



The Centennial

Volume XVI Edition 2

February 2025

**AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL
POST 209**



Supporting a Naturalization Ceremony in January. Imi Mager, Unit 209 member is one of our newest citizens!

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3613 Jeannine Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80917

719.599.8624

www.legion209.org

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

**The American Legion Post 209 Officers 2024-2025**

Commander:	Steve Hayes	(719) 494-7166
Adjutant:	Marvin Weaver, Jr.	(719) 244-3535
Sr. Vice Commander:	Jerry Hopper	(918) 953-9980
Jr. Vice Commander:	Bobby Senter	(719) 660-3775
Finance Officer:	Jeff Heischman	(719) 482-4357
Service Officer:	Brian Murphy	(719) 930-4147
Judge Advocate:	Stan Hamamoto	(719) 322-6959
Historian:	Kurt Skinner	(719) 963-3517
Exec. Committeeman:	Lino Calica	(719) 963-0956
Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928
Immediate Past CDR:	Marvin Weaver, Jr.	(719) 244-3535
Sgt.-at-Arms:	Chris Roebuck	(719) 412-3145

**American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 Officers 2024-2025**

President:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
Vice President:	Michelle Castillo	Mikamish84@yahoo.com
Secretary:	Pat Weaver	(719) 638-4763
Treasurer:	Kellie Hayes	(719) 494-7167
Chaplain:	Pricilla O'Donnell	(719) 290-9130
Exec.-at-Large:	Jackie Bowen	(901) 481-0673
Historian:	Sean Cope	(719) 246-4820
Sgt-at-Arms:	Monalisa Taylor	monalisahugo@gmail.com

**Sons of The American Legion Squadron 2024-2025**

Commander:	Chris Hollingsworth	(910) 364-1677
Adjutant:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928
Sr. Vice Commander:	Rob Barry	(719) 930-5725
Jr. Vice Commander:	Jeff Heischman	(719) 482-4357
Finance Officer:	Ken Taylor	(719) 461-4047
Chaplain:	Bob "Odie" O'Donnell	(719) 432-6018
Sgt-at-Arms:	Chris Roebuck	(719) 412-3145
Executive Committeeman:	Brian Wess	(719) 528-6672 (home)

**American Legion Riders Post 209 Officers 2024-2025**

Director:	Sean Cope	(719) 246-4820
Vice Director:	Chris Cicchi	(719) 493-5897
Secretary:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
Treasurer:	Kellie Hayes	(719) 494-7167
Sgt-at-Arms:	Terry Buxton	(720) 520-9878
Road Captain:	Scott Laudan	(719) 238-2679
Logistics:	Maria Alecia	
Communications:	Chris Castillo	(202) 709-7485
Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928



From the Desk of Our Commander

Great news for Legionnaires in Colorado!!! On Saturday, 25 January, we approved a new Department of Colorado Constitution and By-Laws and elected a new slate of Department officers. These were two critical steps in getting the Department charter reinstated, and kicks off the process to obtain a National Executive Committee vote to reinstate the charter. That will probably occur this coming May. Our Post played important roles in getting this done, including having three members on the team to produce the initial draft of the C&B and one delegate of the 26 Legionnaires elected to produce the draft that went before membership at the Department special convention. The document passed the final vote with only one no vote out of all members present. It was awesome to see Legionnaires from many Districts and Posts across Colorado come together, working hard to knock this crucial task out of the ballpark.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the dinners, events and membership meeting for February. Don't forget to come on down to the Post on Sunday 9 February to enjoy the SUPERBOWL! The Post will open at 3pm ahead of the 4:30pm kickoff for the match between the Chiefs and the Eagles. This will be pot-luck format, so bring food to share. The lounge will be open, and the game will be pushed throughout the Post via our A/V system. If you want something to do while watching the game, it will be on in the game room and there will be a painting class in the AUX-SAL room for \$10. Veterans from the UCCS, CTU and Pikes Peak State College Student Veterans Organization chapters have been invited to join us, so this is a great opportunity to get to know some great new folks as well.

Facility-wise, in December we experienced some component failures with the rooftop heating unit that services our lounge, dining room and meeting room. Thanks to one of our members with HVAC expertise, we were able to identify the failing components, get them replaced, and then troubleshoot it until we got the unit back online before the most recent big freeze in January. On a final note, thanks to the very generous donation from one of our members, the Post received a new (to us) Honda Ridgeline. Through the additional efforts from members and some additional funds, together with a trade of our UTV, the Ridgeline is now fully road safe and equipped with a plow to provide a much more effective plowing capability for the parking lot area that will make it much easier, quicker, and most importantly SAFER to clear snow at the Post. We owe a huge THANK YOU to our members who have contributed and worked so hard to keep our post home in tip-top shape and mission ready!

Can't make it to the Post for the monthly meeting? You can still participate!!! Obviously, we'd MUCH prefer your attendance in person, but we know there are times when that's not possible due to conflicts, illness or travel. This way, you can still stay connected to what is happening at our Post and in our community. Just keep in mind you won't get to eat our delicious breakfast through Zoom!

