

# The Centennial

VOLUME XIII EDITION 1

JANUARY 2022



## AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL POST 209

3613 JEANNINE DR. COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80917

719.599.8624 [WWW.LEGION209.ORG](http://WWW.LEGION209.ORG)

### MEET YOUR 2021-2022 OFFICERS!!



#### American Legion Post 209 Officers

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Commander:</b> Joseph Schmidt<br>651.328.9029       | <b>Adjutant:</b> Jerry Hopper<br>918.953.9980     | <b>Sr. Vice Commander:</b> Marvin Weaver, Jr.<br>719.244.3535 |
| <b>Jr. Vice Commander:</b> Steve Hayes<br>719.494.7166 | <b>Finance Officer:</b> Joel Haas<br>719.482.4496 | <b>Service Officer:</b> Brian Murphy<br>719.930.4147          |
| <b>Judge Advocate:</b> Marvin Weaver<br>719.638.4763   | <b>Historian:</b> Stacey Ousley<br>325.704.0510   | <b>Executive Committeeman:</b> Art Kimbrel<br>719.339.4610    |
| <b>Chaplain:</b> Brad Henderson<br>830.660.4072        | <b>Club Manager:</b> Art Kimbrel<br>719.339.4610  | <b>Honor Guard Captain:</b> Joel Haas<br>719.482.4496         |



#### American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 Officers

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>President:</b> Royce Hopper<br>918.953.9993 | <b>VP:</b> Cathy Barger<br>719.290.3163             | <b>Secretary:</b> Pat Weaver<br>719.638.4763       | <b>Treasurer:</b> Kellie Hayes<br>719.494.7167      |
| <b>Chaplain:</b> Mary Bramer<br>719.633.8612   | <b>Exec.-at-Large:</b> Jackie Bowen<br>901.481.0673 | <b>Historian:</b> Valerie Stephens<br>330.510.0411 | <b>Sgt-at-Arms:</b> Charyse Schmidt<br>651.558.6968 |



#### Sons of The American Legion Squadron

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Commander:</b> Brian Wess<br>719.528.6672 | <b>Adjutant:</b> Ken Taylor<br>719.461.4047        | <b>Sr. Vice Commander:</b> Rob Barry           | <b>Chaplain:</b> Brad Henderson<br>830.660.4072 |
| <b>Jr. Vice Commander:</b> Daxton Attarian   | <b>Finance Officer:</b> Ken Taylor<br>719.461.4047 | <b>Sgt-at-Arms:</b> Bob Ingram<br>480.353.8234 |   |



#### The American Legion Riders Post 209 Officers

|   |                                |                                    |  |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>President:</b> Ed Santos<br>719.329.4357 | <b>VP:</b> Drew Pearson        | <b>Secretary:</b> Mike Sylvester   | <b>Treasurer:</b> Kellie Hayes<br>719.494.7167 |
| <b>Road Captain:</b> Tom Foster             | <b>Historian:</b> Scott Laudan | <b>Communications:</b> Monk Baylis |  |



#### The American Legion Amateur Radio Club (TALARC) Officers

|   |  |                                    |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>President:</b> George Johnson KE0ALQ<br>910.494.9768 | <b>Vice President:</b> Vacant          | <b>Trustee:</b> Harvey LeCato W1JU |
| <b>Secretary:</b> Harvey LeCato W1JU                    | <b>Treasurer:</b> Henry Russell KC0NAJ |                                    |

# FROM THE DESK & MIND OF THE COMMANDER



Happy New Year American Legion Family! The New Year is here and if you haven't renewed yet your membership you are now expired. Membership is more than paying yearly dues and sometimes I feel that is forgotten. I would like to renew some membership points from when I served as the Sr. Vice Commander for 2022.

## **Engagement:**

We are going to be spending a lot of time contacting our entire membership this year, not just about renewing, but more to reach out and to just see how our members are doing. We need to remember all of our members can't make it to post events because they maybe homebound or live too far away, but we always want them to know that they are remembered and appreciated. By engaging our membership, we can better understand their needs and how as The American Legion can help.

## **Involvement:**

Calling and contacting our membership is not the only step, we must be willing to involve our new and older members alike. Find out what drives them, learn their passions and fit them to that. Our involvement can take many shapes from placing a flag at a local cemetery or picking up trash on the side of the road, to serving as commander of the post, the level of involvement is up to individual Legionnaire.

