



The Centennial

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AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL POST 209



Gemma Foley completed the earned her NRA Marksmanship Qualification Program (MQP) Qualification Position Air Rifle - Expert designation. Picture by: Joel Haas (JSSP Instructor)

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Sgt.-at-Arms:	Bobby Senter	(719) 660-3775



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 Officers 2023-2024

President:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
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Secretary:	Pat Weaver	(719) 638-4763
Treasurer:	Kellie Hayes	(719) 494-7167
Chaplain:	Ariel Foster	(719) 281-7965
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Historian:	Maria Alicea	(719) 900-8426
Sgt-at-Arms:	Michelle Bresee	



Sons of The American Legion Squadron 2023-2024

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Jr. Vice Commander:	Mike Barger	(719) 290-3218
Finance Officer:	Ken Taylor	(719) 461-4047
Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928
Sgt-at-Arms:	Tom Foster	(719) 339-2667
Executive Committeeman:	Brian Wess	(719) 528-6672 (home)



American Legion Riders Post 209 Officers 2024-2025

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Secretary:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
Treasurer:	Kellie Hayes	(719) 494-7167
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Communications:	Chris Castillo	
Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928



From the desk of the Commander

Let me be the first to wish every Legionnaire a Happy Birthday! This is our 105th birthday. March 15th 1919, the first American legion Caucus was held in Paris. Members of the American Expeditionary Force in France met to form what is now the American Legion.

The American Legion was formed originally to look out for veterans and to make sure that our country did not forget about what they had done for them during WWI. Direct credit can be given to The American Legion for helping form what is now the Department of Veterans Affairs or as we all know it today the VA. The GI Bill was written by The American legion after WWII to help returning soldiers and sailors. The GI Bill has evolved over time and the new education benefit includes being able to transfer benefits to family members or even use the money to pay for a trade school. All this because the Legion continues to look out for fellow veterans.

The Americanism programs are something every Legionnaire should be proud of as well. Back when first chartered, a relationship was formed with Scouting and continues to this day. Scouting is the longest running Americanism program and our Post charts 6 different units between all of the family members. It is hard not to run into someone who in their younger years did not participate in American Legion Baseball. Legion baseball has produced many major league "Hall of Famers." Boy's State is another big program boasting former Presidents and alumni of Boy's State and Boy's Nation.

Veterans Assistance and Rehabilitation and Americanism are just two of the four pillars that the American Legion stands on and will continue in the future.

At the General Membership meeting in March, we will be celebrating the Legion's birthday by again holding the American Legion Initiation Ceremony. This ceremony introduces you to The American Legion and some of our principles. It doesn't matter if you have been a member for 20 years or if this is your first year as a member of The American Legion. If you have never gone through an Initiation, please consider joining us at the general membership meeting in March and participating in the ceremony. You do not have to go through an Initiation ceremony to be a member of The American Legion, but we encourage you to do so.

We will also have a Post Everlasting Ceremony at the March meeting. This ceremony will be for all of our Legionnaires that have passed away over the past year. This is a nice way to remember our comrades that are no longer with us and to pay final tribute to their family members. We have held this in the past, but normally as a one off for one member and we have missed others that have been deserving of our remembrance and respect. The plan we have worked on is to hold this ceremony each year going forward to honor our departed members.

Please plan to be at our March General Membership meeting to participate in both of these ceremonies with us.

Thank you for all you do to help veterans and our Post.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Commander





From our Post Adjutant

You may have noticed that I have been sending requests for data along with your renewals this year. I have been using part of the membership card slip shown below, by highlighting the empty fields and asking you to contact me with changes.

2024 THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CARD			001089
XXXXXXXXXX 24 07020900 001089 3			
MEMBER ID #	DEPT/POST CO - 0209	CONTYRS	
NAME (FIRST MIDDLE LAST)			
MAILING ADDRESS			
PHONE #	DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)		
EMAIL			
War Era: <input type="checkbox"/> WWII <input type="checkbox"/> Korea <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon/Grenada <input type="checkbox"/> Panama <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War <input type="checkbox"/> Global War on Terror <input type="checkbox"/> Other Conflicts		Branch of Service: <input type="checkbox"/> USA <input type="checkbox"/> USMC <input type="checkbox"/> USN <input type="checkbox"/> USAF <input type="checkbox"/> USSF <input type="checkbox"/> USCG <input type="checkbox"/> USMM (WWII Only)	
GENDER: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female			
If applicable, place an "X" in the appropriate box below: <input type="checkbox"/> Deceased <input type="checkbox"/> Update record changes as noted <input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate of ID# _____			

POSTS: DO NOT SEPARATE THE NATIONAL AND DEPARTMENT CARDS. See instructions on the reverse side. 015684

Why?

Most of the requests I have sent out is for the email so that members can get this newsletter, the 411, minutes, etc. Having the phone number is the way we contact you if the email fails and we need to reach out and to conduct a "Buddy Check."