To virtually access a monthly meeting conducted in the main meeting room, go to web link:
<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/85019977840?pwd=Kjb6mwNLRAjqzqUIVut8DHERIH0UXD.1>

- Dial In: 719-359-4580; Phone or Zoom App Meeting ID: 850 1997 7840,
Passcode: 448593

This link is new, so make sure you don't use an old link to join the meeting!

Steve Hayes
Post Commander





From Our Adjutant

The American Legion's federal charter requires the submission of an annual report to Congress on activities for the year. The Consolidated Post Report (CPR) was established for Posts to document external activities, such as volunteer and fundraising efforts, funeral honors, and youth programs. This information is used when National Commander makes their report to Congress.

The areas on the CPR where I need your help to complete are VA&R (Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation), National Security, Americanism, Community Service Hours. Some examples are for Legion programs like donating blood, Boys State, Legion baseball, Honor Guard, etc. They can also be for things you do not just for the Legion; such as Toy Runs, volunteering at church, Veterans Stand Down, roadside cleanup, Vets4Vets runs, museum docent, etc.

To assist with this, I will send out a tracking sheet in the next 411. It is an easy way for you to track and report your activities, and for me to consolidate all the activities. Please watch for it and use it. If you do not know which block to check, I can do that for you if you give the activity a good description. The key is to just report it, no matter how small or if you think it matters. The reporting period is 1 June 2022 through 31 May, but I must submit it in the first week of June, so please get it to me as soon as you have completed your activities for the year so that I have time to compile all the data. The American Legion as a whole is really bad about reporting all the good we do.

Lastly; if you have not renewed your membership for 2025, it expired on December 31st. I am in the office on most Mondays from 9:30 – 3:00. If you want to come by and talk with me or bring your renewal to the Post, you can do so at that time or see me at one of the Friday dinners.

Thanks for all you do to help Veterans and the Post.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Adjutant



From Our Senior Vice Commander

As of 01/21/2025 Post 209, National has us as having 848 current members. That is 78% of our 1,088 membership goal for 2025. This puts us behind our quota for this period of time. All memberships expire 31 December if not renewed. Those who did not renew by that date are considered delinquent. If you haven't renewed by 1 February, your membership status is considered suspended. Those who do not renew before 30 June will be dropped from the membership roles. Please don't let this happen to you! I ask that you renew at your earliest convenience to keep from losing your standing as a Post member, your ability to vote for changes/updates at the Post, and prevent losing your Legion Magazine subscription.

Your membership matters! It helps us continue supporting our many programs such as Junior Shooting Sports, Boys State, Oratorical Contest, and just as important, it gives us a stronger voice when addressing Veteran issues and concerns to our legislators!



From Our Chaplain

Jerry Hopper
Sr. Vice Commander



Happy New Year to all. I trust you had some time to get alone with God and reflect on the many blessings you and I have living in a country where we can serve God and others openly and personally as the spirit would lead us. I pray that this year will bring each and every one of you many opportunities to grow and prosper.

I am reminded of a story penned by a former mentor of mine about a horse pulling contest at a local county fair where the first-place horse moved a sled weighing 4,500 pounds. The runner up moved 4,000 pounds. The owners of the two horses wondered how much the animals could pull if they worked together. So, they hitched them up and loaded the sled. To everyone's surprise the horses were able to move 12,000 pounds.

Sometimes in our work we try to pull the weight of a job all by ourselves. However, when we team up with others we work with greater efficiency and accomplish so much more. That's what happened with Moses when the Israelites came to him with their difficulties and disputes they needed to settle. At first he tried to work alone where his judgements were effective but his method proved to be inefficient and detrimental. It was his father-in-law that saw this was wearing him down and advised him to start handling only the difficult cases and to let "other wise leaders" take the easier ones. Moses heeded his father-in-law's advice thereby increasing his efficiency and better serving his people.

We may want to believe that we are capable of handling the load all on our own. But if wisdom prevails we'll recognize the limits of our abilities. Sharing our efforts with others will ease our burdens and multiply the quantity the work we accomplish.

So, I leave you with this final thought. A poem by J. David Branon:

**God's people have so much to do,
In serving Christ today,
If they don't share the heavy load,
They'll falter along the way.**

Jim Bird
Post Chaplain





From our Post Historian



In honor of Presidents' Day during the month of February, I want to recognize our ten Legionnaire U.S. Presidents. I hope you enjoy this look at our Commanders-in-Chief who in the last century, honorably answered the nation's call to service and earned the title of American military veteran.

