



The Centennial

Volume XIV
Edition 7

July 2023

AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL
POST 209

HAPPY
INDEPENDENCE
DAY!



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<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanLegionCentennialPost209/>



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American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 Officers 2023-2024

President:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
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Sgt-at-Arms:	Michelle Bresee	



Sons of The American Legion Squadron 2023-2024

Commander:	Rob Barry	(719) 930-5725
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Sr. Vice Commander:	Chris Hollingsworth	(910) 364-1677
Jr. Vice Commander:	Mike Barger	(719) 290-3218
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Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928
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Vice President:	Sean Cope	(719) 246-4820
Secretary:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
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Logistics:	Terry Buxton	(419) 989-9669
Communications:	Chris Cicchi	(719) 493-5897
Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928



From the desk of the Commander

July 4th, 1776 with the signing of the Declaration of Independence set a lot of things in motion that would change the look of America. By signing the Declaration our fore fathers put a price on their head and England was ready to take whatever action they could against them. The American Revolution had already begun, but became more intense with the signing of the Declaration. The Revolutionary War went on for 8 years with the Continental Army being led by General George Washington. I would say that most all of us know all this, but I thought a refresher was in order. This is the event that started our country and the various branches of the Armed Forces that we have all served in at one time.

July 4th was always a good time while I served (and still is). I would always do something with my shipmates on this day, which normally meant a BBQ, alcohol, and of course fireworks. It seems like military people LOVE to blow things up. I only spent one July 4th while I was on active duty not in the United States. The year I spent in Antarctica was the only year I was out of the country. We still found a way to have a BBQ but was definitely a cold day and of course we also found a way to have a few beers. We did not have fireworks unless you count the southern lights that we saw that night.

While stationed in Fallon, NV; July 4th took on a different look. I had gotten involved with the local quarter mile dirt track, Rattlesnake Speedway, helping with the pit crew for a buddy and then had my own car for one year. The speedway association would get funding from the town and purchase the fireworks for the towns show. We would still have our BBQ like normal but it would normally be while we were at the track prepping the car for the evenings race. After the race was over a group of us would set up the fireworks and then one by one start shooting them off. Once the last one had been fired off, we would then be able to crack open a nice cold beer (you know even at night in Nevada it is HOT). It was really cool to be able to help celebrate the 4th shooting off the fireworks for the town.

When I got out of the Navy, I stayed in Fallon for a couple years and kept up with being at the racetrack for the races and the fireworks. When I moved back home to Colorado I started meeting up with my parents and brother for our traditional BBQ and a couple drinks then heading out somewhere to watch the fireworks. Once I joined The American Legion, my July 4th tradition changed. I still am at a BBQ it is just now with fellow Legionnaires at the Post for our BBQ and a couple drinks. We have done many things to help celebrate in the past, we have held a flag disposal ceremony, a formal ceremony, just had a little speech and welcome at the Post, but the best part is just being around a bunch of friends that all know how special the day is. We don't shoot off fireworks; mainly because the Fire Department probably wouldn't like us burning something down especially with all the apartments around the building.

This year the Post will continue our tradition by hosting a barbecue. We will provide the meat. The sides and dessert will be a potluck, so bring enough for your family plus 2 or 3 more people.

We will start at 11:00am until no one is still hanging out. Make sure to pick from one of the many places in and around town to watch fireworks to finish out celebrating the 4th of July.

Once again, I thank you for all you do to help veterans and our Post.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Commander



From our Post Adjutant

I want to start by saying Thank You to all who have joined or transferred into Post 209. Some of you are new, some have been here for what seems like forever. The trust that you have placed in us to accomplish the mission that you see as “being” The American Legion is well placed. “WE” is the operational term used around here when referring to all of our membership as WE work as a team to fulfil our goals supporting the veteran and service members and serving the community.

As the Adjutant I am here for you to assist in membership issues, answer questions, and to lend a hand in your committee’s and projects. The beginning of the renewal season is upon us and that will keep me in the office a lot, but I will be working remotely for the most part. However, you can find me in the office regularly on Tuesdays from 0900 to 1400 unless posted otherwise, and I will be doing a special session just for renewals where I can help with online renewals as well as take cash or check payments on July 16th from 1300 to 1600 Hrs. If you need assistance renewing online and setting up auto renewal (highly recommended) come on down, that is one of the reasons that I am here. I will get an extra day worked into August as well, date TBD.

National will be sending out the first renewal notices for 2024 soon. PLEASE respond to the first one. The more money and time we spend on printing and mailing reminders the less we have to dedicate to our programs and charities.

