

The Centennial

VOLUME I EDITION 9

SEPTEMBER 2020



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: Bill Coakley 972.825.7193	Executive Committeeman: Vacant
Sr. Vice Commander: Marvin Weaver Jr. 719.244.3535	Chaplain: Glen Thompson	Judge Advocate: Marvin Weaver Sr. 719.638.4763
Jr. Vice Commander: Sarah Tobin 719.439.7724	Historian: Vacant	Service Officer: Art Carter 603.913.3261
Adjutant: Jerry Hopper 918.953.9980	Sgt At Arms: Joel Haas 719.482.4496	Honor Guard Captain: Michael Wescott 719.306.9170
		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: Madelyne "Hooty" Newborn
Vice President: Donna Testorff	Treasurer: Kellie Hayes 719.494.7167	Historian: Royce Hopper
		Sgt At Arms: Kris Floyd 719.308.2150

2020-2021 Sons of The American Legion Squadron 209 Officers

Commander: Eric Testorff 719.510.4177	Adjutant: Rick Kettering 813.967.6680	Sgt At Arms: Bob Ingram 480.353.8234	Chaplain: Steve Cox 970.580.8191
Sr. Vice Commander: Michael Wescott	Jr. Vice Commander: Brian Wess 719.528.6672	Finance Officer: Ken Taylor 719.461.4047	

2020-2021 American Legion Riders Post 209 Officers

President: Steve Hayes 719.494.7166	Treasurer: Kellie Hayes 719.494.7167	Vice President: Tim McDowell 719.510.9907	Road Captain: Wade Newborn 719.360.4956
Secretary: Mike Sylvester	Sgt At Arms: Mark Griffin		

2020-2021 Amateur Radio Club Officers

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



Neal Thomas Jr.-Centennial Post 209 Family,

Great news! Our Post re-opening for meetings in July was a success. We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and restrictions published by our state leadership, and adjust as necessary. As you know, we re-opened for dinners in June and that is going just fine. Thanks to everyone for your understanding on the temporary rules we feel is necessary to enforce for gatherings. They are:

Required:

1. We are limited to 50 people at a time.
2. Families must sit together at one table.
3. Other than families seating is limited to 4 people to a table.
4. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL DINNERS. RSVP to Jackie Bowen at jackiebowen2005@yahoo.com or 719-574-1223. For now, we cannot accept reservations at the door.
5. Drive thru dinners will be offered upon request. When you RSVP, indicate it is a takeout order and what time you will be coming to pick up your order.
6. MASKS will be required to enter the Post.
7. Your temperature will be taken at the door, if you register above 100.4, you will be asked to leave.
8. These questions will be asked at the door:
 - a. Have you been exposed in the last 14 days to someone that has tested positive for COVID-19?
 - b. Do you have any symptoms of COVID-19?
 - c. Have you traveled to one of the pandemic hotspots in the last 14 days?

Please know these temporary changes are to keep everyone safe. We are looking forward to seeing everyone and hope everyone is well.

Because we could not hold elections in April, for the most part our current officers remain at their position until such time we can meet and hold elections during a Post meeting. There have been some adjustments made and you can see that list on the previous page.

Thank you for your understanding during these trying times. As with every crisis in the history of the world, this too shall pass.

For God and Country,
Our Post 209 Leadership



FROM THE DESK & MIND OF THE COMMANDER

The National Training Center at Fort Irwin, CA is one of the many places our military trains for war. Last month I spent two weeks training, mentoring, and assisting the Soldiers, NCOs, Warrant Officers, and Officers of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team (1SBCT), 4th Infantry Division. During the two weeks I was there I was responsible for providing logistical support to the Brigade, as many of us know our war fighting function is quite different than our garrison one and at times requires additional support and tactics. General Eisenhower once said, "You will not find it difficult to prove that battles, campaigns, and even wars have been won or lost because of logistics." Watching the 1SBCT go through their various tasks and battle drills was reminiscent to my time not only at the National Training Center but also deployed overseas.