As I write this article, U.S. flags are at half-mast to honor the passing of President James Earl Carter, Jr., who died 29 December 2024 at the age of 100. He will not be remembered as America's most effective President, but he did (in my humble opinion) lead the most admirable, honorable life of any ex-President in our nation's history. As one tribute noted, President Carter taught all of us what it means to live a life of grace, dignity, justice, and service. He was a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy during WWII and served in the active-duty Navy during the early years of the Cold War. He was a life-long member of the American Legion. It seems to me that his life's work exemplified so many of the tenets of the American Legion preamble. By his personal example, he modeled "individual obligation to the community, state, and nation" through his selfless service guided by his deep Christian faith. He worked to "safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy" through his work to promote free and fair elections, advocating for political, civil, and human rights for oppressed peoples around the world. His ceaseless works to "promote peace and goodwill on Earth" were recognized by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. The citation noted "his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights, and to promote economic and social development." We honor the passing of a true servant-leader, James Earl Carter, Jr. Thank you for your service.

James E. Carter, U.S. Navy Home Post: American Legion Post 2 Americus, GA.

James "Jimmy" Carter graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1946 and completed two years surface ship duty aboard USS *Wyoming*, before requesting assignment to submarine duty. LT Carter then served as executive officer, electronics repair officer, and engineering officer aboard USS *Pomfret* (SS-391) and

USS *Barracuda* (SSK-1). In 1952, he was hand-picked by Admiral Rickover to help implement the nuclear-powered submarine program. Carter was preparing to become engineering officer for one of the first atomic powered submarines, USS *Seawolf* (SSN-575), when notified of his father's death in July 1953. Carter made the difficult choice to resign his Naval commission and return to Plains, Georgia to manage the family peanut farming business. The *Seawolf*-class attack submarine *Jimmy Carter* (SSN-23) is named in his honor.



*Engineering Officer LT Carter
aboard SSK-1 submarine*

Harry S. Truman, U.S. Army Home Post: American Legion Post 21 Independence, MO.

At the age of 33, Harry Truman, as a member of the Missouri National Guard, volunteered for service with the American Expeditionary Force in the First World War, and served in France as a field artillery battery commander with the 35th Division. Upon returning to the States, he was a founding member of one of the first American Legion posts in Missouri. He remained active in the Army reserve and was eventually promoted to Colonel. Upon the untimely death of President F.D. Roosevelt in April 1945, Truman became our first Legionnaire U.S. President; company grade officer in one war, commander-in-chief in the next! The aircraft carrier USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN-75) is named in his honor.



*Captain Truman, AEF
Artillery Officer*

Dwight D. Eisenhower, U.S. Army Home Post: American Legion Post 39 Abeline, KS.

A 1915 West Point graduate, Dwight Eisenhower's First World War duties were limited to stateside training posts. During the next two decades of his army career, he served in a variety of staff positions. Despite his lack of direct combat experience, Eisenhower rose rapidly in the Second World War to Supreme Allied Commander in Europe and five-star General of the Army. He served finally as Supreme Commander of NATO forces until his retirement from the U.S. Army in 1952 and election to the presidency, making him the only career military officer to become president in the modern era. The aircraft carrier USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN-69) is named in his honor.



Captain Eisenhower as a WWI tank

John F. Kennedy, U.S. Navy Home Post: American Legion Post 281 Boston, MA.

Commissioned as an Ensign on the eve of America's entry into WWII, John Kennedy, despite medical disqualification for sea duty, was able to use family influence to gain assignment to PT (patrol torpedo) boat command in the South Pacific. LT Kennedy's PT-109 was destroyed during a 1943 engagement with a Japanese destroyer in the Solomons. His command and rescue of surviving crewmembers, despite severe wounds, received widespread recognition in popular culture, and paved the way for his political career following the war. As America's youngest



LT Kennedy and the crew of PT-109

elected president, John F. Kennedy challenged citizens to national service, to "...ask what you can do for your country." The aircraft carrier USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67) is named in his honor.

Lyndon B. Johnson, U.S. Naval Reserve Home Post: American Legion Post 352 Blanco, TX.

As a U.S. House Representative from rural Texas, Lyndon Johnson was appointed as an officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1940. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, LCDR Johnson served briefly on active duty, performing naval inspection duties in the Pacific theater. When all members of Congress serving in the armed forces were ordered to resume their legislative responsibilities in 1942, Johnson was returned to the Naval Reserve, where he was eventually promoted to commander. He remained in the Naval Reserve until he became President of the United States upon the death of John F. Kennedy. The *Zumwalt*-class destroyer USS *Lyndon B. Johnson* (DDG-1002) is named in his honor.



LCDR Johnson, USN

Richard M. Nixon, U.S. Navy Home Post: American Legion Post 51 Whittier, CA.

As a government attorney, Richard Nixon was appointed as lieutenant junior grade in the U.S. Naval Reserve in early 1942. Nixon volunteered for active sea duty and was assigned in early 1943 to the South Pacific Combat Air Transport Command at Guadalcanal. As Officer in Charge, he supervised naval air logistics throughout the Allied campaign to consolidate the Solomon Islands. He finished his wartime duties as a government contract officer; after the end of WWII, he was transferred to the Naval Reserve, and eventually promoted to commander.



