

THE 1889 LAND RUN



DEPARTMENT
OF
OKLAHOMA



American Legion Newsletter

45th Edition, April 1, 2026

American Legion Department Commander

Oklahoma fellow Legionnaires,

Legion Family, Spring is upon us as we move into April. I hope you all are preparing to celebrate our Nations Semi-Quincentennial and continue all the positive momentum across the Department.

Half of the Spring District Meetings are now complete, and I'd like to thank and congratulate all our newly elected or reelected District Officers. Many Posts will also soon be holding new Officer Elections, and I look forward to seeing what Legionnaires the new and upcoming leaders of the future will be.

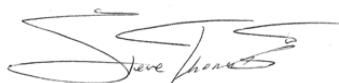
We had an amazing class of Oklahoma American Legion College this past month up in Grove that included members from the whole family. Several alumni of past classes made it by. Dean Woods (PDC) did a fine job along with his assistants. Several students of this class immediately jumped into action and have already been elected to District positions which is awesome to say the least.

Several of our Oklahoma Family spent last weekend in Olathe, Kansas, Fort Leavenworth and the Kansas City WWI Museum with National Commander Dan K. Wiley and fellow members from across the Nation celebrating his year as National Commander. It was a great time except for me getting suckered into going on stage during the entertainment at the Commanders Banquet. I won't go into the horrific details of what they did to me (it included fluffy bunny ears) but I will admit there is video proof that we will share at Convention if and only if the Department reaches 100% membership this year.

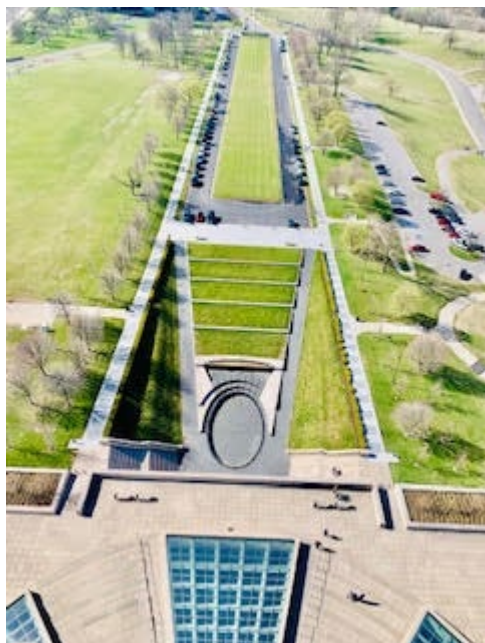
Membership in Oklahoma continues to thrive, for the first time in a decade Oklahoma has surpassed the 90% National Membership percentage and have also hit each and every monthly goal along the way. As part of the Midwest Region, we are the only Region that has had every Department hit every goal. As of this morning Oklahoma sits number 8th Nationally only a lean 8/10ths of a percent (94 members) behind number two South Dakota. We are also only approximately 900 members away from hitting the 100% mark, so kudos to each and every one of you doing buddy checks, community outreach and bringing Veterans back to the Family.

Our Department has had many members step up and announce intention to run for various offices for the next administrative year, I encourage you all to support these candidates putting themselves out there and invite them to your Posts so you can get to know them and what direction and how they plan to assist you and us in leading us in to the future.

Public involvement goes a long way to our mission. Stay engaged with our community events or create your own. With 2026 being the year of our semi-quincentennial as a country I again encourage you to create events based around this celebration. Events themed around 1776 or 250 will greatly help us spread our mission while we celebrate.



Steve Thomas
Department Commander





Campaign for Department Commander



A little bit of information about me. I have been married to Elmo for 48+ years, we have four children, 11 grandchildren, and at the present time 7 great grandchildren with two more on the way. I enjoy spending time with my family, cooking, crocheting, and working outside. I recently retired from the Clinton Veterans Center, where I was a nurse manager and the infection control nurse. I continue to visit the Veterans Center to converse with the Veterans who live there. Now that I have retired, I enjoy spending more time with family and doing some traveling.

I joined the Navy Reserves in 1988 and stayed there for one year. The Army Reserve offered me a direct commission, so I transferred in Dec 1989. I went to Officer Basic in the summer of 1990 before receiving orders to go to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield/Operation Desert Storm. We went to Ft. Sill in November 1990 prior to leaving for Saudi Arabia the 2nd of Jan 1991. My position was an emergency nurse or critical care nurse in the 44th EVAC Hospital. I returned home in May of 1991 but stayed on active duty due to an injury. While at Ft. Sill, I was assigned to help out-process other Reserve and National Guard Soldiers. By November 1991, I was back to my Reserve Unit making plans to attend Officer Advanced in San Antonio.

I felt that I wanted to expand my career in the military and do something different. I was given the chance to move to a Drill Sergeant training Battalion, so I became the Company Commander at the 3/378th, 95th Training Division. As the Commander, I saw individuals come into the military and witnessed their transformation to becoming Soldiers. I continued with my military education throughout this time frame. After moving up in the Battalion, I eventually transferred to the Division Headquarters where I worked with the Surgeon. In 1995, I was again placed on active duty to help prepare and ensure the Soldiers that were being sent overseas from the 95th Division were medically and mentally prepared to help support ongoing operations for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. When our Soldiers returned, I then assisted the Soldiers with obtaining any medical or mental health support that they needed. I spent 9 years on Active Duty during this time frame. In December 2015, I retired from the Military.

My civilian career of nursing started in 1988. I worked primarily in the Emergency Department or Intensive Care Unit before going into Correctional Nursing. As a nurse, it was always important to listen to the patient and their family so that I could convey their concerns to the doctor. I thoroughly enjoyed being a nurse and continue to stay current on medical innovations.

I want to work with the Legion members in Oklahoma to bring our Department to the forefront in our communities and state. As Legion members we can do so much together. I have worked with members from all over our state trying to increase membership, helping to exchange ideas among the different Posts, and just being there to listen to you when needed. My service to my country didn't stop when I retired. Now I can focus on helping other Veterans, their families, and the youth in our community.

During my time with the American Legion, I have held several positions at the Post level – Vice Commander, Commander, Historian, and am currently the Adjutant. I have also been the District Commander for District 7, Vice West Commander, and currently serve as the Senior Vice Commander. With each of these positions I diligently worked to serve Veterans when they sought assistance or guidance.

My level of understanding of the American Legion and the Four Pillars has progressed with the various positions. I was in the first Oklahoma Legion College class where I was able to learn more about Oklahoma and the Legion. Most recently, I attended the National American Legion College where we focused on servant leadership and serving others. I feel that both my military and civilian careers have been connected to servant leadership and serving/helping others.

As Senior Vice, I was able to help and assist multiple Posts across the state with membership numbers, answer questions regarding Posts concerns, and assisted Posts with training and mentorship. I am willing to continue to help throughout the state as your Commander if elected.