In my career I have encountered many challenges from ordering issues, lack of funding, and receipt of the incorrect item, all of which have a direct effect on my unit's life. Regardless if their truck is down or food deliveries are late, these issues have a direct impact on readiness. This is why training exercises at the NTC are so important, to not only exercise our warfighting, but prepare our sustainers for the unforeseen logistical challenges that come with war.

The military is good at training us for the unforeseen challenges of war but what about the unforeseen challenges of civilian life? The logistical issues of day to day life outside the military are something for which many of us don't prepare. When I separated, I could tell you how to find a M1A1 Abrams Tank engine anywhere in the world, but I couldn't tell you how private medical insurance worked or much less how to obtain it. There are others out there when they separated have never bought or sold a house or car, had never budgeted for daily expenses, and those who never even paid rent. My time at Fort Irwin taught me many things but what stood out is our separating service members need us more than ever.

In a time of turbulent unemployment, higher education institutions not reopening, and the homeless veteran rate on the rise, our separating service members need the programs and services of The American Legion because the same logistical issues like food or a broken down vehicle in combat can be just as detrimental back home. These service members rely on us to help teach them tasks they may not have learned while in service. Their success might depend on us and our willingness to put forth the effort to ensure they don't fail when they separate.

I have said this many times, I need you and your talents to further the programs and services of The American Legion. Only together can we ensure the success of not only our separating service members, but also those who may have separated a long time ago.

Lastly, I am always available to talk to if you need anything so please do not hesitate to reach out. I would be happy listen.

Joseph Schmidt
Post Commander



FROM THE DESK OF THE POST ADJUTANT

It has been one year since I assumed the Post Adjutant position. In that year, there have been many things I have learned and done. I will not expound on that statement because not everything has been fun. Like parenthood, we must do things which are in the best interest of our family and I do think of the Post membership as family.

October is rapidly approaching, which means, time is running out for our Early Bird Dinner. If you join or renew your Legion, Auxiliary, or SAL membership by Oct. 12th, not only is your membership good through Dec 31, 2021, but your dinner is free on Oct. 16th. Your guest(s) will pay \$10.00 for the meal.

It's What We Do!!

Jerry Hopper
Post Adjutant



FROM THE DESK OF THE UNIT PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe it's September already. It seems like each year goes by faster and faster, especially this year. Soon the summer days will be gone, and the snow will be flying again.

I'd like to thank our Legion Riders for offering to let us do a breakfast fundraiser for the ALR Annual Poker Run on July 25th. Thanks to everyone that helped cook and serve breakfast and for helping set up and tear down.

Our monthly membership meeting is September 12th, so come down and join us for breakfast at 9 am, and our meeting at 10:00. Just a reminder, our 2021 Membership Drive season has begun.

Due to COVID-19 Governmental Restrictions, the 22nd Annual Stand Down for Homeless Veterans has been moved to outside the First Baptist Church downtown Colorado Springs at 10 am, September 15th.

Don't forget the Healing Warriors are at the Post on the 4th Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm; they see the last client at 12:30 pm. They are here at the Post every month. Make sure to read the newsletter and visit our website: Legion209.org to get updates on the Post activities.

Happy Birthday to Cleo Allgood, Celeste Archuleta, Lisa (Marie) Brandt, Barbara Fisher, Julie Gomez, Vanessa Leiker, Amy Mitchell, Linda Mussmann, Summer Palaroan, Susan Parsons, Joyce Taylor, and Veronica Zeitvogel. Make sure to wish these ladies Happy Birthday when you see them. For more details on what is going on, please look at the calendar.

Serving Our Veterans Proudly!

Cathy Barger
Unit President



FROM THE SEAT OF THE LEGION RIDERS' PRESIDENT

August events were a little slower pace than the high speed ALR209 hosted events in July. We had folks support Combat Vets for the Mission to Zero suicide awareness run, a fun run with ALR28 to Salida, opportunity rides, the Combat Vets High Altitude Poker Run and the POW-MIA ride from Woodland Park to Cripple Creek. Area ALRs were responsible for parking in Woodland Park for the POW-MIA run and we had riders support the ALR38 Color Guard as well as the Kansas ALR lead flag contingent. Great month overall. We've welcomed several new members to both Post and ALR and it's great to see the program growing. In September, we are looking forward to the ALR2008 Stock the Pantry Run 7 September, the third annual Colorado ALR ROMP in Buena Vista 11, 12 Sept. and the annual Vets4Vets party on 26 Sept. ALR209 will be hosting our annual Neal Thomas Jr. Memorial ride on Sunday 27 Sept. This is a Post family-wide event and "Cages" (four-wheel vehicles) are welcome and encouraged! All proceeds from the Neal Thomas Jr. Memorial Ride go to the Post Veterans Assistance Fund. Ride and Drive Safe!!!

