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Message from the Commander

As we observe Veterans Day, our Texas American Legion posts could capitalize on this federal holiday to educate our communities on the significance of this observance.

More and more Americans have very limited exposure to veterans. According to some national research, 94% of us have never served in uniform. This makes it somewhat tricky for non-veterans to comprehend the emotional significance behind this Veterans Day.

Businesses will hold Veterans Day sales specials as another way to sell cars, furniture, and other high-ticket retail items. Many restaurants will offer free or highly discounted meals for veterans. A veteran can show their veteran status with a military or Veterans Health Identification Card.

Sadly, most Texas schools will not close to observe this federal holiday as Nov. 11 comes too close to the Thanksgiving four-day weekend. This, however, allows us to provide speakers on military service for school assemblies or to middle school or higher history classes.

If your post is invited to speak on Nov. 11, this provides an excellent chance to help our school-age children understand the significance of Veterans Day. This also offers an exceptional opportunity to share upcoming events such as the 2026 Boys State and Girls State in Austin. This is also a time to encourage high school administrators to publicize our state's oratorical contest. Both of these experiences will enhance the leadership potential of their students. It will also allow our younger non-veterans to understand what it means to serve in the military.

Many of our Legion posts also support high school junior ROTC programs. American Legion posts also support Boy and Girl Scout programs. Many of these programs are often done without any formal recognition of the American Legion's contribution and sponsorship to continue them. When people ask you about why you're taking an active role in our organization, please remind them of the many school-facing events we undertake to help our communities recognize the significance of how veterans like us have served our nation.

Rich Huntley
Department Commander



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THE LEGION TIMES VOLUME 107, ISSUE 4 NOVEMBER 2025

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A Bit of History from the 1960s *Submitted by Shirley Platt, Department Historian*

1964

Texas American Legion Press Association (TXALPA) was formed. Marcus Cowan, Post 416, Houston and editor of the 416 News Reel was named acting president of the newly formed Texas Branch of the American Press Association in a Dallas meeting during the National Convention. Nels Soderholm, Corpus Christi, was named Secretary-treasurer.

The American Legion Press Association is made up of editors of Post and other Legion publications over the nation. Many states have their own associations and work in the frame work of the national ALPA.

1966 - 1967

The Department has a first for Texas – a husband-wife team to lead the Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. “Jack and Mary (Flynt)” as they are affectionately called, have truly been a team and their drive and leadership have contributed immeasurably to our successes.

Meet Miss American Legion

With tears streaming down her face, Miss American Legion 1966, Miss Janice Kay Hoskins, representative of Gragg-Sherrill Post 248, Corpus Christi, closed the final chapter of the year during which she won the hearts of the Legionnaires. Her final majestic walk thru the audience which she so ably represented during the past year was the culminating event of her memorable reign and was greeted with standing ovation by the multitude in the Crystal Ball Room.

Miss Carol Cutbirth, 17 years old, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Cutbirth and representing Sweetwater American Legion Post 109, was crowned Miss American Legion for 1967-68 at the conclusion of the Beauty Pageant highlighting the 49th Annual American Legion Convention, held in Dallas, Texas, July 27-30, 1967.

The second annual Miss American Legion Bathing Beauty Pageant has proved itself to be one of the major and most popular events of the Legion Convention.

1968

A large freighter S.S. American Legion was launched February 27, 1968 and National Commander Galbraith presented the owners with a plaque commemorating the event. This is a modern freight vessel, of the multi-million dollar class. It was launched at The Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., at Chester, PA.

*Extracted from: A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION –
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS – VOL. II – 1949-1969 – COPYRIGHT 1976*

2025–2026 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Richard Huntley, DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

John Hince, National Executive Committeeman
Bret Watson, Alternate National Executive Committeeman
Tom Marty, Immediate Past Department Commander
William West, Department Adjutant
Jimmy Mitchell, Department Chaplain
Gary Sanders, Department Treasurer
William Wallace, Department Judge Advocate
Shirley Platt, Department Historian
Jerry Tatman, Department Sergeant-at-Arms
Michael Wheeler, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Michael Simon, Director of Internal Affairs
Michael Lacy, Department Service Officer
Ron Peterson, Department Service Officer
Allen Sharp, Department Service Officer

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDERS

Andy Lowen, 1st Division
Steve Kim, 2nd Division
Jose Lopez, 3rd Division
Chris Holt, 4th Division

DISTRICT COMMANDERS

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Cheryl Williams, 2nd District Commander
Kim McCarthy, 3rd District Commander
Michael Olivarez, 4th District Commander
Tynetta Runnels, 5th District Commander
Russ Foster, 6th District Commander
Terry Batson, 7th District Commander
Irene Infante, 8th District Commander
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Phillip Kelly, 10th District Commander
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Chris Grantham, 17th District Commander
Reyna Ruiz, 18th District Commander
Kevin Bright, 19th District Commander
Eric Mayer, 20th District Commander
Don Gray, 21st District Commander
Robert Harvey, 22nd District Commander
Jose Gamez, 23rd District Commander

ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Texas? If so, please follow these guidelines for submissions.