"Be The One"
Respectfully,

Shirley May

American Legion Department-Senior Vice Commander

Hello Legionnaires!

We are still making progress towards our membership goals. We are at 91.86% with 10763 members. We are moving towards the 95% goal and still need 370 members to reach that goal (11,163 members). I know that we still have quite a few members who haven't renewed yet. Reach out to those who haven't renewed and see if we can get them to renew.

We had 6 Districts increase by 1%, this past week. Fantastic job by all of you and your members. We have two Districts over 97% - District 2A and District 7. Awesome! There are 2 Districts who are between 95-97% - District 4A and District 8B. Great job! 4 of the 15 Districts have obtained 95% or higher.

I have had the pleasure of attending several Post meetings. I thoroughly enjoy meeting fellow Veterans and getting to find out what our Posts are doing across the state. Keep getting out there in your communities. Be involved with the Chamber of Commerce in your community.

Spring District Conferences are continuing to be held. Again, it is interesting to hear about all of the fabulous events that the Legion is holding or being a part of in our great state.

Remember to contact your Veterans and check on them. Make sure they are all doing okay. Spring weather is among us, so we can expect severe weather and tornadoes in our state.

Stay safe.

"Be The One"

Respectfully,
Shirley May
Senior Vice Commander

Campaign for Senior Vice Commander



I am **Patricia Mathes -Kerr** of Matheny-Burt-Parrot Post 64 in Chandler, Oklahoma.
I am a candidate for the Department of Oklahoma **Senior Vice Commander**, and I would love your support and vote!

Why am I the candidate for you?

I believe that with support there is success, which significantly improves veteran resilience. I have seen this concept repeatedly in the 12 years I have been a practicing Mental Health provider in the military and now at VA. Support provides connectedness vital to build, maintain, and sustain resilience. Veteran resilience is the key to improved quality of life, throughout all stages of the life span. This touches the American Legion family. It takes a village, and that village is the American legion Family.

Dolphins are a great representation of the concept of support=success. They travel in pods and consistently work together through the storms, waves, and calm waters contributing to their resilience and survival. The American Legion Family very much resembles dolphins in this way. This is the support I want to foster in our family from the post level, all the way through the national community.

This is a part of what I bring to you as a candidate for Senior Vice Commander, improved quality of life through support.

Support=success 4 veteran resilience.

Thank you for your support and vote!



American Legion
Auxiliary



Veterans serving Veterans, their Families and the Community

For GOD and Country

Patricia was born in Lawton, OK and moved to Stroud, OK as an infant with her mom which was near her Uncle Joe Dodson, an Army POW and Bataan Death March survivor.

Patricia was 1 of 15 chosen out of over 125 soldiers, sailors, marines, and DoD civilians worldwide to attend the Army Medical Department Center & School Master of Social Work Program in 2013 becoming a Behavioral Health Officer. It was during this time she recognized her God given mission for assisting military service members and veterans in crisis.

Since then, Patricia has worked in the Army, Air Force, and VA working with homeless veterans, addiction recovery, suicide prevention, crisis intervention, military mental health readiness, local, state and national policy creation, implementation and advocacy, and behavioral health counseling and therapy with a focus on military and veteran resiliency.

Patricia is currently finishing her Seminary studies in the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling program with a focus in Chaplain and Pastoral support.

Patricia is only the second female Legionnaire from Oklahoma to be inducted into ANAVICUS, 2025, and the first to win "Health Care Provider of the Year" at the Department and National Level, 2025.

Patricia is married to her husband and fellow Army combat veteran Michael Kerr of Post 64 in Chandler, OK. They are both dual American Legion Auxiliary life members. Their son, MAC is a member of Squadron 126 Sons of the American Legion.



POST 64, Chandler

proudly presents



Patricia Mathes-Kerr

for

Senior Vice Commander

2026 * 2027

Eligibility

Patricia Mathes-Kerr earned her eligibility for membership in The American Legion with service in the United States Army during Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan, as a Non-Commissioned Officer.

Her service time began in the Oklahoma Army National Guard in 2000 as a full time (AGR) Communications Specialist, Logistics and Administrative NCO. She received a Direct Commission into the Medical Corp. in 2012. She has been a member of the American Legion since 2013.

Education

Bachelor of Arts
University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK: 1996 (Secondary Education)

Master Social Work
Fayetteville State University, (AMEDD) Ft. Sam Houston: 2014

Master Biblical Counseling
SW Baptist Theological Seminary, (MABC) Ft Worth: 2026

Medical Officer School
(AMEDD): Ft. Sam Houston, 2012

LCSW:
State of Oklahoma: 2016

American Legion:
National Legion College 2023
Oklahoma Legion College 2023

American Legion

Post Level Activities

Post Commander, Chaplain, Judge Advocate, Sergeant-At-Arms

District Level Activities

1st Vice- Commander and
2nd Vice-Commander

Department Level Activities

Vice Commander East, Women's Veterans Committee, National Guard Liaison Committee Chair, Department Conference Workshop Instructor

National Level Activities

Americanism Committee, National Guard Committee

Support = Success
4



Affiliations

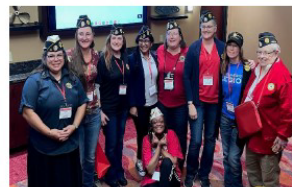


Honors

Post of the Year 2023;
Four Pillars Post Excellence Award, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; National Security, Children & Youth Services 2023

Memberships

PUFL, ALAPUFL, National Legion College, Inaugural Oklahoma Legion College, ANAVICUS, EANGUS, MOAA, 45TH INF. Div., (DAR), 20/4 Society



Hello American Legion Family!

During my candidacy for Department Sr. Vice Commander, I have been asked about leadership training and experience, which is a valid question!

First and foremost, I give God the praise and glory for the pathway my life has taken!

Here is a quick overview of my leadership training, experience, and recognition:

Experience: Three years in State Law Enforcement, 8 years as a teacher in the public school system, 21 years in the Army of which 9 years was as a Non-Commissioned Officer including team leader in combat, and 10 years as a Medical Officer, 2 years as a Director of Psychological Health with the Air Force, and 5 years accumulative with the OKC VA which included 2 years as a program coordinator.

Professional licenses (3): Licensed Clinical Social Work, Licensed Secondary Education Teacher, and CDL.

Education: 1 associates degree, 1 bachelor's degree, 1 master's degree, 1 pending master's degree from Seminary, and 3 military diplomas. I was honor graduate from Army Advanced Leadership Course and distinguished honor graduate of Army Senior Leadership Course. I graduated from American Legion basic training, the inaugural Department of Oklahoma American Legion College, and the National American Legion College. I was the first female Commander, Chaplain, Judge Advocate, and Sergeant at Arms for Matheny-Burt-Parrott Post 64 in Chandler, OK. I was the first female Department of Oklahoma Vice Commander East and the second female from the Department of Oklahoma inducted into ANIVICUS.

