

**A History of**  
*Post 171,*  
*The American Legion,*  
*and the World*

# 1918

## November

11 Armistice signed that ended World War I

# 1919

## March

15-17 Members of the American Expeditionary Force convene in Paris for the first American Legion caucus

## May

8-10 St. Louis Caucus. "The American Legion" is adopted as the organization's official name. The Legion's draft preamble and constitution are approved.

## June

9 The National Executive Committee adopts the Legion emblem

## September

16 Congress charters The American Legion

## October

United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) Founded

## November

10-12 First Legion convention convenes in Minneapolis. The Constitution and preamble are adopted. Delegates vote 361-323 to locate the Legion's national headquarters in Indianapolis, instead of Washington. A resolution is passed in support of Boy Scouts of America.

*Today, the Legion is the chartering agency for more than 1,700 Scouting units made up of approximately 64,000 youths.*

# 1920

## January

10 League of Nations Founded in Paris, France

● 17 Prohibition begins in the United States

## 1921

### July

● 29 Adolf Hitler made Chairman of the Nazi Party

### August

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

*Today, the Legion continues to lobby for adequate funding to cover medical, disability, education and other benefits for veterans.*

### November

● 29 Benito Mussolini establishes the Italian National Fascist Party

## 1921

### March

● 4 Warren G. Harding becomes President

### July

● 29 Adolf Hitler made Chairman of the Nazi Party

## 1922

### May

● 30 The Lincoln Memorial is dedicated in Washington, DC

### October

● 3 Rebecca Latimer Felton of Georgia becomes the first female United States Senator, when the governor of Georgia gives her a temporary appointment, pending the election of a replacement for Senator Thomas Watson, who has died suddenly. She will not take office till November 21, and will thus serve for only one day.

# 1923

## June

- 15 The first “Flag Code” is drafted during a Legion conference in Washington. Congress adopts the code in 1942.

*Today, the Legion is at the forefront of efforts to pass a constitutional amendment to protect the U.S. flag from physical desecration.*

## October

- 16 Walt Disney Company founded

# 1924

## May

- 10 Federal Bureau of Investigation founded under J. Edgar Hoover

# 1925

## July

- 17 The Legion creates the American Legion Baseball program.

*Today, more than 50 percent of Major League Baseball players are graduates of the program. About 82,000 youths play on Legion sponsored teams each year.*

- 18 Hitler’s Mein Kampf is published

# 1926

## June

- 19 NBC is founded

## December

- 25 Emperor Showa (Hirohito) becomes Emperor of Japan

# 1927

## May

- 20-21 Charles Lindberg flies nonstop New York City to Paris

## August

- 1 Chinese Civil War begins

## September

- 18 CBS founded in New York City

## November

- 12 Joseph Stalin becomes Dictator of the Soviet Union

# 1928

## September

- 3 Alexander Fleming accidentally discovers penicillin

## November

- 18 Steamboat Willy's first appearance as Mickey Mouse

# 1929

## March

- 4 Herbert Hoover becomes President

## October

- 24-29 Wall Street crash and beginning of Great Depression

# 1930

## April

- 19 Warner Bros. in the United States release their first cartoon series, called Looney Tunes, which runs until 1969.

## July

21 The United States Department of Veterans Affairs is established.

## 1931

### March

3 Star Spangled Banner is adopted as the United States National Anthem

### September

Japan invades Manchuria

## 1932

### March

1 Lindberg baby kidnapping

### September

The Sons of The American Legion is officially recognized during the 1932 National Convention in Portland, Oregon.

## 1933

### January

30 Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany

### March

4 Franklin D Roosevelt becomes President

### December

5 Prohibition is abolished

## 1934

### August

2 Hitler declares himself Fuhrer of Germany

# 1935

## June

- 23 The first American Legion Boys State convenes in Springfield, Illinois, to help youths gain an understanding of the structure and operation of the federal government. The first Boys Nation, bringing together youth leadership from all the Boys State programs, convenes in 1946.