Current Legionnaires and prospective members will have the opportunity to sign up for a three-year membership under a pilot program approved May 10 by The American Legion National Executive Committee during the organization’s annual Spring Meetings in Indianapolis.

The pilot program will offer, “One-year, three-year and lifetime memberships,” said American Legion Finance Commission Chairman Gaither M. Keener Jr., who chaired the Legion’s Membership Study Committee created in October of 2022. At the conclusion of the pilot program, Keener said, “It will be reassessed and brought back to the NEC for its decision ... whether to continue or discontinue, with factual information so you can make a logical decision.”

And if you are looking at the three-year renewal, compare that to the Paid Up For Life (PUFL) program. For some it might make sense to pay that extra bit just to get it done. I did mine at around 50 years old and paid somewhere around \$70 a month for 10 or 12 months. For me it was doable and I am glad to never have to do another renewal.

You can use the provided envelope that will come with the renewal notice, or you can renew on Nationals website at <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Membership/Renew#legion-org>, or even at <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Home> for those with a MyLegion account.

Or come on down and see me as noted above or even a Friday meal. I cannot process credit cards at the Post, but I can go online at one of the sources noted above and help you process it there if you wish. If you are NOT opting into a multiyear option you can renew through the Post website at https://legion209.org/officers/renew_legion.shtml, that will cost \$2 more to cover most of the PayPal service charge.

A final reminder, ALL 2023 memberships expire on 31 December 2023, not on the anniversary of you last renewal or initial entry date.

There are SO many ways to renew, the only thing is for you to do it.

“Always Forward”

Doug Millison
Adjutant



From our Chaplain

July was named in honor of **Julius Caesar**. Quintilis, which was his birth month, was renamed July when he died. Quintilis means “fifth month” in Latin, which is where this month originally fell in the Roman calendar.

The Fourth of July, also known as Independence Day, has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941, but the tradition of Independence Day celebrations goes back to the 18th century and the American Revolution. On July 2nd, 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence, and two days later delegates from the thirteen colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence, a historic document drafted by Thomas Jefferson. From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence, with festivities ranging from fireworks, parades, and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues.

Fast forward to July 4, 1946. John F. Kennedy, a then 29-year-old Democratic nominee for a Massachusetts Congressional seat, and still a lieutenant in the Navy Reserve, was the featured speaker at the City of Boston’s Independence Day celebration. He spoke at Faneuil Hall, the red brick building where long ago the colonists had gathered to protest taxes imposed by King George III and his Parliament. He did not talk about taxes, or about the British, or about the consent of the governed. Instead, he spoke about the deep religious undertones of the birth of this nation. “The informing spirit of the American character has always been a deep religious sense. Throughout the years, down to the present, a devotion to fundamental religious principles has characterized American thoughts and action,” he said.

For anyone wondering what this had to do with Independence Day, Kennedy made the connection explicit. “Our government was founded on the essential religious idea of integrity of the individual. It was this religious sense which inspired the authors of the Declaration of Independence: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.’”

Let us always be mindful that our Independence was birthed by men and women who were motivated to serve one another:

"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Galatians 5:13-14)

Bob "Odie" O'Donnell
Chaplain Odie



From the desk of the Unit President

Happy July! July is the month for our new officers to step fully into their new roles for the Auxiliary. We are excited to welcome returning & new officers as we continue doing what our Unit does best.

Once again, I am asking members if there is something you would like our Unit to try to get involved with, please let us know. We are always looking to do more for our Veterans & our community.

Happy birthday to all of our members born in the month of July.

Royce Hopper
Unit President
American Legion Auxiliary



From our Junior Vice Commander

By now most of you have been informed of The American Legion Department of Colorado losing their Charter. This does not affect the day-to-day operations of any Post in the state of Colorado. We will continue our normal operations and an American Legion National team will take over the Department activities until they feel Colorado is ready to resume under new officers.

On a brighter note, I had the privilege of being an Advisor at this year's American Legion Boys State. This is a week-long education program to educate boys just completing their junior year of high school and have at least one semester of their senior year left. We educate them in the operation of city, county, and state governments. They form the 51st state and run it themselves.

