

THE 1889 LAND RUN



DEPARTMENT
OF
OKLAHOMA



American Legion Newsletter

44th Edition, March 1, 2026

American Legion Department Commander

Oklahoma fellow Legionnaires,

Legion Family, as we turn the calendar to March, I hope you all are doing amazing. I look forward to this next half year as we are preparing to celebrate our Nations Semi-Quincentennial and continue all the positive momentum across the Department.

We have kicked off our Spring District Meetings with a great meeting over in District 7 at Mangum and will be headed to several more this month with positive vibes for all the great work you all are putting in. We are twelve days away from the deadline for the National Big 12 Membership Competition against all the other Departments in our bracket and sitting strong. We need to hit 93.12% by close of business March 11th which means 472 total across the Department or about 3 per Post average in 11 days.

As of this morning Oklahoma sits #18th Nationally but exactly a 1% jump would vault us up to #5. We are also only 106 members away from hitting the 90% mark for the first time as Department in a decade 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.

There has been a lot of bitterness within the Veteran Community over VA stances but as of reading today, VA has officially backed off and rescinded previous remarks about cutting ratings based on treatment. Hopefully with all the Veterans, Service Organizations and fellow members vocal outrage, this will be out to rest once and for all. A large delegation of our Oklahomans are headed to DC this coming week to speak with our Representatives to remind them that they work for us.

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



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!

District Conferences have started and it looks to be an exciting time. District 7 was held on February 21st with a great turnout and lots of positive interaction. Multiple Posts have several upcoming and community activities in the near future. District 6 will be held on February 28th. I look forward to attending their conference.

Membership is moving right along. We have attained all of National's goals so far. We are presently in a competition - The Big Twelve, and we are trying to stay ahead of Kentucky. If we reach 93.2% by Mar 11th, we could reach two goals. Nationals goal of 90% and trying to be ahead of Kentucky. Let's keep working on our membership. We are at 83.93% retention rate of last year's members. Reach out to your members who haven't renewed yet.

I had the privilege of visiting several Posts this past month. I am always amazed by the members, their individual stories, and all of the work they do for the Legion. I thoroughly enjoy visiting with everyone. I plan on visiting more Posts this next month, as well as attending District Conferences.

Remember to keep your communities informed of your activities.

"Be The One"

Respectfully,
Shirley May
Senior Vice Commander



Campaign for Senior Vice Commander

Patricia Mathes-Kerr

**for Senior Vice Commander '26 - '27
January 2026**



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



Campaign for Senior Vice Commander



Lance Larson

for Senior Vice Commander '26 - '27

January 2026

Friends and Comrades:

I am formally announcing my candidacy for Department Senior Vice Commander for 2026-2027. My Goal is to continue and to expand Departmental Support of Post Initiatives, Post Goals and Post Programs. This year the Posts in the West and their Members have achieved great success, including reaching 83% by mid-January 2026. A true sign of the hard work by each Post to focus on the needs of their Members and their Communities. As Senior Vice Commander I wish to reinforce Departmental Support, not interference, of this Successful Revitalization that is energized by the combined efforts of the Posts to serve their Membership and Communities.

I joined The American Legion (PUFL) after serving in the US Coast Guard. So far, my greatest pleasure in my 16 years as a Legionnaire has been working as a certified Post Service Officer at Post 129 during the last 6 years. I was coached by some of our finest Service Officers, leaders like Past NVCDR Bobby Bryant and Post CDR Jim Hunter. This is one of the most important parts of our mission as set forth in the last sentence of The Preamble: "to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

I currently serve as the Department Vice Commander – West (2025-26) and VCDR of Post 129. As an Instructor at the Department's American Legion College for 4 years, I have built many friendships with leaders across the entire state. As VCDR-West, I have met and worked with even more friends at the Post and District Levels. We have helped each other navigate the renewed focus on taking The American Legion's missions to the streets and schools of our communities.

My additional and varied experience as District 5A DEC (2017-18), District 5A VCDR (2018-19), District 5A CDR (2020-21 & 2021-22), Department Sergeant-at-Arms (2019-20 & 2022-23) and as Acting Department Adjutant (Oct. 2023-Nov.2024) has given me the chance to discover the original flexibility incorporated in 1919 by National HQ and the Department HQ, refined over a Century, relies upon and allow Posts to successfully define and meet the needs of Veterans in their Community and the needs of their Community. Like individual jigsaw pieces, local Posts join together in expanding the results for the entire Department. As Senior Vice Commander, I seek your vote to continue to build on these successful, local initiatives and to encourage sharing of comradeship and mission fulfillment across the state.

Department Vice Commander – East

Greetings Legion Family,

As we move into March, our spring District Conferences are already underway across the Department. This is an important time for Posts to stay engaged and ensure key program deadlines are being met. Boys State and Girls State registrations should now be submitted, and we encourage Posts to continue supporting these outstanding youth leadership programs. The State Oratorical Contest will take place this month, and Districts should have already forwarded their contestants. Best of luck to all participants representing their communities.

Across Oklahoma, awards ceremonies should be taking place to recognize the incredible work being done by our Legion Family and local citizens. Please remember to submit award recipient names to Paul Ray for State-level consideration so their achievements can be properly honored.