- Submit text in Word format (.doc, .docx) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf) or as a PDF. ONE ARTICLE PER EMAIL PLEASE.
- The ideal word count for our format is 200 - 500 words (maximum), with no double spacing.
- Give your article a TITLE! Create a HEADLINE and save with a proper file name so we can easily recognize it.
- Tell us who the author is, whether it's you or if you are just forwarding it to us.
- Attach any photos or artwork for your article separately in your email. DO NOT embed them in your Word or PDF file. Larger photos are best, and high resolution JPG files of 300 dpi or better are preferred. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with your article.

- Let us know in your e-mail or Word doc of any photo captions, the name of the photographer, etc. Please note that due to spacing and layout requirements, we may not be able to use every photo or caption submitted (preferably 2 - 3 photos per article).

- Please spell check everything! Especially people's names, web addresses, etc. We do our best to catch typos, and make corrections, but sometimes they still slip by. You can help us greatly by simply running the spell check function in your word processing software.

- We publish on our Website on the FIRST FRIDAY of the Month, with few exceptions. E-mail everything directly to times@txlegion.org by the 20th of every month, for it to appear in the *following* issue. Submissions received after the 20th will be considered, but may be held over or discarded due to space and layout restrictions.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and hope you continue to help us grow and improve The Legion Times!

Habits

Submitted by Rich Huntley, Department Commander

If your memory is good, you can still recall the day you first met your Drill Instructor. As with everyone else, they promise you will be in great shape by the time you finish boot camp. If they said the program requires you to do ONE push-up every day this week and you needed to record the days and times you completed the task. You might have thought this is too easy. However, you complied and reported back that you did the push-up on five of the seven days at various times during the day but at a late time in the evening. The instructor then said let us try and get two push-ups done each day and still record the date and time you completed the tasks.

Again, you reported with excitement that you did at least two push-ups each day and in fact you did extras on two days this past weekend. The instructor said “You are doing well. What do you think you can do this week? “. You could have given many replies from “I will do as many as I can on three days this week and two on the other days”. Or you might have said “I will make sure to do three each day.”

Now you have started a habit that will get you down the road to getting and being in shape. Always try to improve your efforts each week and record your progress to see what you have gotten done.

What I ask of you today is to make one call a day related to helping Veterans, Children, or your community. Record your efforts and review it each week. Challenge yourself or get a friend to help you keep your efforts improving. What we need to make The American Legion Department of Texas is the efforts of everyone to change a few habits.

Just one call a day.

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The “Mighty” 20th District Hosts Annual Fall Convention

Story and photos by Legionnaire Burrell Parmer, TEXALPA

SAN ANTONIO – (Oct. 18, 2025) – The “Mighty” 20th District, Department of Texas held their annual Fall Convention at Alamo American Legion Post 2.

Special guests included Department Commander Richard Huntley who introduced National Security Director Sean Counihan who traveled from Washington, D.C.

“We’re the one division that doesn’t focus on the veteran. We focus on the active component,” said Counihan. “We focus on the Department of State, we focus on Homeland Security, and we recognized polices and bills that are good for our country for enhancing our national security. We advocate for those bills and policies especially for quality of life for our service members. Additionally, we educate lawmakers and policymakers to include department directors and department heads in Washington, D.C.”

During the morning session, Legionnaires heard from Johnson High School Senior Troy Balogun, the 2025 Texas Boys State Governor.

“The American Legion is an organization that genuinely helps out the next generation and puts their foot forward at every opportunity possible,” said Balogun, who plans to attend Howard University in the fall. “I believe we do everything bigger and better here. We really showcased what Texas and San Antonio could bring to Boys Nation.”

According to District Commander Eric Mayer, 1968 was the last year a delegate from the 20th District won the governorship. This year, the district yielded two of the four top positions, that of governor and chief justice of the supreme court.

“These young men did an amazing job,” said Mayer. “Everything that I’ve ever wished for our delegates from the 20th District to do, they did, and Troy is a representative of all that excellence.”

Additionally, presentations were given on the latest developments in depression, anxiety, and PTSD treatment from Legionnaires Mark Wessler and Dr. Christopher Jackson from the Family Care Center.

A special presentation was witnessed as Past District Commander Walter Geraghty presented Department of Texas Commander Richard Huntley with a framed copy of The Legion Act.



Department of Texas Commander Richard Huntley speaks on The Legion Act during the convention. The framed copy of the act was presented to Huntley by Past 20th District Commander Walter Geraghty. The act approved on July 30, 2019, amended title 36, United States Code, authorizing The American Legion to determine the requirements for membership in The American Legion, and for other purposes

(continued)



National Security Director Sean Counihan briefed legislative priorities of The American Legion with a focus on the quality of life for service members



District Commander Eric Mayer presented a certificate of appreciation to Troy Balogun, the 2025 Texas Boys State Governor

The act approved on July 30, 2019, amended title 36, United States Code, authorizing The American Legion to determine the requirements for membership in The American Legion, and for other purposes.

Prior to lunch, a joint session was held between the Legionnaires, the Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion where members were briefed on justice for veterans by the Honorable Judge Kristina Escalona, chief of the Bexar County Felony Veterans Treatment Court, and remarks from 20th District Auxiliary President Carol Evans.

