



EVERY DEPARTMENT HAS A STORY

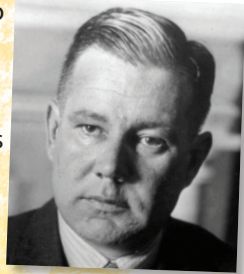
THE AMERICAN LEGION OF

NEW MEXICO

Estimates of the number of New Mexicans who served in the military during the Great War range between 14,000 and 15,000. They were spread across the divisions of the American Expeditionary Forces on two continents. The Germans initially had a low opinion of AEF commander Gen. John J. Pershing, stemming from Pershing's ultimately fruitless pursuit of Pancho Villa after Villa's raid on Columbus in 1916. Pershing would later be named an honorary national commander of The American Legion. The first Department of New Mexico commander/chairman, Col. Charles M. DeBremond of Roswell, died in December 1919 due to gas received in France. DeBremond served with Pershing both in the Villa pursuit and in France during the war. The New Mexico Military Museum has his war uniform, two saddles and a foot locker. The temporary department headquarters was located in Santa Fe, but then moved to Albuquerque where it remains today.

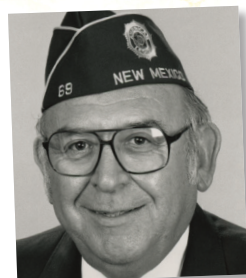
NM National Legion Officers

Bronson M. Cutting was New Mexico National Executive Committeeman (NEC) in 1919, department commander 1923 and department adjutant 1925-1926. He also served as a U.S. senator from Dec. 29, 1927-Dec. 6, 1928, and March 4, 1929-May 6, 1935.



Seaborn P. Collins was the first American Legion national commander from New Mexico, serving from 1954-1955. Collins was a member of Joe Quesenberry Post 10 in Las Cruces.

Rev. Father Arthur Jakobiak, Los Alamos Post 90, national chaplain 1986-1987.



Louis Anthony "Tony" Santillanes, Albuquerque Post 69, national vice commander (West) 1992-1993.

Taurino "TJ" Trevino, Carlsbad Post 7, national vice commander (West) 2005-2006.



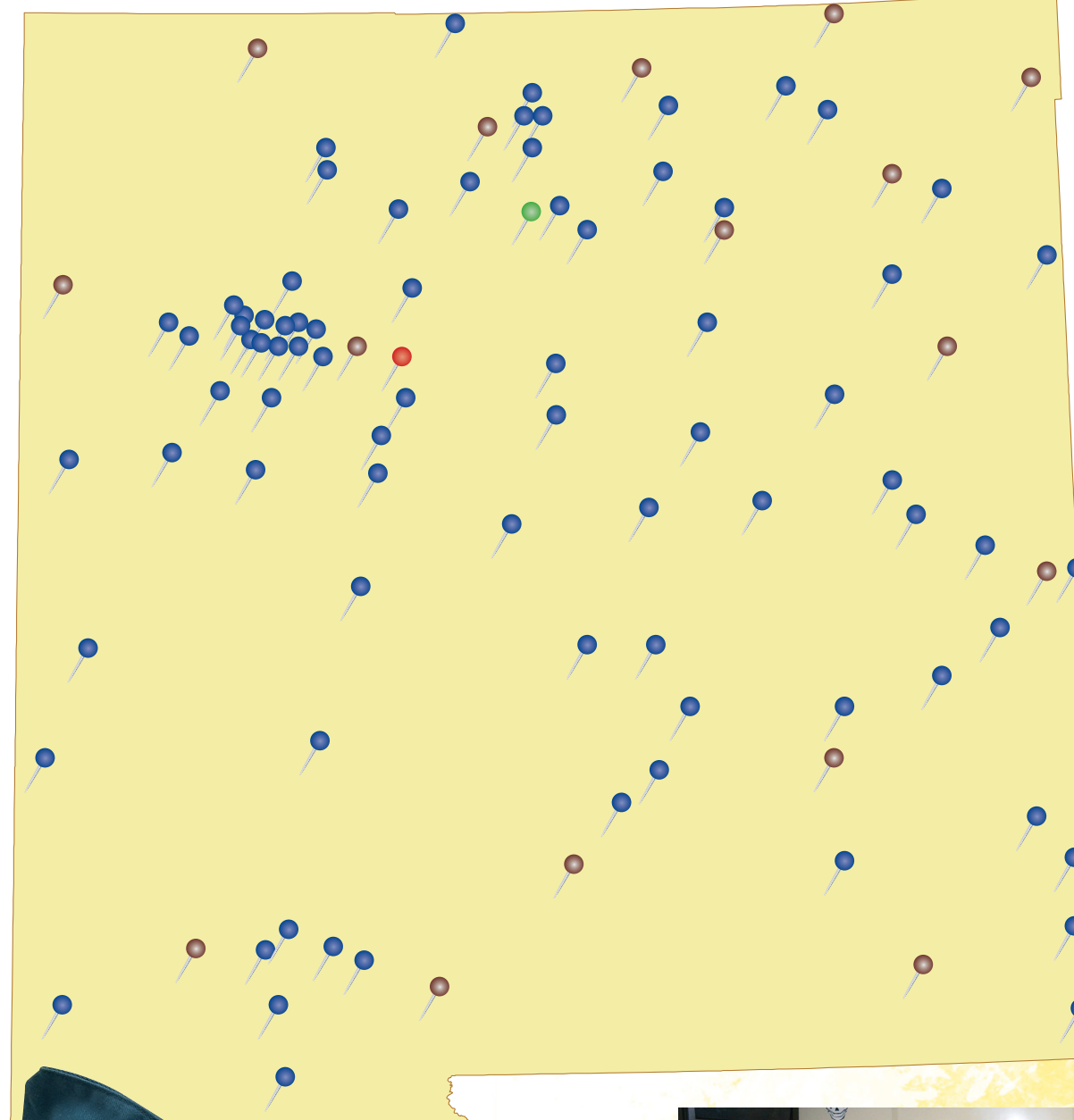
The Department of New Mexico Centennial coin has been established to provide recognition to the many elements of the department that has made it an outstanding organization over the years.