I will be traveling to Washington, D.C. on Sunday to represent the Department of Oklahoma as your Veterans Education and Employment Commissioned Officer. This is a critical time for Congress to hear directly from veterans, and I am honored to carry your voices with me. A special thank you to Post 50 for hosting a town hall meeting this week, giving veterans an opportunity to share their concerns and priorities ahead of this important visit.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for April 25 — National American Legion Family Day. We encourage every Post to plan an activity that highlights the strength and unity of the Legion, Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion.

Finally, a reminder regarding social media: when posting photos, ensure that AI tools or filters are not altering or distorting the American Legion brand or emblem. We have received several reports of misuse, and it is our responsibility to protect the integrity of our organization's identity.

Be The One

Karen Cruice
Vice Commander East
Department of Oklahoma

Campaign for Vice Commander East

Karen Cruice

for Vice Commander East '26 - '27

January 2026

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

Karen Ritter

for Vice Commander East '26 - '27

January 2026

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	American Legion	Affiliations
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 	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 	 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 to all the Legion family.

Hello brothers and sisters of the Legion, coming up on March 13-15 we will have Oklahoma American Legion College and if you wish to attend contact Hayden Woods. The last time I heard we needed people to sign up and let me say you will learn stuff just about Oklahoma that you would have never known. The college is in Grove this time and if you wish to attend be sure to get out and see Harbor Village.

Like I said at Mid-Winter Duncan Post 55 needed help with renovations. I went on the second Thursday of February and don't know if I got in the way or helped out. (LOL) We did get some sheet rock and looking to go back 3rd Thursday of March. Jim Rees has been going to Duncan quite a bit so big shout out to Jim for showing what District Commanders can do to support posts in their district. Finished the day at Post 353 Mustang along with Mike Devenitch who gives everything to the Legion, and a little campaigning going for positions.

Mangum your post put on a class act for District Conference as I'm sure the Tuttle post will as well. Been to Post 157 and as always Mr. Hopkins a pleasure to be invited, and also got to see PDC Don Roane, always funny talking about things from 6 to 7 years ago.

Now Elmo May if you can get a post in Sweetwater then you will have finally taken us to the state line (LOL) for a district meeting.

Went on a visit to VA hospital with Yukon Post 160, it was the second one this year and a humbling experience each time. If you get the chance to do this, please do some of these vets have no one. I saw one who I saw in August he was still there and I was his last visitor. It means the world to these vets, and it takes so very little of our time.

When the TAL started in 1919 it was about vets, so we need to put our petty differences aside and concentrate on what is important.

A little line or two about VSO's, Jack Sikes is chairman of the VSO committee and is considered state level. We don't have DSO anymore, so Jack is the one we to with requests or problems. Somethings don't exist like before and then some have been added to make it better. Using direct submission is the only way to go, making everything so much easier.

Until next time have a wonderful month and if you have a problem call District Commander or me 918-285-2635.

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

Wayne Flowers



Candidate for Vice Commander West

2026-2027

National Executive (NEC) Committeeman



NEC NEWS

Last month Nancy and I were privileged to attend the 92nd Annual Pilgrimage to the tomb of Abraham Lincoln sponsored by American Legion Department of Illinois Post 12 in Springfield, Illinois. There we placed a wreath at the burial site of President Abraham Lincoln on behalf of the Department of Oklahoma and Legion Family Auxiliary and Sons of American Legion and on behalf of all veterans across the State of Oklahoma honoring our 16th President of the United States.

We also had the occasion to visit with Past Illinois Commander Mike Walton, who is also the Chairman of Future National Convention Committee who was in OKC the last week of January checking out everything for a possible National Convention bid in 2032 for OKC. Walton was happy to see us and asked us how long it took us to drive to Springfield, IL [a little over 8 hours] and he noted that OKC would be accessible via auto for most Legionnaires across the country and told us again how much he appreciated all of the hospitality he was afforded and enthusiasm he encountered in OKC during the Committee's visit there. So that sounded positive anyway!

Charlie O'Leary
National Executive Committeeman

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!

Registration for the Oklahoma In-State Legacy Run will be live tonight or tomorrow at:

www.okamlegion.org

If you've been waiting, now is the time. Please register early so we can finalize logistics, route planning, meal counts, and shirt orders. Your registration includes your event shirt, and more importantly, it secures your place in one of the most meaningful rides of the year.

May 15–17 Oklahoma In-State Legacy Run

Benefiting the Veterans & Children's Foundation

Calling all Riders from every corner of Oklahoma, east, west, north, and south, come join us for three powerful days of camaraderie, purpose, and service.

This is more than a motorcycle ride. This is about mission.

Every mile we travel represents commitment.

Every stop we make honors sacrifice.

Every wreath we lay reflects remembrance.

Every dollar raised supports veterans and children in need.

The Veterans & Children's Foundation exists to ensure that when a veteran or a military family faces hardship, The American Legion Family is there, ready to respond. When we ride, we are directly supporting that promise.

The In-State Legacy Run is about unity. It is about Riders from every Post coming together as one team, not for recognition, not for applause, but for impact.

We ride for the cause, not the applause.

You'll experience fellowship with fellow Legion Riders who understand what service truly means. You'll build friendships that last well beyond the final kickstand down. And you'll leave knowing that your participation made a tangible difference.

Whether you are a seasoned Legacy Run veteran or a first-time participant, we invite you to saddle up and be part of something bigger than yourself.

Let's show what Oklahoma Riders can do when we move together with purpose.
Mark your calendars.

Register early.