After lunch, members heard from Northeast Independent School District's Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Director of Army Instruction, retired U.S. Army Col. William LaChance on the State of JROTC.

Candidates for district commander (Legionnaires Willis Gray and Billy Hill) gave remarks followed by Legionnaires Ventura Tounsel and Garrett Stacy for district vice commander, and Legionnaire Jack Caniglia for district adjutant.

Prior to the conclusion of the convention, Mayer presented certificates of appreciation to members of Post 2 and its Auxiliary for their support.

Lastly, the members unanimously voted to voice their disapproval of the change for disabled veteran & military plates parking at the San Antonio International Airport.

On Nov. 1, 2025, veterans with disabled veteran & military specialty plates will be charged for parking in long-term and short-term parking. Discounts of 25% for short-term and 50% for long term will be offered to qualified veterans enrolled in the program. Prior to the change, veterans with disabled veteran & military specialty plates were able to receive complimentary parking at the airport for up to 30 days.



Legionnaires Mark Wesseler and Dr. Christopher Jackson (right) from the Family Care Center presented information on the latest developments in depression, anxiety, and PTSD treatment



The Honorable Judge Kristina Escalona, chief of the Bexar County Felony Veterans Treatment Court speaks at a joint session of Legionnaires and Auxiliary members



Northeast Independent School District's (NEISD) Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Director of Army Instruction, retired U.S. Army Col. William LaChance spoke with Legionnaires during the convention



District Chaplain Tony Vega (left) presented a check of more than \$4,300 to District Commander Eric Mayer from the District's Golf Tourney held in September. The proceeds will pay for bus transportation for future statesmen for 2026 Texas Boys State

Post 593 Helps Out at Universal Pumpkin Patch

Submitted by Shirley Platt, Post 593



Family members of Post 593 helped setup the different areas of the Universal City Pumpkin Patch that runs from October 3rd thru the 31st. There are over 1600 pumpkins sold during this event each year.

There were a variety of events and games at the Patch - Story Time for the kids, community coffee one morning each week, and fright night scavenger hunt, just to name a few. All the events were free to participants.

Various non-profit organizations were invited to help sell pumpkins, take photos of families, and have a food booth. Post 593 did just that on 3 different days. A lot of work and long hours, but a great time to help out the community.



Community Kindness: Post 490 and Partners Uplift Local Families

Submitted by Rene Sanchez, Commander, Post 490



Pamela Cavazo, a Soldiers and Family Readiness Center specialist (SFRS) at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base exemplified the true spirit of service by coordinating a donation of much-needed school supplies to David Witucki, First Vice Commander of South Houston American Legion Post 490.

By embracing a shared mission, SFRS and the American Legion not only offer outreach but also weave a fabric of mutual support that extends across service members, their families, and the entire community.

The ripple effects of their generosity reached even further as Auxiliary Unit 490 distributed these supplies during their annual school supply drive, amplifying their impact on local families. Auxiliary Unit 490 partnered with Sarah's House - a place of hope and healing for those rebuilding their lives. Each contribution is a step toward resilience.

Together, SFRS, the American Legion, Auxiliary, and Sarah's House form a compassionate network, illustrating how collective kindness strengthens communities and inspires hope for all.

Acts of Compassion: Enduring Commitment to Community Service

The South Houston American Legion Post stands as a true example of what it means to serve and support one another, especially in times of hardship. When a fellow Legionnaire—a disabled Vietnam Combat Veteran—tragically lost his home to a fire; Post 490's unwavering dedication was evident as his Marine flag - which remained flying - symbolizing strength and resilience through adversity.

The Post connected him with the Department Service Officer and other helpful agencies, ensuring he had access to crucial resources. Going even further, Post 490 Terry Contella (Judge Advocate) and Earl McClearen (Board of Trustees Chair) purchased and delivered a much-needed appliance to his temporary home. This thoughtful gesture brought comfort and hope during a challenging time, and the veteran was deeply grateful for the support his fellow Legionnaires provided.

Spreading Holiday Cheer: Supporting Seniors

In a heartwarming gesture of generosity, the South Houston American Legion Post 490 stepped up to make the holiday season brighter by donating funds so that seniors at the Friendswood Senior Center can enjoy festive Christmas dinners together at Luby's. Their kindness not only nourished bodies but also lifted spirits, showcasing the power of community and compassion in action.

Stories like these highlight the incredible impact that joining the American Legion can have—not only for veterans in need, but for the entire community. By coming together, we can offer practical assistance, compassion, and the reassurance that no one is ever alone. If you know a veteran that is seeking a meaningful way to give back and make a real difference, tell him or her to join the Legion. Their commitment could change someone's life and strengthen our community's spirit of service and solidarity.

Wheelchairs Distributed to Veterans, Elderly Thanks to Teambuilding & Leadership Event

Story by Legionnaire Burrell Parmer, 20th District Public Relations



District Service Officer Billy Hill (Center) with more than 50 senior managers and engineers who built 20 wheelchairs for donation to Legionnaires and senior citizens
(Photo courtesy of Legionnaire Billy Hill)

SAN ANTONIO – (Oct. 14, 2025) – During the month of September, High Performance Company of Professional Teambuilding & Leadership Development reached out to the “Mighty” 20th District as part of their support for veterans.