New Mexico is represented by the recognizable Zia sun symbol, comprising the yellow and red colors representing our state heritage. The sun symbol established by the Zia Pueblo is made up of the circle representing the Circle of Life, and the four sides of rays symbolizing the four directions, four times of day, four stages of life and four seasons.

Preserving and recording our American Legion Family history is important for our past, present and future. Always learning and finding out new and correct history on the three membership organizations and program that unifies them brings the emblems of The American Legion, the Sons of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion Riders.

The outer ring of the coin identifies all of the Centennial posts still active today that were chartered along with the department in 1919. They are recognized in the binding ring that holds all of the elements of our department together. Without them working together, we would be less than we are today.

The basis of the Centennial coin design was established by Kenneth Nadeau, department American Legion Riders president and Centennial Committee co-chair, with input from the committee. The design was established on the basis of the Riders state coin created in 2013. Notable lead artistic efforts and credit is attributed to the late Scott Wilkenson, a member of Chapter 19 and SAL Challenger Squadron 90 in Los Alamos.



Legend

- NM Current Department Headquarters
- NM Initial Department Headquarters
- Posts temporarily chartered in 1919
- Posts temporarily chartered after 1919

New Mexico Events of Honor

- **April 28, 2017:** Tribute to New Mexico's fallen Vietnam War heroes, unveiling a display honoring 398 KIA at the Bataan Memorial Building in Santa Fe.
- **Memorial Day 2017:** record-breaking attendance at state parks, with ceremonies in communities across the state.
- **Fourth of July 2017:** transferring ceremony of Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park in Angel Fire to the Department of Veterans Services.
- **Armistice Day 1919 to Veterans Day 2019 in New Mexico:** Legacy & Vision, preserving and recording our history for past, present and future.



The Sons of The American Legion is a program within the Legion open to men whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for Legion membership. It was founded in 1932.

The first local-level squadron in New Mexico, Squadron 68 in Lovington, was chartered on March 30, 1964. Today there are 29 squadrons to accompany the 92 Legion posts in the state-level detachment. For our next centennial, our vision is to have more squadrons come into the detachment, which would bring in more membership for our American Legion Family and get people to research their family histories.

Standing with the Legion, Sons and Riders, the American Legion Auxiliary welcomes women whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for Legion membership, as well as female veterans eligible for Legion membership. The Auxiliary was founded in 1919.



The New Mexico American Legion Riders (NMALR) was initially started in 2003, with the establishment of the department-level charter recognized by the department constitution and by-laws. Today, there are 24 chapters statewide, made up of approximately 425 Riders and another 175 Associates. They support American Legion programs that provide for their communities, the state and the nation.

Because of NMALR's combined efforts, approximately \$1 million in aid was provided to Brooke Army Medical Center's Warrior and Family Support Center, the Center For the Intrepid and the Fisher House Foundation – in fact, NMALR was the single-largest donor in the effort to bring a Fisher House to the Albuquerque VA Center.

Around the state, veterans and their families have been supported as well as veterans support organizations. Thousands of hours have been spent supporting children and youth, veterans in need, and running escorts for dignitaries and funerals.

NEW MEXICO Youth Programs

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. The program presents participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. The program has featured numerous politicians and prominent contestants over the years. Young orators earn some of the most generous college scholarships available to high school students; over \$138,000 in scholarships can be awarded each year. High school students under age 20 are eligible.

In New Mexico, the competition begins at the post level and advances to a district competition, then to a state competition. Legion department representatives certify one winner per state to the national contest, where those winners compete against each other in two speaking rounds. The contest caps off with a final round that decides the top three finishers. Speaking subjects must be on some aspect of the Constitution, with some emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to our government. Speeches are eight to 10 minutes long; three- to five-minute speeches on an assigned topic are also part of the contest.



Learning about government

The purpose of Boys and Girls State is to educate the youth of New Mexico in the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship. The objectives are: To teach the fundamentals of government, from dog catcher to governor; to inspire a sense of personal obligation to practice the duties and responsibilities of American citizenship; and to encourage and develop future leaders of America.

