LEGACY & VISION

The American Legion
Centennial Celebration

"The American Legion wishes to call to the attention of the American people the record of achievements that have been accomplished by The American Legion during the 100 years since its founding, to emphasize the impact the organization has had upon the American society, and the extent of its contributions to the national security and the welfare of military veterans, their families and their communities ...

The American Legion wishes to set forth the objectives and the aims that will motivate its programs and activities during the years ahead and to illustrate the contribution made to the future of our country as intended by these programs and activities ...."

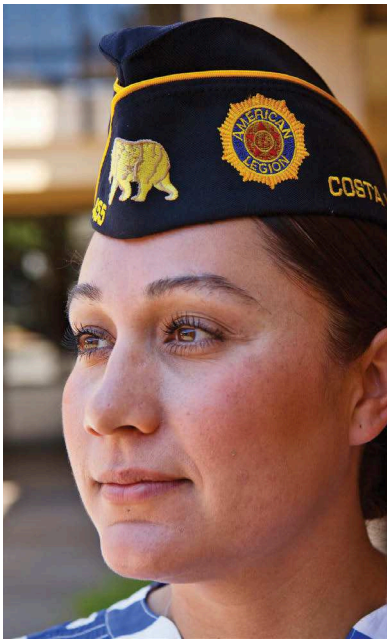
Resolution No. 31, Spring 2011,
National Executive Committee

Every post has a LEGACY

Whether your American Legion post was chartered in 1919 or 1991, it has a story. Behind every namesake, there was a man or woman who made an important contribution or sacrifice. In times of tragedy, triumph and troop support, your post has stepped up and proudly served, helped others and left a mark that will not be forgotten. In words, photos and chronologies, this legacy is what we celebrate.

Every post has a VISION

The 100th anniversary of The American Legion is not only an opportunity to look back on all your post has achieved. It is also the perfect time to chart a course for the second century. New generations of veterans depend on the kind of vision shared and expressed by the World War I-era founders. That vision proved timeless. How will your post extend the same vision and values to future generations?



THE CELEBRATION

THE 100TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

Minneapolis —Aug. 24-30, 2018

The 100th American Legion National Convention in 2018 kicks off a 15-month commemoration to honor the organization's first century of service and propel it into the second.

Minneapolis, home of the 1st American Legion National Convention in 1919, will serve as host city of the 100th National Convention Aug. 24-30, 2018. Centennial events and activities will be conducted at the national, department and post levels through the 101st National Convention in Indianapolis Aug. 23-29, 2019, and will culminate on Veterans Day 2019.

START PLANNING

On the local level, this 15-month celebration offers posts the opportunity to celebrate their legacy, enhance The American Legion brand, and foster a new era of growth and resonance within post communities.By forming post, district and department centennial committees, Legionnaires can plan special events and initiatives that will fulfill these missions. National Headquarters has started to prepare many tools that will help facilitate such efforts.

- Model committees
- National Centennial Website
  - Post History Portals
  - Vision Forum
- Resource Guide
- Post History Workbook
- Media kit/PR tools
- Centennial-themed Emblem Sales merchandise

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GET ORGANIZED

Form a centennial committee and assign responsibilities. The committee and its functions are, as always, at the post's discretion. Two models, the national centennial committee's and the Department of Missouri's, are shown on pages 6 and 7.

USE THE TOOLS

The American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee has developed tools and guides to help posts share their stories.

- The Centennial Celebration website provides information about the Legion's 100th anniversary, and an interactive module for post members to upload text, photos and video.
- The Centennial Celebration Workbook offers guidance as well as a format for posts to submit their legacies and visions in a hard-copy format if they choose. Also included are tips for gathering materials.

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SHARE THE LEGACY

Early involvement with local media outlets, schools, churches, businesses and civic groups is a great way to build buzz about the Legion centennial in your community. Offered in the PR toolkit and website will be sample press releases, ads and other promotions. Posts can also get access to information about artifact displays, special events and opportunities to engage the services of American Legion program alumni, such as former baseball players, Boy Scouts, oratorical contest participants or junior marksmen.

ADVANCE THE VISION

A key component in the Legion's 100th-anniversary commemoration is a vision for the next century. Foremost, the Legion will end its first century the way it began in 1919: by helping a new wave of veterans make the transition to civilian life.

The Centennial Celebration website and workbook also offer ways for posts to share their vision statements, transition-assistance activities and membership growth activities.