Professional Teambuilding & Leadership is a team building event company that creates fun, exciting and unforgettable team building and leadership development activities that drive powerful skills, tools, insights, and abilities making your team more effective, efficient and productive.

As part of their teambuilding exercise, more than 50 senior managers and engineers built 20 wheelchairs for donation to Legionnaires and senior citizens.

(continued)



District 20 Service Officer Billy Hill of Post 828 with 20 wheelchairs received by High Performance Company of Professional Teambuilding & Leadership Development (Photo courtesy of Legionnaire Billy Hill)



Service Officer Marcellus Hutchinson of Fred Brock American Legion Post 828 delivered a wheelchair to Pecan Valley Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center (Photo courtesy of Legionnaire Billy Hill)

District 20 Legionnaire and Service Officer Billy Hill attended the event and transported the wheelchairs to Fred Brock American Legion Post 828 for storage and future distribution.

American Legion Posts within the District coordinated with Hill for distribution of the wheelchairs to those in need.

On Oct. 9, Post 828 distributed wheelchairs to two local nursing homes, Normandy Terrance Nursing & Rehabilitation Center and Pecan Valley Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center.

"This donation was able to directly go to a new resident in need who had a drastic health change and suddenly found themselves in need of one," said Valerie Chapa, activity director at Pecan Valley Rehabilitation & Healthcare. "It truly gave the patient their independence back and when the resident discharges they will be able to take it home. We would like to thank the American Legion for considering our facility. It's stories like these that remind us of the positive impact community members benefit from when organizations collaborate together."

The Service Officer Committee is a vital component of the "Mighty" 20th District, dedicated to supporting veterans, their families, and the broader military community. Through its work, the committee ensures that veterans receive the benefits, resources, and recognition they have earned through their service to the nation.



Chaplain Patricia Wimberly (left) of Fred Brock American Legion Post 828 delivered a wheelchair to Normandy Terrance Nursing & Rehabilitation Center (Photo courtesy of Legionnaire Billy Hill)



First Vice Commander Daniel Frith of Bicentennial American Legion Post 579 took delivery of a wheelchair at Post 828 for distribution to a veteran or senior citizen in the local community (Photo courtesy of Legionnaire Billy Hill)

2nd Division, 7th District Convention

Submitted by Legionnaire Roxanne Moss, 7th District Adjutant and Hubmaster



Saturday September 27, 2025 the American Legion Department of Texas, Second Division, Seventh District held its annual convention. The convention was hosted by the C.M. Joslin Post 618 in Willis, Texas. The post, unit and squadron did a phenomenal job accommodating all of the entities and serving a delicious breakfast and lunch! The district, division and department leadership in attendance were pleasantly surprised and proud of the effort shown by the post members who worked tirelessly the week leading up to the convention. Grounds clean up, interior clean up, kitchen prep, cooking and decor were met head on and tackled with grace by post 618 to ensure the convention was a success! Special recognition was given for the Post Commander Ricky Baimbridge and SAL Squadron Commander Jerry Renard, for their combined leadership making it all come together!

Of the sixteen posts that make up the seventh district, twelve were in attendance and post representation was a welcome mix of officers and general members from each entity. The turn out was a positive acknowledgment for the incoming district officers.

The morning joint session was a mix of guest speakers, good food and lively dialogue. Department of Texas Second Division Commander Steve Kim opened the convention as the Legionnaires keynote speaker and an emotional post everlasting was hosted by district seven Legionnaire Chaplain Dr. Richard Henriksen, Jr. and Auxiliary Chaplain Cynthia Oliphant closed out the morning's activities.

The afternoon session for the Legionnaires included a surprise visit and motivational speech from the Department of Texas Commander Rich Huntley. Training Chairwoman Cheryl Williams offered inspiration and ideas for training and awareness of how to be Legion, followed by important announcements from the new district seven commander Terry Batson, and tips and training for post adjutants and hubmasters shared by the district seven adjutant and hubmaster Roxanne Moss. Commander Batson also engaged a crucial round table for membership, whereby all the posts in attendance shared valuable insight and current experiences in recruiting and maintaining members, while offering ideas and support for each other in overcoming the shared challenges in East Texas, lovingly nicknamed the 'District in the Sticks'. The afternoon session closed with a powerful benediction and positive thoughts for a successful membership year.



23rd District Convention a Success!