*Today, more than 19,500 young men participate in Boys State, and 98 in Boys Nation, from 49 of the 50 states.*

# 1936

## March

- 1 Hoover Dam completed

# 1937

## January

- 20 Franklin D. Roosevelt sworn in for second term as President

## May

- 6 German zeppelin Hindenburg crashes in Lakehurst, New Jersey

## July

- 7 Japanese invasion of China begins World War II in the Pacific

# 1938

## June

- 1 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 from around the country compete annually in the contest, which promotes a greater understanding of the U.S. Constitution. Winners receive thousands of dollars in college scholarships.*

## September

- 30 Munich agreement hands Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany

## November

- 9-10 Kristallnacht: In Germany, the “night of broken glass” begins as Nazi activists and sympathizers loot and burn Jewish businesses (the all night affair sees 7,500 Jewish businesses destroyed, 267 synagogues burned, 91 Jews killed and at least 25,000 Jewish men arrested).

# 1939

## January

- 2 Time magazine has Adolf Hitler on cover as Man of the Year, 1938

## September

- 1 Germany invades Poland; WW II begins in Europe
- 3 Britain and France declare war on Germany

# 1940

## May - June

- Nazis invade France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway

## July - October

- Battle of Britain

# 1941

## January

- 20 Franklin D. Roosevelt sworn in for third term as President

## September

- 8 Siege of Leningrad begins



## December

- 7 Japanese attack Pearl Harbor
- 8 The United States declares war on Japan
- 11 Germany and Italy declare war on the United States

## 1942

### September

- 19-21 Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion is changed for the first and only time since it was written in 1919. The word “War” is changed to “Wars.”

## 1943

### May

- 15 ABC founded in New York City

### September

- 8 Italy’s surrender announced

### November - December

- Tehran Conference: Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin agree on Operation Overlord, including D-Day

## December

- 15 Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery starts to write in longhand, on Mayflower Hotel stationery in Washington, the first draft of what will later become the “GI Bill of Rights” – considered the Legion’s single greatest legislative achievement.

## 1944

### January

- 27 Siege of Leningrad ends

## June

- 6 D-Day landings in Normandy, France
- 22 President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs into law the original GI Bill, or Servicemen's Readjustment Act, ushering in monumental changes in U.S. society. Higher education becomes democratized after 8 million veterans go to school on the GI Bill, get better jobs, buy houses in the suburbs and raise families. For every dollar spent on educating veterans, the U.S. economy eventually gets \$7 back.

## August

- 19-25 Liberation of Paris

## 1945

- ▲ Post 171, originally the Warfield-Cline Post, founded by the Post's Charter members at Damascus High School

## January

- 20 Franklin D. Roosevelt sworn in for fourth term as President

## February

- 4-11 Yalta Conference: Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin discuss the postwar reorganization of Germany and Europe
- Ann Frank dies in Bergin-Belsen concentration camp

## March - July

- Battle of Okinawa

## April

- 12 President Roosevelt dies; Harry S. Truman becomes President
- 28 Benito Mussolini executed
- 30 Adolf Hitler commits suicide as Germany collapses

## May

- 2 Berlin falls
- 7 Germany surrenders
- 8 Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day); the Holocaust ends after 12 million deaths, including 6 million Jews

## June

- 26 United Nations founded

## July - August

- Potsdam Conference: Truman, Churchill, Attlee (British PM replacing Churchill on July 26), and Stalin divide Europe into Western and Soviet blocs

## August

- 6 Truman orders the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan
- 9 Truman orders the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan
- 15 Emperor Hirohito announces Japan's surrender

## September

- 2 Japan formally surrenders; Victory over Japan Day (V-J Day)

# 1946

## February

- ▲ 18 WWI veteran Carroll Fetzer as Commander and Luther Burke, a WWII POW, made the motion to rename the Post "The Damascus American Legion Post" to ensure honoring all local veterans equitably.

## May

- ▲ 27 Memorial Day (then called Decoration Day), 1946, Post members placed flags on the graves of all deceased veterans buried in local cemeteries, thus beginning a meaningful tradition that continues to this present day.

- 29 The Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary present a small, struggling organization called the American Heart Association with a \$50,000 grant. The grant inaugurates a nationwide program for the study, prevention and treatment of rheumatic heart disease.

## June

- 6 Italy becomes a Republic

## July

- 4 Treaty of Manila declares Philippines independent

## Fall

- ▲ Post 171 began tradition of community service by pressing Montgomery County to install street lights in Damascus
- ▲ Post 171 sponsored an “oyster scald”, initiating another Post tradition to raise funds for our many community service and youth programs

## 1947

- ▲ Post 171 entered into a cooperative agreement with the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department to purchase the Thatcher farm.