The rest of the data is mostly used to find out why we have lost touch with you. Frankly, I search the obits to see if we lost any members because let's face it, not every spouse thinks to contact the Post when someone passes away, and not every Veteran has somebody to do that for them. It is also interesting to occasionally look at our demographics and see how many members we have in different era's, services, etc.

At the March membership meeting we will be conducting a Post Everlasting ceremony to transfer those that we find out have passed away that year. Come on in and say good-bye to our Legionnaires. That ceremony is followed by the Initiation Ceremony where we swear in new Legionnaires who are stepping up to replace the "old guard."

So, if you get a "red card" please help me out and send me the data I'm looking for.

"Always Forward"

Doug Millison
Adjutant





From our Senior Vice Commander

I hope everyone is doing great as we move closer to warm weather. Come on down to the Post for one of our Friday dinners. 1 March is our traditional Hamdogger (Pork Tenderloin sandwiches, Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Chicken Wraps and MORE!); 8 March is a Crew 762 fundraiser for the crew and our new Cub Scout Pack 26 with your choice of Fettuccini Alfredo or Spaghetti; 15 March is Chicken Fried Chicken; 22 March will be another awesome meal by Auxilliary Unit 209 and 29 March will be a Jaegerschnitzel dinner fundraiser for the Pikes Peak Honor Bell. Don't forget the monthly membership meeting on 9 March! Check the events calendar for all the other events going on and get involved!

Membership is doing well. We are through 92% as of 20 February and already passed the March goal of 90%. If you haven't renewed, please do so ASAP. Our Adjutant recently sent out an email with the renewal link (SUPER easy) and we have also been calling our un-renewed members. Don't forget new member prospects - reach out to your friends and neighbors who may be Legion, Auxiliary of Sons of the American Legion eligible and ask them to visit the post and join. There are a ton of internal and community service activities to get in volved in with the post family – get them to check us out!

Have a GREAT March!!!

Steve Hayes
Senior Vice Commander



From Our Auxiliary President

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 will be taking nominations for Unit officers in March, elections in April, and installation in May. If you are interested in running for an office, don't forget to send an email letter of intent to Jackie Bowen.

Our Unit will be hosting a garage sale on April 20th. More information will be put out soon. So, if you gave items you can donate, start gathering it up. We will give information about drop off when it gets closer to the date.

Happy birthday to all of our members celebrating their birthday in March!

Royce Hopper
Unit President
American Legion Auxiliary





Chaplain's Corner

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. Philippians 3:10

Christ offers us comfort because He truly understands suffering. We can find support from friends, loved ones and others but only the Lord can truly comfort each one of us as someone who completely understands all of our suffering. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus came to strengthen and support us in our hour of need. One way to look at this is to realize that Christ realizes that you will suffer—sometimes because we live on a broken planet filled with broken people, sometimes because of our own poor choices, and still other times simply because we are a follower of Christ. But amidst all of this we can hold onto some simple truths or promises:

1. Jesus understands pain.
2. Jesus won't crush you in times of brokenness.
3. Jesus came to bring you freedom through His suffering.

The Lord told the people in Isaiah's time that he would send someone (a Servant) to save them. We know that His name is Jesus, and we can benefit from knowing that this Jesus understands what we are and will be going through. Jesus himself suffered more than we could ever imagine in our human minds and in this suffering, we have such a good example. Christ never turned his back on God nor cursed the Lord for all of the things that he knew he would suffer at the hands of the people who condemned him and hung him on the cross. Christ simply trusted in His Father.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Isaiah 53:3

I am sure that we cannot fully understand all of the suffering of Christ that he had to endure here on earth, but it can ease our minds to know that Christ understands true suffering and thus is so compassionate with all of us who call upon His name.

If you have any spiritual needs (prayer, praises, blessings, death in family, etc.) I am here for you. If you just need someone to talk with for any reason, I am here for you. I don't have to know you or your family.

Reach out to me at bob.odonnell@comcast.net or 719-432-6018.

Bob "Odie" O'Donnell
Chaplain Odie



Post 209 Nominations for Officer positions

I have been appointed again this year as chairman of our nomination committee. We need to fill a few vacancies, although all positions are open to any member of Post 209 in good standing. Let me know if you want to participate in the Post-leadership and serve our members. Attached is a short

description of each officer position. We will also ask for nominations from the floor in April when we have elections.

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.

For more information, see the 2024 Officers Guide, beginning on page 7. A free copy can be downloaded from the Legion.org website. Just search for Publications and select the 2024 Officer's Guide. Go to: <https://www.legion.org/publications/259071/officers-guide>

Marvin Weaver

Nomination Committee Chairman



From our Sons of The American Legion Commander

Some members of the SAL have a story of when their father or grandfather signed them up at birth. This is a great tradition that poses a question. Do these members know about what they are signed up for?

The SAL has events that can help with development of these young members. Think about getting them involved in placing flags at graves, participating in parades, and coming to post events to make the younger generation of the SAL more visible. These events teach young members about our programs and values that they can carry on into adulthood. Let's face it, our kids are better at technology than most of us. Get them interested in all of the opportunities online that can help with their legion knowledge.

