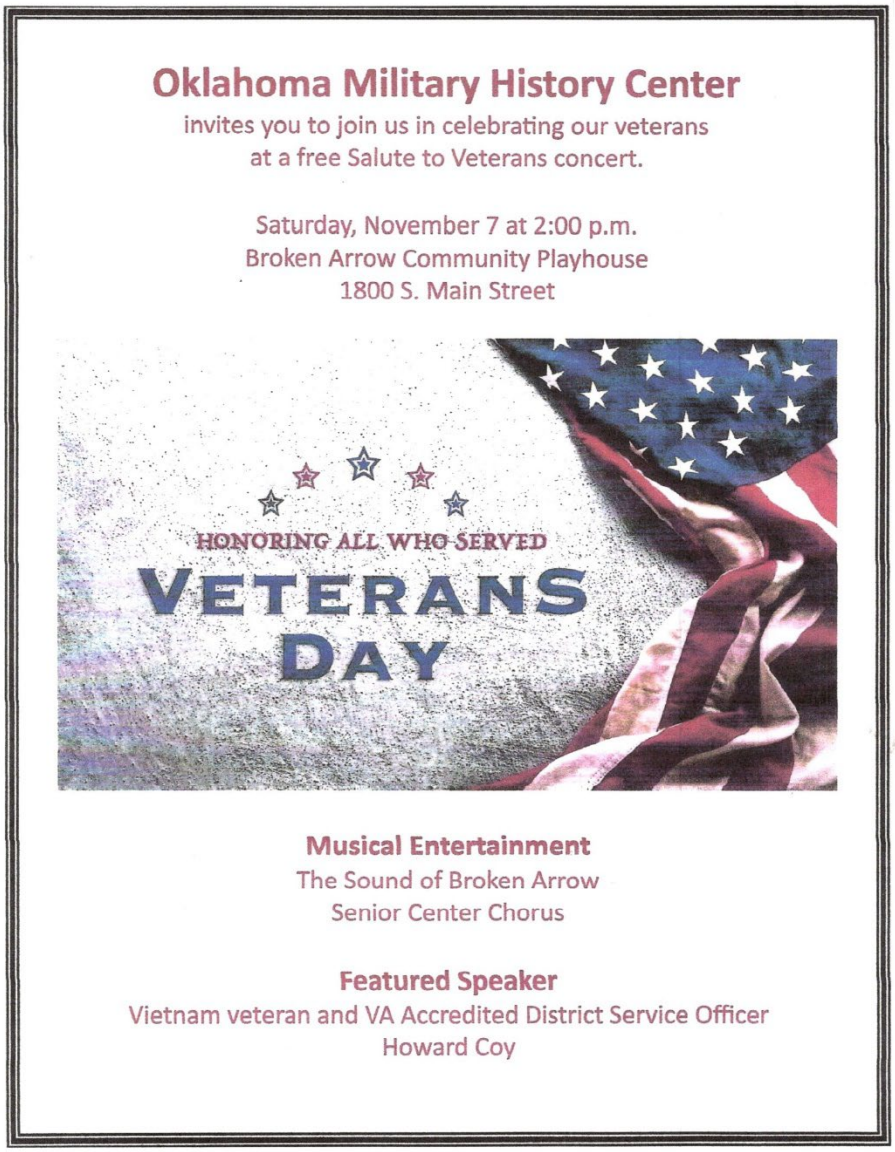
May we never forget.

Serving those who served,
Donna Snodgrass
Department President
American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Oklahoma

Veterans Service Officer

Jack Sikes Jsikesokamlvso@gmail.com
443-271-5545

American Legion Oklahoma VSO Tool Box
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1N7SEJNiLaggXafRX5XBSTkd2stJrhDHK?usp=sharing
American Legion Oklahoma DSO Tool Box
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12YR0c_mw5bxAIBin2bqhUWh5ns78T2-1?usp=drive_link



Oklahoma National Legislative Committee

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

OCTOBER - 2026

Rex Ice



The number one issue in Washington DC for Veterans is the Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA). This initiative will help keep up to $58 Billion Dollars in Veterans' funding over the next ten years. Unfortunately, the TCAVA legislation has stalled in the House of Representatives. We are in the middle of campaign season and Congress will not be back in session until after the November election. When you talk to your members of congress this election season, please let them know that we need them to support the passage of the TCAVA.

The Oklahoma State Legislature is currently out of session. We met with some of the members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee this month. A couple of areas of concern are the seven Veterans' homes in the State of Oklahoma. We support efforts to improve funding for these facilities. Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (OKDVA) currently houses over 1,100 veterans at these facilities. It costs over $400 per day for each Veteran in these facilities. Providing the quality of care these Veterans deserve is an important issue for the American Legion.