## March

- 12 Truman establishes the Truman Doctrine of containment of Communism

## April

- 15 Jackie Robinson becomes the first baseball player of color

## July

- 26 U.S. Central Intelligence Agency created

## 1948

## January

- ▲ Post 171 obtained about fourteen acres for building the Post Home

## April

- 3 The Marshall Plan, an American initiative for foreign aid
- 7 The World Health Organization (WHO) created

## May

- 14 United Nations establishes Israeli independence
- 15 The Arab-Israeli War begins

## June

- 24 Berlin Blockade begins

## August

- Korea divided into North and South

# 1949

## January

- 20 Harry S. Truman sworn in for first full elected term as President

## February

- ▲ Post 171 led the community drive to relocate Route 27 to its present location between Damascus and Cedar Grove.

## March

- ▲ Post 171 was incorporated and initiated two important traditions; elected the first Boys' State Delegate (Ray Harding), and presented the God and Country Award (now called the American Legion School Award) to the most outstanding boy and girl at Damascus and Clarksburg Elementary Schools.
- 10 Arab-Israel War ends

## May

- 12 Berlin Blockade ends
- 23 Creation of NATO backed Republic of Germany (West Germany)

## August

● 28 Soviet Union tests its first atomic bomb

## September

▲ Auxiliary Unit 171 was chartered, and Bernice Cline was elected Charter President

## October

● 1 Establishment of Peoples Republic of China. The Republic of China relocates to Taiwan

● 7 Creation of the socialist German Democratic Republic (East Germany)

## November

▲ The new Post Home was under roof and closed in, the fireplace was working.

## 1950s

▲ The "Legion Hall" became the center of Damascus social life, a hot spot with barn dances on Wednesday evenings, and our own Deputy Sheriff (Guy Jewell) to maintain order. Patsy Cline, Jimmy Dean and Roy Clark performed at the Legion Hall.

▲ During the fabulous fifties, following the Korean Conflict, Post members collected donations and put them to good use for the citizens of the greater Damascus area. One project, for the federal Civilian Defense Program, entailed housing an entire emergency field hospital for the community. Members also delivered food baskets to needy families, ran raffles at the annual Damascus Community Fair.

## 1950

### March

▲ 13 Post 171's members gathered for their first Post meeting in the new Post Home

## May

- 4 The Legion votes to contribute funds to the field of mental health, thereby playing a key role in launching the National Association for Mental Health.

## June

- 25 North Korea invades South Korea
- ▲ The “Legion Hall” became the center of Damascus social life, a hot spot with barn dances on Wednesday evenings, and our own Deputy Sheriff (Guy Jewell) to maintain order. Patsy Cline, Jimmy Dean and Roy Clark performed at the Legion Hall.

# 1951

## September

- 8 The Treaty of San Francisco ends the Occupation of Japan

# 1952

## February

- 6 King George VI of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth dies; Elizabeth II becomes Queen

## May

- Bonn-Paris conventions ends allied occupation of West Germany

## November

- 1 The United States successfully detonates the first hydrogen bomb

# 1953

## January

- 20 Gen. (Ret.) Dwight D. Eisenhower sworn in as President

## March

- 5 Stalin dies; Nikita Khrushchev will assume control in 1955

## June

- 2 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II

## July

- 27 End of the Korean War

# 1954

## May

- 17 Supreme Court of the United States decides *Brown v. Board of Education*

## July

- 9 The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is formed.

*Today, more than \$11 million has been awarded to youth organizations and projects designed to help America's children.*

# 1955

## April

- 12 FDA approves Salk polio vaccine

# 1956

## April

- 12 FDA approves Salk polio vaccine

# 1957

## January

- 20 Gen. (Ret.) Dwight D. Eisenhower sworn in for second term



## October

- 4 Russia launches Sputnik 1 opening up the Space Age

# 1958

## July

- 29 NASA formed

## August

- 23 FAA formed

# 1959

- ▲ Post 171 began what has become a most successful program - the Baseball Team. Almost every year since, the Post 171 team has posted a winning record and participated in many playoff tournaments.