LT Nixon in the South

Gerald R. Ford, U.S. Navy Home Post: American Legion Post 258 Grand Rapids, MI.

Gerald Ford was commissioned into the Navy following Pearl Harbor and performed stateside instructor duties before being assigned to the new light aircraft carrier USS *Monterey* in 1943. He served aboard *Monterey* as navigation officer and anti-aircraft battery officer through December 1944, participating in dozens of carrier strike actions in the Pacific Theater. Ford finished his wartime service in the Naval Reserve Training Command with the rank of Lieutenant Commander. The aircraft carrier USS *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) is named in his honor.



Navigation officer LT Ford aboard the USS Monterey

Ronald W. Reagan, U.S. Army Air Forces Home post:
American Legion Post 283 Palisades, CA.

Ronald Reagan first enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in 1937 as he was pursuing a Hollywood acting career before WWII. He was commissioned and transferred to the Army Air Forces as a public relations officer with the Los Angeles film production unit of the U.S. Army Air Forces during WWII. Throughout his wartime military service, he acted in and produced over 400 training films. He separated from active duty in December 1945 with the rank of Captain. The aircraft carrier USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN-76) is named in his honor.



*Public relations officer
Captain Reagan*

George H.W. Bush, U.S. Navy Home Post: American Legion Post 77 Houston, TX.

George H.W. Bush enlisted in the Navy on his 18th birthday and after completing flight training, was commissioned as an ensign, making him one of the youngest American naval aviators of WWII. LT Bush served aboard the aircraft carrier USS *San Jacinto* in the Pacific Theater as a Grumman Avenger torpedo bomber pilot. He flew 58 combat missions and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for a bombing mission in which his plane was heavily damaged by Japanese anti-aircraft fire, forcing Bush and his crew to bail out in the open sea before crashing and eventual rescue. The aircraft carrier USS *George H.W. Bush* (CVN-77) is named in his honor.



*USN Avenger pilot LT
Bush, South Pacific*

George W. Bush, Texas Air National Guard Home Post: American Legion Post 77 Houston, TX.

George W. Bush was commissioned in the Texas Air National Guard in 1968 and after two years of flight training, was assigned as a Convair F-102 fighter-interceptor pilot. Bush performed part-time ANG duties for the next three years and was honorably discharged in 1973 as a captain.

Happy Presidents' Day and thank you for your service, Legionnaires!



1st Lt Bush, Texas ANG

Kurt Skinner
Post Historian



From Our Auxiliary President

Happy February. This is the time of year when we start thinking about what you can do to help your Unit continue supporting our veterans, our military, and their families. There are so many ways you can help!

Is there a project you would like to have our Unit support? Maybe you want to help our Veterans who are in hospice care by buying and giving puzzle books, balloons/flowers to show we care, or something similar to offer.

Are you interested in helping with the ALA CO Girls State? Our Unit is a huge supporter of this program! We always need help with so many projects we do for the young ladies our unit sponsors. Reach out to Jackie Bowen or me if interested or just want to learn more! We would love to have you help us!

Would you like to help out in the kitchen with dinners or the membership breakfast? Let Jackie Bowen or Kellie Hayes know. They can put you on the list to help! We always need and like having volunteers in the kitchen!

Are you interested in running for an office? Great! We will be holding our election in April. The nomination committee chairperson is Jackie Bowen. Send her an email stating the position you would like to run for, add a line that you will accept the position if elected.

I would like to wish all of our members who will celebrate their birthdays in February a very happy birthday! Once again, as I always say, if you need anything please reach out to me. If I can help, I will help or hopefully point you in the right direction.

Royce Hepper
Unit President



From our Auxiliary Election Committee

Let me introduce your Unit's election committee; Jackie Bowen, jackiebowen2005@yahoo.com, Cathy Barger catbarger68@outlook.com, and Fran Worthington bfworthington@aol.com. If you would like to run for any of the officer positions listed below let one of the committee members know. Also, please send an email to Jackie stating, "If elected to the position of _____ I will accept." This in case something comes up and you can't attend the meeting in April when elections are held.

In March we will be taking nominations for all Officer positions. Below is a list of Officer positions and a short description of the position:

President – to conduct meetings of the Unit and Unit Executive committee

Vice-President – assist the President and in the absence of the President, perform those duties

Secretary – record/publish all proceedings and maintain those recordings

Treasurer – receive and disperse all money belonging to the Unit and account for them

Chaplain – offer opening and closing prayers at the meetings

Historian – compile historical records of the Unit and send those reports to Department

Sergeant-at-Arms – preserve order at the meetings.