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GET ORGANIZED

Organizing a centennial committee can make it easier to plan and execute 100th Anniversary events. A department committee made up of district centennial chairmen can help filter and deliver information from National Headquarters to local posts. A post committee can help distribute the workload of gathering and sharing the post's history, building connections within the community and planning events.

A post's centennial committee can be modeled after the national centennial committee.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE

Members include selected volunteers and national staff. In addition to working as a group, subcommittees focus on specific tasks.Similarly, post committees can work together to plan overall themes and ideas for the celebration, nominate and reach out to honorary committee members, and delegate specific tasks to subcommittees.

MEDIA SUBCOMMITTEE

Set up and maintain post history page on national website.

HISTORICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

Work with local libraries, museums and historical societies to discover post history as well as offer special exhibits to celebrate post legacies in the community.

EVENTS SUBCOMMITTEE

Plan and execute all community events

PUBLIC RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Promote all events and initiatives to local media.

HONORARY COMMITTEE

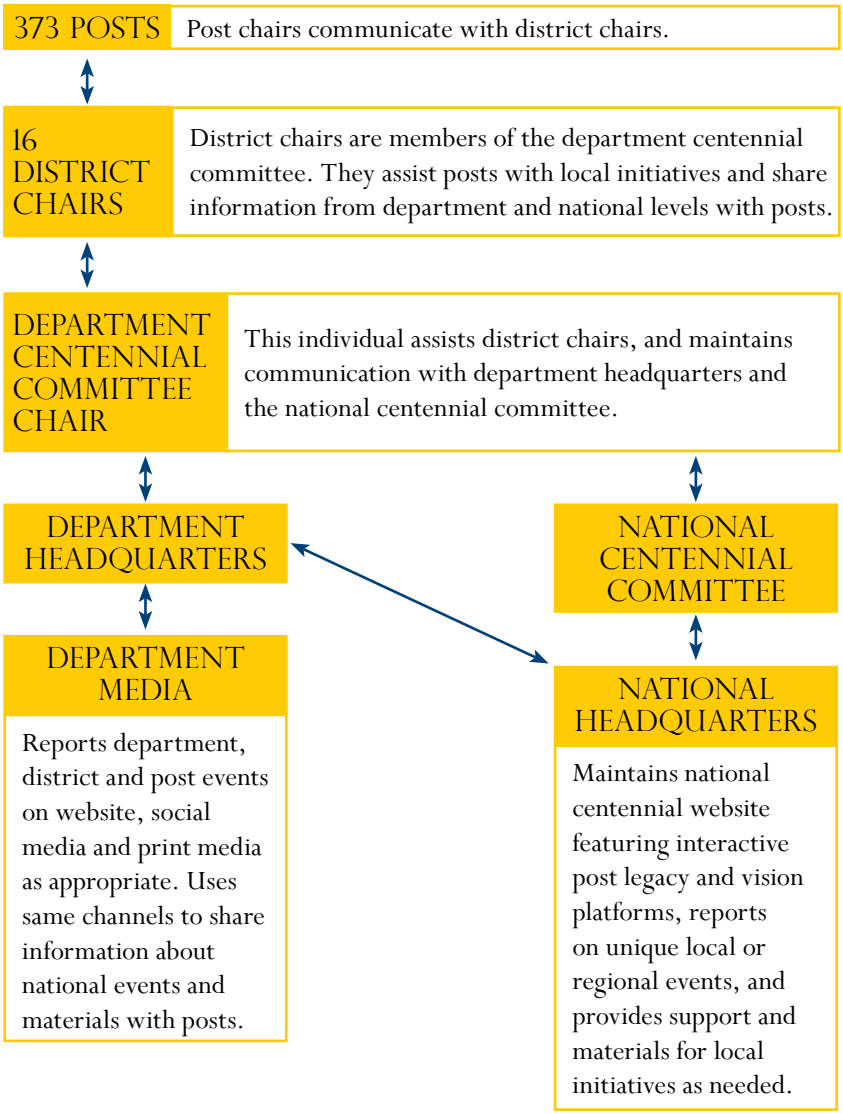
Members include celebrities, politicians and notable figures whose lives have been touched by The American Legion.

At the local level, the post can reach out to local business leaders, youth program alumni, and scholarship recipients and community officials who have benefited from or supported American Legion initiatives.

Honorary Committee members can share their Legion experiences as a way of illustrating the strength and support a post lends to its community.