Submitted by Jose Gamez, 23rd District Commander

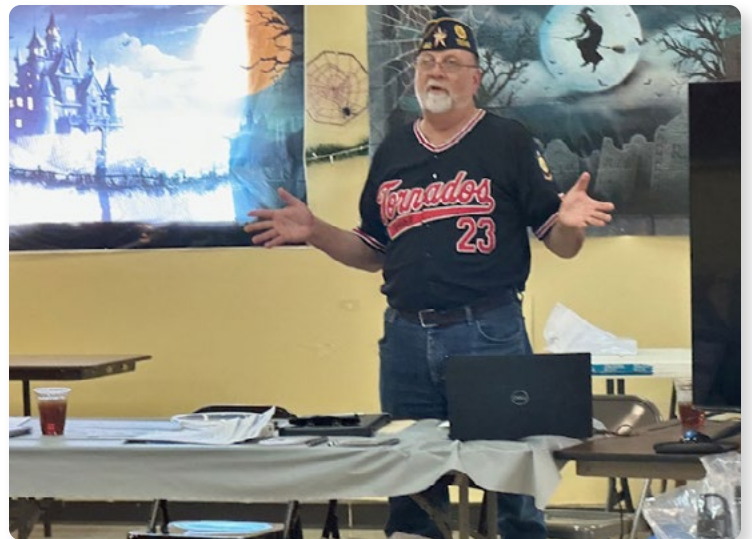


"The 23rd American Legion Convention, Hosted by Melico Ortiz Post 396 was a great success," stated District Adjutant Eloy Vera. On Friday Post 396 hosted a heartfelt Veterans & Community Fair which attracted veterans and their families. "Attendees visited booths, shared stories of service, and connected with representatives of the different public agencies, non-profits, and veteran-serving organizations," Doctor Alberto Gonzalez wrote.

The following day, 23rd district members convened for the District Convention. The main emphasis of the meeting was increasing membership within the district and ensuring members are encouraged to renew their membership.

Department Commander Rich Huntley has made it clear we need to increase our numbers throughout the state and this is being prioritized.

Past 23rd District Commander Jerome Ittis presented on the different programs of the American Legion: Oratorical, Americanism, Boys State, and American Legion Baseball, were some of the topics presented. When you have these programs in place membership automatically increases because there is something worthwhile for the members and newcomers to be a part of, as stated by Legionnaire Ittis. "I am very proud of Post 396; over thirty district members attended the meeting, the food was great, and to top it off we were serenaded by Post member Martin Zavala with his guitar while we ate. The camaraderie among the members present was a reflection of what 'For God and Country' stands for," the District Commander stated.



Warrior Defense Project, 20th Dist., Dept. of Texas Host Global & National Security Conference

Story and photos by Legionnaire Burrell Parmer, TEXALPA

SAN ANTONIO – (Oct. 17, 2025) – More than 100 members of the community including lawyers, educators, law enforcement, and interested members of the public attended the Global & National Security Conference held at the Marriott Northwest.

The free conference hosted by the Warrior Defense Project and the 20th District, The American Legion Department of Texas, presented a unique opportunity for the general community to receive critical information on the full range of issues - legal and policy - related to global and national security.

To kick off the conference, the Honor Guard from Audie L. Murphy American Legion Post 336 presented the colors followed by opening remarks by Patricia Roberts, dean of St. Mary's School of Law.

"For over a century, The American Legion has stood as a pillar of support for those who have served our nation," said Roberts, a Charles E. Cantu Distinguished Professor of Law.

"At St. Mary's School of Law, we believe in service; service to justice, community, and especially to those who have served our country."

Roberts was followed by Department of Texas Commander Richard Huntley.

"A strong national defense is one of our four pillars upon which The American Legion was founded and remains a key focus of our organization," said Huntley. "The American Legion is not just a network; we are very much involved in promoting 100% Americanism as well as focus on other issues such as military healthcare."

Other morning speakers included retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Alfred A. Valenzuela, a senior consultant with the Warrior Defense Project along with retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dr. Jeffrey F. Addicott, director of the Warrior Defense Project who gave a Homeland Threat Assessment.

(continued)



Patricia Roberts, dean of St. Mary's School of Law, and a Charles E. Cantu Distinguished Professor of Law

Traveling from Washington, D.C., was Legionnaire Sean Counihan, National Security director of The American Legion, who briefed attendees on legislative priorities of The American Legion to include each of the several committees under the National Security Commission.

Following lunch, attendees received a Narco-Terrorism briefing from former FBI Special Agent James Conway, a Global Counterterrorism and Risk Management consultant and a briefing on Law of War and Cyber Threats from retired U.S Navy Capt. Robert Lee Summers Jr., emeritus professor of law at St. Mary's University School of Law.

Founded in 2019, the Warrior Defense Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, Section 501(c)(3), academic institution at St. Mary's University School of Law dedicated to providing free legal services to military members wrongfully accused of misconduct.

Since its founding in 1919, The American Legion has been a key advocate for veterans' benefits, children and youth, patriotic American values, a strong national defense and quality-of-life issues for those serving in today's armed forces.

Special thanks to the following sponsors: Roger L. and Laura D. Zeller Charitable Foundation, Ferrari & Associates P.C., and Dr. Richard Sugden.



American Legion Department of Texas Commander Richard Huntley speaks on the four pillars of The American Legion



Retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Alfred A. Valenzuela, a senior consultant with the Warrior Defense Project, welcomes attendees



Retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dr. Jeffrey F. Addicott, director of the Warrior Defense Project and professor of law at St. Mary's University School of Law



Legionnaire Sean Counihan, National Security director of The American Legion, speaks on National Security Concerns

South Houston American Legion Post 490 Participates in Texian Navy Day Parade

Submitted by Rene Sanchez, Commander, Post 490

The Texas Navy Association hosted a truly memorable event at Pier 21 in Galveston, paying tribute to the courageous legacy of the First Navy of Texas, the revered Texian Navy, which served valiantly as the naval division of the Texian Armed Forces during the Texas Revolution.