Jerry Hopper
Jr Vice Commander





From our Post Historian

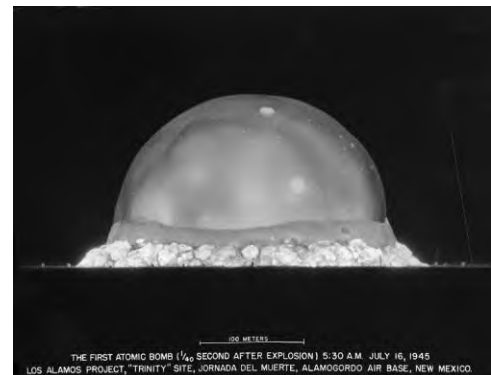
1 July 1898 – Colonel Theodore Roosevelt’s 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, popularly known as the “Rough Riders,” were among the forces that captured the San Juan Heights above Santiago, Cuba in the brief but consequential Spanish-American War. The American victory, in which the U.S. Navy destroyed most of Spain’s warships, brought an end to the Spanish Empire and ceded Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States.



2 July 1863 – Colonel Joshua Chamberlain’s courageous leadership of his 20th Maine Infantry in defense of the Union left flank at Little Round Top in the Battle of Gettysburg earned him the Medal of Honor. The costly Union victory at the three-day Battle of Gettysburg was a turning point in the American Civil War. Two years later, Major General Chamberlain was designated to accept the formal surrender of Confederate forces at Appomattox Courthouse.

4 July 1776 – “Appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions...With a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence,” the Continental Congress formally declared American independence from the British Empire. Seven additional years of military operations were required before the British government was forced to acknowledge the United States of America as an independent nation. Happy Independence Day!

16 July 1945 – America’s first prototype atomic bomb was detonated at the Los Alamos, NM “Trinity Site” as President Harry Truman was meeting with Soviet leader Stalin and British Prime Minister Churchill in Potsdam, Germany. Upon receiving the news of the successful test, Truman issued the Potsdam Declaration demanding the unconditional surrender of the Japanese government, warning that failure to heed the declaration would end in Japan’s “prompt and utter destruction.” When the Japanese government ignored the demand, Truman never hesitated to employ the newest weapon in America’s arsenal; from Germany, Truman instructed the U.S. Secretary of War to “release when ready....”



26 July 1947 – President Truman signed the National Security Act, which in addition to creating the CIA and the National Security Council, reorganized the military branches into a National Military Establishment (renamed Department of Defense) under the control of a single Secretary of Defense, disbanded the War Department into a Department of the Army and the newly independent U.S. Air Force, and created the Joint Chiefs of Staff to advise the executive branch on military matters.

26 July 1948 – President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, which abolished segregation in the U.S. armed forces and ordered full integration of all branches, providing for equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. “I am asking for equality of opportunity for all human beings, and as



long as I stay here, I am going to continue that fight.” Initially there was considerable resistance to the executive order from many military leaders, however the Korean War accelerated the policy, and by war’s end, most of the military was fully integrated.

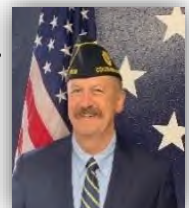
Members of the integrated 2nd Inf. Div. north of the Chongchon River, Korea, 1950

27 July 1953 – Combat operations in the Korean War ended in a signed armistice, creating a demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea along the 38th parallel. To this day, as no formal peace treaty has ever been concluded, “Cold War” tensions still exist on the Korean peninsula. American military intervention in Korea (1950-53) cost our nation over 36,000 lives and has resulted in a continuous U.S. military presence in South Korea since 1950.



The Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall

Kurt Skinner
Historian





From our American Legion Riders

July is the month we celebrate our nation's independence. The 4th of July is a time for the traditional backyard BBQs, fireworks, and family gatherings. ALR 209 has two major events happening this month. First, we are hosting the Pony Express run on Saturday, 8 July at 2:00PM. ALRs from across the state will all converge at Post 209 with donations for the Legacy Scholarship Fund. We will have food and festivities set up for everyone to enjoy. We will also have our annual ALR 209 Centennial Poker Run on Saturday, 22 July with registration starting at 9:00 AM. This is open to any mode of transportation with 5 poker run stops all starting and stopping at Post 209. Many raffle and silent auction items will be offered along with a drawing to win a new customized AR 15 rifle with many accessories and a high impact case.

So now that you know what's happening this month in the ALR, let's switch gears and try something new. The American Legion Riders have many superstars in the ranks. I would like to start a new tradition where we highlight one of our ALR members in a segment called "The Rider of the Month". This month the spotlight is on Jonathon "Skeeter" Shay. Not only is he the youngest member of the Post 209 American Legion Riders, but he is also one of the most energetic and active members in our program.