Departments can also set up centennial committees to help plan regional or statewide events and filter information between the national and post levels. One example of a department structure is the Department of Missouri's model.

THE MISSOURI MODEL



USE THE TOOLS

National Headquarters will provide many tools for posts and departments to use in the years leading up to the 100th Anniversary. The biggest and best tool available is already under construction – the Centennial Celebration website.

QUICK NAVIGATION

Connection to centennial news and resources.

POST HISTORY

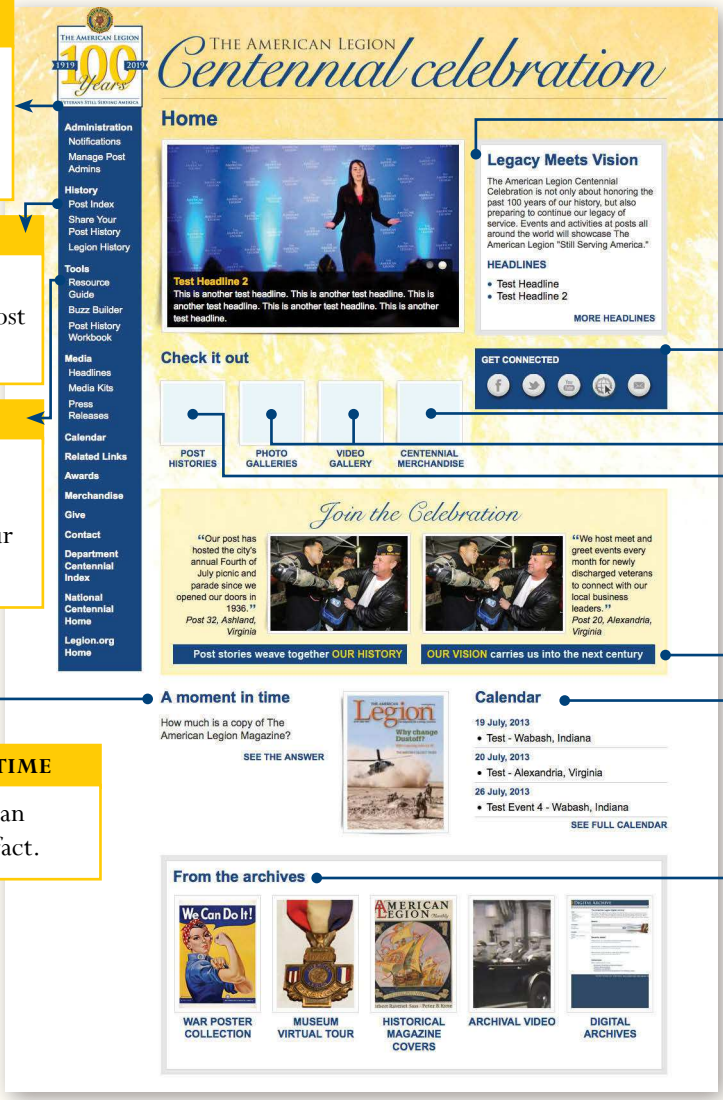
Quick access for site visitors and post administrators.

RESOURCES

Guides, media kits and links to help you plan your celebration.

A MOMENT IN TIME

Weekly American Legion history fact.



CENTENNIAL NEWS

Links to news stories about national centennial events and unique or inspiring local efforts.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Links to social media channels.

PHOTO AND VIDEO GALLERIES

Photos and videos of centennial events, PSAs and featured galleries from post history pages.

MERCHANDISE

Special Emblem Sales storefront with Centennial-themed merchandise.

POST HISTORY INDEX

Links to available post history pages, by state.

EVENT CALENDAR

Event information for national, department and post centennial activities.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Access to online archival materials from the National Headquarters library and museum. Includes virtual tours, archival video and historical image galleries.

INTERACTIVE POST MODULES

Two modules of the website are designed to allow posts to log in and share the legacy of their post as well as their vision for the future.

LEGACY: Post administrators can log in and start a post history page. Members and contributors can share events and memories that add to the post's story.

VISION: Posts can share ideas for growth and continued relevancy within their communities with other posts around the country.

SHARE YOUR LEGACY

One of the main features of the Centennial Celebration website is the Post History Page. A post can start a page – hosted by National Headquarters – that will share the post's history and legacy. Once established, members and friends of the post can add events to the timeline to broaden understanding of the post's place in the community.