Admiral Scott, President of the Texas Navy Association, extended a heartfelt invitation—through Eliu Rojas of the Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund and Post 490—to veterans across our community. Thanks to Eliu Rojas, the invitation reached South Houston American Legion Post 490, encouraging their active participation in this historic commemoration.

The program was a stirring celebration: a solemn wreath-laying ceremony at the First Navy of Texas Monument, an exhilarating boat parade, a powerful military flyover, and a wealth of maritime exhibits that educated and inspired all in attendance. The spirit of camaraderie filled the air as Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, Sons of the American Legion, Riders, and their families came together, enjoying the festivities as the ship, the Observer, sailed proudly across Galveston Bay. Our Post 490 was honored to showcase both the Department of Texas American Legion 22nd District and Post 490 flags for all to see—a true testament to our pride and unity.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Ship's Captain, his exceptional crew, and Loadmaster Don Nicolson for their outstanding hospitality. Their generous provision of delicious food and beverages made everyone feel welcome and valued.

This year's event was a resounding success, but our journey does not end here. Let us carry this momentum forward—may the unity, respect, and gratitude we experienced inspire us to gather in even greater numbers next year. Together, we will continue honoring our heroes, preserving our proud heritage, and building bonds that endure.



Atwoods & Turnbow-Higgs American Legion Post 240 'Eat and Greet Fundraiser'

Submitted by Roger Easter, Post 240 Historian



TURNBOW-HIGGS American Legion Post 240 Legionnaires led by Commander Frank Maddy, hosted an ATWOODS 'Eat and Greet' Saturday, October 11, 2025. Post 240 Legionnaires joining the Commander were JJ Conway, Americanism Chairman; Walter Dotson, Flag Watch Chairman; Curtis Anderson, Past Commander; Chris Grantham, 17th District Commander & Post 240 Adjutant; and Eddie Crowley, Honor Guard Member.

With membership applications in hand and mindful of The American Legion's Four Pillars of service; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, Children & Youth, Legionnaires greeted shoppers and served Hot Dogs (with all the fixins), bakery goods, and drinks provided by ATWOODS. Hundreds visited the 'Eat and Greet' to thank veterans for their service and to learn more about their local American Legion Post 240. Legionnaires Walter Dotson (L) and Curtis Anderson are shown greeting and preparing hotdogs to a couple of young American Patriots!

Thanks to the dedication to purpose the Legionnaires volunteering on this day successfully recruited new members, sold several raffle tickets and gratefully accepted several hundred dollars in donations.

Thanks Comrades! We Salute you for a job well done!

Abe Harrison Post 174 3rd Annual Mini-Golf Event

Submitted by BJ MacMillan, Adjutant, Post 174

In the early evening of October 6th, 2025, Post 174 held their 3rd Annual Mini-Golf Fundraiser at the Centex Mini-Golf Center in Georgetown, Texas. This event is held annually to raise funds for the Abe Harrison American Legion Post 174 high school senior scholarship program.

Last year's fundraising event enabled the Post to fund six \$1,000 merit-based scholarships for students in the Georgetown and Liberty Hill ISDs.

Seventeen teams competed this year with awards and prizes for top scores, best themed team, and two hole-in-one winner! A silent auction was conducted with donated gift baskets.

Overall, the Post raised \$6,000 more than last year's event proceeds. The Post goal was to raise more than last year and deliver more scholarships in 2026. Thanks to the generous donations of our sponsors this will be a reality. Thank you for the support!



Vietnam Veterans Honored at American Legion Truitt Bishop Post 426 in Alvarado, TX

By Donnie Gonzales, Post Service Officer, Post 426

Alvarado, TX – October 12, 2025 — The American Legion Truitt Bishop Post 426 Family in Alvarado hosted a solemn and heartfelt ceremony on October 12, 2025, to honor the service and sacrifices of Vietnam War veterans. Legionnaires, The Sons of the American Legion, and the American Legion Auxiliary of 426 came together to give thanks and gratitude in a way that most of these veterans have never received.

The event, which brought together veterans, their families, and members of the local community, was a poignant reminder of the bravery and dedication of those who served in one of the most turbulent times in U.S. history.

The ceremony, which began at 3:30 p.m., was attended by military veterans and residents of Johnson County, all gathering to pay tribute to those who fought in the Vietnam War. The highlight of the event was the presentation of commemorative pins to veterans who served in the conflict, a small but meaningful token of appreciation for their service.

Judge Christopher Boedeker, and members of the Johnson County Commissioner's Court, had proclaimed October 12, 2025, as Vietnam Veterans Honor Day in Johnson County. The reading of the proclamation at the ceremony showcased the dignity of the proceedings and gratefulness of this community.

Veterans were called to the front of the post by name, each receiving a special lapel pin and applause from the audience. American Legion Post 426 also presented each veteran in attendance a special certificate of thanks.