From our Auxiliary Unit Secretary

Congratulations to Imi Mager on receiving her American citizenship. I was proud to attend the Naturalization ceremony on January 15, 2025 at the District Court with Judge Braswell issuing the oath

to 15 new citizens. Imi was joined by her husband and two sons, plus eight Legionnaires and myself from the Post 209 family. In addition, I was honored to present Imi with her first American flag and the etiquette book that the Post has started presenting to new American citizens. I hear the next ceremony is at the PPLD on January 31, 2025. For more information, contact Kurt Skinner or an officer of the Legionnaires.

Pat Weaver
Unit Secretary



From our American Legion Riders

Serving as President (Rider Director) of the American Legion Riders Post 209 - Reflecting on my time as the President of the American Legion Riders Post 209, I feel a deep sense of pride and gratitude. It was an honor to lead this group of individuals who share a commitment to supporting Veterans and their families. At Post 209, our mission was clear: to serve those who served us and to ride for those who can't. We worked to provide assistance to veterans and their families, whether it was through financial support, community events, or simply offering a listening ear. Knowing we had an influence on the lives of these heroes and their loved ones was the driving force behind all our efforts.

Riding for a Cause - Motorcycling is at the heart of the American Legion Riders, and during my presidency, we participated in numerous riding programs and events. Each ride was more than just an opportunity to enjoy the open road; it was a chance to unite our community and raise awareness for our cause. From local charity rides to larger regional events, every mile we rode brought us closer to our goal of supporting those in need.

Looking Forward - Leadership in Post 209 was about more than organizing events; it was about fostering a sense of belonging among our members. As my term as president comes to an end, I am filled with optimism for the future of Post 209. The foundation we have built together will undoubtedly carry forward, continuing to make a positive impact on the lives of veterans and their families. I am proud to have played a part in this journey and look forward to supporting the Post 209 American Legion Riders in new ways. To all who rode with us, volunteered, or contributed to our cause—thank you! Your dedication and support have made all the difference. Together, we have shown what it means to serve those who served and ride for those who can't.

Sean Cope
Wizard, Rider Director



Post 209 Nominations for Officer positions

We need candidates to fill Post officers' positions for the 2025 – 2026 year. All positions are open but there are a few running for re-election. These are the positions that are wide open: Adjutant, Sr. Vice Commander, Jr. Vice Commander, Historian, and Chaplain. If anyone is interested in filling one of these

positions, please contact Stanley Hamamoto at pastorstan41228@gmail.com, Marvin Weaver at weavermr@q.com, or Jeff Heischman at jeffheman@netzero.net. Tell them what position you are interested in, your full name, and telephone number. American Legion Post 209 has many members who have been in these position in the past and they are always there to help you when asked. Even the current members who now fill these positions will gladly help you when asked.

For your convenience, here's a short description of all officer positions:

Commander: You are entrusted with supervising the duties of all other officers of the Post. You are the presiding officer at all meetings, and you must familiarize yourself with the policies and traditions of your Post and The American Legion.

Adjutant: Also known as the "First Sergeant." You are the Secretary of the Post. Post activities will revolve around you. The Adjutant is the Post personnel officer; maintains membership records, and minutes of meetings, checks up, and assists with the work of the other officers and Committees. In addition, you publish official orders, announcements, and instructions.

Senior Vice Commander: Your primary role is membership. No Post can survive without a strong membership. You should be familiar with ceremonial protocols for regular meetings. A Vice Commander must be ready to fill in for the Commander upon a moment's notice.

Junior Vice Commander: You must be ready to promote your Post. The Commander will depend on you to provide programs that spice up the meetings and attract attendance. You should contact other veteran and civic organizations so that each patriotic holiday and observance receives the attention it deserves. You are concerned with the pageantry of The American Legion. You should also be concerned with the welfare of all fellow veterans and Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation Committees.

Finance Officer: You will serve as chair of the Finance Committee and will be responsible for receiving and disbursing Post funds. You will work closely with the Post Adjutant in all matters related to the finances of your Post.

Service Officer: You should be a dedicated person with a deep interest in fellow veterans, the Post, and the community. You are responsible for bringing to the attention of all veterans and their dependents the rights and benefits granted by law. You must know how to utilize the expert services available through Legion channels and local agencies. You should be ready to visit dependents upon a service member's death. You may be called upon to serve as chair of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee, working with children and youth committees, or making hospital visitations and appointed by the Commander-elect.

Chaplain: You must be a person capable of moral and intellectual leadership. You work closely with all other Officers of the Post. You should attend all meetings of the Post and Executive Committee. When requested, you should be ready to officiate at the funerals of members. The Chaplain must also be prepared to serve the bereaved families of Post members.

Sergeant-at-Arms: You should know how to arrange the meeting hall and assist the Post Commander and Adjutant. You are the custodian of the Colors and in charge of Colors details during presentation and retirement ceremonies. You should know how to display flags and their proper presentation. You are also responsible for maintaining order at all meetings.

Historian: You are responsible for preserving and compiling our Post's records/photos (specifically through our Scrapbook and website). It would help if you tried to attend Department Conventions and keep in touch with other Post Historians. [You are only encouraged to attend, not required.]