Executive Leadership: Over the past 25 years I have had the privilege of serving on 2 Executive Boards of Directors, 28 Boards of Directors, 2 Boards of Advisors, and 1 Board of Visitors. Currently I serve on 3, two of them for the University of Oklahoma and 1 for a veteran non-profit organization.

Awards: Over 25 leadership and excellence awards for leadership which includes military, civilian organization, Department American Legion, National American Legion, National Civilian Organization, State Congressional, and National Congressional.

My life and career has been leadership oriented and filled for the past 35 years on a consistent basis. God blessed me with the opportunity to retire in 2025 and graduate with my final master's degree from Seminary May 2026, allowing me to focus my time and energy into advancing and promoting the American Legion Family.

I appreciate your support and thank you for your time!

For God and Country,

Patricia Mathes-Kerr, CPT (r), MSW, LCSW

Campaign for Senior Vice Commander



Lance Larson

for Senior Vice Commander '26 - '27

Friends and Comrades:

Good morning legionnaires, I'm Lance Larson and I'm running for Senior Vice Commander and I'm all about Vets for Vets along with children/youth. Being a VSO is the most rewarding job in the legion out of many that are rewarding. This year the east and west have come together with Senior Vice and Dept. Commander to work with member ship and it has been working really well. Dept. Commander and Senior Vice have let east and west do it their way and my way was let the post do their own thing and it has worked and I'm the cheerleader and there if they need help. Here is a scenario that might just look familiar. Rome wasn't built in a day but also has a following caveat that it took more than one-day to rebuild. Rome didn't fall in a day – it gradually declined by people playing the part of figurehead. It began gently and quietly lulling you to a false sense of security and putting you to sleep for what is to follow. Some love the saying “that's just how it's done”. Rome wasn't built in a day, but they were laying bricks every hour. Great advancement is only possible with time and consistent effort. So, with this let us be steady with our hands and clear with our eyes. In the end what arises from honesty and understanding will stand longer than anything built in denial.

Lance Larson

Department Vice Commander – East

Greetings Legion Family,

As we move into April, we continue to build on the strong momentum established over the past several months. Much of our focus remains consistent with March, and I am proud to report that we are doing incredible work across the Department. Our retention efforts are strong, membership numbers continue to grow, and Posts are actively engaged in meaningful programs within their communities.

We are nearing the conclusion of District Conference season, with only one weekend remaining. I have truly enjoyed the opportunity to visit with so many of you at the conferences I

have attended. These conversations are invaluable, and they reinforce the strength and dedication of our Legion Family across Oklahoma.

In my role as Veterans Education and Employment Commissioned Officer, I recently traveled to Washington, D.C., where I was able to gather important information to bring back to our Department. One of the continued priorities of the American Legion remains addressing the needs of homeless veterans. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on improving best practices related to college access and technical education opportunities for our veterans.

During our legislative visits, we had the opportunity to meet with both of our Senators and as many Representatives as their schedules allowed. These meetings are critical in ensuring that the voices of Oklahoma veterans are heard and that their needs remain at the forefront of national discussions.

As April 25 approaches, we look forward to celebrating National American Legion Family Day. I encourage every Post to take part by hosting an event that highlights the unity and shared mission of the Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion.

As we move further into the spring season, Posts should be preparing for Memorial Week and taking time to recognize outstanding community members through awards such as Firefighter and Police Officer of the Year. This is also an important time to support our Boys and Girls State participants and to promote available scholarship opportunities.

Thank you for your continued dedication and service. Together, we are making a difference.

Be The One

Karen Cruice
Vice Commander East
Department of Oklahoma

Campaign for Vice Commander East

Dear Legion Family,

It has been an honor to serve as your **Vice Commander East** for the past year. Working alongside our Posts, District leadership, and Department team has been both humbling and inspiring, and I am grateful for the trust you have placed in me.

After much prayer, reflection, and encouragement from many of you, I am announcing my intention to **run for a second year as Vice Commander East**.

This past year has reinforced my belief in the strength of our Legion Family and the importance of recognition, training, and engagement at every level. I am proud of the progress we have made together—supporting Posts, celebrating achievements, strengthening programs, and keeping our focus on serving veterans, their families, and our communities.

If elected to continue serving, my commitment remains the same:

- to support our Posts and Districts
- to encourage leadership development and participation
- to recognize the hard work happening across the East
- to continue promoting *Be The One* in both words and action

There is still important work ahead, and I would be honored to continue serving alongside you as we move forward together.

Thank you for your continued support, dedication, and service to The American Legion.

Be The One

Karen Cruice

Campaign for Vice Commander East



Hello American Legion Family!



I am **Karen Ritter** of Post 178 in Grove, Oklahoma.

I am a candidate for the
Department of Oklahoma Vice Commander East
and I would appreciate your support and vote!

Support, Guidance, & Visibility: Be there to support the district commanders and guide them for the betterment of their assigned districts. Make myself available to the posts. I'm retired and don't work. Motivate and educate on how to retain membership and find ways to keep from letting them walk out the back door even if their current post is not the right place for them.

I'm willing to travel as evidenced by me attending the Lincoln Pilgrimage in Springfield Illinois on February 11th and 12th 2025 and the National Auxiliary President Pam Ray's Homecoming in October 2025. I can make myself available at most times to help work with the Districts and Posts.

I'm dedicated to supporting, guiding, and being available to those who need it. I know from experience of being a District Commander for almost 4 years that without the support from the District Team, the Post leadership, and the Department leadership that I would not have been able to do an effective job. We all need support to be successful in what we want to accomplish. I have had several mentors who helped guide me to get to where I am today. Without them I wouldn't have accomplished anything and would have failed from the beginning.

I want to provide that same thing to those who wish to move up as well or just to help them have a successful post. I want to remain visible. Without visibility, how are the membership supposed to know who you are and what you can do to aid them. Through visibility I will show that I am available when they need me. I am not afraid to ask for help if needed. If multiple issues arise, I will start with the priority issues first and work through them. I will ask for help, if need be, to respond in a timely manner.

Teamwork is key to being successful.

I am dedicated to helping make the American Legion better than it was yesterday.

Karen was born in Dillon, Montana in 1984 and moved around the Western and Central US until her family settled in Tahlequah, Oklahoma in 1994.

She is the granddaughter of a Navy Captain on her maternal side, the daughter of an Army Tech Sergeant, the cousin of a Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer, and the aunt of a Sergeant (retired), and the aunt of a Sergeant First Class still on active duty.

She wanted to follow in the footsteps of those before her after being in the JROTC program at her high school and during her first year of college the ROTC program there before joining the Army.

Since medically retiring from the Army, she went back to college and graduated in 2011 with a Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies/Criminal Justice degree.