The July 2023 American Legion Rider of the Month

NAME: Jonathon Shay

ROAD NAME: Skeeter (Because of a song he would sing, Ask him)

RIDES: 2022 Indian Scout, Kawasaki Dirt Bike, Minibike

YEARS IN ALR: 7 Total, 2016-2018 ALR 2008, 2018-Present ALR 209

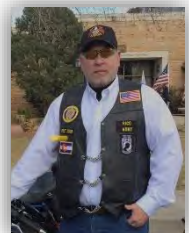
PART OF: Sons of American Legion

OFFICER: Historian

DETAILS: He's been riding motorcycles since he was 6 years old. He went to the Basic Riders Course soon after he received his driver's license at 16, and then got his M endorsement. He's got his first Street legal bike at 16 and (With his mother's permission) rides everywhere. He is a full time High School student participating in baseball and cross country. He still finds the time to be active in the ALR and SAL and you will see him at the dinners, cooking and serving and other events doing set up and clean up. If you ever need help or want to know about military history, just ask him. He always has time to lend a hand or talk history. Jonathon plans to attend Boys State next year, and after high school, go to a Military Academy or Military College. He wants to fly fighter jets in the Navy after he gets his Commission. His mother is happy that it's not the Army!!



Jerry "RICO" Shay
President, American Legion Riders





From our Sons of The American Legion Commander

The last few weeks I had the opportunity to visit South Korea. It is an extremely beautiful country. The people and their culture are inviting and polite. We started in the southern portion of the country where the villages are small and slow paced. It was a relaxing area. We then moved north to Seoul, where things are fast paced and crowded. The one thing that was always a constant was that people were polite and you always felt safe.

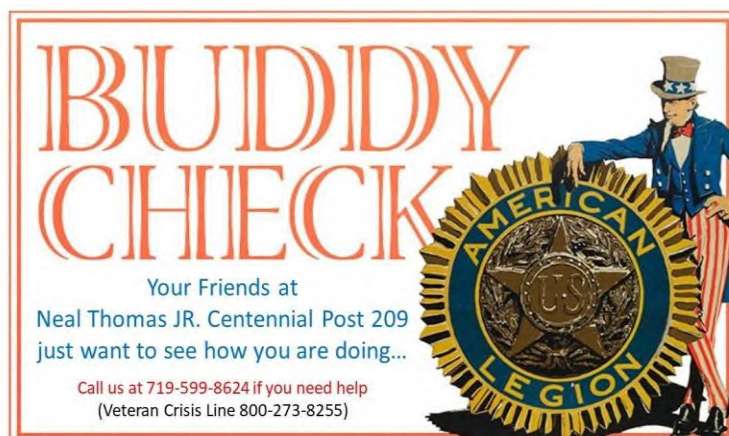
Traveling throughout the country a person could see they have not forgotten why they are there. Everywhere you go there are statues, museums, and parks giving thanks and celebrating their ancestors. We recently observed Memorial Day and I remember having a conversation about the "Forgotten War". It has been said that the Korean War is known as the forgotten war, and our soldiers were forgotten. I can tell you that nothing has been forgotten in that country.

Throughout the National Parks and in and around the city of Seoul, there were memorials to the UN Forces that fought for South Korea's freedom. We saw them inter-mingled with 700-year-old palaces and all around the DMZ. Everywhere we went, there were monuments and statues remembering everything that was sacrificed for their country. Making it up to the fence and looking out at North Korea is a sobering feeling. The discussions and stories from the Koreans, and seeing all of the small personal memorials at the gate are heartbreaking. One of the largest is to the United States Marines for their sacrifice and help. With what I witnessed, there is no forgotten war in Korea. Our soldiers are honored daily.

If you have the opportunity to travel and experience the world, do it. As an SAL member and stuck in Colorado for my career, I am seeing things now through different eyes. For those of you that didn't serve, get out and see new cultures. It is fascinating to be in the areas where our great military has made a difference and see it first-hand.

Rob Barry
Commander

Sons of The American Legion 209





From our JSSP Young Guns Captain

The Young Guns course provides youth ages 10-18 years old (boys and girls) the opportunity to learn about firearms safety and basic shooting skills. During the Young Guns course, NRA Basic Rifle Instructors teach the safe handling of firearms, shooting positions (prone, kneeling, and standing), how to zero a rifle, and how to score targets. At the end of the course, the youth have a competition shoot against the others in the course in order to show off the skills they have learned. The Marksmanship course provides graduates of the Young Guns course the opportunity to further develop their shooting skills.