Steve Hayes
Riders' President



FROM THE DESK OF THE SAL COMMANDER

The rain did not dampen our spirits, as the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 209 came out in force on July 25th to provide lunch for the ALR 209 Poker Run. The money raised went toward our 2020-2021 Child Welfare Foundation donation goal.

Because of COVID-19 distancing rules, the event was held outdoors, with tents & tables, and Michael Wescott & Ken Taylor at the grill, assisted by Commander Testorff as designated umbrella holder.

The fundraising for CWF did not stop there, however, as Squadron 209 cooked the following Friday Dinner at Post 209, as well.

A big THANK YOU to Brian, Bob, "Squadron Mom" Donna, and all who participated in these two events. We are now well on our way to making a substantial contribution to CWF in the spring. Let's keep up the great work!

Eric Testorff
SAL Squadron Commander



FROM THE DESK OF THE JR. VICE COMMANDER

At July's meeting I talked briefly about the Gulf War Syndrome and the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry. I became familiar with both of these after over a decade of going to specialists to figure out what was going on with my health, only to be told that all my blood work

and tests would come back negative and that I was “perfectly healthy”. Despite their diagnosis, I was in a tremendous amount of pain and had a long list of random symptoms that could not be attributed to any particular problem. At one point, I was diagnosed and treated for a year for Lupus, an auto-immune disease. I was “happy” to finally have a name for my issues and was looking forward to some relief. Relief did not come and as the VA personnel changed over, again, they re-ran my blood work and once again determined that I was healthy with no auto-immune markers. It is hard to explain the extent of my disappointment in this good news.

I discovered these two registries after extensive online research to find other vets that might have the same issues. I immediately signed up for both registries and unfortunately, two years later I am still trying to get tests completed. At least I don't feel alone now and the VA personnel working these programs are coming from a position of support rather than discounting my extensive list of complaints. I can now link the start of my issues to the experimental version of the Anthrax vaccine that existed prior to 2004. I had such an extreme reaction to the first three of six shots that the Air Force ultimately put in my permanent record that I am allergic to the Anthrax Vaccine so that I would not have to take the remaining three. I am convinced this trauma, combined with another three years in the Arabian Gulf region, is the root cause of my health issues.

The good news is that this is officially recognized by the VA and Congress and research is ongoing. **It is really important that all vets that served in the US Central Command region after August 1990 and have unexplained health concerns get registered in both the Gulf War Syndrome and AHOBPR.** Initial research shows that two out of five vets have the bio markers for exposure. This can lead to respiratory and skin issues as well as increased rates of auto-immune diseases, cancer, and birth defects.

The VA has developed an exposures website that is broken down by each wartime period: <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp> I recommend you click on the publications section and review the quarterly articles that address current status and studies.

Here is the website for AHOBPR: <https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry>

I have posted additional information on legion209.org/resources/healthcare. Here you can find the step by step guide for AHOBPR and the VA form 1009A for GWS registry.

Both of these can also be obtained from our Environmental Coordinator in Golden, CO.

Harry Moore, (720) 723-5070, Harry.Moore@va.gov

Sarah Tobin

Jr. Vice Commander



FROM THE PODIUM OF THE CHAPLAIN

During this time of fear and chaos in the world it is good to know that God has made some promises to His children that are just as certain today as they were during biblical times. For the children of God these times are not to be feared but to be embraced. It is during times of economic downturn, pandemics, division and great uncertainty the words recorded in Isaiah 41 verse 10 we have hope. In that verse God says “Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God.” The first part of the verse tells us to not be afraid for He is with us. When you meditate on that part of the verse alone you see where we are not alone in these trials. God is

with us, leading guiding and protecting. “When it seems tough, I’m with you. When you become discourage, I’m with you. Why? Because I’m your God and you are my child.” Then He makes three more promises. He says “I will strengthen you, Yes I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Notice God didn’t say he might do those things, He said I will. In other words I guarantee you I will do these things. God is faithful to His word. My question to you is do you trust the heart of God when you don’t see his hand? My answer is YES! When I don’t understand everything He’s doing, and when it feels like He’s not doing anything, I know it’s still part of His plan for all us. Take time to read Isaiah 41 verses 10-20. It will bless you and encourage.

