

The Centennial

VOLUME I EDITION 1

JANUARY 2021



AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL POST 209

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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: 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: Vacant 603.913.3261	Honor Guard Captain: Michael Wescott 719.306.9170
Adjutant: Jerry Hopper 918.953.9980	Sgt At Arms: Joel Haas 719.482.4496	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
Vice President: Royce Hopper	Treasurer: Kellie Hayes 719.494.7167	Sgt At Arms: Annette Coakley 228.243.1218

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	

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	

JANUARY 2021 DINNERS AND EVENTS

CANCELLED!

Due to the spike in COVID-19 cases, the Post leadership made the difficult decision to cancel all events and Dinners this month. This was not an easy decision and one that was made after much deliberation. But we feel the health and welfare of our membership trumps any event or dinner.

As you are probably aware, Colorado Springs has been put on notice that all gatherings outside of family events are restricted. This means Restaurants and even our Post events and dinners are on temporary, but indefinite hold.

If restrictions are lifted or changed, we will adjust as appropriate. We recommend you continue to monitor our website and Facebook page for updates.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and continued support.

Post 209 Family Leadership





FROM THE DESK & MIND OF THE COMMANDER

My message this month is going to be brief, as this year comes to a close, I hope everyone had a good holiday. Moving into 2021 we will be exploring some new and fun ideas for expanding the many programs the Post offers. I am optimistic that we will be able to reopen soon, but as we did last time, we will take every precaution necessary to ensure the safety of our members.

Lastly, we are here for you, if there is you may need please reach out. Again, I hope everyone had a happy holiday and a great New Year, I am eager to see all you again soon.

Joseph Schmidt

Post Commander



FROM THE DESK OF THE POST ADJUTANT

While trying to come up with something good to pass along to the membership all I can think about is the Clint Eastwood movie, "The Good, The bad, and The ugly". Christmas (The Good) has passed. The Bad (2020) has also passed. The Ugly; It still remains. I hope you all made it through The Bad, intact and enjoyed The Good.

I will begin making Buddy checks soon. If your phone rings and you don't recognize the number and it is from area code 918, take a chance and answer it. It may be me and I really take that part of my position here at the Post seriously. I want to hear from you and want to know how you are doing and if there is anything you need me to do for you.

Jerry D. Hopper

Adjutant



FROM THE DESK OF THE UNIT VICE-PRESIDENT



The mission of The American Legion Auxiliary is Service, Not Self. 2020 has been a difficult year for many, but ALA Unit 209 continues to find ways to support our community, Veterans, family & friends. With a little imagination and a lot of determination, we found a way to make this year end on a positive note.

To show our support for our men and women in Blue, ALA Unit 209 decided to put snack bags together for Police Officers across the city of Colorado Springs. First, we had to decide how many bags, *what to put in the bags*, and how to deliver the bags once they were assembled. We reached out to Officer Adam Menter, Community Relations Officer Colorado Springs Police Department on Nevada Avenue for assistance with our project.



L/R: Cathy Barger, Royce Hopper, Officer Adam Menter, Commander Mary Rosenoff, Jackie Bowen, Pat Weaver

Officer Menter shared there are 4 substations around the city. We decided it would probably be best to provide 100 bags per substation. Officer Menter was very excited about this project and stated this would be a wonderful morale boost for our Officers.

Armed with this information, the Unit decided to put 400 bags together with snacks and water. The Unit was ready to get started and was busy planning what they would put in the bags. We were ready to make this project happen. Then our city was put on tighter restrictions due to a large increase in COVID-19 numbers. Once again, the

Pandemic was trying to disrupt our year.

After a restless night, Jackie Bowen emailed the Auxiliary Executive Board with questions about how we could make this project happen. Emails were sent back and forth with ideas, then the decision was made; continue moving forward with this project, meeting only when necessary to complete stuffing the bags.

On December 4th, some members of the Executive Board met at the home of Royce Hopper to put the 400 bags together. Each bag included a hand signed Christmas card, Kleenex pack, granola bars, candy canes and Hershey Kisses. After the goodies were put in the bags, the group folded, punched holes, and tied colored yarn through each bag.

Once the bags were assembled and ready to go, they were delivered on December 8th with the help of Officer Menter. Each substation received 100 bags and 100 water bottles. Based off the comments we received from each substation, we are convinced our efforts resulted in a major morale boost for our men and women in Blue.

In a time with so much uncertainty, our Auxiliary Unit 209 is continuing to find ways to give. We are a valuable part of our Community and we will continue to provide support because with a little imagination, determination, help from our members and volunteers, and heart, we will do everything we can to continue with our Mission. .

Serving Our Veterans Proudly!