The JSSP needs your assistance to continue to provide the quality training opportunity to our local youth. Due to the loss of several instructors over the last couple of years, we need more instructors now more than ever. There are three courses required to become an instructor for the Post 209 Junior Shooting Sports Program: NRA Basic Rifle Course, NRA Basic Instructor Training (BIT) Course, and NRA Basic Rifle Instructor Course. In an effort to help reduce the costs associated with taking the courses, **there is an NRA Basic Rifle Instructor Course scheduled for Sunday July 16 from 8:00am – 3:00pm (classroom) at Post 209 and 4:00pm-5:30pm (live fire) at Frontier Sportsman Club in Falcon.** The course cost is \$50 per student to cover course costs (including training materials, lunch, and ammunition), a significant reduction as compared to other courses offered in the area. There is a minimum of four students needed to hold the course, so **sign ups MUST be made not later than Friday June 30** to allow time for NRA materials to be ordered. An NRA BIT Course and NRA Basic Rifle Instructor Course are being worked out in coordination with a Post 209 member and local Scouting instructors, with the costs yet to be determined (though expected to be much lower than the standard costs in the area). Please feel free to contact me for more information on what an instructor's duties are for each course, the costs of becoming an instructor, or any other questions you may have about the program.

Post Family members just wanting to learn firearm safety, but not be a JSSP Instructor, are welcome to sign up for the class on July 16. Priority will be given to those interested in becoming an Instructor, with remaining openings going to Post Family based on the order signups are received.

The Fall JSSP courses are taking applications, with a cost of \$30 per youth shooter for either course. If there is a youth interested in learning how to safely handle a firearm and basic shooting skills, they are invited to sign up for the Young Guns course. If there is a youth that has already completed the Young Guns, they are invited to sign up for the Marksmanship course. Please go to <https://legion209.org/young-guns/> to download an application, complete the application, and send it to Jesse Wade (jssp209@gmail.com) to sign up for either class. Please feel free to reach out to Jesse or myself (jwahas.al209@gmail.com) with any questions you may have regarding the Junior Shooting Sports Program.

Joel W. Haas
JSSP Young Guns Captain





From our Honor Guard Captain

As mentioned last month, the Post 209 Honor Guard is preparing for upcoming community events in addition to performing Final Honors. The Honor Guard once again supported the Pikes Peak National Cemetery's (PPNC) Memorial Day on Monday May 29 by performing three rifle volleys, followed by three cannons firing and TAPS. It was a beautiful day with a very large crowd and plenty of sunshine, so much sunshine that there was the risk of dehydration and fainting. Not to worry, all of the Honor Guard members made it through the entire ceremony with the only ill effects possibly being a little sunburn.



Honor Guard Members Pictured (left to right): Kurt Skinner, Sarah Tobin, Rob Barry, Joe LaChat, Bill Thomas, Dan Reilly, and Theron Charles; Front: Joel Haas
(Photograph by Post 209 Adjutant Doug Millison)

The Honor Guard has now been requested to Present the Colors at two American Legion Baseball games in Colorado Springs, June 20 and July 10. The Honor Guard will be supporting The American Legion Post 9-11 carrying flags in the 4th of July Parade this year in Monument. A special honor for the team is being requested to do the Presentation of Colors at the annual Salute to Veterans Rally in Woodland Park on Saturday, August 19. Since the number of personnel required for this event is larger than the number of team members available, we are still looking into alternative solutions that will keep the Honor Guard from having to turn down this very special request.

The team has seen the loss of a few members due to moving out of the area or being dropped due to inactivity. The loss of a very active member in March and the pending loss of another in July

has had a big impact on the team's ability to support events, especially Final Honors. We are only halfway through the calendar year and there have already been seven (7) Final Honors requests the team has turned down due to lack of available members (only require three (3) members to support). In comparison, there were only five (5) Final Honors requests turned down in for all of 2022. Using *estimated* membership numbers (Legion = 1,060, SAL = 80, ALA = 125), the Honor Guard is comprised of approximately: 1.23% of the Legion membership, 1.25% of the SAL membership, and 0.8% of the ALA membership. That works out to approximately 1.19% of the entire Post Family representing Post 209 at all Final Honors, Ceremonies, Presentation of Colors, Parades, and any other requested Post/military/community events.