When you talk to your State Representatives and Senators during this election season, please let them know this is an important issue they need to support. We would also like the state legislature to explore expanding tax cuts for all disabled Veterans. This would be based on the level of disability verified through the Veterans Administration.

Another area of concern is the Ardmore and Clinton Veterans homes. Funding must be appropriated to OKDVA to develop a comprehensive plan that will assess construction and renovation plans for these facilities.

We would also like to ask the legislature for funding a subsistence allowance for all Senior Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets contracted as MS-III and IVs at one of the three universities in Oklahoma. This pilot program is endorsed by the ROTC programs at UCO, OU and OSU. It would provide approximately $2,000 per semester for contracted ROTC students. The current enrollment at these schools of contracted ROTC students is around 400 cadets. This program would cost approximately $1.5 million dollars per year.

We need to update the legislative liaison committee. Please make your recommendations to either Charlie O'Leary or Rex Ice. I need the name and contract information on all individuals nominated for this committee by the end of November 2026.

I would like to encourage all American Legion members to vote in the November elections. Let your Representatives know that Veteran's issues need to be a priority in the upcoming year.

Respectfully,
Rex Ice, American Legion Legislative Committee

Legion News

AWARDS

The time has come to demonstrate to the world that you are a nice person and deserve wonderful Christmas gifts. I can help you out with projecting that image. All you have to do is nominate someone for an American Legion Award.

We need nominations for VA Healthcare Provider of the Year, VA Physician of the Year. Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, Firefighter of the Year. Employer of Veterans Small (1-50) employees, Employer of Veterans Medium (51-200) employees and Employer of Veterans Large (more than 200) employees. Legionnaire of the Year. Media Support Professional of the Year. VSO/PSO of the Year.

For VA Healthcare Provider and Physician, we/you have to have authorization from their Supervisor to nominate them. For the LEO and FF, we/you must have authorization from their Chief or Supervisor. To nominate an Employer of Veterans at least 10% of their

I have to have the completed nominations no later than April 30th . If you don't send them before that, don't send them.

I promise that if you nominate someone for any or all of these categories that I will tell Santa Clause you've been good.

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

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Oklahoma ESGR Committee Update: What You Do Matters

The Oklahoma Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Committee extends its sincere thanks to volunteers who support military service members and their families. Through employer outreach, awards, employment assistance, and military outreach, volunteers help protect service members' civilian careers, prevent financial hardship, and strengthen relationships between military personnel and employers. **"What You Do Matters"** is more than a motto; it reflects the lasting impact of every volunteer's service.

A recent case illustrates the importance of this mission. A service member deployed for up to 12 months after notifying his employer, who threatened termination because of an upcoming contract. While the service member was deployed, the employer sent termination papers. The employer was the service member's father, and rather than pursue legal action, he simply wanted someone to explain that the decision was wrong. This situation underscores the importance of educating employers about their responsibilities and ensuring service members are treated fairly.

Recruitment and outreach remain top priorities. Volunteers are encouraged to wear ESGR apparel, share their experiences, recruit new members, and recognize supportive employers through Patriot Awards. A letter of appreciation from the state chair should accompany Patriot Awards when presented. Oklahoma had two finalists for the 2026 Freedom Award but no winner; nominations are already underway for 2027, with 16 submitted. A new award category recognizes the Military Industrial Base. Outstanding after-action reports should

be submitted to Rachelle, and volunteers should complete required training, record their volunteer hours in the My Volunteer Hours database in MMS, and submit their monthly reports.

The committee will schedule its quarterly meeting for a Saturday in early November. Virtual Ombudsman Sustainment Training on ESGR and Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service collaboration is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 18, at 1 p.m. Oklahoma's three working ombudsmen handled 12 inquiries and four cases in October, creating an urgent need for additional volunteers. Service members seeking assistance at outreach events should use the online Inquiry Request system to receive an ombudsman callback by the next business day.

Military outreach included information tables at the National Guard Steps Run on Oct. 3, the Army National Guard's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program event on Oct. 24, and the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Family Day on Oct. 25. Employer outreach continues, with the committee seeking contacts at Cherokee Federal and Cherokee Analytics. A Bosslift event remains in the planning stages.