"This ceremony is about ensuring that the sacrifice of our Vietnam veterans is never forgotten," said Post Service Officer, Donnie Gonzales. "We owe these men and women so much. Today, we honor their courage, their patriotism, and the resilience they showed in the face of adversity."

The ceremony also featured a moving speech by guest speaker, American Legion 6th District Adjutant, Scott Hines. "The Vietnam War was not just a fight on foreign soil," he explained to the gathered crowd. "It was a fight for respect, for recognition, and for the honor that these men and women deserved. We must ensure their sacrifices are acknowledged, and their legacy is preserved."

The Cleburne NJROTC was in attendance posting the colors of our nation and presenting the flags from each branch of our Armed Forces.

In addition to honoring the veterans, the event also highlighted the efforts of the American Legion Post in supporting local veterans and their families. The Post has long been a pillar of the Alvarado community, providing resources, support, and camaraderie to those who have served in the military.

"It's important for us to continue showing our veterans the appreciation they deserve," said Amy Hines, President of American Legion Unit 426 Auxiliary. "Their sacrifices shaped the course of history, and this ceremony is a small way we can say thank you."

As the ceremony drew to a close, the veterans in attendance stood tall, surrounded by their families and community members, as names were read aloud in memory of those who served but were no longer with us. While the event marked an official acknowledgment of their service, for many veterans, the day was a moment to reflect on the bonds they forged during their time in Vietnam and the lasting impact it had on their lives.

For many, the ceremony was a healing moment, a reminder that their service and sacrifices have not been forgotten by their fellow Americans.

Goodbye Clutter, Hello Peace Helps Legionnaires Simplify Their Lives

Story by Patricia A. Zuczek, Adjutant, Post 21

Holley-Riddle Post 21 in The Colony, TX, recently organized a complimentary seminar designed to assist individuals in effectively reducing household clutter. Recognizing that military personnel often accumulate mementos and souvenirs from assignments around the globe, the seminar addressed the cultural tendency to preserve our possessions—a practice rooted in honoring memories, loved ones, and family heritage.

Over time, however, those keepsakes, gifts, and family heirlooms can accumulate, filling closets, attics, and garages with items that are hard to part with.

Facilitated by Leslie Gooding, the event dubbed “Goodbye Clutter, Hello Peace” explored motivations for retaining unused items, common patterns of accumulation, and an understanding of why so many of us keep boxes and bins filled with things we no longer use.

Throughout the interactive session, attendees ruefully “confessed” to buying more than one appliance in case the first one broke, laughed about holding on to outdated clothing that fit just fine when we were younger, and retaining bins full of odd tools, bits, and pieces “just in case I need it someday”. More than one person admitted to continuously paying monthly rent on a storage unit they had not opened in years.

The session offered practical advice on how to begin decluttering in manageable steps, including the 10-10 method, 20/20 rule, and the 3-box method.

As Walt Disney once said, “The best way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing!”

Participants departed the seminar feeling empowered, motivated, and equipped to implement these techniques, bringing order and peace of mind within their home environments.



Rose City Air Fest

Submitted by Kim McCarthy, 3rd District Commander



3rd District, 1st Division had the honor and privilege of working the Rose City Air Fest at Tyler Pounds Airport, Tyler, TX on October 4 and 5, 2025. We got to meet some great people, a few new members and some transfers for the District.

Posts that were able to be present included Tyler Post 12, Lindale Post 15, Jacksonville Post 152, Henderson Post 311, Gilmer Post 320, Carthage Post 353



Post 174's Troop 1096 Stayed Busy at Local Fall Events

Submitted by BJ MacMillan, Adjutant, Post 174

Troop 1096 stayed busy at local community events. First, for the Florence National Night Out on October 7th, they set up a tent to recruit new Scouts for the Troop and newly formed Pack 1096. They set up a Rainwater Regatta racetrack so youth could make a sailboat and race it down the water track. In addition, they had a hatchet throw target where youth practice their throwing techniques. Families were interested and signed up to learn more about Scouts.

Second, the Troop set-up at tent for Santa Rosa Catholic Church's Fall Festival. The Troop holds its meetings at the church. The Scouts had a fishing game, paper rockets to launch, and the hatch throw target set up for the youth. One of the scouts brought his homemade corn dish to serve to our guests. The Scouts had a big time at the pumpkin throwing tent at the event. Again, we had many families interested in the scouting program.



Wood Badge Presentation

Submitted by BJ MacMillan, Adjutant, Post 174

Post 174's Troop 1096 Scoutmaster, Thomas Diaz, received his Wood Badge neckerchief and beads on October 18, 2025.

Tom has been Scoutmaster of Troop 1096 for two years. He attended Wood Badge Training in the Alamo Area Council. His wood badge ticket items were geared towards improving Troop 1096.

Under his leadership the Troop has grown into a spirited and effective group of young men.



Scouts Conduct Flag Retirement

On Saturday, October 11, 2025, Troop 155, Pack 151, and Troop 151 conducted a flag retirement at the VFW Hall in Georgetown. Pack and Troop 151 are chartered by Post 174 and Troop 155 is chartered by the VFW Post 8587.

Because the flags being retired were polyester or nylon and cannot be burned due to toxic fumes, the Scouts cut them into four pieces keeping the blue portion in one piece.