*The Post team was the Legion Maryland State Champion in 2000.*

## January

- 3 Alaska admitted as the 49th U.S. State

## August

- 29 Hawaii admitted as the 50th U.S. State

## November

- 1 Beginning of Vietnam War

# 1960

## May

- 1 U-2 incident sparks deterioration in relations between superpowers

# 1961

## January

- 20 John F. Kennedy sworn in as President

## April

- 12 Russian Astronaut Yuri Gagarin becomes first human in space
- 17-20 Bay of Pigs Invasion by Cuban exiles ends in failure

## August

- 13 Construction of Berlin Wall begins

# 1962

## May

- ▲ 28 Post 171 dedicated the monument in front of the Post Home, which reads; "Dedicated To The Men And Woman of Damascus and Surrounding Area Who Gave Their Lives In The Armed Forces In Order That We Might Remain Free."

## October

- 16-19 Cuban Missile Crisis nearly cause nuclear war

# 1963

## August

- 28 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. gives "I have a Dream" speech

## November

- 22 President Kennedy is assassinated; Lyndon B. Johnson becomes President

# 1964

## July

- 2 Civil Rights Act abolishes segregation in the United States

## August

- 2 Gulf of Tonkin incident led to escalation in Vietnam War

# 1965

## January

- 24 Winston Churchill dies

## February

- 21 Malcom X is assassinated

## March

- 21 Voting Rights act of 1965

# 1966

## September

- 1 The Legion voices great concern over the fate of prisoners of war in Vietnam.

*Today, the Legion urges a full accounting of all POWs and troops missing in action; and has formed a special group from among the nation's major veterans' organizations to continue pressing for further resolution of this issue.*

# 1967

## June

- 5-10 Six Day War between Israel and Arab States

# 1968

## January - September

- Tet Offensive occurs in South Vietnam

## April

- 4 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated

## June

- 5 Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated

# 1969

## January

- 20 Richard Nixon becomes President

## July

- 20 Apollo Moon Landing: Neil Armstrong & Buzz Aldrin walk on the Moon

## August

- 24 The Legion's National Executive Committee establishes the National Emergency Fund as a result of the effects of Hurricane Camille.

## October

- 29 ARPANET the earliest incarnation of the internet

# 1970

## May

- 4 Kent State massacre

# 1971

## July

- 5 25th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution lowering voting age to eighteen

## November

- 15 Intel releases worlds firs microprocessor (Intel 4004)

# 1972

## May

- 1 The Legion implements a Halloween safety program for children; *it remains the only national program of its kind.*
- 26 Richard Nixon and Leonard Brezhnev sign SALT I treaty in Moscow

## August

- ▲ 19 Post 171 members celebrate paying off the Post Home mortgage with a mortgage burning ceremony

# 1973

## January

- 20 Nixon begins second term as President
- 22 Supreme Court of the U.S. decides Rowe vs Wade

# 1974

## August

- 8-9 Watergate Scandal: Nixon resigns; Gerald Ford becomes President

# 1975

## April

- 1 The Legion-sponsored Freedom Bell goes aboard the Freedom Train during its tour of the country in celebration of the U.S. Bicentennial. Six years later, the bell is dedicated at its permanent home in Columbus Plaza, opposite Union Station in Washington.
- 30 Fall of Saigon ends the Vietnam War

## August

- 1 Helsinki Accords officially recognizes Europe's national borders

# 1976

## April

- 1 Steve Wozniak invents the Apple computer and sells the system to Steve Jobs

# 1977

## January

- 20 Jimmy Carter becomes President

# 1978

## September

- 17 Camp David Accords are signed between Israel and Egypt

# 1979

## March

- 28 Three Mile Island (Pennsylvania) nuclear accident

## May

- 4 Margaret Thatcher becomes first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

## November

● 4 Iran hostage crisis begins

## 1980

### February

● 22 The United States Olympic hockey team defeats the Soviet Union, 4 to 3, in the semifinals of the 1980 Winter Olympics, in what is considered to be the greatest moment in sports history which then became known as the Miracle on Ice.

### May

● 18 Mount St. Helens erupts in Washington.

## 1981

### January

● 20 Ronald Regan becomes President

### March

● 30 President Regan and 3 others injured in an assassination attempt

### August

● 12 IBM Personal Computer released

## 1982

### August

■ 26 The Legion presents a \$1 million check to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund for construction of the Wall in Washington, becoming the largest single contributor to the project.

### October

● 1 Sony releases first commercially available CD Player

# 1983

- ▲ Post 171 starts very successful Bingo program, which takes place at the Legion Hall each Thursday evening from September through June

## April

- 18 Bombing of U.S. Embassy in Beirut results in 63 deaths

## August

- 26 The Legion announces its sponsorship of an independent study on the effects of exposure to Agent Orange on Vietnam War veterans. Congress receives the results of the "American Legion-Columbia University Study of Vietnam-era Veterans" in 1989.

