

The Centennial

VOLUME I EDITION 6

JUNE 2021



AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL POST 209

3613 JEANNINE DR. COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80917
719-599-8624 WWW.LEGION209.ORG

MEET YOUR 2020 - 2021 OFFICERS!! 2020-2021 American Legion Post 209 Officers

Commander: Joseph Schmidt 651.328.9029	Finance Officer: Joel Haas 719.482.4496	Executive Committeeman: Art Kimbrel 719.339.4610
Sr. Vice Commander: Marvin Weaver Jr. 719.244.3535	Chaplain: Glen Thompson 334.717.3746	Judge Advocate: Marvin Weaver Sr. 719.638.4763
Jr. Vice Commander: Sarah Tobin 719.439.7724	Historian: Stewart Anderson	Honor Guard Captain: Michael Wescott 719.306.9170
Adjutant: Jerry Hopper 918.953.9980	Service Officer: Art Carter 603.913.3261	Club Manager: Art Kimbrel 719.339.4610

2020-2021 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 Officers

President: Cathy Barger 719.290.3163	Secretary: Pat Weaver 719.638.4763	Chaplain: Donna Rae Smith 815.973.0073	VP: Donna Testorff
Treasurer: Kellie Hayes 719.494.7167	Historian: Royce Hopper 918.953.9993	Sgt At Arms: Annette Coakley	

2020-2021 Sons of The American Legion Squadron 209 Officers

Commander: Michael Wescott 719.306.9170	Adjutant: Rick Kettering 813.967.6680	Sgt At Arms: Bob Ingram 480.353.8234	Chaplain: Steve Cox 970.580.8191
Sr. Vice Commander: Brian Wess 719.528.6672	Jr. Vice Commander:	Finance Officer: Ken Taylor 719.461.4047	

2021-2022 American Legion Riders Post 209 Officers

President: Stewart Anderson	Treasurer: Kellie Hayes 719.494.7167	VP: Ed Santos 719.329.4357	Road Captain: Tom Foster	Historian: Scott Laudan
Secretary: Mike Sylvester	Sgt At Arms: Drew Pearson	Communications: Monk Baylis	Logistics: Caty Daly	

2020-2021 Amateur Radio Club Officers

President: Jon Davis K0YOV	Vice President: George Johnson KE0ALQ	Director: Jim Harris W0EM
Secretary: Harvey LeCato W1JU	Treasurer: Henry Russell KC0NAJ	

2021 DINNERS AND EVENTS RE-OPENED!

GREAT NEWS!!!!

We are back to normal (whatever that looks like) for all events at the Post. There are no restrictions mandated by the Federal Government nor the State at this time.

If restrictions are re-introduced or changed in any way, we will adjust as appropriate. We recommend you continue to monitor our website and Facebook page for updates.

Masks are no longer required, but please feel free to wear them if it makes you more comfortable.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and continued support.

Post 209 Family Leadership





FROM THE DESK & MIND OF THE COMMANDER

I want to thank everyone for electing me as your Post Commander, it seems appropriate to take a moment to introduce myself and share a little about my life to those members who may not know me. My name is Joseph Schmidt, and I grew up in Saint Paul, Minnesota where I joined the Army in 2008 as an Automated Logistical Specialist (92A). From there I would serve in the MN National Guard before going active duty. After going active duty, I was stationed in South Korea before finding my way here to Colorado where I was stationed at Fort Carson with the 4th ID. While with the 4th ID I deployed to Afghanistan. During my deployment I would sustain an injury that at the time I did not know would start a chain of events leading me to the American Legion and ultimately serving as your Post Commander.

The injury I sustained in Afghanistan would lead me to a medical separation from the Army in late 2016. I found employment as a government logistics contractor on Fort Carson. I wasn't able to continue serving as a soldier, but I could continue to serve the soldiers and my country through government contracting. I now serve as the 4th Infantry Division, Global Combat Support System – Army, Field Service Representative. I troubleshoot all supply system issues for the 4th ID and tenant units, in addition I coach, train, and mentor the soldiers, NCO's and Officers to be better logisticians.