Royce Hopper
Unit Vice-President



FROM THE DESK OF OUR SAL COMMANDER

Squadron 209 has reached 100% membership goal and working on increasing its membership, I would like to say Thank You to Mike Barger for stepping up and taking on the role of SAL Squadron 209 Advisor. Also, I have talked with the Post Commander about hosting the CWF Banquet at Post 209 next year in April he said yes, so with that being said I have informed SAL Detachment Commander Nick Arceo that SAL Squadron 209 and Post 209 will host next year's CWF Banquet. The Commander has thanked us and post 209 for hosting it. That's if it's not cancelled due to COVID-19.

Michael Wescott
SAL Commander



FROM THE DESK OF OUR HONOR GUARD CAPTAIN

Post 209 Honor Guard has been doing a lot of Final Honors at PPNC and Cemetery's around Colorado Springs. The Honor Guard has done 10 Final Honors and 1 Posting of Colors in the Mouth of Oct. so far in the mouth of Nov. we have done 4 Final Honors. The Honor Guard has been doing a lot this year I would like to say Thank You for all the hard work that they do in Supporting the Honor Guard to make sure that Final Honors are given to all that have fallen. I'm so proud to be the Captain of the American Legion Post 209 Honor Guard and to work with a group of Veterans that take pride in what they Stand for.

If you would like to be part of such a Great Team, please contact me, my contact info is on Legion209.org.

Michael Wescott
Honor Guard Captain



FROM THE DESK OF THE FINANCE OFFICER

Thanks to the members of Post 209 finances are moving in the right direction. Even though our facilities have been shut down much of the time and spending over \$3000 in additional expenses, we have grown our total financials by over \$9000 in 5 months. This is actually quite impressive, considering the lack of fundraisers due to the COVID-19 shut downs.

I thank you all and keep up the good work!

We do have some unexpected expenses in the near future:

1. We have to replace a cooler. It will cost approximately \$2000, and has been approved By the Post Executive Committee.
2. We have a substantial increase in our insurance. But we are looking for another carrier.
3. We are still shut down. Hopefully this will change in 2021.

I would like to give a special thanks to The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209, Sons of the American Legion Squadron 209, American Legion Riders Post 209, and the American Legion Post 209 Honor Guard, for the fantastic support they have provided in 2020. I hope it will continue through 2021!

I would like to thank everyone, for the effort they have put into 2020 and wish you all a Happy and prosperous New Year.

William Coakley
Finance Officer



FROM OUR SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

As 2020 finally comes to a close, it is hard to believe how much has happened during the course of the last year. I ask that you reflect on all that has occurred over the year, including the good and the not so good, and how it affected you. Everyone has been affected in one way or another, from needing assistance to make it through very difficult times, to stepping up to be there to assist others in need. While we use these experiences to grow and improve upon ourselves, my hope is that in 2021 the need for assistance will diminish and the ability to assist others will continue to grow.

Joel Haas
Sergeant-At-Arms



THE AMERICAN LEGION AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (TALARC)

WHY ARE WE HERE?

The Legion Radio Club has three goals.

1. Provide community service when needed
2. Promote awareness of the Legion through Amateur Radio
3. Provide the opportunity for Legion members to be exposed to and join this exciting hobby.



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

The Post 209 Amateur Radio Club is suffering from the same malady as everyone else. We are certainly not happy with our activity restrictions and look forward to better days when you can join us for our activities.

VETERAN BURIAL BENEFITS

The Veterans Affairs: "National Cemetery Administration", wants veterans to know the bottom line upfront: many veterans do not realize that their military service entitles them to be interred in a national cemetery at no cost.

Even if a veteran never received disability or any other benefit from the VA, if they served on active duty and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. they are eligible. If they served in the Reserve Component and were mobilized or served long enough to earn a retirement, they are eligible. Yet only 20% of all eligible veterans living in the United States take advantage of this benefit which would save their families thousands of dollars.

The best, most effective way to ensure veterans get the burial or memorial benefits they and their spouse have earned through military service is through a VA program called Pre-Need Eligibility, or Pre-Need.

Pre-Need establishes eligibility for VA burial and memorial benefits before death, so the family doesn't have to go searching for documentation after the veteran's death" Simply fill out a VA form 40-10007 and mail it to the St. Louis office indicated on the top of the form. Veterans can print out a form or fill it out online. The form and more information are available at: <https://www.cem.va.gov/pre-need/>

VA officials will review each application and send a letter confirming or denying eligibility. If approved, safely store the letter, and inform someone of its location.

Pre-Need provides veterans and families with peace of mind. This information is particularly important for Guard and Reserve members, many of whom do not realize that their service entitles them to burial benefits. There are some nuances for reservists who may have to provide additional paperwork if a mobilization is not documented on their DD Form 214, so it is even more important for them to apply for Pre-Need. Waiting to establish eligibility at the time of death can sometimes result in a non-eligible decision with little or no time to provide additional information.

If a VA national, state, or tribal veteran cemetery is selected as the final resting place, a veteran will receive the following: gravesite, opening and closing of the grave, grave liner, and perpetual care of the gravesite. Also included are memorial benefits such as a headstone, marker or cover for a columbarium niche.