Upcoming recognition events include Patriot Award and Statement of Support signings at C M Truck Beds in Madill on Nov. 2 at 9 a.m. and Arvest Bank in Tulsa on Nov. 5 at 9 a.m. The City of Elk City will receive an Above and Beyond Award on Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. Seven Seals Award presentations are scheduled for American Legion Post 12 in Warr Acres and Oklahoma Veterans Commissioner Brett Martin on Nov. 9, with another presentation for Marcus Castillia in Edmond on Dec. 4 at 10:30 a.m.

Additional resources include VetJobs employment assistance, Army Reserve unit locations, Navy Reserve Centers, and Defense Manpower Data Center workforce reports. These resources can help veterans and service members explore employment opportunities and locate Reserve Component units.

ESGR volunteers are encouraged to take pride in their service, invite others to join, and continue building bridges between service members and civilian employers. Every award presented, every concern addressed, and every supportive employer recognized strengthens the nation's Reserve Component.

Stand in the gap. Be the bridge. We all serve. What you do matters.

Membership

Welcome to The American Legion League!

Membership is a Team Sport



RANK	DISTRICT	DISTRICT COMMANDER	POINTS
1	4A	Vane Bell III	12
1	1A	Rich Conn	12
3	6A	Michael Devenitch	10
4	2B	Kayla Rector	8
5	1B	Andrew Fisher	7
6	5B	David Schacher	5
7	5A	Ezekiel Jenkins	4
8	6B	Bobby Marshall	3
9	7	Elmo May	2
—	2A	Kayla Rector	—
—	3A	Scott Hilgenberg	—
—	3B	Randy DeWitt	—
—	4B	Vane Bell III	—
—	8A	Barry Vincent	—
—	8B	Philip Holland	—



RANK	DISTRICT	DISTRICT COMMANDER	TOTAL POINTS (AFTER GAME 2)
1	1A	Rich Conn	24
2	6A	Michael Devenitch	20
3	5A	Ezekiel Jenkins	13
4	1B	Andrew Fisher	12
4	4A	Vane Bell III	12
4	6B	Bobby Marshall	12
7	5B	David Schacher	11
8	2B	Kayla Rector	8
9	7	Elmo May	5
10	8A	Barry Vincent	4
11	2A	Kayla Rector	—
11	3A	Scott Hilgenberg	—
11	3B	Randy DeWitt	—
11	4B	Vane Bell III	—
11	8B	Philip Holland	—



Karen Cruice
Department of Oklahoma
Vice Commander East

DD Form 214 Assistance

A great tool and often a quick turnaround to assist a Veteran or loved one request their DD-214. Quicker than snail mail, as soon as the following day.

Help with a Federal Agency - Senator James Lankford

Senator Lankford's reps in the Tulsa office work with the National Archives. They have been extremely helpful in requesting and following up with any documents needed.

Very self-explanatory when completing, although I will share, if you are not a direct family member, they will ask for a document from the next-of-kin; Driver's License, Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, etc., which is easy enough to follow-up with.

Department of Oklahoma Fundraising Committee



Legion Family,
Chris Sherbourne
Department Fundraising Committee Co-Chair
The American Legion, Department of Oklahoma

Department Blood Program Chair

John Bishop, 405-414-2515, jbishop22@cox,net
Blood Donor Program Chair,

https://ourbloodinstitute.org/

Fall District Conferences

East

- **DISTRICT 1 - 07 November 2026, Tulsa, OK Post 1776**
- **DISTRICT 4 - 21 November 2026, Bristow, OK**

West

- **DISTRICT 5 - 14 November 2026, Moore, OK**

DEC

- **DEC #3 - TBD**

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

For submissions, please include District and Post number in Subject line

District 1A

Rich Conn – Commander

Post 178 – Grove



District 1B
Andrew Fisher – Commander

Post 1776 – Tulsa





POST 1 LAUNCHES NEW ORATORICAL ACADEMY

Dr. Tamecca Rogers Develops Innovative Tool to Help Students Prepare for Competition

Tulsa's Historic American Legion Post 1 has launched a new **Oratorical Academy** designed to give students more than an invitation to compete — it gives them a clear path to prepare.

The Academy is the work of **Dr. Tamecca Rogers**, a Post 1 Executive Board member who saw an opportunity to strengthen one of The American Legion's premier youth programs. The American Legion Oratorical Contest challenges high school students to study the U.S. Constitution, develop their public-speaking skills, and compete for scholarship opportunities. But Dr. Rogers believed Posts could do more than announce the contest and expect students to determine the rest on their own.

"I created the American Legion Post 1 Oratorical Academy because I didn't want us to simply invite students to compete and then expect them to figure out how to prepare on their own," Dr. Rogers said. "If we are asking young people to step up, study the Constitution, find their voice and stand before an audience, then we should give them the tools to put their best foot forward."

