

This Edition of Cooter's Blog Spot by Don Hatch is dedicated to Us!
100th Anniversary of the Legion Is March 15!!!

Happy Birthday to Us!!!
Our organization was founded on March 15-17, 1919, in the American Club in Paris, France, by members of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) after the conclusion of World War I. Another centennial commemoration will mark the May 8-10, 1919, St. Louis Caucus. Then, we'll have another anniversary on September 16, 1919, when the American Legion was formally chartered by the United States Congress.



So, this year, we will have three times to observe the 100th anniversary. That's a lot of time and a lot of history.

OTHER 1919 EVENTS IN LEGION HISTORY

It was at the St. Louis Caucus that the name "The American Legion" was adopted as the official name. The draft preamble and constitution were approved.

On June 9, 1919, the National Executive Committee adopted the Legion emblem.

The American Legion Auxiliary was also formed in 1919.

November 10-12, 1919, the first Legion Convention was held in Minneapolis. It was decided to locate the national headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, instead of Washington, D.C..

FIRST POST

The very first post of the American Legion was established before the organization on March 15, 1919, when the General John Joseph Pershing Post 1 was established in Washington, D.C., on March 7 and obtained its charter on March 19. According to the Legion Centennial website it is called the Pioneer Post. However, the name of that organization now appears to be the George Washington Post 1.

The Legion played a leading role in the drafting and passing of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the G.I. Bill. In addition to organizing commemorative events, members provide assistance at VA hospitals and is politically involved in lobbying on behalf of veterans.

Also important, the Legion has always promoted Americanism.

AUGUST 9, 1921

The Legion's efforts result in the creation of the U.S. Veterans Bureau, forerunner of today's Veterans Administration.

JULY 17, 1925

The Legion creates the American Legion Baseball program. About 82,000 youths play Legion ball each year.

SEPTEMBER 1932

The Sons of the American Legion is officially recognized at the National Convention in Portland, Oregon.

JUNE 23, 1935

The First American Legion Boys State convenes in Springfield, Illinois. Today, more than 19,500 young men participate in this as well as 98 in Boys Nation.

JUNE 11, 1938

The final round of the Legion's first annual National High School Oratorical Contest is conducted in Norman, Oklahoma. Today, more than 3,400 high school students compete in this.

1960s

SEPTEMBER 1, 1966-- The Legion voices concern over POWs in Vietnam and urges full accounting. That has now grown to include all wars.

AUGUST 24, 1969-- The Legion's National Executive Board establishes the National Emergency Fund as a result of Hurricane Camille. (Up to \$3,000 for each member in a disaster.)

1970s

MAY 1, 1972-- Legion implements a Halloween safety program for children which remains the only national program in the country.

APRIL 1, 1975-- The Legion-sponsored Freedom Bell goes on the Freedom Train on its tour of the country for the U.S. Bicentennial.

I will continue with these important dates in the May newsletter, on our second 100th anniversary commemoration for the St. Louis caucus.