In addition to volunteering with the American Legion, I have also held positions in other organizations. I served on my church council for several years and had the honor to serve my church as their congregational president. At the time, I was 27 years old and the youngest congregational president in the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. I have also served as a Volunteer Coordinator for Family Promise of Colorado Springs. Homelessness strikes so many in our city and it takes hundreds of volunteers to ensure the parents and their children have a safe place to sleep at night and a hot meal. The parents of these children are fighting to provide a better life for their children. The least I could do was help provide a small piece of stability.

If you've made it this far you can see there is some common thread in my life, the need to help and serve others. From my service to my country to service to the community, I believe that if we can change one person's life they can go on and change someone else's life. With over 1,200 members in this Post we have the potential to make real change in the life of our community. The American Legion exists to serve Veterans, their families, and the community.

We together can be the driving force to combat Veteran homelessness, fight child hunger, and something very personal to me, we can fight to end Veteran Suicide. These aren't the only issues plaguing the Veteran community, but together, we can make a difference.

My theme this year is going to be Team 209, because nothing can be accomplished alone. We are bonded as not only Legionnaires, but as Veterans and a Legion Family. Regardless of when we served, we share a bond that spans across the creation of our great nation. We are TEAM 209.

Over this next year, with the help from the executive committee and you, I hope to expand on some of the many programs the American Legion has to offer. Although the COVID-19 restrictions have made things difficult, I know in my heart that we can provide stability and peace to Veterans; we can teach our youth what it means to be an American, we can be the driving force of change in our community, and lastly, we can be the place a Veteran can turn to when they have nowhere else to go.

Will you help me in my mission to help others?

Joseph Schmidt
Post Commander



FROM THE DESK OF THE POST ADJUTANT

Per The American Legion Constitution, Neal Thomas Jr Centennial Post 209; "A member whose dues for the current year have not been paid by January 1, shall be classified as delinquent. If they are paid on or before February 1, they will be automatically reinstated. If still delinquent after February 1, they shall be suspended from all privileges of membership. If still under suspension on June 30 of each year, membership in The American Legion shall be forfeited."

I dangle this in front of you, not as a threat but as incentive. If "2021" does not appear at the top center of your member ID, you are who I am referring to. Please check your ID. Help me help you to remain a member of the BEST. If you attempted to renew on line at the National website and were unable, you can renew with us on legion209.org or mail a check to AL Post 209 3613 Jeannine Dr Colorado Springs, CO 80917, or better still, just visit the Post and take care of it personally with me. If you want to visit during the week, just call me in advance. Renewal dues are \$45.00.

Jerry Hopper
Post Adjutant



FROM THE DESK OF THE SR. VICE COMMANDER

I would like to start out by saying thank you for re-electing me to serve as the Sr. Vice Commander for another year and look forward to what we will be doing this upcoming year. Look to the Post website and the following newsletters to keep up on the events for the Post.

With the 2020 Membership drive coming to an end soon we are still about 100 members short of our goal for this year. If you have not renewed yet, you still have time to do so. I know that some of you have been trying to renew through National's website. They underwent a software change to the membership database in April and have been having problems with the process. If you have tried to renew on their website and have not been able to do so please send in your renewal to the Post. The address is 3613 Jeannine Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80917 or you could always come to one of the dinners on a Friday and bring your renewal with you to drop off. Just remember to RSVP if you are going to stay for the dinner.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Sr. Vice Commander



FROM THE DESK OF OUR FINANCE OFFICER

I want to first thank everyone for showing their confidence in me and my abilities by electing me to be the Finance Officer for the next year. To paraphrase what Tom Bock said during the Installation of Officers, "it is a huge responsibility and requires the trust of the Post." I want to make sure I continue to earn and keep the trust of our Post members. While I have been a Legion member of Post 209 for a relatively short time (only a couple of years), I quickly learned the best way to help the Post and the Veterans it supports is to be involved. That is why back in March I actually volunteered to fill the vacant position. In the Army they always said you should "never volunteer," which for many things was probably sound advice. When I realized that I could make a difference using various skills I learned through my experiences in the Army and afterwards, the decision to volunteer was easy because it helps the Post, the membership, and Veterans.