That idea became the foundation of the Academy.

The web-based program guides students step-by-step from registration through Competition Day, providing training, practice opportunities, guidance and support along the way. The goal is not simply to produce a contest winner, but to help every participant become a stronger, more confident communicator.

"The Academy gives students a clear path from registration to Competition Day," Dr. Rogers said. "My hope is that whether a student wins the competition or not, they leave this experience more confident in their voice and knowing that what they have to say matters."

Post 1's local Oratorical Contest is scheduled for **December 9**, with the winner advancing to the District competition.

For Post 1, the Academy represents more than a new website. It is an example of what can happen when Legion programs are paired with new ideas, technology and a willingness to give young people additional tools to succeed.

Dr. Rogers deserves tremendous credit for taking the concept from idea to reality. Her work has created a resource that strengthens Post 1's own Oratorical program while also demonstrating what may be possible for other Posts looking for new ways to recruit, prepare and encourage student participants.

At its heart, the Oratorical Academy reflects a simple idea: if The American Legion asks young people to step forward, study the Constitution and find their voice, we should do everything we can to help them succeed.

Learn more about the Post 1 Oratorical Academy at:
oratoricalacademy.lovable.app

Post 227 - Barnsdall



Provided the Color Guard for the Football Homecoming Parade for the Barnsdall Panther Football Game that occurred on the evening of October 22nd. Participants included front row left to right American Legion members Claud Rosendale, Joshua Walters, Emmanuel Martinez, J. D. Cole and Ivan Winger. Second row left to right are American Legion Auxiliary members Eleanor Allison and Paula Weidner.

District 2A
Kayla Rector – Commander

District 2B
Kayla Rector – Commander
District 3A
Scott Hilgenberg– Commander

District 3B
Randy Dewitt – Commander

Post 65 – Ardmore

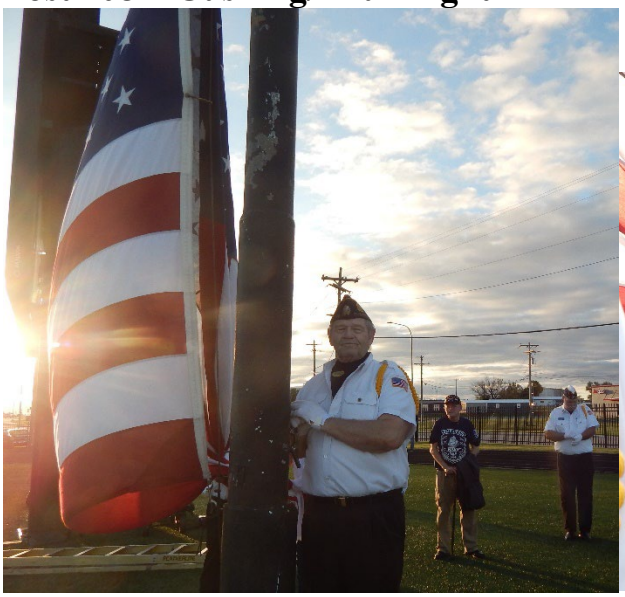


Picture from ceremony of three unclaimed Veterans that we brought to Ardmore for final resting place.

District 4
Vane Bell – Commander

District 5A
Ezekiel Jenkins - Commander

Post 108 – Cushing/Drumright







`"On October 2, Post 108 Legionnaires raised the flag for the Cushing High School Homecoming football game. Post 108 performs this same ceremony at all Cushing High School and Drumright High School home football games."

Post 58 – Guthrie

TAL LeBron Post 58 remains focused on the mission of the organization.

Visit https://www.lebronpost58.org/ for Post info or follow on Facebook at LeBron Post 58 American Legion.

Legionnaire Max Warren was recognized for his dedication to Post 58. At 90 years young, Max has played a