QUICK NAVIGATION

Centennial home page navigation is readily available from the post page.

ABOUT THIS POST

The brief bio statment about the post tells the charter date, post namesake and notable members or details that make the post unique.

POST LINKS

Outbound links send readers directly to established post websites, contacts and social media channels.

PHOTO GALLERIES

Photo galleries can add life to event postings, or stand alone to tell their own story.

EVENTS TIMELINE

By adding events to the post timeline, the legacy of your post will emerge through the stories, of both current and former post members and members of the community, who share in the values and mission of The American Legion.

Event posts will only appear after review by the page administrator. The original administrator of the page can add co-administrators to help manage the page.

Once your post's history page is started, there are many ways you can use it to leverage increased visibility in your community.

- Link from an existing post website or Facebook page for an elegant presentation of the post's history.
- Create awareness about the legacy and contributions your post has made in the community.
- Invite others to share testimonials about the importance of the post's presence in the community.

NOT TECH? NO SWEAT.

For posts that want a post history page but lack an IT hero to take on the administrator duties, there is an alternative. Contact your department or district centennial chair to get the **Centennial Celebration Workbook**.

Instruction manuals assist those who need help getting started, and workbook pages guide in the creation of hard-copy entries that can be uploaded by a third party.

ADVANCE THE VISION

The 100th anniversary is not just about the celebration of The American Legion's history. It is also an opportunity to enhance the branding of the organization in communities around the world and foster a new season of growth and service.

MAKE A STATEMENT

Work with post leaders to develop a vision statement about where your post is heading in the next century. Will you focus on youth programs? Disaster preparedness? Transition assistance? Share your vision with your community and other Legion posts.

GET A ROADMAP

Set milestones and goals to help your post realize its vision for the future. Think about how you can tie those events into your centennial celebrations.

CALL FOR BACKUP

Many hands make light work. While you are out in the community sharing your legacy, invite new members to help fulfill the vision for the future. Strive for an all-time membership high in your post during the centennial celebration.

SHARE YOUR VISION

Share your vision and the successes as you embark on your journey with our Centennial Vision Forum. Let other posts know what works in your community so they might develop similar plans.

FAMILY LEGACY

WWII vet continues to serve nation in honor guard..

St. Clair, PA

On Monday, Joseph Gravish carried an American flag and stood outside of a church, then made his way to the..

17 Tweet 0 Share 0

LEGION RIDERS

Remember the Heroes Poker Run

Saluda, VA

Nearly 50 riders participated June 29 in the 2nd Annual Remember the Heroes Poker Run beginning..

80 Tweet 0 Share 4

OTHER

Boys State members leave for Tallahassee

Belleview, FL

On July 7, 12 local students left to go to Tallahassee for one week to learn how the Florida..

43 Tweet 0 Share 0

OTHER

Post 110 holds Flag Day Ceremony

Virginia Beach, VA

American Legion Post 110 held a Flag Day ceremony on June 14 at the Our Lady..

39 Tweet 0 Share 0

OTHER

Post 284 helps ill children in Florida

BELLEVIEW, FL

Commander Ed Jaworski presented a check to Ms. Boykin on July 1 to help support Boggy Creek. ...

MY TIME IN UNIFORM

After almost 70 years, Merchant Marine finally honored at national memorial

Holland, NY

Nearly seven decades after James Van Splunder decided to join the Merchant Marines rather than be drafted by the Army,...

HONOR & ACHIEVEMENTS

68 years of service

Loretto, PA

William J. Wyland, center, receives a plaque honoring him for his 68 years of service to Loretto (Pa.) Post 748...

NATIONAL INITIATIVES

The American Legion's 100th Anniversary Observance Committee has begun planning commemoration activities that emphasize local posts and departments. A number of national events and initiatives are also being planned. They include:

- An American Legion historical video series, including a special documentary about the Legion's continuing role as parent of the GI Bill of Rights
- Commemorative certificates and other recognitions for Legion centennial posts
- Centennial conventions in 2018 and 2019, featuring distinguished American figures whose lives have been influenced by the Legion
- A special gift to the nation
- The unearthing of a time capsule buried in St. Louis
- Exhibits at national museums
- At least two special Centennial American Legion Legacy Run motorcycle rides
- Two new illustrated books about the Legion and its place in the fabric of America

MORE INFORMATION

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THE AMERICAN LEGION