I have continued to diligently work to learn the "ins and outs" of the Post's budget. I have also been identifying, developing, and implementing processes to improve efficiencies so that things run smoother. I believe that I have met my goal of providing a simple way for everyone to easily understand the overall status of Post finances. While it might not be as easy as "money came in, money went out, there's still money in the bank," I feel that from a high-level perspective everyone can understand where we stand financially. If you should have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me any time at: finance@legion209.org

It is good to see more people coming out to the Post for Friday night dinners and the General Membership meetings. Obviously, COVID has not gone away; however, things are rebounding and people are able to do more than the previous year allowed. I hope to see more of you at the door on Friday nights for dinner and at breakfast before the June Membership meeting.

As I stated in previous newsletters, the Post needs your help in identifying new fundraising ideas. Any fundraising idea – big, small, unconventional – is worth consideration. We need to do everything possible to help the Post get back to pre-COVID and keep supporting our Veterans in the community.

Joel Haas
Finance Officer



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

(719) 599-8624

3613 Jeannine Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80917

*Additional cost may apply



FROM THE DESK OF OUR SAL COMMANDER

Here is a list of SAL Squadron 209 Officers that were installed in May; Commander Michael Wescott, Sr. Vice Commander Brian Wess, Adjutant, Rick Kettering, Finance Officer Ken Taylor, Chaplain Brad Henderson, Historian Even Schwartzbart, Sgt-At-Arms Bob Ingram and Squadron Advisor Mike Barger. I thank all of you for stepping up in these leadership roles. Commander Wescott, Ken Taylor, Post 209 Commander Joe Schmidt and Past Department Commander Jay Bowen went to Evans Army Community Hospital at Ft. Carson on May 12th, to give out the remaining Josh Dog Kits to all the kids that are in the Hospital. It was an honor to be able to give these Kits to the kids.

Michael Wescott
SAL Commander





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, 11 June for our second Trivia Night event. Come on out and unseat last month's team of Joe Schmidt and Marvin Weaver, JR.

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.

Jay Bowen will serve as Emcee for the event; he claims it would not be fair for him to play because he is the self-proclaimed **Trivia Champion of the World!**

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 THE UNIT PRESIDENT



It has been a great run for me, and I would like to thank you all for your support during my time as ALA Unit 209 President.

We will be hosting Bunco on June 6, from 2p.m. to 4p.m., \$15 buy in. RSVP to Jackie Bowen.

Auxiliary will be hosting the dinner for June, we will have a BBQ Ribs and Chicken, Corn on the Cob and Texas Toast, price \$10.00, \$1 extra for to-go orders. Please come down and support the Auxiliary, and make sure to RSVP to Jackie Bowen (901-481-0673) or via email at jackiebowen2005@yahoo.com. Movie to follow dinner - outside weather permitting - bring your most comfortable folding chair.

Our next meeting, is June 12th at 10am. Plan on coming down and enjoy a warm breakfast before the meeting starts. Breakfast begins at 9am. Remember to look at the calendar for the various dinners that the Post hosts. It is a great time with great food and great friends!

Don't forget the Healing Warriors are at the Post every fourth Saturday of each month, from 9am to 1pm; last client is seen at 12:30pm. They treat Veterans, their spouses and children at no cost, donations are welcome.

Make sure to read the newsletter and our website: Legion209.org for information on the Post.

Happy Birthday to the following: Dominique Attarian, Nancy Dandino, Sharon Groothof, Becky Hall, Becky Ingram, Carol Jean, Colleen Knapp, Jaye Larsen, Evelyn Muckelrath, Donna Testorff, and Katie Rose.

Serving Our Veterans Proudly!

Cathy Barger
Unit President



FROM OUR POST HONOR GUARD

The Post Honor Guard has been doing a lot of Final Honors in the month of May. We will be at PPNC for a Memorial Day Ceremony for Rifle Honors. The Post Honor Guard has more Final Honors scheduled for June and July at PPNC. Our Honor Guard Team has made a Great name for doing Final Honors and being there when called upon and for The American Legion Post 209 as a hole. We are still looking for more Honor Guard Team Members. If you are able to help, it would be nice. The Honor Guard needs the help, so please, if you are interested in participating with a great group of Veterans contact me. My contact info is on the website.