Post Executive Committeeman: You are a voting member of the Post Executive Committee and are entrusted with the government and management of the Post. You shall be responsible for representing the interests of the general membership to the Executive Committee.

Judge Advocate: You provide professional advice in conducting Post business or assist in procuring proper counsel. You are the interpreter of the Constitution and By-Laws of our Post. You may be asked to assist in auditing Post financial accounts, appointed by the Commander-elect.

More information about these positions can be found in the 2024 Officers Guide, beginning on page 7. A copy can be downloaded from the Legion.org website. Just search for Publications and select the 2024 Officer's Guide. <https://www.legion.org/information-center/in-the-media/publications/organization-membership-awards>



From our Color/Honor Guard Captain

The 2024 calendar year ended with the team supporting a total of 68 Final Honors. Two team members have the distinction of supporting over 80% of the total Final Honors: Bill Thomas (2nd year in a row) with 56 Final Honors supported (82.35%) and Jeff Heischman with 60 Final Honors supported (88.24%). Here is the article that was submitted to The American Legion National website to recognize Jeff's efforts in 2024:



Post 209 Honor Guard Captain Joel Haas (left) presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Post 209 Honor Guard Member Jeff Heischman (right) Jan. 14, 2025. Photo by Valerie Stephens

“The primary mission of The American Legion Neal Thomas Jr. Centennial Post 209 Honor Guard is to support Final Honors for Our Veterans, which is then followed by supporting Our Post and Our Community. The members of the Honor Guard showed very strong support in all mission areas by supporting 72 events during the 2024 calendar year. Of the 72 events supported, 68 of those events were Final Honors for Our Veterans, one (1) Presentation of Colors event for Our Community, two (2) ceremonies for Pikes Peak National Cemetery supporting Memorial Day and Wreaths Across America, and one (1) ceremony for our Post supporting the Post Everlasting Ceremony.

One member of the Honor Guard stands out in providing support to Our Veterans, Our Post, and Our Community – Jeff Heischman. Jeff joined the Honor Guard in November 2023 when answering a call for anyone willing to support even just one event a month, because that one event might be the one that the Honor Guard cannot support without another available member. This year Jeff has become much more than a “one event a month” Honor Guard member. Out of the 72 events the Honor Guard supported in 2024,

Jeff supported 63 of those events. Final Honors for Our Veterans accounted for 60 of the events, 88% of the total Final Honors performed by the Honor Guard. Jeff was that one “available member” for 31 of those Final Honors, ensuring those Veterans received the Honors they earned and deserved. Our Veterans, Our Post, and Our Community are very lucky to have Jeff as a member of The American Legion Neal Thomas Jr. Centennial Post 209 Honor Guard.”

Submitted by Joel Haas, Honor Guard Captain

<https://www.legiontown.org/honor-guard>

The Honor Guard continues to be the regular Honor Guard at Pikes Peak National Cemetery. Here is the article that was submitted to The American Legion National website to recognize the Honor Guard’s continuing contributions:

“The American Legion Neal Thomas Jr. Centennial Post 209 Honor Guard was afforded the privilege to support a very unique event this month, a “Green Burial”. Green Burials, or Natural Burials, are an increasing choice for many when planning for funeral services and interment. This includes a growing number of Veterans, enough that Congress passed a law allowing for the establishment of green burial sections in national cemeteries. From the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) website:

- “Generally, “green burial” refers to more environmentally friendly methods of burial that refrain from the use of chemicals, concrete vaults, and other non-biodegradable materials. These methods are also referred to as “natural burial.” For more information about green burial, you may wish to visit the Green Burial Council’s website (<https://www.greenburialcouncil.org>).
- “Congress gave VA the authority to establish green burial sections in its national cemeteries through Public Law (P.L.) 117-355, the National Cemeteries Preservation and Protection Act of 2022. VA sought this authority so it could provide a more environmentally sustainable burial option for Veterans and their eligible dependents in national cemeteries.”
- “NCA will maintain green burial sections to have a natural appearance and will use native grasses and plants to differentiate them from other sections in the cemetery. NCA will mark the gravesites in green burial sections with a flat granite marker that is distinct from other markers in the national cemetery to complement the section's desired natural appearance and to be consistent with green burial practices.”
- “In November 2024, VA’s National Cemetery Administration (NCA) officially opened Green Burial sections at the Pikes Peak National Cemetery in Colorado Springs, Colorado; the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix, Arizona, and Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida. The number of green burial sites at each cemetery are 152, 155 and 222, respectively.” (<https://news.va.gov/>)

On Monday January 6, 2025, as one of the first three national cemeteries with a Green Burial section, the Pikes Peak National Cemetery held the first green burial in a national cemetery. The Post 209 Honor Guard was requested to provide the rifle volleys for Army veteran Gerald Riley’s Final Honors. In addition to local organizations (e.g., The Honor Bell Foundation), there were individuals from Washington, D.C. in attendance, signifying the important step in the NCA’s implementation of green burials and green burial sections.”