Invite a fellow Rider.

And prepare to ride with pride.

Looking forward to seeing you May 15th through the 17th as we come together in unity, service, and camaraderie.

For God, Country, and Service,

Brett Martin

Director, American Legion Riders

Department of Oklahoma

Past Department Commander's Corner

Preparing to Lead — Preparing to Serve

As we approach our Department elections this July, I first want to extend sincere congratulations to every Legionnaire who has chosen to step forward and run for office. The willingness to serve at a higher level, whether for Vice Commander East, Vice Commander West, Senior Vice Commander, or Department Commander, reflects dedication to something greater than oneself.

Leadership in The American Legion is never about position. It is about responsibility. It is about stewardship. It is about protecting and strengthening our beloved Department of Oklahoma for those who will follow us.

Before stepping onto the campaign trail, I encourage each candidate to pause and take inventory of their “tool bag.”

Start at your Post.

How is your membership health?

Are all officer positions filled?

Is morale strong?

Are meetings productive and respectful?

Have you mentored and developed future leaders?

Have you grown programs and strengthened community presence?

Our Posts are the proving grounds of leadership. They are where we learn to manage budgets, resolve conflict, inspire volunteers, recruit members, and carry out the Four Pillars effectively. If we have not navigated those waters at the Post level, it becomes increasingly difficult to do so at the Department level, where the scope is broader and the impact far greater.

The pathway to Vice Commander East or West, Senior Vice Commander, and ultimately Department Commander is not intended to be a leap, it is a progression. Each step builds perspective. Each responsibility sharpens judgment. Each challenge prepares us for the next.

I wholeheartedly encourage those who feel called to lead to run. Our Department needs energy, vision, and commitment. But with that encouragement comes a reminder: preparation matters.

These positions are not ceremonial. They are working offices. They require travel, diplomacy, conflict resolution, membership growth strategy, program oversight, and the ability to unify diverse personalities and Posts across the state.

If someone assumes office without having first built the necessary experience, the learning curve can unintentionally slow progress. And when progress slows, it is not the individual who suffers, it is the Department of Oklahoma.

Our Department deserves leaders who are prepared to lead on day one.

If you have built your resume through service, strengthened your Post, worked District and Department committees, mentored others, and grown through each level of leadership, then I commend you. I wish you great success and wisdom in your campaign and service.

If you are still building those tools, continue building. Leadership is not a race; it is a journey of preparation and growth. There is great honor in being ready when the time comes.

As we move toward July, let us conduct ourselves with humility, respect, and unity. Let us compete with integrity and support one another as Legionnaires first.

May we always remember why we serve.

For God, Country, and Service,

Brett Martin
Past Department Commander
Department of Oklahoma

Greetings Legionnaires!

The visit by Trailing Candidate Matthew Shuman who has been picked by the American Legion Leadership and Past National Commanders in Indianapolis as Future National Commander 2027-2028, will be visiting Oklahoma on May 30, 2026 and will be hosted by historic Tulsa Post 1 in a Family Town Hall meeting open to all Legion Family members who will get a chance to meet the Trailing Candidate, ask real questions and make our Legion Family better!

He will also have a chance to visit Tulsa area Posts and attractions.

May 30th is also the last day of Oklahoma Boys State so after you pick up your kid, you can swing by Post 1 on your way home with your kid, meet the Trailing Candidate and head for home and his own bed!

Mark your calendar today for this first-of-a-kind event in our Department!

Charlie O'Leary
PDC 2021-22

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

Oklahoma Veterans Commission Update

Steady Progress. Strong Leadership. Focused Mission.

We held an Oklahoma Veterans Commission meeting on 20 Feb 2026 that reflected both progress and purpose. It was, in every respect, a successful and productive session.

I want to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to my fellow Commissioners. The preparation, research, and thoughtful engagement demonstrated between our last meeting and this one was evident throughout the discussion. When board members come prepared, informed, and ready to engage in meaningful dialogue, it elevates the quality of governance, and ultimately benefits the veterans we serve.

Our agenda included several important operational and strategic items. We had open, constructive conversations focused not on personalities, but on performance and outcomes. That is exactly how oversight and governance should function.

It is especially encouraging to report that we continue to see measurable financial and operational improvement within the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA). Week by week, we are witnessing stability return and fiscal discipline take hold. Seeing ODVA move back into the black is not accidental, it is the result of intentional planning, accountability, and execution.

Special recognition is due to Director Jay Bynum for his steady leadership during this period of rebuilding. Leadership during transition is never easy, but clarity of vision and consistency of action make a significant difference. The ODVA team also deserves credit for developing and executing a strategic plan that is not merely theoretical, but practical and results-driven.

Strategic plans only matter if they are implemented. We are seeing implementation. The Commission remains focused on three essential principles:

- ☐ Accountability
- ☐ Transparency
- ☐ Measurable improvement in services to Oklahoma's veterans

Every discussion, every vote, and every policy consideration centers on one question: *Does this improve outcomes for the men and women who have worn the uniform of this nation?*

We understand that trust must be earned. Progress must be demonstrated. And oversight must be diligent. The good news is that progress is happening.

I remain grateful for the dedication of my fellow Commissioners and the professionalism of the ODVA leadership team. Together, we are moving forward, deliberately, responsibly, and with veterans at the center of every decision.