## October

- 23 Bombing of Beirut barracks kills 220 Marines, 18 Sailors, 3 Soldiers and 58 French military members
- 25-29 Invasion of Grenada by the United States

# 1984

## September

- 10 *Jeopardy!* begins its syndicated version, with host Alex Trebek.

## October

- 11 Aboard the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, astronaut Kathryn D. Sullivan becomes the first American woman to perform a space walk.

# 1985

## January

- 20 President Regan begins second term

## November

- 20 Microsoft releases Windows 1.0



# 1986

## January

- 28 *Challenger* breaks apart 73 seconds into its flight killing all seven crew members aboard

## April

- 26 Chernobyl disaster in Ukraine

# 1987

## October

- 19 Stock Market crash

# 1988

## November

- 2 First computer virus distributed through the internet

## December

- 21 Pan Am Flight 103 explodes over Lockerbie, Scotland killing 270 people

# 1989

## January

- 1 The Veterans Administration is elevated to Cabinet-level status as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The Legion fought hard for the change, arguing that veterans deserve representation at the highest levels of government.
- 7 Emperor Showa (Hirohito) dies; Akihito (Heisei ) becomes Emperor of Japan
- 20 George H. W. Bush becomes President

## March

- 24 Exxon Valdez spills 10.8 million gallons of crude oil in Prince William Sound, Alaska

## October

- 16 The long-standing objective of the Legion to improve adjudication procedures for veterans' claims is achieved when the U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals becomes operational. Most of the provisions contained in the law creating the court were originally included in the Veterans Reassurance Act, written by the Legion and introduced in Congress in 1988.

## December

- 20 United States invasion of Panama to arrest General Manuel Noriega

# 1990

## April

- 24 Launch of the Hubble Space Telescope

## August

- 2-4 Gulf War begins

## October

- 11 The Legion creates the Family Support Network to assist families of servicemembers deployed for operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the Middle East. Through local posts, the network offers a wide range of assistance, including financial assistance, mowing lawns, baby-sitting and more.

*Today, FSN continues to assist families affected by military activation and deployment.*

# 1991

## February

- 28 Gulf War ends

## June

- 15 The Legion hosts its first Junior Shooting Sports National Air Rifle Championships at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

*Today, more than 2,000 high school students a year enter the contest, which teaches gun safety and marksmanship.*

## September

- 17 North and South Korea admitted to the United Nations

## 1992

Post 171's new flagpoles were installed and dedicated

## 1993

### January

- 20 Bill Clinton becomes President

## 1994

### January

- 1 Establishment of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

### July

- 8 Kim Il-Sung dies; Kim Jong-Il becomes Supreme Leader of North Korea

## August

- 24 The Legion announces the creation of the Citizens Flag Alliance, a coalition of organizations and individual citizens united to work for a constitutional amendment to protect the U.S. flag from physical desecration. Since 1995, the amendment has passed in the House by a supermajority six times: in 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2005. In 2006, the amendment fell one vote short of passage in the Senate.

## September

- 24 The American Legion announces partnership with the Smithsonian Institute's Air and Space Museum to develop an exhibit for the bomber Enola Gay, which dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Previous museum plans had drawn intense criticism from veterans, scholars and the public.

## 1995

- ▲ Post 171 celebrates 50th anniversary

## January

- 30 The American Legion announces acceptance of scaled-down exhibit "without political commentary" for the Enola Gay, ending the greatest controversy in the Smithsonian Institute's 149-year history.

## April

- 19 American terrorist Timothy McVeigh bombs the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. 168 people were killed, including 19 children, and over 800 others were injured

## October

- 1 The Legion forms the Persian Gulf Task Force to enhance service for the newest generation of wartime veterans, thousands of whom suffer from illnesses linked to their service in the region.
- 16 Million Man March is held in Washington, D.C.

## 1996

## September

- 16 The Legion awards a \$20,000 college scholarship to each of the 10 inaugural Samsung American Legion high school scholars.

# 1997

## June

- 11 The National Emergency Fund surpasses the \$1 million mark in cash grants given to flood victims who belong to the Legion family. Most grant recipients reside in the flood plains of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Minnesota and North Dakota.

## September

- 3 The Legion presents its first National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award at the 79th National Convention in Orlando, Florida.