Submitted by Joel Haas, Honor Guard Captain

<https://www.legiontown.org/honor-guard>

So, now it is time for the standard ending of my newsletter article – Want to be part of a great team? 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.

Like and Follow Post 209 Honor Guard” Facebook page. The link is at the top of the Honor Guard website: <https://legion209.org/honorguard209/>

Joel W. Haas
Honor Guard Captain



From our Junior Shooting Sports Program

There are still open slots for the Spring 2025 session. The courses start on Wednesday February 5, 2025 (at 4:45pm, 5:45pm, and 6:45pm) for the Marksmanship Course and Thursday February 6, 2025 (at 6:15pm) for the Young Guns Course. The courses will run every week for 10 weeks, ending with the Awards Night and Pizza Party on Thursday April 10, 2025 at 6:00pm. The updated course flyer has been uploaded to the Young Guns webpage.

The JSSP still needs Instructors, RSOs, and Volunteers to support the program to ensure the continuation of quality instruction and a safe range for the students taking part in the program(s).

If you are interested in volunteering, or just learning more about the Post 209 JSSP, please email: jwhaas.jssp209@gmail.com.

The Young Guns Basic Course provides youth ages 10-18 years old (boys and girls) the opportunity to learn about firearms safety and basic shooting skills. During Young Guns, credentialed National Rifle Association (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 Young Guns the opportunity to further develop their shooting skills. Both courses have a credentialed NRA Range Safety Officer (RSO) overseeing the range and ensuring all activities are conducted safely and in accordance with the JSSP Range Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). If you have a child,

grandchild, niece, nephew, neighbor kid, etc. interesting in learning about firearm safety, contact the Post 209 JSSP at: jssp209@gmail.com.

Like and Follow “Centennial Post 209 Young Guns Shooting Sports” Facebook page. The link is at the top of the Young Guns website: <https://legion209.org/young-guns/>

Joel W. Haas
JSSP Instructor



Salty Dog

Fire Party:

All sailors are trained in firefighting. Not all though participate on a regular basis. Everyone on a ship has been through the training. The reason being that if a fire happens on a ship, it could be catastrophic if not put out quickly. Remember that ship is your ride home so you need to know what to do when the time comes. On bigger ships they have a division that is the fire party when out to sea. When in port the daily duty section has their own “in-port fire party”. Just because you work in personnel does not mean you cannot be detailed to the in-port fire party. I served for two years as the access and overhaul member on my duty section in port fire party. We would have a fire drill every day that we had duty and my job was to access the space for the hose team to extinguish the fire. I would then come in and make sure it was completely out and no hot spots remained.



Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Adjutant





Bringing A Little South to the West

Growing up, my three siblings and I had a pretty strict weekday 9:00pm bedtime curfew. As we got older and into our teens where we could drive, the curfew was relaxed on Friday's and Saturday's to 10:00pm, and sometimes 10:30pm upon request for a special event such as going to a drive-in movie. But, if we weren't out running the streets at night, we made certain we were home in time for our "7:30pm snack."

This was a BIG treat for us. The time was just a target, but it was kept pretty close to that. Regardless of the start time, it was called our "7:30 snack."

This was special for all of us, not just the kids. Mom and Dad also waited for the 7:30 snack before they would indulge. And the treat varied from something sweet to anything we could find in the Fridge or cupboard that could be eaten as a snack. It was one of the few times we didn't all have to eat the same thing. That in itself was a treat!

Even though our snack varied, often we would follow Dad's lead. One of his favorites (and mine) was a glass of milk with left-over corn bread crushed in the glass. The difference between his choice and mine was he more often than not poured Butter Milk in his glass. I have NEVER developed a taste for Butter Milk so I would opt for plain ole milk. Once that corn bread soaked up the milk, it was GREAT!

Another one of Dad's favorite (and ours) was to take a bag of fresh peanuts still in the shell, spread them out on a flat cooking pan and put them in the oven to roast. When he did this, Dad knew he would have to make certain there was enough for all of us. Rarely did Dad wait for the peanuts to cool down. He would take them out of the oven, select 3 or 4 and just bounce them from hand to hand almost like a juggler, until they cooled just enough to not burn his mouth. We did the same.

Nowadays, on the occasion I have a 7:30 snack, it typically consists of a shot of Crown, Jack, or Jamison. It's still good, but I don't put the shot in the oven to roast (Jackie gets mad when I do that) and I don't put corn bread in the glass. And I don't always wait until 7:30. But I'm still pretty good with the 9:00pm bedtime curfew.

Jay Bowen
Past Commander



UPCOMING EVENTS



**Superbowl 59
@ Post 209!!!**

Sunday 9 February
Post opens at 3pm
Kickoff at 4:30pm

Potluck format - Bring food to share!
Lounge open, Post provides coffee, tea, lemonade
and water.
See you there!

The game will be broadcast throughout the Post!