## **Breaking Barriers:**

Welcome new and potential members get to know them, we already share the bond of service. We must be willing to step outside of our comfort zone from time to time to talk to those we normally wouldn't. You may end up making a lifelong friend, but at a minimum you made them feel welcome. Remember you were new once too!

## **WORKING THE PROGRAMS!**

For over 100 years now the American Legion has been focused on service to the community, state, and nation. We offer programs for almost anything related to our four pillars. Let's work together and focus on these programs. Jr. Shooting, Amateur Radio, Flag Advocacy, Oratorical Contest, Boys State, Homeless Veteran Outreach, the list goes on and on. There is something for every member of the American Legion!

By working these four key membership points I believe we can not only continue to be the largest post in the state of Colorado but grow to be one of the largest in the nation. El Paso County is home to over 80,000 Veterans and they too can benefit from what we the American Legion has to offer they just need to be shown.

I leave every member of our post with a challenge, to recruit 1 new member this year. While you are out there, remember what your "WHY" is, share with them the passion of this amazing organization. One new member may not sound like could make a difference, but collectively if we all signed up one new member, we could grow to a post of over 2,000 members!



*Joseph Schmidt*  
**Post Commander**

# Celebrate

At  
American Legion  
Neal Thomas Jr. Centennial Post 209

Host your next event with us! With over 2,500 SQFT of venue space this is the perfect location for your next social event!



## Rental Features:

- 6 Hour Rental
- In House Catering Available\*
- Fully Stocked Bar\*
- Muti-Room Sound System
- Dance Floor with Lighting

If you and your family are looking for an affordable option for a wedding, corporate event, retirement party, or any other event, we here at The American Legion Post 209 are ready to assist you in all your event planning needs.



For More Information

[www.legion209.org/contact\\_us](http://www.legion209.org/contact_us)

(719) 599-8624

3613 Jeannine Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80917

\*Additional cost may apply



## **FROM THE DESK OF THE POST ADJUTANT**

The past couple years have been really messed up. With any luck at all it is all behind us. I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and that we will see you all here at the Post. Let's make a New Year's Resolution to renew our commitment to helping Veterans and our community by helping our Post. Let me know if I can help.

*Jerry Hopper*  
Post Adjutant



## **FROM THE DESK OF THE SR. VICE COMMANDER**

Happy New Year! I Hope you had a good Holiday with friends and family while the Post was closed for the month. Even though we were closed, we still had a few events that happened in December. The Post presented colors and helped lay wreaths for Wreaths Across America, the family came together and presented 40 "goodie bags" to four of the CSPD substations and we had our annual Christmas Party. Hopefully this year will be better than the last two and we are finally past the COVID restrictions.

We are doing well with membership for 2022 but still need about 300 more members to meet our quota from Department. If you do not have a 2022 card in your possession you are now classified as delinquent. All you need is to pay your dues to become current. Please, if you have not renewed yet contact Jerry to set up a time to meet so you can give him your dues, or you can go online to our Post website and renew thru PayPal. You can also send a check through the Post Office if you would like. If you know of a veteran (family, friend, neighbor) who is not a member invite them to join. It is easier than you might think to recruit a new member. Just let them know why you joined and are a member; for many people the reasons are the same.

Thanks for all you do to help our Post and hope to see you this year.

*Marvin Weaver, Jr.*  
Sr. Vice Commander



## **FROM THE DESK OF THE JR. VICE COMMANDER**

Happy New Year!!! We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the 8 January membership meeting at the Post. Our guest speaker will be Karen White. Karen is the southern Colorado director for Combat Hero Bike Build. This is an awesome organization that provides custom designed motorcycles and trikes tailored to the specific needs of disabled veterans. Our February speaker is cool as well - on February 12th, McConnell Bristol will speak at the membership meeting on Boys State and Boys Nation. Post 209 sponsored McConnell to attend Boys State and he was elected as one of the two delegates to Boy's Nation out of his 2021 session. I hope you enjoyed a wonderful holiday season!

*Steve Hayes*  
Jr. Vice Commander



## FROM THE DESK OF THE UNIT PRESIDENT



### What Does Your Post Mean to You?

We have had several "out-of-state" guests recently visit who have enjoyed Post 209. A common statement from our guests has been, "You have a beautiful Post!"