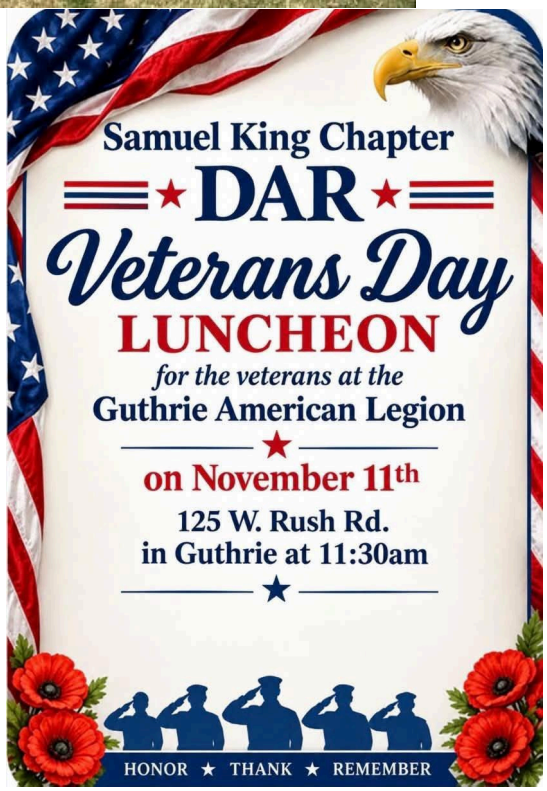
vital role on our Building Committee and as a PEC member. Heather Holman of Channel 4 News Pay it 4Ward

Segment joined us recently at the Post. Check out the story https://kfor.com/news/pay-it-4ward/spry-oklahoma-veteran-90-helps-remodel-american-legion-building/Post Executive Committee member Steve Gentling is dedicated to the beautification of Honor Park throughout the year! His love for gardening shows. The Post would like to thank Tara Cotta Garden Outlet, TLC and the City of Guthrie for their in-kind donations!

The Post is ready for the Veterans Day parade and ceremony. Legionnaires Captain John Shore, U.S. Navy Ret. will be the Keynote Speaker, and Lt Colonel Kyle Brede, U.S. Army Ret., will be the Master of Ceremony. The Daughters of the American Revolution will provide an array of dishes and desserts immediately following the ceremony at 1130.


HONOR
PAR


GUTHRIE
VETERANS DAY
PARADE
HONOR ★ SERVICE ★ SACRIFICE ★ FREEDOM
WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 11, 2026
Join the American Legion LeBron Post 58 and the Guthrie High School JROTC as we march in the Veterans Day Parade to honor and celebrate all who have served our nation.
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
10:15 AM Formation at Golden Age
10:20 – 10:29 AM Honors at Golden Age
• GHS Fight Song
• National Anthem (GHS Choir)
• Cadet Creed (JROTC)
10:30 AM Depart for Honor Park
~10:38 AM Arrive at Honor Park
10:38 – 10:59 AM Veterans Day Ceremony
• Invocation
• National Anthem (GHS Band)
• Guest Speaker Remarks
• Service Medley – America the Beautiful (GHS Choir)
11:00 AM Taps Played (GHS Band)
11:05 AM Load buses & return to GHS
All are welcome to join us in this special tribute.
LET US COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY
Join the American Legion LeBron Post 58 and the Guthrie High School JROTC as we march in the Veterans Day Parade to honor and celebrate all who have served our nation.
AMERICAN LEGION LEBRON POST 58 GUTHRIE, OK
GUTHRIE HIGH SCHOOL JROTC
VETERANS ★ COMMUNITY ★ GUTHRIE ★ ALWAYS REMEMBER

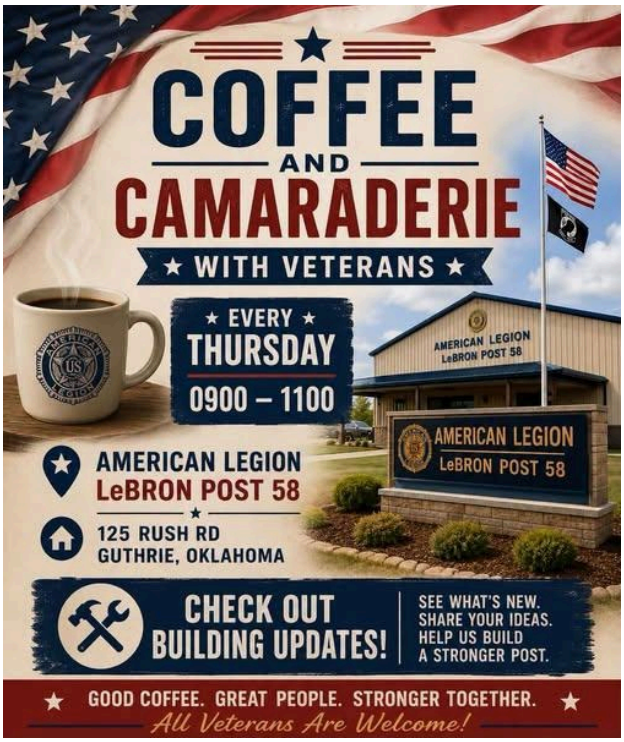

Samuel King Chapter
DAR
Veterans Day
LUNCHEON
for the veterans at the
Guthrie American Legion
on November 11th
125 W. Rush Rd.
in Guthrie at 11:30am
HONOR ★ THANK ★ REMEMBER