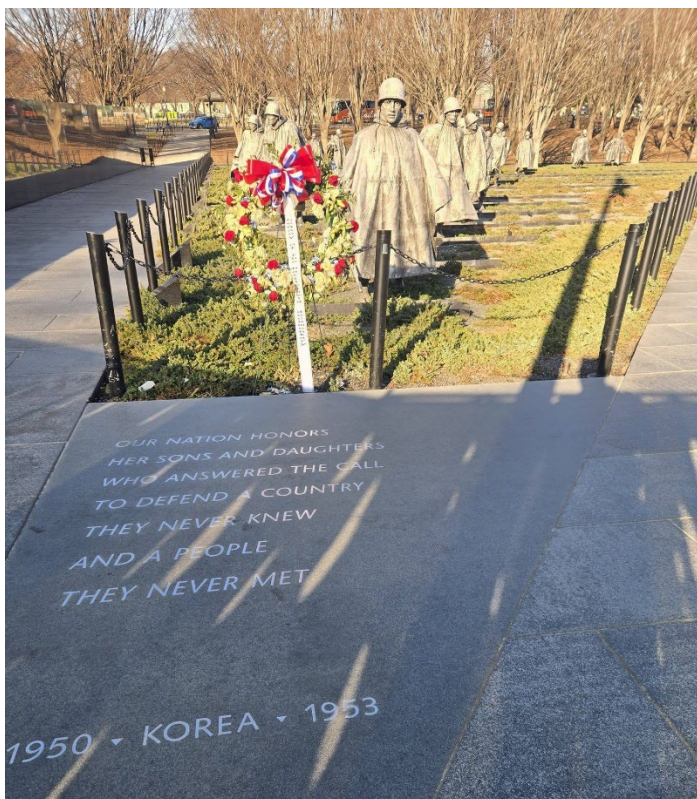
Thank you to all who continue to support this important mission.

For God, Country, and Service,

Brett Martin
Chairman
Oklahoma Veterans Commission

Sons of the American Legion





NEC/ Detachment Adjutant [Chris Cook](#) took a morning stroll while in DC. Enjoying the sights before the Washington Conference. Thank you for representing the Detachment of Oklahoma for us.

Women Veterans Outreach

---MEDIA RELEASE---

February 12, 2026

Daron Hoggatt,

Public Information Officer

Phone: 405-523-4026

Email: Communications@odva.ok.gov

Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs to Host Women Veterans

Dress for Success Summit in Lawton

LAWTON, Okla. — The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) Women Veterans Program will host the Women Veterans Dress for Success Celebration Summit on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at FISTA Innovation Park in Lawton, during Women's History Month.

The summit is designed to support women veterans in Southwest Oklahoma with career development, transition assistance, and access to benefits. Unlike a traditional resource fair, the event focuses on practical solutions for women veterans and their families.

Services offered include professional development, resume review and professional suiting, entrepreneurship and job placement support, VA claims and benefits assistance, financial empowerment tools, and wellness resources.

To help remove childcare barriers, **FISTA Innovation Park will also host a FREE STEM Day for children of women veterans (Pre-K through high school), allowing veterans to fully participate in the summit.**

For more information or to get involved, contact:

Guadalupe “Pitta” Higadera Women Veteran Program Administrator

Email: okwomenvets@odva.ok.gov **Office:** (405) 523-4020 | **Cell:** (918) 681-0089

About the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs:

The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) delivers high-quality care, benefits, and support to Oklahoma veterans and their families through programs such as State Veterans Homes, Claims & Benefits, OKVetWorks, Women Veterans, Health & Wellness, Mental Health, and the Veterans Registry.

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_FBhUzslp3dI

2025-2026 Goal

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

American Legion Auxilliary

April 25 marks American Legion Family Day, a special opportunity to celebrate the strength and unity of the American Legion Family. Across our state, Posts, Units, and Squadrons are encouraged to recognize the partnership that makes our mission possible. This day is about connection, pride, and visibility in our communities.

What is your Post family planning? A cookout, community service project, membership drive, recognition ceremony, or open house are all meaningful ways to highlight who we are and what we do. Even a simple time of fellowship can strengthen relationships and remind us why we serve. Share your activities and photos so we can celebrate together.

Spring District Meetings are now underway, and elections for the 2026–2027 District Officers will take place. These meetings are essential to the future of our organization. Every Unit should plan to attend and bring a report outlining accomplishments since the Fall District Meeting. Service hours, membership gains, veteran outreach, fundraisers, and community projects all tell the story of your impact. When we share those successes, we inspire one another.

District 7 has already held their meeting and successfully filled five officer positions. Their district has worked diligently to rebuild leadership and restore structure. The progress they have made reflects determination and teamwork. They are currently only nine members away from reaching 100% membership. That kind of momentum deserves recognition and applause.

District 4 is also doing an outstanding job and needs just nine members to reach 100%. Focused outreach and consistent follow-up make a difference. Reach out to your members and remind them that granddaughters are eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary. Expanding awareness of eligibility strengthens our future and grows our membership base.

Department-wide, we have reached 85% membership. That milestone clears one of the major hurdles toward earning the Merit Medallion Award presented at the national level. A dedicated team continues working on the remaining requirements, and the grant application is prepared for submission this week. The progress being made is the result of teamwork across every district and unit.

The work accomplished this year reflects commitment, resilience, and heart. Leadership growth, membership gains, and service to veterans and their families demonstrate what can happen when we work together with purpose.