The Honor Guard needs to gain more new team members in order to ensure we are able to continue supporting our veterans and our community. Understandably, not everyone has much time to participate in the Honor Guard. In reality, all someone needs are a few available hours: about an hour to participate a night for a training meeting (check the newsletter calendar or the calendar on the Honor Guard website - <https://legion209.org/honorguard209/>) and up to a couple of hours for an event. So around three hours a month for a meeting and just **ONE** event is all you need to make a difference in helping support our veterans and our community. Members of The American Legion, the Sons of The American Legion, and The American Legion Auxiliary are all eligible to be members of the Honor Guard with all uniform items provided except Legion family-specific cap and shoes. If you or someone you know might be interested in supporting the Honor Guard, please reach out to me at: (719) 482-4496 or honor.guard@legion209.org.

Joel W. Haas
Honor Guard Captain



Letters to the Editor...from the Editor pro tem

Do you have a recommendation for *The Centennial*? Or maybe you want to comment on a recent article, or you have something you want to share as a guest contributor to our monthly newsletter. If so, just go to award winning website at <https://legion209.org/newsletters/> and click on the first bullet. That will take you to our letters page. Or you can send an email to letters@legion209.org and send your thoughts. If you don't have access to email, or if you don't feel comfortable sending a message via email, no problem. Send your thoughts to:

Letters to the Editor, C/O American Legion Post 209
3613 Jeannine Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80917

We reserve the right to edit for size and content. Also, we will not publish any letter without your name.

UPCOMING EVENTS



The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 & Friends Active-Duty Military Baby Shower.

The Auxiliary's Baby Shower mission is to reduce the stress of expectant parents, and new families of active-duty military families.

WHEN: Saturday, September 16, 2023, 10 a.m. — 2 p.m.

**WHERE: The American Legion Neal Thomas Jr.
Centennial Post 209**

3613 Jeannine Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80917

Contact: American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209

Email: alaaux209@yahoo.com

Military Families:
Tell us about your
needs.
Scan the QR Code to
register to attend.



Donations will be distributed
to Expectant and/or families
with babies 2 months or
younger of servicemembers
and/or spouses E5 and
below.





Buddy Time

Haven't talked to another veteran in a while and are looking for like-minded conversation? Then, come on down to YOUR post and talk with your buddies.

As of January, the post is open solely for **social time**, typically on the **third Saturday of every month from 0900 to 1100 Hrs.** No meals, no fundraising, or meetings. Come to see your post or introduce family and friends to it. Grab a cup of coffee (or tea) and hang out with other members.



July's Buddy Time is **July 22nd**, (yeah, we know this is the 4th Saturday) **0900 – 1100**. We are looking forward to seeing you there.

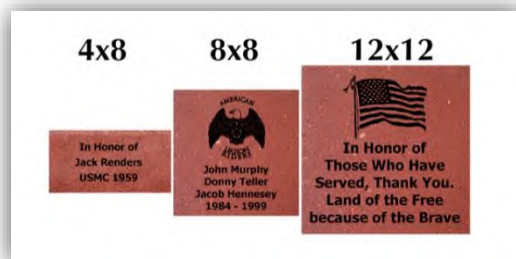


FUNDRAISER INFORMATION

Walk of Honor



- **What are the costs for the individual bricks?** Prices vary depending on size, style, and lettering desired but typically range from \$90 to \$200, depending on size.
- **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 for veterans and family members wishing to purchase a brick to honor their veterans. The corporate bricks are for our veteran-friendly supporters and businesses who want to show their continued support for our nation's heroes by purchasing a brick.
- **Is the brick purchase restricted to members of the Post 209 families?** No. We encourage members to buy a brick for themselves for their veteran loved ones or to show their support for our veterans.
- **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 user-friendly and will walk you through the design and purchase. In addition, you will see a preview of your brick before finalizing the purchase.
- **How do I pay for the brick?** We have the site set up to accept payment via PayPal or 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 sent 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. 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 only to sell as many bricks as needed for the first phase of the landscaping project.
- **Will I have an opportunity to buy a brick later?** Quite possibly, depending 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 projects. If you buy multiple bricks, let our Adjutant know, and we will ensure they are all placed together.

Announcing the return of Monday Night

BINGO

to Carefree Bingo at 3440 Carefree Circle North, CS/CO, 7 P.M.

Come on out and support
Neal Thomas JR – Centennial
American Legion Post 209 while
we raise money for our
charitable
programs in support of veterans,
our youth and the community.



"VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA"

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.

Starting at

\$350!



For More Information

www.legion209.org/contact_us

(719) 599-8624

3613 Jeannine Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80917

*Additional cost may apply



Looking for a New Publisher – HELP!!!!

As previously mentioned, due to an increased workload, Georgianna (a.k.a. George) Shea had to step down as *The Centennial* Publisher.

