

Daniel D. Fernandez
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Post 9676

Specialist 4th Class, [Daniel D. Fernandez](#), died in Vietnam on February 18, 1966. He heroically gave his life to save the lives of four of his comrades. During a fire fight near Cu Chi, a suburb of Saigon, Vietnam, Daniel without any regard for his own life threw himself onto an enemy grenade as it exploded. He sacrificed his own life so the four men with him could survive. He was only 21 years old. Daniel lived in the small village of Los Lunas, New Mexico. When Daniel passed away there was an American Legion Post, in Los Lunas, but there was not a VFW Post.

Consequently, within months of Daniel's passing, 61 eligible veterans applied for and began a VFW Post named after their local hero. The Post received its Charter on May 8, 1966. At first, Post members had no formal meeting place, so they began meeting at different member's homes, garages, barns, and sometime in small businesses. The Post did not have the resources to rent a meeting place, so they spoke to several railroad officials and found the decommissioned Railroad Pullman Car shown below. The Post members immediately went to work remodeling and converting this Railroad Pullman Car into their meeting place and Post Home.



Without delay, Post members began a Veterans Outreach Program along with other Community Service Programs, particularly focused on assisting the most vulnerable and needy in their community. The Post operated out of this railroad car for almost 20 years, until the Village of Los Lunas offered to trade the Post for a more permanent facility. The Railroad Car was moved on to Village property and the Post began operating out of the renovated Los Lunas Train Depot shown on the next page.



The Railroad car is still in use by the Village of Los Lunas and our new Post Home is located on the land dedicated by the Village of Los Lunas, as Daniel D. Fernandez Memorial Park, at 1201 State Hwy, 314.

In February 2016, Post 9676 was visited by the New Mexico Department Commander to celebrate its 50th Anniversary since receiving its Charter. The State Commander provided then 25 year Post Commander, James Garley, a Certificate in recognition of the Post's 50 years of service to residents of Valencia County. For almost fifty three (53) years now, in honor of Daniel D. Fernandez and in the tradition of all VFW Posts, members of Post 9676, have served and will continue to serve their communities located in and around Valencia County

New Mexico. VFW Post 9676 has been recognized, award and supported by many in this small community. Come visit with several current Post members who knew Daniel D. Fernandez, personally and served in Vietnam at the same time. Use this Website to learn how we are giving back to our community through Volunteerism and Community Service.

THEN – COME JOIN US!