Let's close this year with energy and determination. Support your districts, attend your meetings, celebrate Family Day, and continue reaching toward 100%. The finish line is in sight.

Kim McInnis

Department President

American Legion Auxiliary Department of Oklahoma

Veterans Service Officer

American Legion Oklahoma

Tool Box

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

Jack Sikes

Jsikesokamlvso@gmail.com

443-271-5545

Legion News

Awards

In The American Legion February 2026 magazine, yes, I read them, National Commander Wiley wrote that last year the National Executive Committee changed the wording of the official definition of Americanism. What follows is what I gleaned from his article.

What is Americanism

- Americanism was one of the founding “Four Pillars” of the American Legion in 1919
Americanism is essentially “love of country and our form of government
- In October of 2025 the American Legion updated the concept of Americanism to fit into modern terms
The goal was to change the words without changing meaning “Americanism is,
 - a steadfast and heartfelt devotion to the founding principles
 - enduring values and civic responsibility
 - a devotion inspired and exemplified by those who have
 - honorably served in uniform
- Those values include
 - Loyalty to the Constitution
 - Reverence for sacrifice
 - Commitment to democratic principles
 - Patriotic citizenship
 - Respect for God and Country

“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 1--March 7-Post 182 Pryor

District 2--March 21-Post 153 Wagoner

District 3—April 11-Post 188 Heavener

District 4—March 28-Post 126 Bristow

District 5—March 21-Post 12 Warr Acres

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

STOEGER STR-9 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.

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

I flooded District 7 with Blood Program information at their District Meeting on February 21. It was good information and I hope someone, many someone's, at every District 7 post reads it. OBI has a great Credit Benefit Program discussing how hospital blood fees can be reimbursed because of donors specifying recipients. Lots of great information was included in packets addressed to each District 7 Post.

IF ANY DISTRICT 7 POST WANTS TO RETURN ANY PORTION OF THE PACKET THEY WERE PROVIDED, IT WILL BE APPRECIATED AS YOUR CIRCULAR FILE RATHER THAN RETURN SIMPLY MEANS I HAVE TO PRODUCE MORE MATERIALS USING MY PRINTER OR HOPING OBI CAN CONTINUE TO GENEROUSLY SUPPORT ME.

I intend to furnish each post with pertinent information about the Blood Donor programs at their District Conferences throughout this Spring Conference season.

I am trying to obtain information from the American Red Cross but they haven't returned my calls. I'll continue.

The American Legion takes no stand on what Donation Center's Blood Program your Post supports. Just support the program and complete your Consolidated Post Report. Remember your report is based on donations you've collected and not on the hat you wear. I certainly support Legionnaires rolling up their sleeves and donating but I likewise support the numbers you can accrue encouraging your family, friends, and community to join our Donation drives.

In addition to your supported drives, poll your membership monthly at your meetings and certainly immediately prior to CPR submission and include those donations in your tally. Blood Donations Save Lives.

<https://www.floridalegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/25-26BloodDonorManual.pdf>

<https://ourbloodinstitute.org/>

Please see how you can use it to develop and increase your success. For comments, questions, concerns, contact me –

JOHN G. BISHOP

405-414-2515, 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**

Post 178 – Grove



Pictured L to R: Rod Bray,
Lenny Corisek and
Lyanna McKinney



On February 20 and 21, 2026, The 28th Annual Grove Home, Garden and Travel Show wasn't just about flowers, plants, home fixtures and travel destinations – it was also about serving the purpose. Seeds were planted-not just for gardens but for relationships and renewed purpose.

Front and center stood the **Grove American Legion 178 Family**, united in mission, heart and dedication. Representing the American Legion 178 Family were the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion, and the American Legion Riders – four pillars standing together to fulfill one powerful promise: serving those who served, our youth, and strengthening our community.

Throughout those 2 busy days, the booth became more than a display, it became a place of connection. Veterans stopped to ask questions about benefits and resources. We let them know that our Post is open Monday through Friday for free coffee and doughnuts from 8-12. Families and friends discovered ways they could give back alongside those who once wore the uniform.

Conversations turned into handshakes, and handshakes turned into hope and camaraderie as some of them wanted to join our organization. The Grove American Legion 178 Family showed that service doesn't stop at the doors of a Post. It goes beyond and shows up wherever the community gathers.

Nearby, the Grove Ritual Team demonstrated the dignity and precision that honors our nation's flag and our fallen heroes—reminding everyone that respect and remembrance are not traditions of the past, but commitments of the present. Also, the Delaware County Together with Veterans, a suicide prevention program offered awareness, resources and reassurance that no veteran stands alone. Information was shared, lifelines were extended, and compassion led every conversation. And F4 worked faithfully—focused, fearless and forward-moving—ensuring every detail reflected the heart of the mission.

“At the heart of everything we do is one simple truth: Serving those who served, mission first, veterans always, youth and community forever.”

District 1B

Post 308 Tulsa & Post 2 Collinsville & District 2B Post 153 Wagoner



ALR charters 308 Tulsa, 2 Collinsville, 110 Broken Arrow, and 153 Wagoner have joined forces in hosting a collaborative poker run. All proceeds from registration and raffle will be contributed to the Oklahoma In-State Legacy Run. Come on out and join in the fun and ride for a cause.