Michael Wescott
Honor Guard Captain



FROM OUR AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS

Are you ready for Summer? ALR209 has been really busy the last month with Veteran ride events every weekend. Runs since the last newsletter included the VFW Fallen Warriors Run, A 'Bug Run' to La Junta, a fun run to Limon, the Spring Vets4Vets event, Veterans MC Run for the Pig, the Spring Dart Run, and the annual Defenders of Freedom Run. We have Riders all across the state and New Mexico the weekend of 22 May supporting multiple events in District 4, the Remember our Fallen Run going through Colorado on the way from California to Washington DC, and a Combat Vets event. All these fundraising efforts supported several Veteran causes. June will continue to be busy with ALR2008, ALR 38, and ALR 5 events to support. We will also be running our annual high country run as a remembrance ride for Dan Jean on June 19. Not all our service has been on two wheels. This month we've also been able to support a family in need with funds to keep their utilities going and support an active duty soldier in replacing essential items that were lost in a house fire. This is shaping up to be a really great year – Ride safe!

Ed Santos
ALR President



ASSIST A VET!!!

ACTIVE DUTY & LOCAL VETS THAT ARE HOMEBOUND OR DISABLED

The "Post 209 Membership Team and the Post Officers" wishes to THANK "EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF POST 209's AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY" (American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, and Legion Riders) that have allowed the Post to assist our deserving members in continuing their membership with the "WORLD'S GREATEST AND LARGEST VETERAN'S ORGANIZATION."

THE "2022 Membership Year" IS THE 6TH ANNIVERSARY year we have ask for your financial help and many of you have been most generous with your assistance.

With your continued support we will be able to keep this program alive. (Each year you have donated generously and we THANK YOU).

The annual portion of the Post's "American Legion dues" that must be forwarded to the state headquarters for the "State" and "National" American Legion dues is \$36.00 per member.

WITH YOUR HELP WE CAN CONTINUE TO SEE TO IT THAT OUR SERVICE PERSONNEL ON ACTIVE DUTY, AS WELL AS OUR POST MEMBERS IN NURSING HOMES OR ARE HOMEBOUND, AND ARE ON A REDUCED INCOME, CONTINUE TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE A MEMBER OF "THE AMERICAN LEGION."

If you would like to assist for the 2022 Membership Year, just mail your check, payable to "Post 209", in whatever amount you would care to give (be it only \$1.00 or \$5.00 or any other amount, it all adds up to a \$36 per-capita amount), put "ASSIST-A-VET" on the memo line. You can also make the donation on our website at www.legion209.org

MAIL YOUR ASSISTANCE TO "AMERICAN LEGION POST 209, ATTENTION: MEMBERSHIP, 3613 JEANNINE DRIVE, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80917.

Your donation is tax deductible up the amount allowed by law.

OUR ACTIVE DUTY AND ASSISTED MEMBERS THANK YOU IN ADVANCE, FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATION! - POST 209, MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

FROM OUR POST CHAPLAIN

Greetings from the Chaplain's desk! I'm Brad Henderson, the incoming Chaplain of American Legion Post 209, and Squadron 209, Sons of The American Legion. My wife Pam and I are new in town, having arrived in April.

I am a six-year "dual PUFL" member, having served in a variety of positions, most recently as a member of the Executive Board, Post 179 (New Braunfels, TX) and as Commander, Squadron 179, Sons of The American Legion. I am a CW3, US Army (Retired) and Vietnam Veteran.

I have a M.Ed. (Elementary Education) from Southwest Texas State University. I also have coursework in "The University of Hard Knocks".

My sister married a Texas Aggie (Texas A&M University). Their son continued in his steps.

I remember her letter of celebration, noting that their son had tried on his dad's "Senior Boots." They fit perfectly, saving the family hundreds of dollars. My dad wore a size 9 shoe, whereas my "gunboats" are a "perfect 10." I replied with congratulations. I also wrote that no matter what I did or how hard I tried, I would never be able to fill Dad's shoes.