Then she spent numerous hours volunteering in the local elementary and high school. In 2022, she joined the American Legion to continue her Voluntary Services to help Veterans as well. She spent 13 years as a caregiver to her Veteran father as well.

Karen is the mother of her son Lonnie Evans who is a Sons of the American Legion Squadron 178. She is also the Unit Auxiliary Secretary at Unit 178 and the Bingo Chairperson at her Post 178. She became a member of the Post and Unit 178 in March of 2023.



POST 178, Grove

proudly presents



Karen Ritter

for

Vice Commander East

2026 * 2027

Eligibility

Karen Ritter earned her eligibility in the American Legion for her service with the United States Army from July 2005 - June 2008 and through her deployment with Operation Iraqi Freedom from August 2006-June 2007.

She was a Heavy Wheeled Motor Transportation Operator (Truck Driver 88M). She medically retired as an E-4 Specialist. She has been a member of the American Legion since May 2022.

Education

Bachelor of Science

Northeastern State University 2011
(Paralegal Studies/Criminal Justice)

American Legion:

Oklahoma Legion College 2023



American Legion

Post Level Activities

Post Finance Officer,
Post Commander,
Bingo Committee Chairperson

District Level Activities

District Commander,
1st Vice Commander,
3rd Vice Commander

Department Level Activities

Women Veteran's Committee
Chairperson,
Constitution & By-Laws Committee
Chairperson

National Level Activities

Constitution & By-Laws
Commission



Affiliations



Honors

ARCOM (Army Commendation Medal), Children and Youth Award for generous commitment to the Grand View Elementary Academic Team in Tahlequah, Ok.

Memberships

TAL, ALA, Inaugural Oklahoma
American Legion College



Department Vice Commander – West

Hello, brother and sisters of The American Legion.

We have had some very unusual weather for March. I hope you stayed cool when needed and warm on those cool days. We have seen some changes in the West in District Commanders, Bobby Marshall 6B Duncan, Dave Schacher 5B Blanchard, 5A Ezekiel Jenkins OKC congratulations to all three. Went up to Grove on March 10th to meeting and I was impressed with the way you are treated as soon as you walk in in the door. It isn't everywhere people will make you feel so welcome. Nobody is better than the next person, we are all the same in the same American Legion. March 13 thru 15 we had American Legion College in Grove and yes, it was a turnaround trip for me but well worth it. Got to see some great people from Sand Springs Post 17, Tulsa Post 1, Grove Post 178, Jay Post 195, and Muskogee Post 15 and all were a joy to work with. Went To Post 108 Cushing for a visit always something to learn always up to something. Went to Washington Post 310 and they are a post on the rise looking for good things here. Legionnaires the legion is in an upswing and let's take some time and take advantage. Believe me good times are a head of us, and may we have a good month of April. Have visited new statehood Post 1907 in Guthrie multiple times and they look to be doing well.

They received temp. charter with close to 20 members at 5A District conference. The people in the post are friends, so I stayed to the side so there would be no conflict of interest. There are so many vets in that part of Logan County each post could realistically have 300 hundred members each. Where they meet at is nice little store on Harrison in Guthrie downtown called Utopia. Congrats 1907

Vice-Commander West

Lance Larson

Campaign for Vice Commander - West



Michael Harris

Candidate for Vice Commander West

2026-2027

I am running for the position of Vice Commander West. I have been a member of the American Legion for 16 years.

As a member of the American Legion Riders, Post 1340 I have served in various offices within the post. My leadership journey started when I was chosen to be the Chaplin of our riders post, from 2017-2021. I was elected Post Commander in 2021 and served in that position until 2024. I was elected as the DEC for District 5A in 2023 and then elected as District Commander for 5A in 2024.

I am a member of both the American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion. My military experience is USAF 3 years active duty and 23 years in the Oklahoma Air National Guard. I graduated from SEOSU in Durant with a degree in Aviation Management and a Minor in Business Finance. I retired from the FAA in July 2024 with 36 years and 8 months total Government work. I have an extensive background in working with various levels of government employees. I feel this knowledge and experience will give me the experience to serve the Department of Oklahoma as your Vice Commander West for the term of 2026-2027.

I would like to represent the West in the best way possible and to assure everyone, every decision I make will be following our Constitution and By-Laws.

Campaign for Vice Commander - West

Greetings American Legion Brothers and Sisters



My name is Wayne Flowers, and I have made the decision to run for Vice Commander-West. I have been a member of Laverne Post 273 since August of 2019, eligible by honorable service in the United States Army, which I joined after a few years of traveling 2 hours from my home in Dover, Oklahoma, to assist with funeral Honor Guard duties. After joining The American Legion, I was made Commander of Post 273 in March of 2020, and have brought Post 273 from having one meeting per year, to having regular monthly meetings, along with working alongside other area American Legion Posts and other Veterans Service Organizations, to provide Honor Guard services, community events, and started an American Legion Fishing Derby, which is held on American Legion Family Day Weekend. A position which I still hold to this day.

In 2022, I was voted in as District 8B Commander, where I expanded on getting Posts in District 8B to work together. I make both random and scheduled visits to posts in the District, not to reprimand or judge the post, but to see what I can do to assist the post with membership, or any other project or event that the post may need help with.

I have started associations with other Veteran Service Organizations that assist veterans in crisis, and have direct contact with VA representatives, that call me when a veteran in my area needs immediate help. I have intervened, and gotten help for multiple veterans that were suicidal, and I have gotten contacts made, and used, to get assistance with veterans with housing issues, worries about not having food, and even getting or giving rides for veterans that needed rides to VA appointments, needed to get to a military base to get retired military ID cards, and event to Social Security offices, to apply for replacement cards or benefits. I am currently working with the Governor's office, State Legislator's, and Federal Legislators, to get answers as to why a VA clinic was promised in NW Oklahoma 5 years ago, which has not happened yet.

In 2024, I became a member of and started a Sons of The American Legion Squadron at Post 273. I acted as Interim Commander, until the National Charter was received, and an official election could be held. I now hold the office of Adjutant in Squadron 273. And I am the District Commander for all of the District 8 area.

Also in 2024, I was appointed Liaison between The American Legion and The Sons of The American Legion and was appointed as Department of Oklahoma American Legion Historian.

I was a Combat Medic, during service in the Army, and retired from civilian Emergency Medical Service, with 23 years on a civilian Ambulance, mostly volunteer. I am currently not able to work a full-time job, due to injuries sustained while on active duty, which prevent me from doing many things without severe pain.

I believe that what the Department of Oklahoma American Legion needs, is to get past the infighting and bickering that has happened over the last few years. Some of us may not like each other, but we are supposed to be here for the purpose of helping our fellow veterans, without any judgment for any reason, or personal gain. We all learned in the military that there is no room for disrespect of any kind, or any reason.