## November

- 11 Post 171 starts annual Veterans Day program

# 1998

- Post 171 begins monthly pancake breakfast

## September

- 4 Google is founded

# 1999

## April

- 20 Columbine High School massacre results in 15 deaths

# 2000

## March

- 10 Dot-com bubble bursts, causing stock markets worldwide to crash
- 26 Vladimir Putin becomes President of Russia

- 29 Senate Joint Resolution 14, the constitutional amendment that would return the people's right to protect the U.S. flag from physical desecration, falls four votes short of the necessary 67 to override a presidential veto.

## September

- 5 The American Legion presents the first "Spirit of Service" Awards to active duty service members for their off-duty volunteer activities.

## October

- 5 Al-Qaeda suicide bombs USS Cole killing 17 sailors

## November

- 2 International Space Station begins operation

# 2001

## January

- 20 George W. Bush becomes President

## August

- 28-30 The American Legion passes resolution to rekindle Blue Star Service Banner program.

## September

- 11 Terrorists crash airplanes into the World Trade Center, Pentagon and field in Pennsylvania
- 12 The American Legion reactivates the Family Support Network following terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C.
- ▲ 12 Post 171 begins flag-raising ceremonies at local schools

## October

- 10-11 The American Legion creates the American Legacy Scholarship Fund for children of military members killed on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001.

## October - December

● United States invades Afghanistan

## 2002

### March

● 14 SpaceX founded by Elon Musk

### September

■ 11 The American Legion takes lead in conducting “A Day To Remember” events to mark the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the nation.

### November

■ The Legion launches the national “I Am Not A Number” campaign to identify and document the delays veterans face in obtaining medical care from VA.

## 2003

### February

● 1 Space Shuttle *Columbia* disintegrates upon reentry, killing all 7 astronauts on board

### March

● 19 United States invades Iraq and ousts Saddam Hussein and starting 8 year war

### October

■ 17 American Legion efforts on Capitol Hill break the deadlock on the Disabled Veterans Tax when Congress creates a 10-year phase-in for service-connected disabled retirees to receive military retired pay and VA disability compensation without subtraction from either. Legion efforts also result in passage of the Military Family Tax Relief Act.

# 2004

- ▲ Post 171 receives American Legion All-Time award with 417 members

## February

- 4 Facebook is formed

## September

- 3 American Legion lobbying leads to more progress in elimination of the Disabled Veterans Tax with passage of PL 108-375 that eliminates the 10-year phase-in for 100 percent service-connected retirees, allowing them to immediately begin receiving both retired pay and VA disability payments.
- 19 The American Legion launches a national program, the Blue Star Salute, where posts across the country hold public events to recognize troops, their families and local businesses on Armed Forces Day.

# 2005

## May

- 7 The American Legion lobbied successfully to remove from VA funding legislation administration-proposed increases in VA prescription copayments and institution of user fee for Priority Group 8 veterans using VA health facilities. Efforts focus on legislation to provide mandatory, vice discretionary, funding of VA health care.

## August

- Delegates at the 87th National Convention in Honolulu unanimously voice their support for the global war on terrorism with Resolution 169.

## November

- 22 Angela Merkel becomes Germany's first female Chancellor



# 2006

## March

16 The Blu-ray disc format is released in the United States.

# 2007

## January

4 Nancy Pelosi becomes first female Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives

## October

17-18 The American Legion National Executive Committee passes Resolution 35 and adopts The American Legion Riders as a national program of The American Legion. The first American Legion Riders chapter was established by American Legion Post 396 in Garden City, Michigan, in 1993.

# 2008

## May

7 Dmitry Medvedev becomes President of Russia

## June

30 President George W. Bush signs into law the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act, a next-generation GI Bill strongly supported by the Legion. The bill renews the federal government's commitment to veterans by providing them with substantially better education benefits. The Post-9/11 GI Bill took effect Aug. 1, 2009, and sent an unprecedented number of veterans to college.

*Today, as at its formation, the Legion remains at the forefront of efforts to improve education and other benefits for all veterans.*

# 2009

## January

20 Barack Obama becomes the first African American President

## October

■ 22 President Obama signs the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform Act of 2009, guaranteeing “advance funding” for VA appropriations, a formula that The American Legion has strongly supported for many years. The new law sets funding for VA one year in advance.