Glen Thompson
 Post Chaplain



The Redshirts are Coming!

Now is your chance to help our Post and get something in return! We will be taking orders and selling Red T-Shirts as a fundraiser! If you don’t already own a red shirt to wear on “Red Shirt Friday” (or any other day), this is your chance to get one of our Post 209 family customized T-Shirts and show your support to our Post and our deployed troops. And even if you own a red shirt, order one anyway. We are selling these “Remember Everyone Deployed” short-sleeve t-shirts for \$15.00 each. All proceeds from the sale will be used to complete our backyard fencing, concrete, picnic table project.

Here’s what they will look like:

OPT 1.
 THE AMERICAN LEGION
 NEAL THOMAS JR.
 CENTENNIAL POST 209
FAMILY
 LEFT CHEST

OPT 2.
 THE AMERICAN LEGION
 NEAL THOMAS JR.
 CENTENNIAL POST 209
FAMILY

**REMEMBER
 EVERYONE
 DEPLOYED**
 BACK

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 SPORTS**
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 www.shopallamericansports.com

CLIENT: ALR Post 209
 PROJECT: Family Shirts
 TEAM SALES: Jamie Wise
 DATE: 08/19/20

COLOR(S): 1 Color Front/Back White
 DESIGN SIZE(S): Left Chest : 4" x 1.75" Full Back 12" x 10"
 GARMENT(S): Red
 GARMENT MODEL# Short Sleeve Tee Shirt

Order your t-shirts today! Contact Kellie Hayes at hayeskelliej@yahoo.com or by calling her at 719.494.7167!!!!



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.

FROM OUR POST SERVICE OFFICER

LEGION FAMILY: IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION FOR LEGIONCARE 45043

NO-COST-TO-YOU BENEFIT

Endorsed by Your The Legion Care program will pay you \$1 ,000 for a covered accident or, if the accidental loss occurs American Department Legion when on official Legion Family Business, Legion Care will cover you for \$5,000 of AD&D coverage.

THERE IS NO COST TO YOU

' Coverage has been arranged on your behalf by Your American Legion Department.

GUARANTEED ACCEPTANCE

- Regardless of your age, health or occupation, your acceptance is guaranteed.
- Your coverage will become effective the date your Enrollment is received by the Administrator.

YOUR COVERAGE IS IMPORTANT

We want you to know too, Legion Care is now available to all members of the Legion Family including the American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of the American

Legion members 18 years and older. The Legionnaire Insurance Trust has been working hard with Securian* to provide valuable benefits to your entire family and we look forward to continuing to serve veterans' insurance needs.

THIS PLAN IS APPROVED AND ENDORSED

- This No Cost to you plan has received complete approval and endorsement from your department.
- Your Department has arranged this coverage at No Cost to you because of the need for this type of protection and the recognition that many Members may not have enough protection.