We all also learned that, despite our personal political beliefs, we have to keep an outward neutral position about anything political. We can make this Department the absolute best in the country, as we have seen our Sons of The American Legion Detachment, and our Boys State programs prove. I am also of the opinion that if you don't like the way your Post, District, Department, or any of our programs are operating, you as an individual need to take the initiative to STEP UP AND BE THE CHANGE!

I would appreciate your vote at Summer Convention!

Wayne Flowers, District 8B Commander

Cdrpost273@yahoo.com

National Executive (NEC) Committeeman

Greetings Legionnaires!

At the end of February and first week in March, eight Legionnaires attended the Washington DC Conference in Washington, and it was a successful visit. We were able to visit all of our elected National Senators and Congressional Representatives and/or staffers as many of our Representatives were in session in Congress or Senate. We talked to them about supporting legislation that the American Legion supports providing funding and programs for veterans in our State and for the VA facilities in our State and holding the VA accountable. New National Legislative Committeeman Rex Ice from Post 111 in Edmond did an outstanding job of organizing everything, gathering information on pending legislation and making a presentation at each Congressional and Senate office in Washington, DC. We had several new National Committee members in attendance, and it was a productive learning experience for them, although the sticker shock of the very high prices for food and transportation in Washington was a surprise compared to Oklahoma, but everyone survived! We did get to hear VA Director Doug Collins from Georgia who is an ordained Baptist minister and USAF active-duty Chaplain. He quickly rescinded the AI-generated VA rule to take away a veteran's disability if their condition was stable, within 72 hours of it being publicized, after opposition from the American Legion and other Veterans groups.

Don't forget we have rescheduled the visit to our State by National Leading Candidate for National Commander in two years Matt Shuman to May 29-31 who will be coming to Tulsa and historic Post 1 in Tulsa, for round table meeting with bluecaps to discuss issues of concern and what the Legion can do better for veterans. He will also be visiting Post 308 in Tulsa and Post 1776 in West Tulsa.

Also, the Leading Candidate for National Commander next year Jay Bowen from Colorado, called me and specifically requested to visit Tulsa as he and spouse have family in Louisiana and drive from Colorado Springs to Tulsa and spend the night and love it there and then go on to their family destination in Louisiana. Those dates will be June 5-7 and will visit the Tulsa area Posts including Post 17 in Sand Springs.

-Other legionnaires from across the State are invited to attend these visits also.

-And these visits will be at no expense to the Department as we have found generous donors who are willing to make these events happen.

The National Commander Dan Wiley from Kansas will be making his official visit to the Department of Oklahoma June 28-July 3, 2026, and will be in the OKC area. He and his Aide have specifically requested to visit Bunker 58 Esports set-up at Post 58 in Guthrie. This visit is at the expense of the Department of Oklahoma and is done on a yearly basis.

There is also a possibility that another National Official may be visiting Oklahoma also, but let you know more about that when we get it firmed up! That visit will be at no expense to the Department also.

V/R,
Charlie O'Leary
NEC DPT OKLAHOMA

Campaign for NEC



Greetings Legionnaires!

At the Mid-Winter Conference in January in Norman, I formally announced that I am running for another term as your National Executive Committeeman for the Department of Oklahoma. The NEC office is a two-year term and will end in August of 2026 when the National Convention in Louisville, KY adjourns.

The past eighteen months have been a learning journey for me, as I discovered many things I didn't know and have a new perspective on what National and Legion leadership thinks of us and expectations that I didn't know of when starting.

I have tried to get new and younger Legion leaders to step up and get involved, have had some success in that endeavor and would like to continue for another two years.

After that I will be stepping aside due to my age and the travel and involvement at National level but will still be involved actively at the Department level. I would appreciate your support in accomplishing this goal.

Remember the date: July 12, 2026, 9:00 AM at Department Summer Convention, NEC is the first vote of the day!

Respectfully,

Charlie O'Leary, NEC 2024-26, PDC 2021-22

Charlie-Mike,
Continue Mission

I am declaring my
candidacy for a
SECOND TERM
as Department National
Executive Committeeman



Attending Washington Conference Meeting
with Senator Marwayne Mullen

Caring and Compassionate

Tirelessly working to bring about a positive
image for the Department of Oklahoma
with Past, Current, and Future National
Commanders, Officers, and Staff

Diligently working to develop and mentor new
and younger leaders in Oklahoma

Advocating and empowering members to
constructively connect across our State

Working to project a positive image and foster
a cohesive spirit within the Department

Support integrity and transparency of word and
action in all of our members

Double Thunderbird

45th Infantry Brigade 1980-2007
179IN, 279IN, 180IN, 160FA,
C-MED CDR 700 SB, 45BCT SURG



Active Duty/USAR 1967-1973
1st Special Forces Grp
Airborne, Okinawa
12th Special Forces Grp Airborne
OKC, Green Beret A-Team Member

Leadership Goals

- Representing Oklahoma in a Positive manner at National
- Developing new and younger Legion leaders in Oklahoma
- Helping regular Blue Caps across the State
- Working together with the entire Legion Family to benefit Veterans across the State.

FUTURE GOALS

- Wisely vote on financial and goal setting issues that affect all Oklahoma Legionnaires
- Work on camaraderie programs and projects to benefit veterans
- Reach out to Legionnaires across the State by continuing to visit Posts as I have done in the past.
- Increase communication with Blue Caps concerning issues with the VA and Congressional funding to benefit veterans, within the limitations of my duties and responsibilities as NEC

**LEGION
FAMILY
WORKING
TOGETHER
FOR YOU**



CHARLIE O'LEARY
for
**National
Executive
Committee
2026-2028**

No One Left Behind



**Vote
For
Continued
Leadership
At
NEC**

Department First Term NEC Accomplishments

- Attended all required NEC meetings
- Voted on all National issues presented
- Served as NEC Liaison on National Finance Committee
- Participated in fiscal discussions
- Voiced opinion on Policy
- Appointed Finance Committee Chaplain
- Recommended new and younger Legion Members to Natl Committees, all approved by the NEC
- Recommended new ANAVICTUS members from Dept of OK including first Female nomination in this Century
- Reported NEC activities and issues to OK membership in monthly Dept Newsletter articles, District and Dept meetings

No One Left Behind

Alternate National Executive (ANEC) Committeeman

American Legion Riders

Attention Riders Across the Great State of Oklahoma!

I bring you great news.

Our In-State Legacy Run, scheduled for 15–17 May, is well underway, and the momentum continues to build across Oklahoma. You are proving, once again, what it means to ride with purpose.

This past weekend, our Riders in the Northeast Region hosted an outstanding Legacy Run event, raising nearly \$3,000. That is exceptional work and a testament to your dedication to the cause. Bravo Zulu on a JOB Well Done, you are setting the standard.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize and welcome a new addition to our Rider family.

