



I am Marie Wilbanks and I am seeking your vote to become The American Legion Department of Arkansas State Commander for 2023-2024.

If elected as Commander, I want to continue the work of previous department commanders: Membership retention and growth; improving communication and the public perception of our department; continuing to expand training; and **getting back to basic: VETERAN AFFAIRS and REHABILITATION, NATIONAL SECURITY, CHILDREN and YOUTH and AMERICANISM.** Will you be the one to help accomplish this?

I currently serve as the Northwest Area Vice Commander, District One Finance Officer (2 years), and the Commander of my home post Londagin-Hardcastle Post 159 located in Gentry. I have been Commander of my home post since we re-opened it in March 2020. Previous to this, I served 3 years as Finance Officer for Siloam Post 29, then 1 year as President of Unit 29.

At Department level, I have served on the Children and Youth committee for the past five years. I am also Dean of Administration and an instructor for the Department of Arkansas Legion College.

I am a twenty-year Air Force veteran, starting in the first class of female aircraft mechanics. I eventually cross-trained and spent the majority of my career in Civil Engineering as a Production Control Manager. A highlight of my career was my selection as the 1984 Civil Engineering Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. Definitely an honor!

After the Air Force career, I went back to school and finished three Masters degrees (MS Project Management, MS Human Resource Management and an MBA with a certificate in Information Systems Management). My education also includes a Doctorate of Management. I taught full time at DeVry University for 4-1/2 years in the classroom and 9-1/2 years online. I served as a Resource Analyst for Disposition Services and the Army Corp of Engineers for 11 years prior to my retirement at the end of 2019.

I am co-owner of Vetcentric Mental Health Services, specializing in areas that are unique to veterans and their families.

I work with the youth group at my church, the school administrators and the city on how and what the American legion can do on to support our educators and youth in school and the community.

I ask for your consideration and vote.