## 2010

### February

■ The entire Legion family bands together and wins \$250,000 for Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) in PepsiCo’s Refresh Everything Project, submitting the most votes in an online contest and beating out hundreds of other groups and charities to take first place in the contest’s first month. A big part of getting the word out was the *American Legion Online Update* e-newsletter. This is an early example of the still growing power of online and social media to augment everything the Legion does.

### April

● 20 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in Gulf of Mexico

## October

■ Continuing a long-standing tradition of advocating for timely and adequate medical care for veterans, the Legion forms a PTS-TBI Ad Hoc Committee to both examine current methods by VA and the Department of Defense of treating the two conditions and investigate potential alternatives.

## December

■ The Legion officially begins a relationship with United Services Automobile Association (USAA), making the veteran-founded insurance company “The American Legion’s preferred provider of financial services.” The purchase of USAA products gains money for Legion programs. USAA representatives often give members helpful financial information and tips through Legion media.

# 2011

## May

- 2 Osama bin Laden is killed by U.S. Navy SEALs in Pakistan
- 5 The National Executive Committee authorized establishment of The American Legion Amateur Radio Club (TALARC) to promote emergency communications and disaster preparedness, engage youth in math and science and facilitate public communications with our nation's federally licensed amateur radio operators who are veterans. TALARC membership opened free for members of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion who are FCC licensed ham radio operators.

## August

- The American Legion Baseball World Series is held for the first time in the tournament's new permanent home, Shelby, N.C. Prior to this, the tournament had rotated to different cities. Total paid attendance at the Shelby contests soars to an all-time high of 86,000 total.
- 5 NASA launches space probe Juno to Jupiter

## October

- 20 Muammar Gaddafi captured and killed during the battle of Sirte

# 2012

## September

- 11-12 Benghazi attack leads to death of Ambassador Christopher Stevens

## October

■ VA guarantees its 20 millionth home loan. 1936-1937 National Commander Harry Colmery and 1943-1944 National Commander Warren Atherton escorted the original GI Bill of Rights through Congress in 1944, arguing passionately for veterans' educational benefits, government-assured health care and what they called "readjustment allowances." Today Colmery and Atherton are lauded as the "fathers of the GI Bill" and its successors.

## November

● 15 Xi Jinping elected General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party

## 2013

### April

● 15 Boston Marathon bombing kills 3 and injured hundreds

### July

● 3 Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi is deposed by military coup

### August

■ 30 National Commander James E. Koutz announced that the American Legion family raised more than \$1.1 million for Operation Comfort Warriors during the 2012-2013 fundraising year. It easily surpassed his original goal of \$500,000.

## 2014

■ in the midst of a VA waiting-list scandal that reached up to the deaths of veterans waiting for care, The American Legion calls for the resignations of several top officials, including VA Secretary Eric Shinseki. The scandal would ultimately engulf multiple facilities and offices; the Legion kept the issue in front of the public and Congress via articles and testimony.

## August

■ National Commander Michael D. Helm announces that Legion Family members and friends donated more than \$4 million (his goal) to Legion charities and programs during his year in office.

## 2015

### July

● 14 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action sets limits on Iran's nuclear program

### September

● 30 Russia begins airstrikes against ISIL and anti-government forces in Syria

## 2016

### June - July

● Brexit: United Kingdom votes to leave the European Union

### July

■ The Legacy Scholarship is expanded to children of post-9/11 veterans who have a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or greater.

● 4 Space probe Juno enters orbit into Juniper

## 2017

### January

● 20 Donald Trump becomes President

● 21 Women's March on Washington, DC

## June

Created to hold VA employees more accountable, the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 is passed by Congress in concert with The American Legion. A longtime goal of the Legion, this legislation gives the VA secretary the authority to terminate the employment of VA employees who do not hold the standard of the VA's missions, to help veterans. The American Legion worked hard with Congress, VA and others to create and pass this much needed veteran-centric legislation.

## August

Denise H. Rohan of Wisconsin is elected national commander, the first woman to hold the role in the Legion's history.

16 The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 – also known as the “Forever GI Bill” because it removes time limits for veterans who wish to use it for college – is signed into law by President Donald J. Trump. The legislation is named for The American Legion past national commander who in the winter of 1943-44 drafted the Servicemen's Readjustment Act that changed the nation after World War II.