All our guests have given us high marks for having our lounge upstairs instead of the standard location for Posts across the country where you walk into the Post and the first thing you see is a bar. Having the Lounge located away from the main area makes for a great "Family-Friendly" atmosphere. One couple from California stated they wished their Post could do the same.

As members, we have a very important role regarding our Post and Post home. We are all volunteers, and we are also ambassadors for this Post, this Unit, this Squadron, this family. How visitors view our Post home directly reflects on our total membership and The American Legion. It's all about perception and first impressions. We are very proud of the first impression we make when we have visitors. And it's not just about the Post home. It is also the manner in which we greet and meet our guests. Our focus is to try and make everyone, member or guest feel comfortable and at home.

When was the last time you visited YOUR Post? If you haven't been here in the past couple of months, you've missed out on some AMAZING updates, changes, and beautification. I encourage you to come out, or back for a visit. Join us for a meal and/or a membership meeting soon.

Come see what others are raving about!

Happy January birthday to the following: Marcia Bangs, Linda Cancellieri, Barbara Green, Joyce Moyer, Linda O'Riley, Chelsea Thompson, Valerie Stephens, Marilyn Stites, Jailyn Weaver, Debbie Yates, Michelle Wissler, Lynn Thomas, Cheryl Wright, Ashlynn, and Brianna Bock.

*Serving Our Veterans Proudly!*

*Royce Hopper*  
Unit President



## FROM THE DESK OF OUR FINANCE OFFICER

Happy New Year!!! I hope everyone's holidays were a happy and enjoyable time. We are off to starting a new year that hopefully leaves a lot of difficulties behind and mostly good things ahead. My goal for the remainder of the 2021-2022 fiscal year is budget planning. What is your goal?

This month's article is short and to the point since December was pretty quiet. I have a basic budget completed for presentation to the Post Executive Committee at the January 2022 meeting. While I expect there to be some tweaks suggested, this will give the Post a foundation to start managing the finances a little easier. I feel this also provides a tool to assist in future planning of larger expenses going forward. Throughout the last six months of the fiscal year, I will be using information from changes needed to the budget to build a better 2022-2023 fiscal year budget for the new Executive Committee to have in place in July.

And for my normal closing statement, the Post needs your help identifying new fundraising ideas. We are still working to get back to pre-COVID status in order to keep supporting OUR Veterans in the community. Any fundraising idea – big, small, unconventional (think about the impact of Kellie's Stick Pony Race) – is worth consideration to help us get there.

*Joel Haas*  
Finance Officer





# Trivia Night!



**Do you want a chance for a free dinner? Or maybe a free beverage?**

**Do you know what is the longest river in the world?**

**Do you know what is the largest river in North America?**

**How about Roy Rogers real name?**

**What is the President of the United States' address?**

**If you know the answers to the above and other questions similar to these, or if you fancy yourself a trivia wizard, join us on **Friday, 14 January, 2022** for our Trivia Night event. **We cancelled the December dinners, so Trivia Night will not be played in December.****

**The fun will start following dinner that night, around 7:00pm. You must be at the Post for the beginning of the contest; late arrivals will not be allowed to play.**

**This will be a team event; teams can be as small as one person or up to four (4) can play on a team.**

**Cost to compete is \$5.00 per person.**

**Even if you don't want to play, come on out and watch the fun! But you should consider competing in the contest. You never know, your dinner that night might be free!**

## **FROM THE DESK OF OUR SERVICE OFFICER**

Greetings from your Service Officer. It has been quite a year (or two)! I am here to assist you in getting the benefits you deserve and I will help you with my knowledge of the VA healthcare system and the Veterans Benefits Administration to do so. I know the different areas in which a veteran may have issues. I will refer you to appropriate resources when I am unable to assist, and I am confident that I will get you the answer you need to move forward. I am passionate about helping veterans, and have worked for the past 10 years assisting veterans with behavioral health counseling, disability benefits and compensation, helping active-duty service members transition from active duty, referring veterans for compensated work therapy, education benefits, care giver support, etc. Also if you are struggling financially, I can help with emergency assistance. Please contact me at 719-930-4147. I will work diligently to help you!

I hope all my Legionnaires had a Merry Christmas! You are so important to me!