Neal Thomas Jr Centennial Post 209
3613 Jeannine Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80917

***Painting Class available in the Aux Room for \$10
donation while watching the game***

RSVP to Jackie Bowen at jackiebowen2005@yahoo.com or 901-481-0673
or via the RSVP button on our website <https://legion209.org>

Tips for Confronting a Veteran in Crisis!

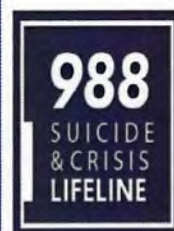


**ASK A FELLOW VETERAN
CARE FOR A FELLOW VETERAN
EMBRACE A FELLOW VETERAN**

Always ask questions 1 and 2.		Past Month	
1) Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?			
2) Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?			
If YES to 2, ask questions 3, 4, 5 and 6. If NO to 2, skip to question 6.			
3) Have you been thinking about how you might do this?			
4) Have you had these thoughts and had some intention of acting on them?		High Risk	
5) Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Did you intend to carry out this plan?		High Risk	
Always Ask Question 6		Life-time	Past 3 Months
6) Have you done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life? <i>Examples: Took pills, tried to shoot yourself, cut yourself, tried to hang yourself, took out pills but didn't swallow any, held a gun but changed your mind or it was grabbed from your hand, went to the roof but didn't jump, collected pills, obtained a gun, gave away valuables, wrote a will or suicide note, etc.</i> If yes, was this within the past 3 months?			High Risk

If YES to 2 or 3, seek behavioral healthcare for further evaluation. If the answer to 4, 5 or 6 is YES, get **immediate help**: Call or text 988, call 911 or go to the emergency room. **STAY WITH THEM** until they can be evaluated.

Download
Columbia
Protocol
App





SAL



SAFETY INITIATIVE

Sons of the American Legion
Squadron 209 will replace and install
smoke detector batteries at no cost for
veterans in financial need or with
physical limitations

Contact SQ 209:
Rob Barry
719-930-5725
colo.rsb@yahoo.com



Made with PosterMyWagon.com

Walk of Honor

- **What are the costs for the individual bricks?** Prices vary depending on size, style, and lettering desired but typically range from \$75 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 \$125 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 in the area we call the Walk of Honor.
- **How long will this fundraiser effort last?** We plan to continue selling bricks until the Walk of Honor is covered with personalized bricks.
- **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.

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

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 with the following Boy Scouts of America (BSA) units:



- Cub Scout Pack 24 (Boys and Girls): p24@legion209.org
- Cub Scout Pack 26 (Boys and Girls): p26@legion209.org
- Scouts BSA Troop 77 (Girls): t77@legion209.org
- Scouts BSA Troop 79 (Boys): t79@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 www.alacolorado.org/girls-state

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/>

February 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1  Honor Bell Meeting 10:00am
2 Groundhog Day	3 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	4	5  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	6 Exec. Cmtee Mtg. 6:00pm  Young Guns 6:15pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm	7 \$10/person Crew 762 Dinner Hamburgers or Pork Tenderloins 6:00pm RSVP Required!	8 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00 
9 Super Bowl Potluck! 3:00pm Painting Party! 3:00pm	10 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	11 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm 	12  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	13 Young Guns 6:15pm   Venture Crew 7:00pm	14 Valentine's Day \$10/person ALR Chili Cookoff 6:00pm RSVP Required!	15
16	17 Presidents Day Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	18 ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:30pm. 	19  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	20 Young Guns 6:15pm   Venture Crew 7:00pm	21 \$20/person Steak Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required!	22 Washington's Birthday Healing Warriors! 9:00am-1:00pm Vets Helping Vets
23 ALA Bunco! All are Invited! 3:00pm-5:00pm	24 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	25 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:45pm 	26  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	27 Young Guns 6:15pm   Venture Crew 7:00pm	28 \$12/Person ALA Dinner Tacos/Nachos Bar 6:00pm RSVP Required!	Notes:

March 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1  Honor Bell Meeting 10:00am
2	3 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	4	5 Ash Wednesday  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	6 Exec. Cmtee Mtg 6:00pm  Young Guns 6:15pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm	7 Price Depends on Menu Hamdogger Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required!	8 Int'l. Women's Day Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
9	10 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	11 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm 	12  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	13 Young Guns 6:15pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm 	14 SAL Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required!	15
16	17 St Patrick's Day Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	18 ALR Exec. Mtng 6:30pm. 	19  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	20 Start of Spring Young Guns 6:15pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm 	21 Chicken Fried Chicken 6:00pm RSVP Required!	22 Healing Warriors! 9:00am-1:00pm Vets Helping Vets
23	24 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	25 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng 5:30pm ALR 6:45pm  	26  Marksmanship 4:45pm-8:00pm	27 Young Guns 6:15pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm 	28 ALA Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required!	29
30	31 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	Notes: Notes: At our General Membership Meeting on 8 March, we will conduct an Initiation ceremony and Post Everlasting ceremony.				