Post 131 – Skiatook



We finished our kitchen remodel with the new vent hood with fire suppression system. All our inspections passed. We are so excited to serve our veterans, veterans' families and communities.

District 2A

Post 20 – Fort Gibson



District 2B

District 3A

District 3B

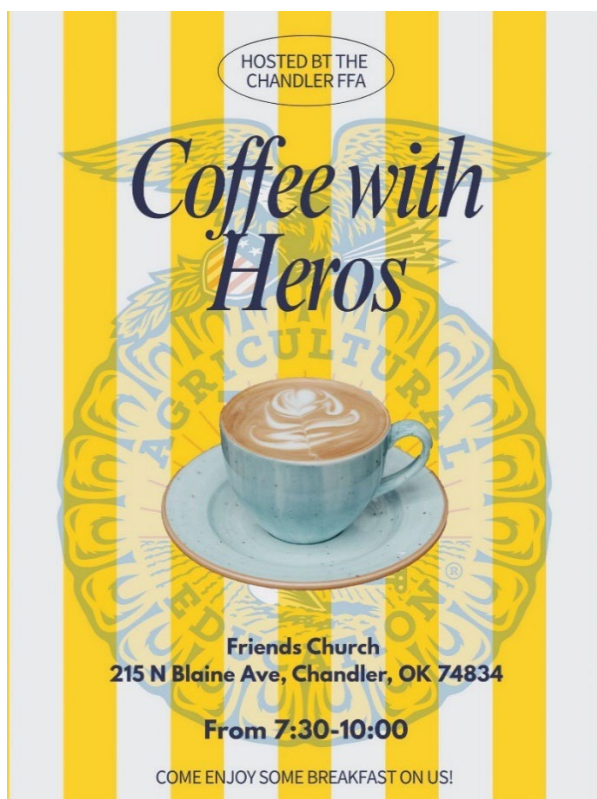
Post 39 – Durant



February 28th was our second day at Choctaw Casino for New Frontier Gun Show. We are in the Northeast corner of the building.

District 4

Post 64 – Chandler



Chandler FFA is Hosting Coffee with Heros next Friday March 6th from 7:30 to 10.

Business owners, Veterans, and First Responders are all welcome!

We appreciate the Chandler FFA providing this event. Let's support them and their wonderful service to our community.

District 5A

February 24, 2026

Fellow Legionaries,

As we enter Springtime of the year, the weather be getting better for us to get out and enjoy the favorable temperatures.

When we get out and enjoy the weather, let's keep in mind our fellow veterans that may need some help or assistance. Helping our veterans is showing our support for them and maintains one of our four pillars our legion was founded on. Continue to reach out, and let's do what we can to improve our community service.

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

Respectfully,

Mike Harris

District 5A Commander

For God & Country.

District 5B

Post 88 – Norman



Those pictured from left to right (looking at the picture) are District 5B Commander Eric Grubbs, Natalie Boone, Jenna Idlett, and Christopher Moses.

American Legion Oratorical

The American Legion Oratorical is a prestigious national speech contest. Students in grade 9 thru 12 present an 8-to-10-minute speech on a topic of their choice related to the U.S. Constitution. They must also be prepared to present a 3-to-5-minute speech on one of four assigned topics that are assigned at the contest.

The contest begins at the local posts and progresses through the District and Department contests to the National Contest. Scholarships of \$1000, \$750, and \$500 are awarded to the top three contestants at the Department level. The winner of the Department contest is awarded an expense paid trip, to include an adult chaperone, to the National contest.

Contestants at the National contest compete for top prizes of \$25,000, \$22,500, and \$20,000 scholarships. They are also awarded a \$2000 scholarship for competing in the first round of competitions and an additional \$2000 scholarship if they make it to the second round. All scholarships can be used at any institute of higher learning.

Lexington American Legion Post 301 was again the host of the District 5B contest this year at the Lexington First Baptist church. Natalie Boone from Norman took first place, Christopher Moses from Moore took second, and Jenna Idlett of Lexington placed third. Natalie and Christopher will progress to the Department contest on March 7 at the University of Central Oklahoma and Jenna will be the alternate. Congratulations to all three for a job well done.

District 6A

Post 353 – Mustang

We sponsored our Mustang Community Blood Drive on February 17th. 27 Whole Blood and 4 Double Red Cell collections were received. Our cumulative total collections for our CPR to date are 232 units.

A 'pass the hat" collection of \$202 was presented to supplement the Oklahoma Veterans of Foreign Wars (OK VFW) support program of the American Cemetery at Margraten, Netherlands. 122 KIA Oklahomans are interred there from World War Two. Volunteers at that American Battlefield Monuments Commission (ABMC) Cemetery place Netherlands, American and Oklahoma stick flags on those 128 graves each Memorial Day. District Commander Mike Devenitch (former Department Commander of OK VFW) headed VFW support. He "confirmed the Department of Oklahoma VFW does have budgeted funds for buying Oklahoma flags for the American Military Cemetery at Margraten, Netherlands. This year's budget has a line item of \$282 in for these flags and over \$1K in the main line item and asked our Commander to supplement shipping costs. To learn more about Margraten's adoption of this American Cemetery, read "Remember Us: American Sacrifice, Dutch Freedom, and a Forever Promise Forged in World War II By [Robert M. Edsel](#)". It's a great read.

Legionnaires attended the presentation of our \$500 Americanism Grant check to Ms. Ras: 6th Grade Geography Teacher at Horizon Intermediate School.