As a result, we are looking to our Post 209 family (Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, and/or ALR) for someone to step up and serve as Publisher. I will stay on as the Editor. This is not a time-consuming job. I would estimate 4-5 hours a month is all that is needed to publish our newsletter.

This can be a truly rewarding opportunity for you to get to know many of our Post members and officers through their contributions, despite the lack of face-to-face interaction. Serving as our Publisher should be considered an honor to be part of such a dedicated group of individuals who share a common passion for supporting our veterans and contribute to making a positive difference in their lives.

Please consider the position as Publisher for the newsletter. I am confident that many talented and qualified individuals within our community would be eager to take on this role and continue the great work we have done. Contact me if you are interested at legionnairejay@yahoo.com

Thank you in advance for your consideration. I look forward to seeing the continued success of *The Centennial* newsletter.

Jay Bowen

Editor

letters@legion209.org





Salty Dog

Mess Cranking:

All enlisted personnel are required to spend 90 days working on the mess deck when they report onboard. This is normally just the E-3 and below but sometimes it is required by a Petty Officer as well. This is normally referred to as mess cranking. You could work in the Officers Mess, the Chief's Mess or the Enlisted Mess. While there you are assisting the cooks in preparing and cleaning up after the meal. I spent my time for the first 2 weeks working in the veg prep section for the Enlisted Mess (taking care of the salad bar and organizing the cooler). I then spent the rest of my time with the Jack of the Dust (JOD); we would bring up the food for the next day from the big cooler and freezer to the veg prep cooler.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Commander



The American Legion

Neal Thomas JR. Centennial Post 209



Veterans Strengthening America



Bringing A Little South to the West

How many of you know what a rope swing is? How about a tire swing? Have you swung on a homemade swing with a 2x12" seat? If you've never experienced any of those, you're missing out.

Growing up in suburbia Memphis with days, weeks, and months also spent on farms in Arkansas and Missouri, we, like many kids of that day made swings to fit the place and need. One of our favorite routes of travel to/from school was through a field and over a relatively small ditch. At one point along the ditch was a large oak tree. Someone tied a thick rope to a large branch and let it hang almost to the ground. The branch and rope were at such an angle that allowed the rope to rest almost directly over the middle of the ditch.

Even though we could normally clear the ditch with a long jump (very long to clear the mud that accumulated on both sides of the ditch), it was much more fun to grab the rope and swing across in our best Tarzan-like manner, often including his yell. This same type swing could also be found inside our friend's hay barn across the gravel road from our grandfather's farmhouse outside Matthews, Missouri, where we would swing from one loft to the other. This was a more dangerous and much longer distance than that of the ditch, but it was also more fun. If you didn't let go, the worse that would happen is that you didn't have enough speed to make it to the other side and you would have to lower yourself to the ground, climbing down the rope.

Another favorite was a tire swing. The larger the tire, the easier to fit inside hole. Any old tire would work. Just tie it to a large rope and secure it to a larger branch of a tree. Ideally, the bottom of the tire was about two to three feet off the ground. You needed to make room for the branch to bend with your weight and also for the tire to expand (we didn't have steel belted radials back then). As we grew, instead of jumping inside the hole in the tire, we would jump on top of the tire, grab the rope and swing. Many hours were spent on the tire swing, but there wasn't much you could do in the way of tricks because you were confined inside the tire or with your legs wrapped around the rope on top of the tire. Most of the time we imagined the tire as our horse when playing Cowboys and Indians.

If you had the money, time, and ability to engineer an actual swing, the ultimate was a 2x12 inch seat about two feet wide, supported by a 1/2" or 5/8" chain secured to a very large and strong tree branch. To do it right, you would need to notch the seat on both ends wide enough for the chain to securely fit inside. The chain needed to be long enough to go from the branch to the seat, again about two feet off the ground, have it run underneath the seat and back up to the branch. Both ends of the chain should have enough loop to allow a good swing motion without binding at the branch. This type of swing offered the most opportunity to be creative and do daredevil things. We would stand and swing, sometimes getting our entire body parallel to the ground. Or we would have contests to see who could jump out of the swing and land the furthest away. At the very least, we could just sit and swing and allow our thoughts to travel wherever we wanted. It was a great way to just relax and let the wind cool our face and let our worries blow away.

Back then, we didn't even think about a concussion for a bad landing when we jumped or a twisted ankle from not keeping our feet square to the ground. Oh, we twisted our ankles, and our head

sometimes hit the ground pretty hard. But, after the initial pain went away, we were back in the swing and ready for the next jump. If you didn't risk injury, you were guaranteed to never win the long jump out of the swing! I long for the old swings, but I have lost the urge to jump.