EXCLUSIONS: In addition to any benefit-specific exclusions, benefits will not be paid for any Injury or Loss which, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, is caused by or results from any of the following. intentionally self-inflicted injury, suicide or any attempt thereat while sane or insane (while sane in Colorado and Missouri); declared or undeclared war or act of war; military or combat activities while serving in the armed forces, National Guard, or organized reserve corps in any state, country, or international authority; sickness, disease, bodily or mental infirmity or medical or surgical treatment thereof, or bacterial or viral infection, regardless of how contracted. This does not include bacterial infection that is the natural and foreseeable result of an accidental external bodily injury or accidental food poisoning; flight in, boarding or alighting from an Aircraft or any craft designed to fly above the Earth's surface: (a) except as a fare paying passenger on a regularly scheduled commercial airline; (b) being flown by the Covered Person or in which the Covered Person is a member of the crew; (c) being used for: (i) crop dusting, spraying or seeding, giving and receiving flying instruction, fire-fighting, sky writing, sky diving or hang-gliding, pipeline or power line inspection, aerial photography or exploration, racing, endurance tests, stunt or acrobatic flying; or (ii) any operation that requires a special permit from the FAA, even if it is granted (this does not apply if the permit is required only because of the territory flown over or landed on); (d) designed for flight above or beyond the earth's atmosphere; (e) an ultra-light or glider; (f) being used for the purpose of parachuting or skydiving; (g) being used by any military authority, except an Aircraft used by the Air Mobility Command or its foreign equivalent; the Covered Person's intoxication as determined according to the laws of the jurisdiction in which the accident occurred; voluntary ingestion of any narcotic, drug, poison, gas or fumes; driving while intoxicated or driving under the influence of a controlled substance; riding or driving as a professional in any kind of race for prize money or profit.

ACTIVATE ONLINE AT: www.TheLIT.com/LegionCare2

*Underwritten by: Securian Life Insurance Company.

Coverage provided under Group policy form series 1 7-50925 and individual policy form 1 7-51040 and any state variation thereof. Terms and Exclusions may vary by state. Coverage is paid for through the Legionnaire Insurance Trust.

For more information please call 1-800-235-6943

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AG Carter
Post Service Officer



FROM THE DESK OF THE SR. VICE COMMANDER

As many of you know, the 2021 Membership Drive season has begun. This year the Department membership quota for Post 209 is 1185 members. This number is higher than we have had in past years but I know that we can reach this quota. The 50% target date is in mid-September. Let's make this another successful year for our new Post Commander and our Department Commander. If you have any questions or ideas that will help the membership drive, please feel free to contact me. Reach out to your friends and neighbors if they are Veterans. Let them know the reason you joined; for most people the reasons are the same.

I am looking for members that would like to help by being on the Post Membership Committee. If you are interested, get with me and I will bring you on board. I already have one member that has volunteered and we can always use more. I will be planning a Committee meeting in September and will get the date and time of the meeting sent out once it is finalized.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Sr. Vice Commander



FROM THE DESK OF THE FINANCE OFFICER



Post 209, finances are moving in the right direction. We have a little more money than we had last month. Recommendations of the Audit committee have been incorporated or corrected. This system should make audits and tracking both in and out of our accounts easier to track and verify. Our biggest downfall would be if we were to have a catastrophic failure of building or equipment. We need to create a budget where we put money aside for emergency repairs or replacement of high dollar items. We currently are surviving off the great work everyone has done in the past. Things

can and will change. We need to be prepared, not blindsided. To do this we will have to do some fundraising to build up emergency expenditures. We should be looking at our equipment and determine if preventive maintenance is required and being conducted. In my experience equipment breaks at the most inopportune moments. We also need to get money or grants to upgrade the facilities. We could really use the assistance of a grant writer. There is money available. Please let us know if you know of someone willing to help write grants and/or fundraise. Our goals should include not only taking care of what we have but to also improve on what we have done in the past. We have some serious events that are coming up soon. We need to start planning and raising funds. For example:

1. Veterans Day, to me this especially important for us as we are a Veterans Organization.
2. Oratorical contest. This year more than ever we need to educate our children on the Constitution.

William Coakley
Post Finance Officer





FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (TALARC)

A small cadre of Legion members continues to enjoy the magic of Amateur Radio. Talking to other “hams” around the world is always a thrill. We hosted a “testing session” at the Legion on August 22nd and were able to bring one new Ham into the hobby when he passed his General Class exam. If you would like to explore this exciting and multi-faceted hobby just let me know.

With the hoped-for wane of COVID-19 restrictions, we are planning more operating events for the fall. Stay tuned.

Contact: Club Secretary, Harvey LeCato 331-1212 mbca@comcast.net.