Today, I have another pair of shoes to fill – those of a dedicated man who has devoted most of his entire life to the service of the Commander of us all. I am neither pastor, nor Biblical scholar. Many of us, including me, read our Bibles for growth and learning. My feet are small.

I have always enjoyed serving others, whether as a Cub Scout, Boy Scout, or Representative DeMolay. When I was in high school, I decided I wanted to become a minister. The Good Lord, whose plans are perfect, had other ideas.

I joined the Army and became a specialist in Human Resources; first as a clerk, then as a Personnel Sergeant, retiring as a Senior Warrant Officer. We took care of soldiers and their families wherever they were - in peace and in war. I managed systems, and I led soldiers.

Christian leadership is serving others by leading; and leading others by serving. Being a servant leader requires attitude first, followed by action. Having discernment keeps us focused on our mission – to serve the Creator of the universe! "But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant." (Matthew 20:26)

When I retired, my Colonel asked, "What are you going to do next?"

"I'm going to teach children." I taught for 15 years, retiring from a Christian school and "The World's Greatest Fifth Grade Class." We strove to develop responsible, productive, patriotic citizens, with a Christian worldview. It was a ministry of its own.

As your Chaplain I look forward to serving you, and to serving with you.

Like the famous comedienne "Minnie Pearl" would say, we're "So PROUD to be here!"

Brad Henderson
Chaplain



FROM OUR LOUNGE MANAGER

The Post museum got a much-needed update in early May. Please come and see it! We love to share our Post history and some of the artifacts of the past we have collected over the years.

Inside the museum is the Post 209 Memorial Wall. While it's never easy to lose a loved one, this is a special way to hold on to their memory. This is open to all members of The American Legion family for free.

If you would like to add your family member, friend or comrade to the Wall, please email your favorite picture to Charyse at cnbe89@gmail.com along with their name, birthdate and date they passed. The picture will be printed with the information and printed as a 5x7 and hung on the Memorial Wall. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions!

Charyse Schmidt
Lounge Manager



THE AMERICAN LEGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (TALARC)

Devoted to the Hobby and Art of Amateur Radio and Promoting the Legion

Upcoming Events

Field Day – THE Amateur Radio Event of the Year

Every June, more than 40,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations operating on emergency power to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to our communities.

The Legion Radio Club will operate on June 26th at Mary Kyer Park – Voyager and Middle Creek. Call in on 146.52. Come out and join us.

Fox Hunt – July 17th – Come out and find the *fox*. Details forthcoming.

Progressive Radio Rally – August 28th Details forthcoming.

Questions /Comments?

73 (Best regards) – Harvey W 1 J U 331-1212 mbca@comcast.net





Happy Father's Day!

**To all you Dads, Granddads,
Great Granddads, and Great-
Great Granddads!**

NEAL THOMAS, JR.-CENTENNIAL POST 209 GOLF TOURNAMENT



Where? King's Deer Golf Club, Monument, CO

When? Sunday, 22 August, 2021

Time? Player Check-in 7:00 am

Shotgun Start 8:00 am

Scramble Tournament (Rules Announced Prior to Start
of Play)

Cost? \$100/Person

Entry Fee includes: Green Fees, Range Balls, Golf Cart,
and Awards' Luncheon.

Donations and Sponsorships Appreciated and
Encouraged.

Event Coordinator, Joseph Schmidt – 651 328-9029

Email: josephschmidt@ymail.com



GAME NIGHT

START AT

♠ 6 PM ♠

★ EVERY SECOND WEDNESDAY ★

AMERICAN LEGION POST 209

GAME NIGHT IS A MONTHLY FUNDRAISER FOR AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL POST 209. POST MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS ONLY. GAME(S) TO BE PLAYED TBD.



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 \$75 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 \$125 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 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



I gotta believe in many cases the problems we are having with kids and guns is because they weren't raised to understand the rules of "gun control." And gun control, which includes gun safety, must start at home with the parents. I firmly believe if we did that, gun violence would be greatly reduced.