Jay Bowen
Past Commander



Our Department's Charter has been Suspended!

On Saturday, 10 June, a National Executive Committee meeting was convened via Microsoft Teams to decide whether to accept our Department's recommendation to the National Department Advisory Committee to suspend our Department's (State's) Charter. Charges related to the Department ranged from misappropriation of funds to creating a hostile work environment. The vote was 48-0 to accept the recommendation to suspend. So, what does that mean? Several things. First, all elected and appointed officers of The American Legion, Department of Colorado have been dismissed. The entire Department Executive Committee has been dissolved until such time the Department can be reconstituted.

The actions taken can take a year or longer before normal Department operations can resume. At that time, new officers for the Department will be elected and/or appointed. Until then, a team comprised by our National team will assign an administrator and caretaker to oversee day-to-day operations of our Department to ensure bills are paid, Veterans issues are addressed, and members are kept aware.

There are still several questions unanswered, which is to be expected. If you are concerned or want more information, don't hesitate to contact Commander Weaver, Adjutant Millison, or Past Department Commander Jay Bowen. We will do our best to keep all our members informed.

Bottom Line: Our Post operations are unaffected! Please continue to support your/our Post and our programs. We simply **CANNOT** and **MUST NOT** let this affect our programs!

PROGRAMS FOR KIDS

Young Guns



NRA-Accredited members of Sons of The American Legion are sponsors and instructors for the Young Guns program. This basic rifle safety and marksmanship course are offered to boys and girls ages 10-18. Shooting is indoors, using air rifles.

<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanLegionCentennialPost209/>

Scouting Programs

The Post 209 family is the charter partner for six Boy Scouts of America (BSA) units:



- Cub Scout Pack 24 (Boys and Girls): p24@legion209.org
- Cub Scout Pack 386 (Boys and Girls): p386@legion209.org
- Scouts BSA Troop 77 (Girls): t77@legion209.org
- Scouts BSA Troop 79 (Boys): t79@legion209.org
- Scouts BSA Troop 187 (Boys): t187@legion209.org
- Venture Crew 762 (Young men and women ages 14-20): c762@legion209.org

Boys and Girls State



Boys State and Girls State are for high school juniors going into their senior year with at least one semester left.

- BOYS STATE www.colegionboysstate.org/.
- GIRLS STATE <http://alacolorado.com/girls-state.html>

Oratorical Contest



This Nationwide contest is designed to develop a more profound knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States on the part of high school students.


www.colegionoratorical.org



















Eagle Scout of the Year



The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year nomination window is from **1 November to 1 March**. Nomination packets must be received by each applicant's respective The American Legion department (state) headquarters no later than 1 March.

<https://legion209.org/Scouting/>

July 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Department Convention
2 Department Convention	3 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	4 Indep. Day Post 209 Independence Day Picnic! 12:00pm	5	6 Executive Committee Meeting 6:00pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm 	7	8 ALR Pony Express 11:00am 
9	10 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	11	12	13  Venture Crew 7:00pm	14 Price TBD SAL Dinner - 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	15 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00 2:00pm  Flag Disposal Ceremony
16 NRA Instructor's Course 8:00am - 5:30pm Online Renewal Help 1:00pm - 4:00pm 	17 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	18 ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:30pm. 	19	20  Venture Crew 7:00pm	21 \$17/Person Steak Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	22 ALR Poker Run 9:00am Last Bike Out 11:00am Buddy Time - 0900 
23	24 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	25 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:30pm  	26	27 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm 	28 Price TBD Auxiliary Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	29 Healing Warriors! 9:00am - 1:00pm
30	31 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	Notes: We will not have Hamdogger night this month. Instead, we will have a Potluck Independence Day picnic on 4 July.				

August 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Executive Committee Meeting 6:00pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm	4 Price Depends on Menu Coast Guard B'day! Hamdogger Night! 6:00pm 	5
6	7 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	8	9	10  Venture Crew 7:00pm	11 Price TBD Auxiliary Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	12 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
13	14 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	15 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:30pm.  	16	17  Venture Crew 7:00pm	18 \$17/Person Steak Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	19 Post 209 "Buddy Time" 9:00am - 11:00am 
20	21 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	22 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:30pm  	23 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	24  Venture Crew 7:00pm	25 Price TBD ALR Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	26 Healing Warriors! 9:00am - 1:00pm
27	28 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	29	30	31 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm	Notes:	