They completed retirement of about 1,400 flags in about two hours. Good job Scouts!

Troop 1096 Helps with Florence Community Clean-up

Troop 1096, chartered by American Legion Post 174, helped the Florence Community with their annual clean-up.

The Scouts spent the morning unloading trailers full of tree limbs and yard debris/waste.

The Scouts enjoy working with the Florence Police Department to keep the city clean.



Celina, TX Post 145 Holds Pancake Breakfast

Submitted by Philip F. Shortino, Adjutant, Post 145



Post 145, Celina, TX held a Pancake Breakfast on October 5, 2025. This was the Post's first breakfast event conducted in collaboration with a local Celina establishment, Tender Smokehouse Restaurant.

Post 145 member Rose Kemmel planned the breakfast event with the cooperation of management at Tender Restaurant. The menu for the breakfast included scrambled eggs, sausage, and of course, pancakes. Tender's management offered all patrons free coffee as well as orange juice and milk to complement the tasty and satisfying platters.

Members of the Post volunteered for kitchen duty, and arrived early to receive training in various aspects of food handling, preparation, and portion control. Three members worked in the kitchen and each was assigned a specific task — one member was grilling sausage, a second member was preparing scrambled eggs, and the third member was working the flat top range grilling pancakes. Teamwork was evident throughout the morning as when orders were placed, platters were quickly filled and delivered to the customer with minimal wait time.

The success of this event has members already planning to make this an annual event. The proceeds raised from this event are being allocated to programs and projects dedicated to support our active-duty troops, veterans, students, and the community.

Post 145 members who worked behind the scenes providing kitchen duty were Carlos Olivarez, Butch Wilson, and Jack Eramdlan. Rose Kemmel supported the event as a server, and she had enlisted the help of her daughter, Isabella, who received Community Service Hours for her volunteer service from Celina High School, where she is a student.

Community residents who came out to support the breakfast enjoyed fellowship with Post 145 members and left having a greater appreciation of the interactions of Celina Post 145 with the community.

The Post has undertaken this project to further educate the residents of Celina and surrounding communities regarding the Post's mission and goals, and to support the Post's recruiting initiatives to increase membership.

Post 164 Hosts Legion College

Submitted by Sandy Krum Commander, Post 164

On the last weekend of September, Post 164 hosted the Texas Legion College.

The three-day event was led by Butch Sparks, Past Department Commander, Cheryl Williams from Post 817, Jim McGuire 22nd District Vice Commander, Harry Woodstrom past 22nd District Commander, and Sandy Krum Post 164 Commander. Jimmy Mitchell Department Chaplain opened each session with a prayer. There were 16 Legion and Son's members in attendance.

Everyone commented on how well all the material was presented and how much more they learned about the working of the American Legion. Breakfast and lunch were provided each day.



Post 164 Participates in the Katy Rice Harvest Festival Parade

Continuing its tradition Katy Post 164 participated in this year's Katy Rice Harvest Festival Parade. Our trailer was decorated with all the service flags as well as our truck with bunting and U.S. and Texas Flags. Jim McGuire past District 22 Commander and current District 22 Vice Commander, did a masterful job with the towing. On the trailer were Linda Malsbary past Unit 164 President, Jennifer Lowery current Unit 164 1st Vice President, Post 164 Commander Sandy Krum, Dennis Wells Post 164 1st Vice Commander, Tina Miller Unit 164 member, Lucia Delgado from Katy Christian Ministries, and 6 members of the Jordan Rach High School National Honor Society, who got their steps in walking the parade route and handing out American Flags.



Post 164 Receives an Eagle Scout Candidate Project

The first weekend in October Post 164 received a horseshoe pit as an Eagle Scout candidate project.

Scout Walker approached the post with a request for his Eagle project. He and his crew got the installation done and finished in one day.

Post 164 has plans to use this and other games during family events at the post.



Post 164 Booth at the Katy Rice Harvest Festival

Submitted by Sandy Krum Commander, Post 164

Post 164 and Auxiliary Unit 164 were at the Katy Rice Harvest Festival with booths to display our materials for upcoming and ongoing events. We had information for area veterans and their families, and about VA benefits and services available in the area.

We were visited by both the Mayor of Katy, Dusty Thiele, and State Representative Mike Schofield. Both of whom are great supporters of veterans and Post 164. We were able to recruit 3 new members to the American Legion over the weekend.



Mayor Thiele with Post Commander Sandy Krum and Post Finance Officer Harry Woodstrom.



State Representative Mike Schofield with Post Commander Sandy Krum and 1st Vice Commander Dennis Wells

Post 168 Commissions Flag Mural

Submitted by Lewis Field, 18th District VCDR



Post 168 of Vega, TX recently commissioned a mural in town to help commemorate the 100th celebration of Route 66 next year. Adjutant John Webb says this recreates signs the post ran for many years but had become weathered or missing.

The sign is on the Old Roark Hardware building and sits on Old Route 66. Alfonso Garcia of Tulia, TX is the artist and has created numerous murals in Vega. The hardware was donated to Milburn Price Heritage Museum which sits right behind the hardware store.



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