I, along with my siblings grew up around guns. My Mother and Father kept loaded handguns, rifles and shotguns in the house. Both grandparents (paternal and maternal) kept loaded handguns, rifles and shotguns in the house at all times. We knew they were there. We knew they were loaded, and most of all we knew to keep our hands off them unless we were going hunting or needed protection.

We were taught at a very young age about gun control. We learned how to use them, when to use them, and how to handle them in a safe manner. Our parents didn't stress out about leaving loaded guns around the house because they knew we weren't going to do something stupid with the guns (we did plenty of other stupid things however). We got it! Guns can hurt people! Guns can kill people! And guns can keep us safe from those who would want to harm or kill us!

When we got mad at someone at school or in the neighborhood, settling a dispute with a gun wasn't even considered. And that wasn't just for us, it was the same for everyone we knew. Heck, it was not uncommon for a high schooler to drive his/her pickup to school with a shotgun or rifle in the gun rack against the back window. And most of the time, they didn't even lock their truck while in school.

Some people will argue that much of the reason we have folks shooting other folks indiscriminately is because they have been exposed to violence on TV and with video games. Hmm. When I was growing up, Westerns were very popular as was cop shows. Matt Dillon (Gunsmoke) killed someone almost every episode. So did Hugh O'Brien (Wyatt Earp), Steve McQueen (Wanted, Dead or Alive), and someone was always getting killed on Perry Mason and Columbo.

When we would go outside to play (yes, we really spent many hours outdoors playing), we would often pretend to be one of our TV heroes. We'd get into gun fights with our "Fanner 50" cap pistols. By the way, I won more face-to-face quick draw gunfights than I lost. We would throw our pine cone hand grenades at our make-believe military enemies.

So why didn't we get de-sensitized to killing? Because we knew what we saw on TV wasn't real life. Our parents taught us how to separate real from fake. We didn't take "real" guns outside to play. If I had a "real" gun in my hands, it was because I was in the woods hunting squirrels, rabbits, or deer. Growing up, it never even occurred to me that I should point a gun, loaded or unloaded at another person.

What changed? It wasn't the guns. We had semi-automatic rifles even in the Stone Age when I was a kid. And if you really tried, you could even find a Thompson Submachine Gun or "Tommy Gun!" But unless you were Al Capone or a member of the Mafia, you didn't hear about mass murderers using guns. We did have mass murders, but it was typically "Kool Aid" or knives as weapons of choice. So why didn't we move to ban Kool Aid or Butcher knives? Maybe it was because we understood the weapon wasn't the problem. It was the idiot wielding the weapons.

Sadly, if I were to put on my Cowboy Hat and Boots, grab my Daisy BB Gun or "Fanner 50" and walk around my neighborhood, I'd be arrested. And probably not just for brandishing a weapon; the charges would also include just looking dumb!

Jay Bowen

Past Post Commander



June 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm 	3	4 Price Varies w/Menu Hamdogger 6:00pm 	5 VFW Meets at 8:00am
6 Auxiliary Bunco Fundraiser - 2:00pm	7 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm	8	9 Game Night! 6:00pm	10	11 \$10.00 Meal Aux. Dinner - 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	12 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
13	14 Flag Day/Army B'day! Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	15 ALR Exec. Board 6:00pm 	16 Marksmanship 3:00pm 	17 Young Guns 3:00pm 	18 \$15.00 Meal Steak Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	19
20 Start of Summer Father's Day	21 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm	22 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng 6:30pm. Social 5:30pm SAL 5:45pm  	23 Marksmanship 3:00pm 	24  TALARC EC Mtg. 5:00p Young Guns 3:00pm	25 Department Convention! Elegante Hotel	
27 Department Convention TALARC ARRL	28 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	29	30 Marksmanship 3:00pm 	Notes: Chef's Choice is cancelled 25 June. All the help will be at Convention.		

July Events of Note:

Independence Day! – 4 July

Independence Day Picnic at the Post – 4 July

Trillion Trees Dinner – 9 July

Game Night – 14 July

Pony Express 2 – 17 July

Trivia Night! – 23 July

ALR Poker Run – 24 July