23 President Donald J. Trump signs the Veterans Appeals and Modernization Act of 2017 onstage at the 99th American Legion National Convention, in Reno, Nevada. The measure offers three courses of action for veterans to appeal decisions on their disability benefits claims in an effort to reduce the number of pending appeals – at this point more than 470,000 nationwide – and speed up the process. It is the first time in history a U.S. president has used an American Legion National Convention stage to sign a bill into law.

## 2018

### October

2 Jamai Khashoggi assassinated in Saudi consulate in Istanbul

# 2019

▲ Post 171 begins new program of visiting veterans at Lorien Assisted Living in Mount Airy, Maryland, under the leadership of Post Commander George Bolling

## January

■ 31 The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance program completes a record-breaking month of cash-grant disbursements. Of the \$1,030,163 delivered to military and veteran families, most is distributed to U.S. Coast Guard families with children at home who were affected by the 35-day federal government shutdown.

## March

■ 15-17 The American Legion celebrates its 100th birthday in Paris, France, throughout the United States and around the world.

## April

● 10 Event Horizon Telescope takes first picture of a black hole at the core of the galaxy Messier 87

● 11 Julian Assange arrested in London

● 21 Volodymyr Zelenski elected President of Ukraine

● 30 Emperor of Japan Akihito abdicates and Naruhito ascends to the throne

## June

▲ 1 More than 150 members and friend Post enjoyed a special dinner honoring 27 members of the Greatest Generation, WWII veterans

■ 20 The U.S. Supreme Court rules 7-2 in favor of The American Legion in its case to allow a 40-foot cross-shaped memorial in Prince George's County, Md., to stay on public property. The memorial was erected in 1925 by The American Legion and Gold Star Mothers to honor 49 who gave their lives fighting in World War I. The Supreme Court heard the case after the American Humanist Association filed suit to have it removed, claiming its presence on public property violated the Constitution.

## July

- 30 President Trump signs the Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service – the LEGION Act – which extends recognized wartime service to cover previously unrecognized periods of U.S. military conflict, back to World War II. More than 1,600 Americans were killed or wounded in armed hostilities during periods not previously recognized as wartime. The act allows veterans who served outside of the previously designated war eras to join The American Legion.

## December

- 19 President Trump is impeached by the House of Representatives

# 2020

## January

- 30 United Kingdom formally withdraws from European Union

## February

- 5 President Trump is acquitted by the U.S. Senate

## March

- 16 American Legion National Headquarters staff begin a period of social distancing and work-from-home procedures amid the deadly coronavirus pandemic. American Legion posts, departments and facilities worldwide are forced to temporarily close their doors to members and the public. The organization responds with hundreds of Buddy Check activities to assist older veterans; dozens of blood drives as need increases; food delivery services; supplies for parents suddenly forced to home-school their children; protective mask making and distribution; and hundreds of other acts of community support. The pandemic leads to cancellation or postponement of national meetings, including the 101st National Convention, American Legion Baseball World Series and American Legion Boys Nation.



# 2020-2021

▲ In spite of the hardships and financial strain caused by the Covid virus, Post 171 still arranged to have a flag ceremony on Veterans Day, participate in the American Legion Oratorical Contest and took first place in the Department of Maryland State Finals, Awarded 6 Scholarships to local High School Seniors.

## 2021

### January

- 6 Supporters of President Trump attack the U.S. Capitol
- 13 President Trump impeached by the House of Representatives for a second time
- 20 Joe Biden becomes President
- 22 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons comes into effect

### February

- 13 Former President Trump acquitted by the U.S. Senate for a second time

### June

- ▲ Post 171's Will Trotter sworn in as the Department of Maryland Commander
- 24 Champlain Towers South apartment in Surfside, Florida collapses killing 98 and 97 missing

### Summer

- ▲ Post 171 opens back up again, people started to rent out the Post, in-person meetings occur once more.

### August

- 15 Kabul falls following 2021 Taliban offensive, Taliban now govern Afghanistan

## October

- 15 Yoshida Suga becomes Prime Minister of Japan

# 2022

## February

- 24 Russia invades Ukraine

## July

- 11 James Webb Space Telescope takes First Deep Field

## September

- ▲ Post 171's Color Guard performs the Presentation of Colors at the annual Damascus Freedom 5k

- 8 Queen Elizabeth II dies; Charles III becomes King of the U.K.

# 2023

## February

- 21 Vladimir Putin announces Russia is suspending its participation in the New Start Treaty

## March

- 17 International Criminal Court issues an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin

- ▲ 18 Post 171 restarts the annual health fair