*Brian Murphy*  
Service Officer



## **JR. SHOOTING SPORTS (A.K.A. YOUNG GUNS PROGRAM)**

Overcoming personnel challenges, the Young Guns Junior Shooting Sports and Marksmanship Program successfully completed their fall semester supported by Squadron 209 with generous sponsorship assistance from the NRA. The Program graduated nearly a full component of students and the next semester in February 2022 has already been completely filled along with several volunteers making the commitment to take the \$250 NRA Instructor Certification in January 2022 in order to serve and assist the program as necessary. Our New BSA Venturing Crew, sponsored by SAL 209, will be involved at our Post and this sharp young group looks to be a significant help and contribution to ALL aspects of our Post Family.

## **FROM THE DESK AND HEART OF SAL SQUADRON 209**

During this Wonderful Holiday Season just concluding, I'm exceptionally pleased and proud to report that our Post SAL Squadron 209 continues its work to renew & rejuvenate participation & expanding our active membership toward fulfilling our key missions within our Legion Family and for our duties to Community, State & Nation. The SAL remains continually grateful to the Leadership of the ALR for their support in reminding members of the ALR who are SAL Members that they have a duty and obligation to support their SAL Membership participation without which they would not be eligible to be members of the ALR. We offer our wholehearted cooperation to our ALR Brethren in trying to work together for the benefit of both organizations.

I'm exceptionally pleased to officially welcome our newly installed Senior Vice Commander, Robert Barry, who made the volunteer commitment & sacrifice to assist our SAL Team continue to build on our foundations from the extreme challenges of the past 2 years.

Our SAL Squadron recently received several awards at the Detachment of Colorado Meetings. The Joe D. Roe Americanism Award 2020-2021, which our Squadron is proud to be a perennial recipient of; The Detachment of Colorado VA&R Award for 2020-2021; The Detachment of Colorado Americanism Award 2020-2021 & The Detachment of Colorado Children & Youth Award 2020-2021. Additionally, after only a few months we've already had numerous Squadron Members who have already accumulated the 10 designated SAL & Post Family Participation Activities needed to complete the SAL Participation Incentive Reward Program and receive their SAL Allegiance Polo purchased for them by the Squadron. The eligible activities are detailed on

the Post SAL webpage in a downloadable participation checklist which may also be requested from any Squadron Officer.

And several of our members continue to work on and complete the SAL 5 Star & 10 Ideals Programs. While geared toward the education of more youthful SAL members, these programs can serve as a great refresher & reminder of American Civics and assist more senior members to help guide & mentor the youth.

*Brian Wess*

SAL Squadron 209 Commander



## **THE AMERICAN LEGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (TALARC)**

**Devoted to the Hobby and Art of Amateur Radio and Promoting the American Legion**  
**What is Ham Radio?** Amateur Radio (ham radio) is a popular **hobby and service that brings people, electronics and communication together.** People use ham radio to **talk across town, around the world,** or even into space, all without the Internet or cell phones. It's a great hobby that's **fun, social, educational, and can be a lifeline during times of need.**

**Ham License Testing at the Post – Jan 15 at 1300                      Spring Event – Fox Hunt**

Transmitter hunting (also known as fox hunting, is an activity wherein participants use radio direction finding techniques to locate one or more radio transmitters hidden within a designated search area. We are planning an event like this for the April/May timeframe. If you are interested in participating in this intriguing and fun event--Call, email or text Harvey at [mbca@comcast.net](mailto:mbca@comcast.net)



## **FROM OUR HONOR GUARD CAPTAIN**

The Honor Guard supported the Wreaths Across America event at Memorial Gardens on Saturday, December 18. The team performed the Presentation and Posting of Colors along with the playing of TAPS. The Honor Guard also provided assistance for the planning of the event. In addition to providing recommendations for the script, we assisted in identifying someone from each of the military services for presenting each service's wreath, as well as someone to present the Merchant Marine and POW/MIA wreaths. Overall, it was a very successful event by the team.

While December was pretty quiet for Final Honors events, I expect things will pick back up again during the January to February time frame. The Honor Guard members will be cross-training for all aspects of performing Final Honors. This will hopefully make it a little easier for the newer members when the more senior members are not available.