BRINGING A LITTLE SOUTH TO THE WEST



If you're a frequent reader, you already know I grew in a Memphis, TN suburb and went to the same school 12, almost 13 years (thank God there was Summer School or I'd probably still be in the 10th grade). I think it is appropriate for this time of year to delve a little deeper into the school where I spent many long hours studying (ha), and in Detention (not ha).

The Oakhaven suburb where I called home until I left for the Army was a typical 60's suburb. We were not in the upper-class part of town, it was probably considered middle class. Our home was a 3-bedroom, 1 bath home. Now imagine today trying to raise a family of 4 kids, 2 girls and 2 boys in a one bath home. I don't know how Mom and Dad did it, but they did. They bought the house in 1953 and Dad used to comment he paid more for his used car in 1990 than he did his first home.

It was a great neighborhood and all the kids went to Oakhaven. This was in the days before segregation and bussing. So we knew and grew up with the neighbors. The school went from Kindergarten up to the 12th grade. The elementary part of the school was in a separate building but on the same grounds as the Jr. and High School building. The school buildings were separated by a field, the Gym, the Shop, and ROTC buildings.

There was no air conditioning in the school and as you can imagine, the late summer and late spring during the school year could make it a little uncomfortable. Fortunately for us Bowen kids, our Dad worked for the Hunter Fan Company. He gave each of us kids a “Box Fan” to take to school at the beginning of each school year. The Box Fan was about 2 feet square, had two knobs on the top (one was a thermostat and the other for the fan speed and direction), and it had little rubber feet for sitting on the floor. This versatile Fan had mounts available to be used as a Window Fan and the fan speed knob was capable of blowing in or out, which was important when using it as a Window Fan. I still have and occasionally use that Fan.

We would take our Box Fan to school, which made our teachers extremely happy to have something to circulate the air. They would typically place the Fan near a window and as a way of saying “Thank You,” they would put us in a desk nearest the Fan. Now if you know anything at all about me, you know I am not a Front Row, Front Seat person. I've always had a strong affiliation for the back of the room. I guess that's why I'm a Baptist today. In most Baptist

Church's, you can normally tell who shows up late for the service because they are sitting toward the front pews. Taking the Fan worked well when we were in Elementary School because we sat in the same room all day. When we moved up to Jr. and High School, we changed rooms with each class. This made the Fan decision a little more difficult. I would normally leave it in my Home Room class because I would wind up going back during the day for one of my subjects.

My favorite place to "hang out" during school was in the Shop and ROTC buildings. The Shop was pretty cool. They taught mostly wood and metal shop, very little electrical. The ROTC building had a large room with a rifle range (.22 caliber) and it doubled as a classroom when we were not firing. We also had Garand M1 Rifles. I took 3 years of JROTC and was pretty adept at tearing down the M1. I got to a point where I could do it blind folded. There were some smaller classrooms in the ROTC building that was used for special training classes. Thanks to the 3 years I spent in ROTC, I was able to enter the US Army as an E-3. But that's not why I did the 3 years. I did it because it was an easy credit. Funny how the simplest of reasons for doing something can often wind up paying large dividends.

We didn't have security at our school. Nobody did. And it was very common to see pickup trucks in the school parking lot with a shotgun or deer rifle prominently displayed on a gun rack in the rear window of the truck. No one ever gave it a second thought.

I still have fond memories of that school and the teachers who tried to make me a good person. I think in a future article I'll talk a little more about some of these wonderful people. They are definitely worth mentioning, even those few who implemented "Corporal Punishment" on my backside to help me re-focus. I would love to tell you it was never warranted, but I doubt anyone reading this would believe it.

Jay Bowen
Past Post Commander



We all have talents and gifts, and as Legionnaires you have the opportunity to share them with not only the Post but our community as a whole. These committees are the foundation of how we work the many programs of The American Legion and their success depends on our membership. Even if you have never served on a committee please come out and give it a try, or for those who have chaired one before all are invited to come and share their talents! Below are some of the committees and positions we are looking to fill. If you are interested, please reach out to the Chairperson or anyone on the executive committee. Don't waste your talents! Make a Difference! Get Involved!

Membership Committee:

Chaired by the Sr. Vice Commander, the Membership Committee is responsible for creating and spearheading projects/ideas to maintain and increase membership of the Post. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting a vigorous recruiting effort, such as actively supporting the Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) campaign to obtain new members and ensuring retention.