All are absolutely-free, which means a savings of thousands of dollars to the veteran's family. The veteran's spouse as well as minor children and unmarried adult children who legally rely on the veteran for support are also eligible for interment free of charge, typically in the same grave or columbarium niche as the veteran.

If veterans choose to be interred in a private cemetery, they can still have a free government-furnished headstone, marker, or niche cover. If a veteran chooses burial in a private cemetery with a privately purchased headstone. Marker, or niche cover, their family may request a free bronze medallion with the word "veteran" and the appropriate branch of service to attach to the headstone.



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

So far this year, our Post has reached out with assistance to 68 Veterans. You may not be aware, but we have a Post Veterans' Assistance Fund that was first established by our Post's namesake, Neal Thomas, Jr. As of 30 November, we have just over \$5,431.85 this emergency fund. That may sound like a lot of money, but it goes very quickly when used to assist Veterans with emergency support.

If you would like to donate to keep this fund going, you can mail us a check or go to our Post website at legion209.org and click on the "Donate" button. You can enter the term PVAf to ensure the donation is earmarked for this special account. Remember, we are a non-profit charity so your donation may be tax deductible. Check with your tax advisor to find out!

AG Carter
Post Service Officer



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



BRINGING A LITTLE SOUTH TO THE WEST

In a recent article I wrote about some of the TV shows I enjoyed growing up. Those mentioned were some of the more recognizable shows, but there were several others I thought were very good that you don't get to see on TV Land or Me TV, so I take another stroll down memory lane and share with you some of my favorites and what I thought made them unique.

In no particular order, the first show that comes to mind was "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis." This series aired from '59-'63 and starred Dwayne Hickman as Dobie. What made this memorable for me was his sidekick, Maynard G. Krebs, played by Bob Denver of Gilligan's Island fame. Maynard was a beatnik, complete with the dopey look, facial hair on the chin and sweats. I believe there was at least one instance he would shout his famous line of "Work? Work?" in a high pitched and seemingly scared tone. A great example that you don't have to be the headliner to get recognized and move on to other opportunities.

Another favorite was "The Twilight Zone" hosted by Rod Serling, who could always be shown smoking a cigarette while introducing the episode, many of which was written by him. Even though the show only ran 5 years ('59-'64), it can still be seen during the Labor Day weekend as they run the marathon of episodes over the three-day weekend. This series introduced many relative unknowns who went on to stardom in their own right. Interestingly, many of these horror/science fiction shows are used as subjects in many church Sunday School sessions for their almost Revelationists messages. While it is very difficult to pick a single favorite, one that is definitely in my top 5 would be the episode of the 'coon hunter who dies trying to save his 'coon dog and finds himself at Heaven's and hell's gates.

Then there was "Route 66." This series ran from '60-'64 and starred relative unknown actors that include George Maharis (he went on to star in many other TV shows and movies), Martin Milner (later to star in "Adam 12), and a couple of guys that never did much else, Robert Redford and William Shatner. This was a pretty cool show about two young dudes (Maharis and Milner) who traveled along Route 66 looking for adventure in a very, very cool '61 Corvette. Many of us who remember the show think about Buz and Ton (Maharis' and Milner' character's) every time we travel or see signs of Route 66.

And who could forget "Car 54 Where Are You?" This was one of the stupidest sitcoms to air from '61-'63, but the characters were lovable and it was so stupid, it was funny. It starred Officer's Francis Muldoon (Fred Gwynne) and Gunther Toody (Joe E. Ross). Yep, you got it, the diner we have across town and this state was modeled and named after the fictitious Police Officer. I can't drive by the diner without thinking about Officer Toody and his famous "OOH, OOH!" Fred Gwynne went on to play Herman Munster in another sitcom, "The Munsters." While it only ran for two seasons ('64-'66), it had a large following. A point of interest about both shows was Al Lewis, who played Grandpa in "The Munsters" also starred as Leo Schnauser in "Car 54 Where Are You?"

While there are so many others I could write about, I think I'll end this month's remanences with an early detective show, "77 Sunset Strip." This series was about Private Detectives in LA and starred Efrem Zimbalist Jr., Roger Smith, and Edd "Kookie" Burns. Even though Kookie was not one of the two major stars, he was considered a heartthrob among the young ladies. He was famous for reaching into his jacket and pulling out his comb several times during the episodes to ensure his hair was never out of place. There was a novelty song in '59 sung by Connie Stevens and Edd Byrnes called "Kookie, Kookie (Lend Me Your Comb)." Edd Byrnes may be remembered by some of our younger members as Vince Fontaine, the teen dance show host from the movie "Grease."

It's fun thinking about these old shows. Makes me want to go to Gunther Toody's Diner for a chocolate shake while I sit in a booth listening to songs from the '50's and '60's combing my hair.

Jay Bowen

Past Post Commander