If you, or someone you know, have a request for the Honor Guard to support an event, please contact the Honor Guard Coordinator. The Honor Guard Coordinator, Valerie Stephens, can be reached through any one of the following: Cell Phone: (330) 510-0411 Personal Email: [valerie.al209honorguard@gmail.com](mailto:valerie.al209honorguard@gmail.com) Legion209 Email: [honor.guard@legion209.org](mailto:honor.guard@legion209.org)

As seen in previous articles (and can expect to see in each article in the future), while not everyone has a lot of time to participate in the Honor Guard, all someone needs is the time to participate a night or two for training meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month) and even just one event a month. A meeting or two and one event a month is only 3-5 hours. Those 3-5 hours makes a difference for a Veteran and their family. Those 3-5 hours a month can also make a difference for you! If another 10 to 15 members of the Legion, Sons, or Auxiliary *gave back* with 3-5 hours a month, the Honor Guard could possibly not have to keep turning down requests. If you do not remember/know how to march or fold the flag, we will teach you. The only two items that a new



Honor Guard member needs to get on their own is a Legion cap (or SAL/ALA as applicable) and shoes (multiple options available). All other uniform items that you need are provided by the Honor Guard. You do not have 3-5 hours a month? That is okay, you can still help the Honor Guard by telling others in the Legion, Sons, or Auxiliary (Post 209 or other posts in the area) about what the Honor Guard does and the importance of growing in order to meet the increase of requests to support OUR Veterans. If you or anyone you know might be interested in supporting the Honor Guard, please reach out to me at: (719) 482-4496 or [honor.guard@legion209.org](mailto:honor.guard@legion209.org).

*Joel Haas*  
Honor Guard Captain



## **FROM OUR POST CHAPLAIN**

### **“Trees”**

*“I think that I shall never see, a poem as lovely as a tree.”* Joyce Kilmer

Colorado – what a great place in which to begin a new year! It is a genuine pleasure for these South Texans to see the magnificent Rocky Mountains, and to experience the wonderful trees unique to Colorado. I find woodland trails and enchanting forests to be places of peace.

Trees come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, ranging from dwarf Bonzai and ornamental topiary varieties to the majestic giant Sequoias of California. Each individual is distinguished by its characteristics internally, and externally. There are hardwoods; and there are soft woods. Their collective display of beauty and function is a wonder to behold! The history of this great nation is replete with timber and wood products. Most trees begin from simple seedlings. Supported by a fragile stem, the little youngster requires the nurturing of sunlight and proper nutrients to ensure its proper development. Some are very particular, while others adapt and grow where planted.

The young sapling must condition its trunk to withstand the winds of change. It must grow strong roots to develop a solid base. Youth is a sensitive time in its life. Even simple wounds can cut deep and leave lifetime scars. The young sapling must branch out and interact with its environment, filling out with twigs and the leaves it needs to sustain itself. Mature trees will often develop substantial girth. The canopy of their inheritance offers shade and refreshment. Thickened bark can withstand the challenges of living. The age lines we call “rings” illustrate the effect of the good years, and those that were not so good. Mature trees are more resilient to injury. When branches are lost, new ones are grown in their place. Mature tree begins to produce fruit, and the seeds needed for a new generation. Some may suffer disease, and some may be harvested. The remaining forest stays strong.

Toward the end of the year, trees cast off the foliage of the past, and retain only that which will contribute to success and a long life. Before the ball drops in Times Square, perhaps we need to ask ourselves: What will we cast off? What will we retain for success?

Some days and weeks ahead will be sunny and warm. Others will be cold, dark, and stormy. It doesn't get much darker, or more volatile than in a prison cell. History shows that POW's who had faith in their religious beliefs, also had *hope*. The expectation that things would eventually get better in this life or the next, sustained them. Those who had no faith, had no hope. Without hope, many gave up and died. Are you ready for the new year? Are you deep rooted in a strong faith?

“Know God, know peace. No God, no peace.”

