

Lawton couple named Oklahoma Veteran Family of the Year

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A Lawton couple, Ted and Marilyn Janosko, have been selected as the Oklahoma Veteran Family of the Year.

The award is given by the Oklahoma Veterans Council and will be presented at noon today on the steps of the Oklahoma Capitol.

Ted and Marilyn Janosko both served in the Army before they were married, and continue to serve veterans.

Retired Col. Ted Janosko had seven commands in his 30 plus years in the Army. After retirement from the Army, he transitioned as a government contractor until 2014.

As an Elder Trustee at the Western Hills Christian Church, he manages the finances of the church. He also mentors the military and veteran members of the congregation. He is a life member of the Military Officers Association of America and as a member of the local Southwest Oklahoma Chapter, Ted has served as the Second and First Vice President and President.

He is also an OK State MOAA Council Past-President and serves on the National Board. Ted annually "Storms the Hill" to inform members of congress of MOAA's concerns about military and veteran's benefits and those of their families. Through the efforts of MOAA Auxiliary, a Military Welcome Center was established at the Lawton Fort Sill Regional Airport which operates like a USO providing a sleep room, lounge with internet and phone capabilities, television and movies, a library from which the services members and their families can take literature with them, and snack items. It also has a kiosk located near the exit to assist travelers with hotel and transportation information and assistance. Both Ted and Marilyn volunteer on a regular basis.

Ted has served on the Board of Trustees for the Armed Service YMCA in Lawton Fort Sill for eight years to include president for two years. This organization has a mission for junior enlisted and their families and runs programs for childcare, soldiers closet, food bank and others.

Ted also serves in several other community and veteran organizations. As a life member of the 30th Field Artillery Regiment, he has held the offices of the



Courtesy photo
Ted and Marilyn Janosko have been named the Oklahoma Veteran Family of the Year by the Oklahoma Veterans Council.

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment and is president of the Regimental Alumni Association. He is a life member of the Association of the United States Army, the Field Artillery Association, the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He is the chairman of the Comanche County Veterans Council, which is made up of 18 other patriotic organizations such as Purple Heart, Gold Star Wives, MOAA, AUSA, VFWs and their Auxiliaries, and the Lawton-Fort Sill Chapter of the Oklahoma Women Veterans Organization.

Marilyn served in the Army from October 1976 to March 1981 and in the ready Reserves until 1986.

Although leaving active duty in 1981, she still was as part of the command team during her husband's seven commands from Battery to Corps Artillery levels.

She is a member of the Lawton Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution and has been its regent, treasurer, flag chairman, veteran's affairs and national defense chair. She also serves as the Project Patriot chair and creates humanitarian programs for active duty service members hospitalized in Landstuhl, Germany, due to injury in the Middle East Hazardous Duty Zones.

She is an animal activist and created a program to get "Cool vests" to service dogs in Iraq. She also was involved in "Adopt a pet" where families or another person could foster a pet while the active member was deployed with the understanding that the pet would become part of the adopted home if the service member did not survive the deployment.

She has served on the Board of Trustees for the Armed Service YMCA in Lawton Fort Sill for 16 years in every executive position. This organization has a mission for junior enlisted and their families and runs programs for childcare, soldiers closet, food bank and others. When the ASYMCA needed to move to expand services, she helped raise over \$2 million and personally designed and donated the chapel where she provided Wednesday worship for children ages 1-5.

She is a member of the national and local chapter of the MOAA (Military Officers Association of America) and serves as the chapter first vice president. She also was the Liaison for Surviving Spouses to the OK State Council of MOAA.

Marilyn is treasurer of the Comanche County Veterans Council. She volunteers with the Korean War and Defense Veterans as its treasurer and as the legislative chair for the Lawton-Fort Sill Chapter of the Oklahoma Women Veterans Organization. She organized and executed the recent Honor Tea, honoring Gold Star families and the Society of Military Widows.

As a member of Western Hills Christian Church, she has assisted in the media for the choir practices and for the Sunday worship. She has also cooked for Wednesday night suppers, special meals for holidays, and special services. She is involved in Vacation Bible School and other events for children in the church. She also has facilitated the Women's Bible Study and events that are part of the Women's Ministry.

She is a charter member of the Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C., and was chosen Oklahoma's Woman Veteran of the Year in 2018.

The Janosko family also contributes an annual Leadership Monetary Award for selected JROTC and ROTC Cadets in Lawton Public Schools and Cameron University