Bristol Chapter 127 officially received their charter last week. The charter was presented by Senior Vice Commander Shirley May at the District 4 Conference. Congratulations to the entire Bristol team, we are proud to welcome you into the American Legion Riders family.

Riders, there are several important opportunities ahead:

First, there is still time to register for the Sojourn Ride to Washington, D.C. There are already two Department of Oklahoma American Legion Riders signed up, and participation is limited to only 250 riders total, so act quickly.

Second, I strongly encourage participation in the National Legacy Run at the end of August, supporting the Veterans & Children's Foundation.

Additionally, Harley-Davidson's "Let's Ride Challenge, Ride for Heroes" is back. Please go out to our Department of Oklahoma American Legion Riders Facebook site and click on the link to register.

We also have Oklahoma American Legion Riders T-shirts currently available. These shirts feature our Riders on a motorcycle. If you would like one, please contact any of us to place an order.

T-shirts are \$25 each.



Our goal this year is \$15,000, and as of today, we have already raised over \$12,000, all in support of the Veterans & Children's Foundation.

Together, we are better.
 Together, we ride for the cause, not the applause.
 And together, we will finish strong.
 For God, Country, and Service,

Brett Martin
 Director, American Legion Riders
 Department of Oklahoma www.okamlegion.org

Past Department Commander's Corner

My fellow Legionnaires,

I want to take a moment to talk about a few things that matter to all of us.

First, elections. Leadership matters. Who we choose to lead our Posts, Districts, and Department shapes the future of the American Legion. Let's ensure we are selecting individuals who are not only willing to serve, but qualified, committed, and ready to lead with integrity.

Second, as we approach Memorial Day, let us never forget the importance of honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice. One of the most visible and meaningful ways we do this is through our poppy program. If you have poppies get them out into your communities. If you're short, poppy stickers are just as effective. This is a simple, powerful fundraiser that works whether you're in a large city or a small town. More importantly, it keeps the meaning of Memorial Day alive in the hearts of the public.

Third, continue your Buddy Checks. They matter more than you know. A phone call, a visit, a simple check-in can make a difference in someone's life. This is what we do, we take care of our own.

Before I close, I want to recognize something worth celebrating.

Congratulations to the newest Post in the Department of Oklahoma Post 1907, the Statehood Post from Guthrie. You are fast approaching 20 members, and that kind of growth is a testament to your leadership and commitment. Your presence at the 5th District Conference did not go unnoticed. Outstanding work, we are proud to have you in our ranks. Let's stay focused. Let's stay engaged. And let's continue to lead from the front.

For God, Country, and Service,
 Brett Martin
 Past Department Commander

Past Department Commander Corner

The Department of Oklahoma was well-represented at National Commander Dan Wiley's Homecoming Ceremony sponsored by the Department of Kansas and held in Olathe Kansas. Representatives from the Oklahoma American Legion Family were present including Department Commander Steve Thomas, NEC Charlie O'Leary, ANEC Michael Taylor, SAL Detachment Commander Chris Sherbourne and Auxiliary Past Department President Nancy O'Leary, Unit 1 President Jen Ann Mangum, and Commander Thomas is also Commander of ALR Grove 178 Chapter.

National Commander Dan Wiley as well as the Department of Kansas officials including PNC Jimmie Foster originally from Nowata, were glad to see us. Also, National Adjutant Rodney Roland and several PNC's including Dan Dellinger from Virginia were also present and glad to see us.

We were able to tour the WWI museum in KC which is very nice and a museum and Buffalo Soldier monument complex at Ft. Leavenworth, KS, which for some of us who were stationed there or attended military schools there, was nostalgic also.

New attitude, new atmosphere, new outreach for the Department of Oklahoma and the Legion Family, being recognized on the National level!

Keep up the good work everyone!

V/R,

Charlie O'Leary

PDC 2021-22, NEC 2024-26

Department Adjutant - Rick Redden

CAM RAHN BAY AIR FORCE BASE- VIETNAM

REUNION - SEPTEMBER 10 - 13, 2026

"To all Cam Rahn Bay Air Base, Vietnam veterans. A reunion is now scheduled in Colorado Springs, CO for September 10 - 13, 2026". Information/registration can be found at: dicancook@gmail.com or on CRB

Web Site at: 2026 Cam Rahn Bay Reunion Colorado Springs.

Any questions contact information below.

Sincerely,

Jimmy M. White, Co-coordinator

Cam Rahn Bay Air Base Reunion

PO Box 334

Wadena, MN 56482-0334

218-631-3211

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.

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_FBhUz1p3dI

2025-2026 Goal

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Cgqp7FOd6zwOIUcvG-D34KIoU72eYPBo8yk4qXXrBCM>

American Legion Auxilliary

Veterans Service Officer

American Legion Oklahoma

Tool Box

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1N7SEJNiLaggXafRX5XBSTkd2stJrhDhK?usp=sharing>

Jack Sikes

443-271-5545

Jsikesokamlvso@gmail.com

OKLAHOMA NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT FROM WASHINGTON DC

March 2026

By Rex Ice, National Legislative Committee Representative

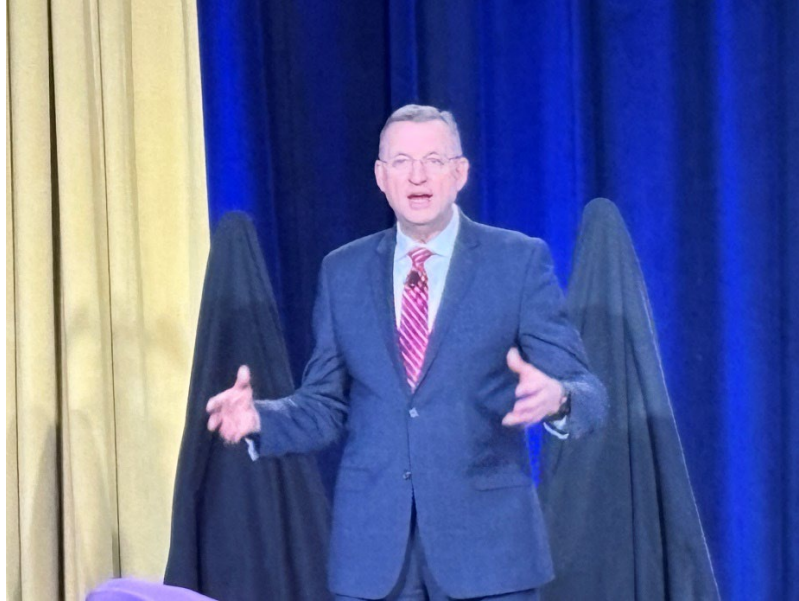


I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that participated in this year's trip to Washington DC to advance the American Legion Legislative Agenda. These individuals are, National Executive Committee (NEC) Charlie O'Leary, Department Vice Commander (East) Karen Cruise, Department Veteran Service Officer Jack Sikes, SAL Vice Commander Chris Cook, Auxiliary Representative Angie Wagstaff, Carrie Moore, Female Veterans Representative, and Rex Ice, National Legislative Committee member.