*Brad Henderson*  
Chaplain





# AMERICAN LEGION POST 209

THE PREEMINENT VOICE FOR VETERANS • COLORADO SPRINGS, CO



## WALK OF HONOR

### Buy A Brick Fundraiser!

We are re-introducing an exciting fundraiser for our Post. We are partnering with Polar Engraving to offer our members, family, friends, and our corporate Veteran-friendly supporters an opportunity to purchase an engraved brick to adorn our landscaping project we are working. The engraving uses the same technology as used on tombstones so it's extremely durable. Here are some FAQs:



- **What Are We Having?** A Brick Fundraising Event
- **Why?** To Further Funding of our American Legion Programs
- **What Size Are the Bricks?** 4"x 8" or 8"x 8" bricks for individuals, and 8"x 8" or 12"x 12" bricks for our corporate supporters.
- **What are the Costs for the Individual Bricks?** Prices vary depending on size, style and lettering desired, but typically range from \$90 to \$200. For the 8x8 or 12x12 bricks, you can add a second emblem. Contact the Adjutant for ordering details. There is **NO** additional cost for the second emblem on the larger bricks.
- **What are the Costs for the Corporate/Veteran Supporter Bricks?** Again, prices vary depending on size, style, and lettering but typically range from \$250 to \$500.
- **What is the Difference between Individual and Corporate Bricks?** Individual bricks are identified for Veterans, and family members of Veterans wishing to purchase a brick to honor their Veteran. The corporate bricks are for our Veteran-friendly supporters and businesses who wish to show their continued support to our Nation's heroes by purchasing a brick.
- **Is the Brick Purchase Restricted to Members of the Post 209 Family?** No. We encourage members to buy a brick for themselves as a lasting memory of their association with Post 209. We also welcome anyone to purchase a brick for their Veteran loved one, or to show their support to our Veterans.
- **Can I Buy a 12"x 12" Brick for Myself/Loved One?** Absolutely!
- **Where Do I Go to Buy a Brick?** We have a link on our website. Just visit [legion209.org](http://legion209.org) and click on "Walk of Honor." Or, you can visit <http://polarengraving.com/ALPost209> to buy your brick. The site is very user-friendly and will walk you through the design and purchase. You will be able to see a preview of your brick before finalizing the purchase.
- **How Do I Pay For the Brick?** We have the site setup to accept payment via PayPal or by check. PayPal is an extremely safe way to purchase a brick and you don't need a PayPal account to use it.
- **Where Will the Brick Be Shipped?** All bricks will be shipped to the Post. We will notify you when it arrives and you are welcome to stop by and see the brick you have purchased.
- **What Will Become of My Brick?** It will be placed near the Flagpole at the Post and will be part of the landscaping design we are working. If you are a landscaper or know a good one (preferably a Veteran), have them contact our Adjutant.
- **How Long Will this Fundraiser Effort Last?** We plan to only sell as many bricks as needed for the first phase of the landscaping project. Currently, that is anticipated to be 600 bricks, but that number may change depending on brick sizes purchased and the final design approved by the Post.
- **Will I Have an Opportunity to Buy a Brick Later?** Quite possibly. It depends on what is decided/approved for the next phase of our project.

Order your brick(s) now to ensure you get one in Phase One of our project. If you buy multiple bricks, let our Adjutant know and we will make certain they are all placed together.



## BRINGING A LITTLE SOUTH TO THE WEST

In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, I spent quite a bit of time in Study Hall. Some of it was planned because I didn't sign up for enough classes to complete a full day at school, so the hour in between my scheduled classes is where I went to "study" and wait for the next class. I use the term "study" pretty loosely, because only the brainiacs and those who were trying to catch up on the homework they didn't do the night before studied. The rest of us visited with everyone not studying. Study Hall was also the place you went if you had Detention Hall, so I spent some extra quality time in my 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades sitting quietly for about 30 minutes in Detention after the final bell rang.

The Study Hall was connected to our high school library by about a three-foot high wall or partition with an opening in the middle of the wall so kids could traverse between the two rooms to get some reading material if they didn't bring a textbook with them. It also made it easier to get to the research material for a book report. That was because there were more tables in the Study Hall than in the library.

For me, Study Hall was a time to quietly visit with friends I didn't have classes with or those friends who were underclassmen. And there were many of them. Matter of fact, many of the kids from my senior class married someone from our junior class. Even now, or maybe I should say especially now, it's hard for me to keep track of who was in which class.

One day early in my Junior year, I was visiting with friends in Study Hall and met a really pretty girl that was best friends with a girl I had known most of my life. They were both in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and sitting at a table with a few others. I walked up and said hello to my friend and asked who the girl was sitting with her. This "new" girl was a short blonde wearing a polka-dotted dress. Back in those days, girls weren't allowed to wear pants or jeans. My friend introduced this pretty girl as Jackie Walker and so I sat down to talk. There was something special about this short little blonde that attracted me when I first saw her.