In 1946 the American Legion Department of New Mexico Executive Committee authorized the feasibility of establishing a New Mexico Boys State program, which was approved in 1947 at the annual convention. In 1948 the first NM Boys State was held at El Rito Normal School in El Rito. The program's initial success was the direct result of the appointed committee's deliberate attention to program development, and the encouragement and support of interested individuals throughout New Mexico.

Attorneys and the law department of UNM

collaborated in writing the first text for NM Boys State, titled "The Government in Brief," that continues to be printed and distributed to each Boys State delegate. Boys State sessions have been held in Socorro on the campus of NM School of Mines and Technology; Roswell at the NM Military Institute, and currently in Portales on the campus of Eastern NM University, where three college credits are granted to the boys completing Boys State. The American Legion Auxiliary Department of New Mexico administers Girls State. Our vision is that we continue to work with the NM Legislature for funding for Boys and Girls State programs and with the high schools to grant units toward high school graduation in civics.

Two representatives from Boys State, and two from Girls State, are elected to attend and participate in Boys and Girls Nation in Washington, D.C. Many prominent men and women have attended and participated in Boys and Girls State.



The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports program is a gun education and marksmanship program that encompasses the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment and competition. Shooters use the .177 caliber air rifle. Boys and girls can participate, through Legion sponsorship; disabled youth are encouraged to join, as competitive shooting is a sport that creates an equal playing field for all competitors. Contact your local Legion post, Sons of The American Legion squadron or American Legion Auxiliary unit for information about affiliating as a club or individual. Junior Shooting Sports is a three-part program that combines the Basic Marksmanship Course, Qualification Awards and Air Rifle Competition into a well-rounded activity. New Mexico claimed national winners in 2013 (Precision), 2009 (Sporter) and 2012 (Team Sporter Individual).

The Americanism Commission's Children & Youth Committee is the center of the Legion's youth-support efforts. The committee meets annually to formulate, recommend and implement plans, programs and activities designed to: Assure care and protection for the children of veterans; improve conditions for all children and youth with due concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home; prevent social and physical ills of children and youth where possible, utilizing services of and cooperating with sound organizations and agencies for children and youth; and maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs.

The American Legion has been a strong advocate for children and youth since its inception. This steadfast dedication has never wavered and continues to be a driving force on behalf of children across the country today. Our vision in New Mexico is to continue to work with veterans with children through our posts, districts and the department.

Did you know?

The Department of New Mexico American Legion Family has worked for years supporting the efforts to get a Fisher House, for veterans and their families, in New Mexico. Ground was broken on Nov. 9, 2018, and the Legion is looking forward to serving them through the next 100 years.

Legionnaires IN ACTION

What The American Legion has done for the community, what it's done for veterans – it gets me in my heart.

Paul Espinoza, national vice commander (West), 2016-2017.



When Paul Espinoza is trying to recruit a young veteran into The American Legion, he'll often go the extra mile of covering the first year's membership dues.

"That's just my instinct," says Espinoza, who served as New Mexico's department commander from 2013 to 2015. "When I see they really want to be involved in the Legion, I'll fork it out if I can." Other times, he'll encourage a Legion post to pick up the dues.

An Army (1983-1986) and Army National Guard (1986-2005) veteran, Espinoza meets a lot of younger veterans by helping organize an annual job fair at Post 13 in Albuquerque. This year's event attracted hundreds of people, including many post-9/11 veterans. "Half of them didn't know what The American Legion was, and once we explained, they wanted to be in," he says.

Espinoza knows the benefits of the Legion's work firsthand – for example, the GI Bill helped put him through college. He has been a member for more than 10 years, and is proud of what New Mexico Legionnaires do for local communities, including providing coats and food for homeless veterans, scholarships for students and other services.

"Being a part of the Legion means a lot to me," Espinoza says. "They gave so much to me and my family."



New Mexico Baseball

American Legion Baseball is a national institution, having thrived through a world war, several national tragedies, and times of great prosperity as well as great despair. Legion Baseball has taught hundreds of thousands of young Americans the importance of sportsmanship, good health and active citizenship. The program is also a promoter of equality, making teammates out of young athletes regardless of their income level or social standing. American Legion Baseball has been, and continues to be, a stepping stone to manhood for millions of young men who have gone on to serve their country or community, raise families or play the sport at the highest level.

The department of New Mexico has Senior 'A' Teams and Junior 'B' Teams. An Eldorado High School

Post 49 player pitched for the University of New Mexico, a player went to Boston as first baseman, a La Cueva Bears High School player went to the Minnesota Twins, and a player on a Junior 'B' Team played in Houston at the American Legion 4th World Series, where his base hit won. New Mexico Legion alum Alex Bregman, who won the 2017 World Baseball Classic with Team USA and the 2017 World Series with the Astros, made his first appearance in the All-Star Game and made an impact, hitting a tie-breaking home run in the 10th inning on his way to earning the Most Valuable Player award.

Contact The American Legion of New Mexico

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Join The American Legion

www.legion.org/join