

# Lawtonian to be sworn in as State Chamber's new chairman

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## Oklahoma State Chamber annual meeting

June 18, Fort Sill Patriot Club

9:30 a.m.: Registration

The Oklahoma State Chamber's annual meeting June 18 will have a distinctively military — and Southwest Oklahoma — flavor this year.

10:30 a.m.: Board of directors election; 2009 legislative recap with Senate President Pro Tempore Glenn Coffey, legislative Affairs Committee Chairman H.J. Reed and the state chamber lobbying team; Champions of Freedom award ceremony.

The organization's annual meeting will be at the Fort Sill Patriot Club, and Lt. Gen. David P. Valcourt, a former Fort Sill commander who is now deputy commanding general of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, will be keynote speaker. And, to top it all off, Lawtonian Phil Kennedy will be sworn in as the statewide business organization's new chairman, becoming only the third Lawtonian to serve in that capacity.

Noon: Installation of new officers and annual membership luncheon with presentation of the George Migh Global Trade Award. 12:30 p.m.: Keynote address, "Thoughts on Leadership," Lt. Gen. David P. Valcourt.

2 p.m.: Adjourn.

Information and registration: (405) 235-5669 or <http://www.okstatechamber.com/>; registration deadline June 12.

board of directors and continue with the general membership annual meeting June 18 at the Fort Sill Patriot Club.

The annual meeting, expected to draw 250 to 300 people, rotates among Oklahoma City,

Tulsa and a location outside the two largest metro areas, but this will be the first time for Lawton-Fort Sill to be host. It also will be the first annual meeting to be conducted on a military installation.

Kennedy, owner and president of Comanche Home Center, said the impetus for having the meeting here came from Gilbert C. Gibson of Lawton, who served as chairman of the state organization in 1991. The chamber staff and the outgoing chairman, Steve Turnbo of Tulsa, were receptive, Kennedy said, and "I think the whole board in general is very excited about coming to Lawton-Fort Sill."



KENNEDY

The meeting will be a good way for board members and other state chamber members to learn more about Lawton-Fort Sill and the military's contribution to the nation and the state, Kennedy said.

Kennedy not long ago participated in Leadership Oklahoma, a leadership development program sponsored by the state chamber, which makes Fort Sill one of its class sites each year. He said he was struck by how few of the participants were acquainted with the military and its role and impact on the state and what this region has to offer.

"They almost don't know that we're here," he said. "It's important for us to continue to share our story with those individuals."

Kennedy became interested in the state chamber through Leadership Lawton-Fort Sill, a regional version of the Leadership Oklahoma program. His company had been a long-

time member of the state organization, "but I didn't really know some of the things they do for business in the state of Oklahoma."

He became involved with the organization, serving on the Oklahoma Small Business Advocacy Committee and the chamber's Small Business Committee. He began participating in the state chamber's visits to Washington, D.C., and was chosen to serve on the board of directors and as a regional vice chairman.

"I think it's very important for Lawton to be recognized in the state chamber and the state in general and I think this is one way I can help Southwest Oklahoma to be recognized at the state level," he said.

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