The American Legion Auxiliary is in the midst of their busy season with the 5th Annual Turkey Trot 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run ready to go. Trotters can register at https://runsignup.com/Race/Register/?raceId=153659

Proceeds benefit Veterans and their families. Donations are also being accepted for the 16 Thanksgiving Food Baskets. The Auxiliary partners with the Guthrie Public Schools to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Baskets to families in need. Veterans in need can also receive a food basket. Arrangements are being made for the Quilts of Honor members to present quilts to Veterans in the local nursing homes and assisted living facilities.
Peer to Peer is in full swing. A time of camaraderie amongst Veterans. Need not be a member to join in on the conversation. The 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month from 1130-1230.







Work continues at the Post. The Certificate of Occupancy was recently received, and the building can officially be rented to those interested.

Legionnaires receive drywall and mud from the LOWES delivery driver. Red Vests assist with installation of insulation and drywall following delivery.







Legionnaire Timothy Hibner donated his time and equipment to assist with digging the trench for the plumbing and electrical lines, while Legionnaires Jeremy Stahl, Max Warren, Jim Vincent assisted. Max Paid It 4Ward with his $400.00 to the building project and suggested we

purchase the parking bumpers. The Post immediately ordered them for installation, painted the parking stripes and hung the parking signs. The front of the Post took on an immediate official business look. The 30-foot flagpole and Post signage will be installed in the coming days. The Grand Opening will also take place soon. Max was convinced the news was joining us to do a follow-up story on the property. He was surprised to find several of his family members in attendance watching the story / interview take place. He was pleasantly surprised by the turn-out.





Congrats to The American Legion Auxiliary LeBron Unit 58 Officers! Thank you, District 5 President Edie Thomas, for installing President Charlissa Hunter, First Vice President Kim Vincent, Secretary Lula Smith- Manderscheid and Treasurer Alice Allen. Members Lily Cross, Judy Owens, and Junior Member Lil Monchy were also installed as members of the Unit. We are off to a great 2026-2027 Year! Not pictured Chaplain Joan Smith.





Legionnaire Cliff Hanks and Auxiliary President Charlissa Hunter continue to organize a Legion booth at Gun Shows and the Home & Garden Shows to raise awareness on Post 58’s

Transitional Homes Project. Stay tuned for some exciting news as the membership prepares to kick-off our fundraising campaign.





National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony was held at The American Legion LeBron Post 58 honoring those who were held captive and returned, as well as those who remain missing. Thank you Legionnaires and family, members of the Daughters of the American Revolution, American Legion Concho Post 401 Commander Turtle and friends, and community members for joining us. Members enjoyed the Guthrie Road Celebration, as a Trophy Sponsor and vendor. One of our Legionnaires served as a judge while our young Auxiliary member participated in the Hula Hoop Contest. The trophies were all very creative.











9/11 Remembrance Ceremony at The American Legion LeBron Post 58. Long before radios, pagers, or fire alarms, daily announcements were sent from headquarters to fire houses by system of commands and telegraph. When a firefighter died in the line of duty, headquarters would transmit five bell strikes, repeated in four series. This custom has continued through the years to this day. It is a form of rendering final honors to departed comrades. In the fire service this is known as “striking the four fives”;. Firefighter Paramedic Justin Nelson Jr, of Guthrie Fire, gave the presentation. Justin also placed the Memorial Wreath in remembrance of all who perished on September 11, 2001, and for those in uniform who lost their lives in the war on terrorism. Veterans from VFW Post 7740 Crescent, American Legion Post 200 Crescent, Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution Samuel King Chapter Edmond, and local Legion Family members attended the Inaugural 9/11 Remembrance Day Ceremony.




Legionnaires are so thankful for the many partnerships we have. Thank you, Kristina McCombs, Program Director Senior Life Solutions, Mercy Hospital, and staff for joining us to share more about the programs Mercy offers. They also bring donuts to share. Join us every Thursday morning for coffee and donuts 0900- 1100 at 125 Rush Road.




District 5B
Dave Schacher - Commander

As we are finally getting cooler weather and the year is winding down to the upcoming holiday season, lots of post activities are happening in 5 Bravo , I appreciate ALL posts in the

district on an outstanding job in community involvement as well as membership. Veterans Day is the 11th a solemn day. The fall District meeting will be in Moore (hosted by Post 184) 11/14/26 and the US Marine Corps BIRTHDAY !!!!! (Semper Fi to ALL of our Marines)

Also, if any members wish to be a Veterans Service Officer please contact me.