The Conference started with workshops concerning legislative issues, Female veterans concerns and information on Veteran Service Officer operations. The largest concern was the recent ruling from the Veterans Administration (VA) concerning the use of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) review of disability claims. American Legion Commander Dan Wiley addressed the conference on this and many other concerns for the American Legion in the upcoming year. Veteran Suicide, Homelessness and medical care were addressed at the conference. All are concerns for the American Legion this year.



Commander Wiley's address also discussed support for the Major Richard Star Act. This legislation must be passed to provide pay equity for our veterans. During his presentation, Commander Wiley listed all the legislative priorities for the upcoming year. The work of the American Legion will improve the quality of life for all veterans across the United States.



After Commander Wiley addressed the conference, VA Secretary Doug Collins came to talk with the assembly. He stated that the VA Made a “Mistake” with the Disability review policy. A policy that is now Rescinded with immediate effect. This message was well received by all the members of the American Legion.

Secretary Collins stated that he heard us. He then stated that we need to move on to make the VA the best possible agency for veterans. He said the VA will work on improving its quality of service in the upcoming year. It will work hard to limit the waiting period for veterans that need specialized services. He desires to make the VA more efficient with upgrades in software systems that are antiquated. He ended his remarks by saying thank you to all the veterans across the nation that have served this nation with pride and distinction. The American Legion supports Secretary Collins in his efforts to improve services to our veterans.



The next day we started our efforts on Capitol Hill. We started our meeting with Senator James Lankford and his staff. The Senator was briefed on our legislative priorities for the upcoming year. NEC Charlie O'Leary presented Senator Lankford with a certificate and American Legion Challenge Coin as a token of appreciation for his support on veteran's legislation. We also met with Senator Mullins staff that morning. We were unable to meet with Senator Mullin and found out a little later, President Trump was nominating him to be the new Secretary for Homeland Security. We wish him well in this new position.

After our meetings with the Oklahoma Senate Delegation, we moved onto the House of Representatives. Our first meeting was with Representative Tom Cole. The delegation was cordially received, and our discussions were very productive. Then we moved onto Representative Kevin Hern, Representative Josh Brecheen and Representative Bice.



This picture shows the Certificate of Appreciation we gave to Representative Stephanie Bice while we met in her office to discuss veteran's legislative issues. Each of these Representatives met our delegation with open arms. It is great to know that the Representatives from Oklahoma genuinely care about veterans in our state.

I would also like to thank all the members of the American Legion Delegation that made this such a wonderful event. Your efforts are appreciated.



I would just like to close this report with a picture of the POW / MIA chair displayed in the National Capital. Let us always remember those who served this nation with pride and dignity. Let us always remember the sacrifice of those that came before us.

Respectfully,

Rex Ice, National Legislative Committee Member

Oklahoma American Legion
 "For God and Country"

Legion News

AWARDS

You have one month to get your nominations for this year. I know the Summer Convention is still almost 4 months away, "BUT" a lot of things have to happen between now and then. The main thing is you have to get your nominations in. Then I have to categorize them, email them to the Awards Committee and the Committee Members have to rate them. Then they email them back to me and I rank the committee's nomination ratings. Then I have to notify the winners so they can make arrangements to attend the convention to receive their awards. Then We have to notify the award maker to have the plaques personalized.

Being the Awards Committee Chair isn't a hard job it just has a lot of moving parts. Please do your part and nominate someone for the awards. So, we will have some parts to move. The more nominations you make the harder I have to work. The older I get the less I want to do. The less I do the fatter I get. It's your fault that I am fat. You need to make me work a little harder.

Nominate someone.

April 30th, nominations are done. May 1, they are too late.

AND, to add some icing to the cake. **The job of Awards Committee Chair is open.**

One more thing, I think I would be remiss if I didn't say something about MEMBERSHIP, so here it is...HELP.

“Americanism is about what unites us not, what divides us”

He closed the article with the statement from a 100-year-old report that probably applies as much to our place in today's world as it did then: “We must seek the level ground between the mire of reactionism and the crags of extremism.”

Be civic, be civil. Speaking of being “civic” The Oklahoma State Legislature's Veteran Recognition Day is Monday May 11th at 1:00pm in the State Capital Building.

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

Spring District Conferences

District 3—April 11-Post 188 Heavener

District 8—April 11-Post 19 Woodward

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

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

10 GUN DRAWING TICKETS \$10 EACH



SIG SAUER P226 9MM



**SIG SAUER P365 9MM FUSE ROMEO X
COMPACT SITE 2-21 RND & 1-17 RND MAG**



RUGER MINI 14 RANCH 5.56



CZ FS DRAKE 12GA



WATCHTOWER T15M 5.56



VENTURE 2 6.5 CREEDMORE



MOSSBERG 500 TAC 12GA



FRANCHI 6.5 CREEDMORE



CANIK TP9SF 9MM

**Thank you for supporting the
Oklahoma American Legion
Family and Oklahoma Veterans.**

Drawing JULY 11th 2026!

Winners must be of age and pass a background check and all IAW State Laws.



STOEGER STR-9 9MM

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

Department Blood Program Chair

FROM THE DEPARTMENT BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM CHAIR

Informational materials have been furnished for all Posts at the District Conferences excepting the April 11 Conferences. Please let me know how I can help you with establishing a viable blood program.

John Bishop 405-414-2515

<https://ourbloodinstitute.org/>

jbishop22@cox.net

DEPT OF OKLAHOMA BLOOD DONOR CHAIR 2025-2026

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

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

District 1A

On Saturday, 7 March 2026, at the District 1 Spring Conference, elections were held for District Commander. Rich Conn was nominated, unopposed, and voted by acclamation, as the new incoming District Commander beginning his role after the Department Summer Convention. Congratulations Rich Conn!

District 1B

District 2A

District 2B

District 3A

District 3B

District 4

District 5A

Post 108 – Cushing/Drumright







On February 13, we held their annual Valentine's Day party. Commander G.W. Davis presented each lady attending, with a rose. Decorations and food were supplied by the Post 108 Ladies Auxiliary and Post member and Chef, Robert Howell. A good time was had by all.



Fellow Legionaries,

Welcome to Spring. I hope everyone is safe and taking care of all the allergies, we all seem to be battling during this time of year. The weather is a challenge this time of year, not knowing whether it will be hot or cool during the day.

I want to say how proud I am of all the posts in District 5A with all the work you have done and getting the retention numbers up during this year. I am a strong believer in getting our retention numbers back and the new members will join us in this great organization.

Keep working on your retention and bringing our past members back into the American Legion.

Together as ONE.

For GOD & Country.

