



Winnek Post

AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. 396

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After the Armistice was signed to end the first World War on November 11, 1918, 2.5 million veterans who had done what they were asked to do were ready to come home.

The soldiers were tired of discipline, regulations, and being away from home. There were many AWOL's and malcontents in the ranks.

Since that many people could not be sent home at once, a group of the American Expeditionary Forces were ordered to meet in Paris in February 1919 to consider steps that would improve conditions, contentment and morale.

After the meeting, a proposal was made to organize some kind of American veteran of the war. Out of the meeting came an agreement that the new organization should be based on the following concepts:

It should include all those who served in American uniform overseas or at home.

It should be a civilian organization, devoid of rank.

It must operate in a democratic fashion.

Several names for the organization were considered and after much serious deliberation, the delegates settled on "The American Legion".

On September 16, 1919 the United States Congress passed an act incorporating The American Legion. The act outlined its purposes and defined its powers and its membership criteria. The original act has been amended to extend eligibility to those who served during World War II, the Korean War, Viet Nam, Lebanon, Granada, Panama and the Persian Gulf War.

Word about the new veterans organization spread throughout the land and a group of World War I veterans from Geneva quickly became interested in forming their own American Legion Post.

They had many meetings at the Armory and filed an application for a charter which was accepted on September 8, 1919

One of the first decisions to be made was a name for the new post. It turned out to be an easy decision because the name of First Lieutenant Edward F. Winnek, an officer of Geneva's Company B who was killed in a charge on the Hindenberg Line in France, was fresh in their minds. The post was named in his honor.

For the next three years, the new Legionnaires continued to hold their meetings in the Armory. Then