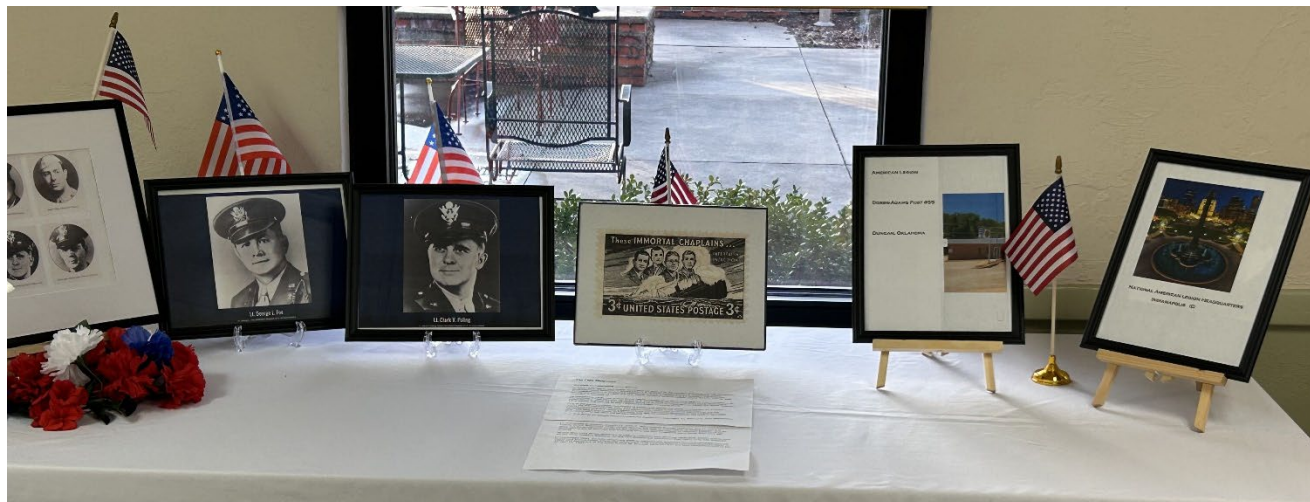
Our Post will be represented at the District 6 Spring Conference but more sparsely than usual as our Honor Guard has two funerals – one at 9am, the other at 1pm. Best wishes for full District representation and a great productive gathering.

Don't forget the Legion's 107th birthday is officially commemorated on March 15. 353 will celebrate at our General Membership Meeting March 12.

Be Safe, wear your Legion gear, and support all Legion programs to the best of your ability.

District 6B

Post 55 – Duncan



The Four Chaplain Ceremony on February 3rd, 2026, at All Saints Episcopal Church. It was a beautiful ceremony that went without a hitch. It was an honor to be a part of celebrating the lives of these brave chaplains. Post 55 Commander Erik Rasmussen and Post 55 Chaplain Dalton Matthews were interviewed by The Duncan Banner about the ceremony. Attached is a video of the ceremony and the news article.

Video of the Four Chaplains Ceremony: [Facebook](#)
(Video Credits: All Saints Episcopal Church)

[Four Chaplains Day Ceremony recognizes unity and strength](#) | [Community](#) | [duncanbanner.com](#)



On February 14th, 2026, Post 55 was the Memorial Flag Detail for a Celebration of Life ceremony for veteran Duane Paul at All Saints Episcopal Church. Duane Paul proudly served in the U.S. Navy as a sonar technician on various submarines.

Video of Ceremony: [Facebook](#)
(Video Credits: All Saints Episcopal Church)



Post renovation is going slowly but surely but we have made some progress on the post. Vice Commander West Lance Larson came out to help with the renovations for a day. He did say that he will try to come out once a month to help. So far, we have new shelving in the storage area, the office now has walls, and a new countertop is under construction.



During the Post Membership meeting held on February 17th, 2026, we inducted two new members to the Post! New Post Members are: Steven Hull a U.S. Air Force Veteran and Robert "Brooks" Hardage a U.S. Army Veteran. Congratulations to the new members at Post 55!

Before I forget, this is in recognition of one of the members of the Post. This is past due but is worth mentioning. Last year, Oklahoma Magazine was doing a Veteran's Day piece for different veterans throughout the state of Oklahoma. Post 55's very own Terry Spradley was one of the veterans that were selected for the interview! Terry is a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran who had served in the Korean War and is also a recipient of the Ambassador for Peace Medal! We are very proud and excited for Terry!

Oklahoma Magazine Article: [Oklahoma Magazine](#)



Post 55 Sergeant-At-Arms Douglas Carrol made it out of scrap wood he had laying around and inlaid each of the 6 military branch emblems in flag order into the countertop. We plan on pouring on the acrylic epoxy onto the countertop to create depth and a smooth surface.

District 7

Post 41 – Clinton





L to R:

Son Ryan,
granddaughters
Kennedy and
Conner; wife
Sharron, Desiree
and Russ

Legionnaire Randy Meacham recently received a Quilt of Valor. The Quilt of Valor Foundation recognized him for his service to our nation. Randy was a Captain in the United States Air Force and served in the Judge Advocate division. His family was present for the award presented at the American Legion Post meeting.