Respectfully,

Mike Harris, District 5A Commander

District 5B

Post 184 – Moore



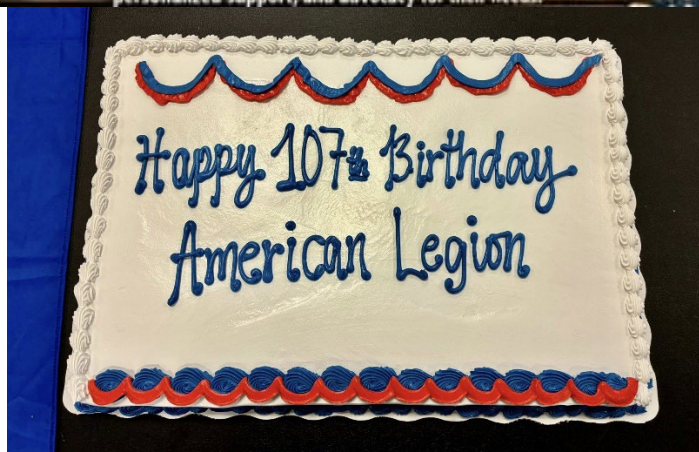
The members of **American Legion Post 184** were recently honored by the **Military Order of the Purple Heart** for their continued dedication to recognizing and supporting America's combat-wounded veterans and their families. This recognition highlights the Post's commitment to honoring those who have sacrificed in defense of our nation and ensuring their service is never forgotten. Through community outreach, veteran support initiatives, and participation in commemorative events, Post 184 continues to uphold the values of service, patriotism, and respect for the men and women who have borne the wounds of battle.



In addition, **Christopher Moses**, a senior student competitor, earned outstanding recognition in this year's **American Legion Oratorical Contest**. Moses placed **2nd in District 5B** competition and went on to achieve **3rd place at the State level**, demonstrating exceptional public speaking skills and a strong understanding of the U.S. Constitution. His accomplishment reflects both his dedication and the importance of the Oratorical Contest program in encouraging young people to study and appreciate the principles and freedoms that define our nation.

District 6A

Post 160 – Yukon



Coffee with Karl – A Yukon Legion “Be the One” Event

The James Albert Wheatley American Legion Post 160 is proud to host an upcoming veterans’ coffee gathering at the post as part of the “Be the One” program. Join us for *Coffee with*

Karl on Friday, April 3rd from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at 1010 West Main Street, Yukon, near the corner of Garth Brooks and Main Street.

Karl Greene, a United States Army veteran with combat service and a SSG Fox Case Manager with the SSG Parker Fox Program at Oklahoma Veterans United, will be available to chat and connect with fellow veterans. His work focuses on supporting veterans who may be experiencing mental health challenges, especially those struggling with thoughts of suicide. He helps veterans access vital resources and support services to improve their well-being.

“We invite all veterans in the Yukon area to come in, chat, and connect with others in the community,” said Post Commander Mike Devenitch. “It’s a chance to enjoy coffee and camaraderie while learning about services that can make a real difference.”

Veterans and their family members who may benefit from learning about these resources are encouraged to attend. Oklahoma Veterans United’s mission is to build a stronger veteran community together.

The American Legion “Be the One” program is a nationwide effort focused on preventing veteran suicide and supporting the mental health of those who served. The initiative encourages Legion members, veterans, and community members to “be the one” to reach out, listen, and help a veteran in need by connecting them with support and resources. Through education, awareness campaigns, and community outreach, the program aims to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and ensure that no veteran feels alone when facing personal struggles.

District 6B

District 7

Post 117 - Mangum

Mangum Post 117 held a blood drive earlier in the month, their adjutant Dennis Haught said they had a really good turnout.

Post 146 – Sayre

Sayre Post 146 will be having their first blood drive on Tuesday 31 March. This is their first blood drive with another one scheduled for 8 October 2026.

I want to thank the Legionnaires from District 7 for voting me to be their commander for the next 2 years. It really means a lot to me to be your commander. Good things to come.

Elmo May
District 7 Commander

District 8A

Post 53 – Perry



Amanda Wilson, Perry District STEM Coordinator and a proud 2004 graduate of Perry High School, was the featured speaker at the regular meeting of the Ellis-Jirous Post 53 American Legion. Returning to her hometown in a leadership role, Wilson shared an inspiring overview of a program that is shaping students not only for college, but for meaningful, career-ready futures.

The Perry STEM Program, supported through generous contributions from the Malzahn Foundation, Oklahoma State University, the Tulsa Regional STEM Alliance, and other partners, provides hands-on, real-world learning opportunities beginning in pre-kindergarten and extending through senior year.

At the elementary level, students are introduced to design, modeling, robotics, safety concepts, ratios, and even Claymation film production. These early experiences cultivate creativity, critical thinking, and confidence.

In junior high, students may choose between courses such as Design and Modeling or Automation and Robotics. Under Wilson's guidance, these young innovators tackle impressive projects — from designing prosthetics to building and programming robots using individual robotics kits and remote systems.

At the high school level, opportunities expand even further. Beginning in their sophomore year, students may enter the Aviation Program, where they work toward pilot, unmanned aircraft, or aircraft maintenance certifications by graduation. One of the premier events of the aeronautics program is SpeedFest, held each April at Oklahoma State University, where students compete with entirely original flying projects they have designed and engineered themselves.

Wilson's presentation highlighted not only the innovation taking place in Perry classrooms, but also the remarkable talent and potential of its students. Through vision,

community partnership, and dedicated leadership, the Perry STEM Program continues to prepare the next generation to soar.

District 8B

District 8B news District 8B has been really active with Military Honor Guard Services, with 6 services since the first of the year. Posts throughout the District have been having their annual elections, with most posts keeping all officer positions the same.

District 8 Spring Conference will be on April 11th, at the High Plains Technology Center in Woodward, Registration starting at 8 a.m., and the meetings starting at 9. We are starting the meetings a little earlier than usual, due to several posts in the District having other things going on that weekend. Post 19, Post 273, and possibly Post 63, will have a booth at the Woodward Spring Farm Home Expo, April 10, 11, and 12th. Post 63 will also have a Ranch Rodeo going on that weekend.

Good progress has been made in the District with membership, and I have to thank each and every post in the District, for their efforts in pushing our membership numbers to the levels they are! We still have room to improve, with 4 posts in the District having 100% or better, and 4 Posts above 80%. Please keep doing what you can on membership! And remember, both myself, and Vice Commander Philip Holland, are here to assist you in any way we can!

All Posts in District 8, are asked to please send representatives to the District Meeting on April 11th!!!

Wayne Flowers, District 8B Commander



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



James “Jim” Chappell



<https://www.palmermarlerfh.com/obituary/james-jim-chappell>

Jacqueline L Robertson ALA



<https://www.smithfuneralhomesapulpa.com/obituaries/Jacqueline-L-Robertson?obId=47788639>