



OFFICE OF THE STATE COMMANDER
AMERICAN LEGION STATE HEADQUARTERS
P.O. BOX 3280
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72203
(501) 375-1104 ★ Fax (501) 375-4236
Web site: www.arlegion.org



Biography

Marie Wilbanks
State Commander
American Legion Department of Arkansas

The American Legion Department of Arkansas is pleased to announce the election of Marie Wilbanks, of Londagin-Hardcastle American Legion Post #159 in Gentry, Arkansas as the 2023-2024 State Commander. Commander Wilbanks was recently elected in North Little Rock during the 104th Arkansas State Convention of the American Legion Department of Arkansas...the state's largest veteran's organization. She is only the third female commander of the organization in 104 years, and the "second" female commander of the state's largest veteran's organization during wartime.

Commander Wilbanks continues her family tradition of service to her country. The oldest of nine children, she is the granddaughter of a World War II veteran and daughter of a Korean War veteran. Her four brothers served (two in the Air Force and two in the Army), with one sister who retired from the Air Force. She grew up in Lake Carmel, a small town in the foothills of the Catskills, a 700-thousand-acre mountain range in southeastern New York. Upon graduation from Carmel High School, Wilbanks joined the Air Force and embarked on a career which satisfied her desire for travel, education, and the opportunity to see the world.

A 20-year Air Force veteran, Commander Wilbanks started in the first class of female aircraft mechanics. She eventually cross-trained and spent much of her career in Civil Engineering as a Production Control Manager, with the highlight of her career being selected as the 1984 Civil Engineering Non-Commissioned Officer-of-the-Year. After finishing her Air Force career, she went back to school and earned three (3) master's degrees: MS Project Management; MS Human Resource Management; and an MBA with a Certificate in Information Systems Management, as well as a Doctor of Management (DM).

Additionally, Wilbanks is an ordained Stephen Minister and Certified Grief Educator, and taught full time at DeVry University for 4-1/2 years in the classroom and 9-1/2 years online. She served as a Resource Analyst for Defense Logistics Disposition Services while at Eglin AFB, FL, and the Army Corp of Engineers, Beaver Lake Project Office in Rogers, Arkansas for a total of 11 years prior to her retirement at the end of 2019.

Commander Wilbanks has served in numerous positions with the American Legion. She has served as the Department of Arkansas Northwest Area Vice Commander (2022-2023), and the current District One Finance Officer for two years. She has also served as the Commander of Londagin-Hardcastle Post #159 for three years (her home Post), where she is also currently the 1st Vice Commander. Additionally, she served for three years as Finance Officer for Siloam Springs Post #29, and President of American Legion Auxiliary Unit #29.

~ More ~



For God and Country...

At the Department level, she has served on the Children and Youth Committee for the past five years, and was the Dean of Administration and an instructor for the American Legion Department of Arkansas Legion College.

Commander Wilbanks is also a co-owner of Vetcentric Mental Health Services, a business which offers mental health services in areas unique to veterans and their families. She also works with the youth group at her church, local school administrators, and her city, on how and what The American Legion can do to support educators, as well as youths in school, and her community.

She and her husband Jim (USAF, Ret) reside in Gentry. They share five children and have 19 grandchildren. Wilbanks has one son (United States Navy, Ret.); one daughter (United States Air Force, Ret.); one son (United States Army, Ret.); and to top off this GREAT family tradition...Commander Wilbanks is proud to have a grandson who served in the United States Navy, and yet another grandson currently serving in the United States Marine Corps Reserve.

Above all hers and her families MANY accolades...Commander Wilbanks believes the American Legion is the "greatest organization" for Veterans in the History of America, and is committed to serving ALL veterans and their families, especially as America continues to combat terrorism and conflicts world-wide and abroad!

#



For God and Country...