Post 181 – Elk City





February has been a busy month for posts in District 7. Post 181 in Elk City continues to grow with 4 new members. On 2 February I visited post 181, it was good to see so many legionnaires attending their meeting. There was a couple of young men from the Civil Air Patrol attend their meeting, they discussed what they do and what it would take to have a squadron in Elk City. There were several legionnaires interested in helping them get the squadron started. They have a few young men going to Boy's state. I always enjoy going to visit the legionnaires in Elk City.

Post 91 - Weatherford



February 10th made a visit to Post 91 in Weatherford. District 7 DEC Doug Hale has been very busy with visiting schools for Boy's State and Girl's State. He interviewed and accepted for attendance to Boys/Girls state.

Weatherford High School: 7 girls for Girl's State and 5 boys for Boy's State.

Thomas-Fay-Custer City High Schools: 2 girls for Girl's State and 1 boy for Boy's State.

Hydro-Eakly High School: 1 girl for Girl's State.

Post 121 – Altus

Thank you to Post 121 in Altus for hosting District 7 spring conference on 21 February. We had a really good turnout, and a lot of good information from all officers and committees,



We sang happy birthday to Auxiliary member Arvella Mote that is 101 years old and still attending meetings.

Post 146 – Sayre

Post 146 in Sayre donated emergency supplies to be distributed to all the firefighters that were fighting the Woodward fires.

In closing, I want to thank all Legionnaires in district 7 for your trust and confidence in electing me to be your district commander for the next 2 years.

Elmo May
District 7 Commander

District 8A

Post 53 – Perry



Top: Doyle Balzer, Ramond Wagner, Jim McIlvain, Nik Leach, Corbin Baumfalk and Daniel Shade

Left: Commander Jeremy Hines, Ellie Dillon, Jaxson Dillon, Betty Dillon and Bentley

Betty Dillon of Path Finder Friends was the featured speaker at the Ellis-Jirous American Legion Post 53 meeting on Tuesday, February 3, where she shared highlights from the group's energetic and impactful first year. Path Finder Friends stayed busy with community involvement, including caroling at the 5th Street Apartments, helping at the 4-H Carnival, assisting with Earth Day activities, and proudly participating in both local parades.

Dillon noted that the favorite event among the children was the March slumber party—adding with a smile that she is usually the only adult able to stay awake. The program serves approximately 30 children and emphasizes service and outdoor experiences, volunteering at the Soup Kitchen at least four times a year and enjoying trips to camp at CCC Lake, where participants have access to six kayaks and two canoes.

She was assisted by Jaxson Dillon, Ellie Dillon and Bentley as they passed out Valentine's Day boxes to the attendants and will be delivering to the Green Valley Nursing home veterans later this month.

Post 190 – Covington



Clark-Perrin American Legion Post 190 Hosts Successful Pancake Supper Fundraiser

Clark-Perrin American Legion Post 190 recently hosted a pancake supper at the Covington-Douglas School cafeteria as a community fundraiser, raising approximately \$900 in one evening.

The supper included pancakes, sausage links, orange juice, coffee, and water. Guests were offered butter, peanut butter, and syrup as toppings. The event was scheduled in the evening to encourage families to attend after work and school activities.

Attendance exceeded expectations. The entire meal sold out within the first 45 minutes, resulting in a larger crowd than anticipated. While running out of food that quickly was not the original plan, it clearly demonstrated strong community interest and support.

Based on the success of this event, Post 190 has decided to make the pancake supper an annual tradition. Moving forward, it will be held each year on Senior Night during basketball season at Covington-Douglas School. Adjustments will be made next year to increase food quantities and better accommodate the turnout.

This event proved to be a simple, cost-effective fundraiser that also strengthened community visibility and engagement. Other posts looking for a straightforward evening fundraiser may find this format easy to replicate.

Clark-Perrin American Legion Post 190 appreciates the volunteers and community members who made the event possible and looks forward to building on this success in the coming years.

District 8B

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



Geraland Eugene Bond



https://www.schillingfhg.com/obituary/Geraland-Bond?fbclid=IwZnRzaAPsjKlleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZAo2NjI4NTY4Mzc5AAEevYisEZSnOd3YCbQ3blXzgE0MehGJ2kBww6o4F4ZX57x1J0UhnaJItrGdL1E_aem_sak5wzumWzX7IDf4RBEUww

Grover Harold Gay

<https://www.guthrienewsleader.net/index.php/obituaries/grover-harold-gay-1947-2025>

Quentin Larue Ploch



<https://www.mcneilsfuneral.com/obituaries/Quentin-Larue-Ploch?obId=47128863>

Lindsey (Pete) Allen Helquist



<https://www.mcneilsfuneral.com/obituaries/Lindsay-Pete-Allen-Helquist?obId=46463433>

James Alan Butler



[https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/46837475/james-alan-\(butler\)-butler](https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/46837475/james-alan-(butler)-butler)

Duane Paul John



<https://obituaries.duncanbanner.com/obituary/duane-paul-1093532365>

Charles "Chuck" Moe



<https://www.shipmanfuneralhomes.com/obituaries/Charles-Henry-Moe?obId=46820633>

Steven "Steve" Duane Garman



https://www.brownfamilycare.com/obituaries/steven-garman?fbclid=IwY2xjawQQLVRleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeU147fGzNzhlcZ6JHVESo_ciqQOI8f1KvW7BNLJwj86rcai_Goqo_HJ_XgzC8_aem_wY86Q_tgsexkoL2ySg-2zQ