Dave Schacher
Commander 5 Bravo

okresqtek51@yahoo.com
580-747-6234

Post 184 – Moore

A Spooktacular October at Moore Post 184

October brought plenty of treats, laughs, and community spirit to Moore Post 184! We kicked things off with Poker Night – always a good time with pizza, friendly competition, and plenty of laughs. If Travis doesn't cheat…Just kidding, Travis!




Our general membership meeting, held on the second Tuesday of each month, featured two guest speakers. Gary Brown, owner of SleepSmartz. He discussed the sleep-support resources for Veterans and First Responders. Adam Ely, owner of Hard-Luck Motor Pool. He assists Veterans with basic car repairs while the customer covers the cost of the parts.






On Saturday, October 10th, our own Amanda Neito was responsible for putting together our Be the One walk, that brought attention to suicide prevention and the importance of looking out for one another. Amanda is Moore Post 184's Liaison and social media extraordinaire. She even won an award recognizing her social medial work. Congratulations, Amanda!









Hocus Pocus, was our indoor trick-or-treating event at Central Park. And really - don't you just love Carrie, our Commander as a Care Bear with Joe Connor our Sergeant-at-Arms Who knew leadership could be so cuddly?







Getting our craft on!! Craft night at our post had us going in circles – in the best way! James Lane, our 2nd Vice, showed us how to make wreaths. With a little guidance and creative twist, we discovered there's more than one way to bring our Post full circle.





October 27th was a special evening for our American Legion Auxiliary as these officers were sworn in. President, Sara Musick, Secretary, Amanda Nieto, Treasure, Sandy Lane and Chaplain, Pegi Moncrief.






With so much happening, things can feel a little overwhelming. As the saying goes, "Adjust your crown and move on!" Bridget King our Judge Advocate and Chaplain as well as Arrie Flowers, our Adjutant and Finance Officer, took that advice literally. The Queens are on deck! Go Navy ! 😊



We'll wrap up the month on Halloween, October 31st, with Haunt the Post from 4-7pm. Serving hot dogs, chips and handing out candy to all ghosts and goblins, big and small.

Thank you to everyone who helped make October such a Spooktacular, I mean Spectacular month. From sharing laughs to serving our Veterans and welcoming our neighbors, American Legion Post 184, Moore, Oklahoma continues to show what our family and community is all about. For God and Country!

District 6A
Michael H. Devenitch – Commander

Post 353 – Mustang

Community

Don Kuntze honored for Boys State efforts



Legion Post 353's Don Kuntze is honored by Bart Looper for his contributions to Boys State. PHOTO BY JACOB STURM

By Jacob Sturm
news@mustangpaper.com

American Legion Post 353 members got a chance to witness an unique honor being bestowed on one of its members at their meeting Oct. 8.

Bart Looper, the Assistant Director of Oklahoma Boys State, has been on staff with the program for the past 30 years. Looper presented Mustang legion member Don Kuntze with a retirement of his Boys State city flag.

Looper said Boys State attendees are put into different groups (cities) where they learn about how a city works through electing Mayor all the way to City Dog Catchers. The activities over the week-long event allow the boys to encounter challenges and learn how to govern their cities. This is meant to show how an actual community works, and has the impacts on these boys that can define their lives.

"Well, in all the different Boys States around, they're all named after different things and people, and towns," Looper said. "In Oklahoma, it has always been the tradition that all of the cities are named after the immediate past State Commanders of the Oklahoma American Le-

See KUNTZE, page 10A

KUNTZE

Continued from page 1A

gion. So, eleven years ago when a young man named Don Kuntze became the State Commander, he was lucky enough to of course next year have a city named after him. For the next 10 years, we had Kuntze city until this past year when it was retired."

Looper stressed that every city takes incredible pride in their commanders, and the fact that they carry their guide on for the city with the name of the commander on their flag.

Looper also had high praise for Kuntze.

"I don't think there's been a more dedicated legionnaire to the program," Looper said. "He's been there all 10 years, which I can say in all my 30 years of being a part of the program, he is the only commander that I've known of that has made it every single year. And almost all of those years he was there the whole week."

Kuntze made a major impact on the boys in Kuntze city, being there for moral support and imparting wisdom on the students through spending time with the program.

In those 10 years, Kuntze city won the city of excellence multiple times.