As I got to know her a little more, I learned she was dating an active-duty Army guy from her neighborhood. I cleverly convinced her that she should not have anything to do with someone serving in the military. They only had one thing on their mind, and you couldn't trust them to stay true when they were deployed. I'm sure I probably also added that even a career soldier did not make for a good family life. Soldiers were notoriously underpaid, they moved around constantly, and many of their assignments put family members in potential danger wherever they went.

My ploy worked. She broke up with that Army guy and about 52 years ago that started a relationship resulting in a marriage while I was on leave from, you guessed it, the US Army. That marriage was 50 years ago on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, and my lovely bride has been on a honeymoon with me since that time.

She was a senior in high school when we married and I was on leave just completing my AIT (Advanced Individual Training) assignment at Ft. Bliss (El Paso), TX. We were married and six days later, I PCS'd to the Federal Republic of Germany. We spent the first 20 years of our marriage making just enough money to "get by" and moving around quite a bit. But you know, that actually made for a really good family life because we learned to count on each other rather than having to rely on our extended family for help. It also allowed us to make some life-long friends we are still connected with today. Matter of fact, one such friend hired me in 2005 to come out here to Colorado Springs.




It's been a crazy and fun 50 plus years, not just learning how to be a decent husband and father, but to also be a good in-law. Some of you have met a few of Jackie's family. They are certainly different. Not at all normal like my family (i.e. Bubba).

I dunno. Maybe marrying an active-duty career Army guy was not such a bad idea after all. 😊

Happy Golden Wedding Anniversary to my sweetheart! I'm looking forward to the next 50 years.

*Jay Bowen*  
Past Post Commander



| January 2022   |                                   |   |           |  |   |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|-----------|--|---|--|
| Sunday   | Monday                            | Tuesday   | Wednesday | Thursday   | Friday  | Saturday   |
| Price for ALR, Aux. Dinners and Chef's Choice depends on Menu.<br>Steak Night is cancelled in January due to unavailability of help. |                                   |   |           |  |   | <b>1</b> New Year's Day<br><br><b>Happy New Year!</b><br><br> M'n'C Polar Bear<br>Breakfast   |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b><br>Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm  | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>6</b><br>Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm <br>Crew 762 meeting 7pm | <b>7</b> Price TBD<br>Troop 762 Fundraising Dinner - 6:00pm<br><b>RSVP Required!</b>  | <b>8</b> \$9/\$10 b'fast per person<br>Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00<br>  |
| <b>9</b>   | <b>10</b><br>Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm | <b>11</b><br>Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm    | <b>12</b> | <b>13</b><br>Crew 762 meeting 7pm  | <b>14</b> Price TBD<br>ALR Dinner - 6:00pm<br><b>RSVP Required!</b> <br><b>Trivia Night!</b> | <b>15</b><br>Ham Radio License Test Session 1300-1500<br>   |
| <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b> Martin Luther King Jr.  | <b>18</b><br>Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm <br>ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:00pm.  | <b>19</b> | <b>20</b><br>Crew 762 meeting 7pm  | <b>21</b> Price TBD<br>Department Mid-Year Conference   | <b>22</b><br>Healing Warriors 9:00am-1:00pm  |
| <b>23</b><br>Mid-Year Conference   | <b>24</b><br>Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm | <b>25</b><br>ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:30pm                 | <b>26</b> | <b>27</b><br> TALARC EC Meeting 5:00pm<br>Crew 762 meeting 7pm           | <b>28</b> Price TBD<br>Chef's Choice Dinner 6:00pm<br><b>RSVP Required!</b>                | <b>29</b><br>Troop 77 ILST 24-hr. Lock-in 8:00am   |
| <b>30</b>  | <b>31</b><br>Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm | Notes:  |           |  |   |  |

## February 2022 Events of Note:

**Groundhog Day!** – 2 February

**Trivia Night!** – 11 February

**American Legion/Auxiliary Monthly Membership Meeting!** – 12 February

**Valentine's Day!** – 14 February

**President's Day!** – 21 February

For schedule updates and more information, visit our website at [www.legion209.org](http://www.legion209.org)