

Springfield Virginia Post 176 History

The American Legion, Inc, is a U.S. wartime veterans organization formed in Paris, on February 16, 1919, by three officers of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) The American Legion was chartered by the U.S. Congress on September 16, 1919. It is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, and has a legislative office in Washington, D.C. The Legion played the leading role in the drafting and passing of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, otherwise known as, the "GI Bill."

Veterans who served at least one day of active duty during wartime, or are serving now, are potentially eligible for membership in The American Legion. Members must have been honorably discharged or still serving honorably. Merchant Marines who served from December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946, are also eligible.

Eligibility for Membership in the American Legion		
War or Conflict	From	To
Southwest Asia and Global War on Terrorism	August 2, 1990	Present Day
Panama	December 20, 1989	January 31, 1990
Lebanon and Grenada	August 24, 1982	July 31, 1984
Vietnam War	February 28, 1961	May 7, 1975
Korean War	June 25, 1950	January 31, 1955
World War II	December 7, 1941	December 31, 1946

The Springfield American Legion Post 176 was established in 1955, Edwin Dentz served as the first Post Commander. In the spring of 1956, the Post members established and operated a Babe Ruth Baseball League for the Springfield area. In 1957, Post property was made available for a Little League Field.

In October 1956, the first issue of the Post newsletter, "Post Scripts" was published. That name has remained since the first edition and today has a distribution of approximately 1500 copies. The Post purchased land for the first Post Home in December 1957; became incorporated in September 1958; broke ground for the Post Home in March 1963; and accepted the Post Home, known as "The Tin Tabernacle", on July 6, 1963. To make way for a highway expansion, the "Tin Tabernacle" was razed in November 1985.

The Post, without a Home, temporarily lost nearly 50% of their membership. The venture of selecting a location, design and building a new Post home, trying as it was did not hamper the Post leadership from continuing to achieve their goals and, by the time the new home was completed, membership was again at its previous level. The new Post Home, designated "Legion Center", was opened October 25, 1991. The building is a two story 12,250 square foot brick building which features three flag poles flying "Old Glory" with a POW/MIA pennant below it, the Commonwealth of Virginia Flag and the American Legion colors.

The flags wave during daylight hours and are illuminated at night for all to see and to be reminded of the great privilege of living in a free and peaceful country. Post 176 has continued to grow and is now the largest Post in the Department of Virginia with 1500 plus members. Post 176 has produced 2 Department Commanders, 5 Department Vice Commanders, 9 District Commanders and a National Executive Committeeman. Each year the Post has sent boys to Boys State, sponsored an Oratorical competition; visited and sponsored events at the Washington VA Hospital; held blood drives; sponsored American Legion Baseball, and Boy Scout troops; provided aid and comfort to Veterans and their families; and conducted child awareness programs. The Post has “adopted” a one mile stretch of the Fairfax Parkway. Post 176 is an active member of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, having produced four of its Presidents and three of its “Persons of the Year”. But with all its contributions to the community, the Post has not lost sight of its principal mission – to see to the needs of the area’s veterans, their widows and orphans. With a dedicated membership there is time for both.

A list of current Post Officer's, Legion Family Commanders and Activity Chairpersons may be found [here](#).