Currently seeking the following members:

Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

Program and Planning Committee:

Chaired by the Jr. Vice Commander, the Program and Planning Committee is responsible for planning programs for the Legion year, and preparing and submitting to the Executive Committee both short- and long-range plans for the conduct of Post activities. This includes, but is not limited to, fundraising, securing speakers for Post meetings, and for planning Post observances of national holidays and other significant community events.

Currently seeking the following members:

Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

Public Relations Committee:

The Public Relations Committee is responsible for promoting public interest and support of Post programs and activities through local news and social media, and assisting the publication of the Post newsletter.

Currently seeking the following members:

Chair, Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

Welcoming Committee:

Chaired by the SGT-At-ARMS, the Welcoming Committee takes on the job at all Post-sponsored events to welcome new members, guests, or even older members who are not well acquainted, making them feel at home, and introducing them to other members.

Currently seeking the following members:

Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee:

Chaired by the Service Officer, the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee shall be responsible for assisting Post members and other veterans and their families in obtaining veterans' benefits to which they are entitled; for visiting comrades who are sick or disabled; and for keeping the membership informed on veterans' benefits available.

Currently seeking the following members:

Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

Americanism and Youth Committee:

The Americanism and Youth Committee is responsible for inspiring patriotism and good citizenship through patriotic observances, patriotic and civic instruction in schools, and similar activities. This committee shall also be responsible for Post participation in such Legion programs as Boy's State, Oratorical contests, and other Americanism.

Currently seeking the following members:

Chair, Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

Fundraising Committee:

The Fundraising Committee is responsible for all the major fundraising activities of the Post to include corporate sponsors, in-kind gifts, fundraising events, and any other ways to raise fund to support the programs and operations of the Post.





Currently seeking the following members:

Chair, Vice Chair, 2-3 committee members

September 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm 	4 Price Varies with order Hamdogger 6:00pm 	5
6	7 Labor Day ALR Post 2008 Stock the Pantry Run 	8	9 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	10 Young Guns 6:30pm 	11 \$10.00 Meal Patriot Day! Aux. Dinner - 6:00pm RSVP Required! ALR ROMP Buena Vista 	12   Membership Meeting Breakfast - 9:00am Meeting - 10:00am ALR ROMP Buena Vista 
13	14 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	15	16 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	17 Young Guns 6:30pm 	18 Price TBD Chef's Choice Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	19
20	21 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	22 Start of Fall ALR Monthly Meeting 6:30pm. Social 5:30pm SAL 5:45pm  	23 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	24 Young Guns 6:30pm 	25 \$10.00 Meal Chef's Choice Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	26 ALR 10th Annual Vets 4 Vets Party 
27 ALR Post 209 Neal Thomas Jr. Memorial Run 	28 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	29	30 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	Notes: 11-13 Sept. 3rd Annual ALR ROMP - Buena Vista 12 Sept. VFW Warriors End of Summer Run 		

October 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Early Bird Dinner is FREE to Post 209 Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL members who joined or renewed by 12 October and RSVP'd to Jackie or online for the dinner no later than noon, 15 Oct. Dinner for non-members is \$10.00				1 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm  Young Guns 6:30pm 	2 Price Varies with order Hamdogger 6:00pm 	3
4 Toy Run - CTU 11am 	5 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	6	7 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	8 Young Guns 6:30pm 	9 \$10.00 Meal ALR Dinner - 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	10   Membership Meeting Breakfast - 9:00am Meeting - 10:00am
11	12 Columbus Day Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	13	14 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	15 Young Guns 6:30pm 	16 \$10.00 Meal Early Bird Dinner! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	17
18	19 ALR Exec. Board 6:00pm  Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	20	21 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	22 Young Guns 6:30pm 	23 Guests \$10.00 Meal Chef's Choice Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	24
25	26 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	27 ALR Monthly Meeting 6:30pm. Social 5:30pm SAL 5:45pm  	28 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	29 Young Guns 6:30pm 	30 Dinner - Scouts Fundraiser 6:00pm  RSVP Required!	31 Halloween