Kuntze was presented with the flag from the city, which included all of the accolades accomplished by the city in Boys State in those 10 years of representation.

l News Thursday, October 22, 2026

Legion



Sgt. David Walker accepts an award from Post 353's Don Kuntze. PHOTO BY JACOB STURM

Legion Post 353 present certificate to David Walker

By Jacob Sturm
news@mustangpaper.com

American Legion Post 353, located in Mustang, recently awarded Sgt. David Walker with a certificate recognizing him as the Posts outstanding teacher for his service to the American Legion Education program.

Walker was in attendance to receive the honor, which the Post 353 leaders awarded him on behalf of the National Americanism Commission.

Legion member Don Kuntze presented the award, which said it was unwavering commitment to supporting the four pillars of the American Legion.

Walker works with the Mustang Public Schools JROTC Program as the Senior Army Instructor.

According to information found through the American Legion's website, The National Americanism Commission serves as a core division of The American Legion that was established in 1919 to promote civic responsibility, patriotic values, U.S. flag protection, community service, and youth development.

Legion members in attendance recognized the honor, which was officially awarded July 9, among myriad others during their October meeting.

Legion Post 353 meets at the Senior Center inside Mustang Town Center.

District 6B
Bobby Marshall – Commander

District 7
Elmo May - Commander

Congratulations to Post 30(OSR) Granite, Post 123, Sentinel and Post 151 Reydon for already reaching 100% membership renewals. You have all done a great job. As for the rest of the posts in District 7, continue reaching out and calling your members that haven't renewed. We can be the TOP DISTRICT again this year, but it is going to take all of us. Thanks, you all for everything you all do.
Post 41 Adjutant, Bobby Stewart and his wife Judy (ALA) worked and served refreshments at Bingo at Clinton Veterans home twice this month. TAL and ALA joint service. Department Chaplain attended the Leadership conference at Post 12. Commander Keith Brisco conducted church service on the fourth Sunday of October for residents at the Clinton Veterans home. Post 41 will take part in city of Clinton Trunk-or-Treat on Saturday, October 31st.

Post 91 in Weatherford gave out some scholarships, they will have a flag ceremony on Veterans Day and put out flags on Veterans graves at the cemetery in Weatherford.

Post 146 – Sayre





Post 146 in Sayre had a blood drive on 1 October with 12 showing up and 9 were able to give. We had Legionnaires, Auxiliary, police officers and community members participate.





Post 146 had a haunted house with plenty of scares, screams and lots of fun. The surrounding communities and residents of Sayre made this a great success. I want to give a shoutout to everyone that has volunteered their time. Without all your help we couldn't have done this. Pictured volunteers of event.

District 8A
Barry Vincent - Commander

Post 53 – Perry



Commander Jeremy Hines introduced Brian Friend and Melinda Bolay of Trout Funeral Home at the October 6 American Legion Post 53 meeting, where they discussed the benefits of prearranged funeral plans. Bolay stressed the importance of veterans keeping their military discharge papers and ensuring family members have a copy. These documents help arrange military funeral honors, including an Honor Guard and, when eligibility requirements are met, a ceremonial 21-gun salute. Including the paperwork with a prearranged plan can spare grieving families additional difficulties. Approximately one in three people has made funeral arrangements in advance, allowing them to plan expenses and provide peace of mind for loved ones. With traditional casket and burial services approaching $20,000, cremation options have also become increasingly popular. Prearranged plans may be paid for in installments, transferred to another state and coordinated with national veteran's cemeteries when applicable.





District 8B

Philip Holland – Commander

Post 273 – Laverne

--Fall-a-Days Expo, October 23-25th.
--12hr Vigil-November 10th 7am to 7pm
--Army/Navy Watch Party, Potluck snacks for the game, potluck supper to follow, First United Methodist Church—December 12th at 3pm.
--2027 Weapons Drawing – Henry Goldenboy 22mag, Taurus Judge .410/45 Long Colt/99 Long Colt---4th of July is date of drawing--$10 per ticket or 6 for $50.

PLEASE SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS TO

TALOK1889@GMAIL.COM

NO LATER THAN 1800hrs on the 28TH OF THE MONTH

Please include District and Post number in the subject line for submission

POST EVERLASTING



Randall Engleman



https://www.smithfamilycares.com/obituaries/randall-engleman

Ulon Killmer



https://www.eisenhourfh.com/obituary/ulon-killmer

Eldon Ray Randolph



https://www.palmermarlerfh.com/obituaries/eldon-randolph

Clifford Dane Madewell



https://www.matherlyfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/clifford-madewell

Jeremy Scott Moore



https://www.palmermarlerfh.com/obituaries/jeremy-moore