As your member gets older, the youth have so many legion opportunities, from Scouting, Boys State, oratorical, and many more. Participating in these events will foster their knowledge and pride in the SAL and provide scholarship opportunities for them. These community service activities will not only make them better Americans, but will provide them a well-rounded resume when applying for college and jobs down the line.

As we are volunteering in our community, state and nation, we need to remind ourselves of our responsibility to share what we have learned with the youth of today. Let's make sure to bring along our younger members to our next SAL event and encourage them to be an active part of this great organization alongside their sponsor.

Rob Barry

SAL Commander





POW/MIA Ceremony

As Adjutant, I am responsible for printing and distributing the meeting minutes. One of the things I try to do is to keep it consistent so a lot of times I just copy and paste text into an older minute format. While I was doing that for the January minutes, I noticed a similarity of distinguished guests in our November and January POW/MIA ceremonies. Coloradans' Seaman 2nd Class Leroy Arthur Amick and Electricians Mate 2nd Class Glenn W. Anderson shared the same submarine, the S-26.

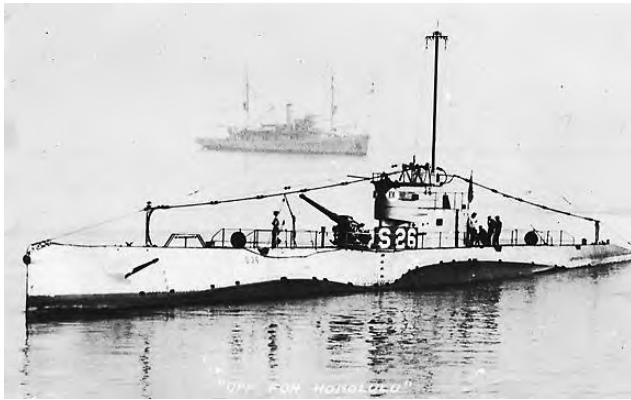


Photo: USS S-26 (SS-131) Compiled by Paul W. Wittmer and Charles R. Hinman, originally from: U.S. Submarine Losses World War II, NAVPERS 15,784, 1949 ISSUE.

S-26 (Lt. Cdr. E. C. Hawk) was lost at 2223 on 24 January 1942, in the Gulf of Panama about fourteen miles west of San Jose Light in three hundred feet of water. There were three survivors, two officers, one of whom was the Commanding Officer, and one enlisted man. These people were

on the bridge at the time of the collision; the fourth person on the bridge, an enlisted man, was lost.

S-26 was proceeding from Balboa, C. Z. to its patrol station in company with S-21, S-29 and S-44 and an escort vessel, PC-460, at the time of the disaster. At 2210 the escort vessel sent a visual message to the submarines that she was leaving the formation and that they could proceed on the duty assigned. S-21 was the only submarine to receive this message. Shortly thereafter PC-460 struck S-26 on the starboard side of the torpedo room and the submarine sank within a few seconds.

Salvage operations were started immediately under Captain T. J. Doyle, USN, Commander Submarine Squadron Three and Submarine Base, Coco Solo, Canal Zone, and attempts at rescue were made but without success. The submarine was not raised. She had previously made one war patrol but had inflicted no damage on the enemy.

S-26 lies upright on the seabed and is a protected war grave.

Lest We Forget

Doug Millison
POW/MIA Committee Chair





From our Post Historian



Joseph Louis Simpson, from Denver, Colorado, joined the U.S. Army after high school and served in Vietnam with the 23rd Infantry Division.

On May 12, 1968, Sergeant Simpson was manning an operational outpost of the Kham Duc Special Forces Base Camp at Quang Tin, South Vietnam, when the base came under heavy attack by a numerically superior enemy force. He was severely wounded in the attack in which his outpost was overrun, and the surviving personnel were ordered to escape and evade the enemy and make their way back to the Kham Duc airfield if possible. Kham Duc, the last Special Forces camp on the northwestern

frontier of South Vietnam, was abandoned to advancing NVA infantry at 4:33 p.m. on May 12, 1968. Sergeant Simpson and two others arrived at the airfield just as the last C-130 departed. A fellow soldier, SP4 Long, carried SGT Simpson to a nearby hill, where Simpson reportedly died during the night. SP4 Long was captured by enemy forces and later released from North Vietnam in 1973. Attempts to recover SGT Simpson's remains after the attack were unsuccessful; his body was never recovered, and he is listed as Missing in Action. After the incident, the Army promoted Simpson to the rank of staff sergeant (SSG). Today, Staff Sergeant Simpson is memorialized at Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver, on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, and his name is also inscribed along with all his fallen comrades on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, DC.



Thank you for your service, Joseph – You are not forgotten.



25 March is designated as **National Medal of Honor Day** in recognition of the first Medals of Honor awarded on 25 March 1863 to six Union soldiers for their daring commando raid on Confederate forces.

Edgar Lee McWethy Jr. was born and raised in Leadville, Colorado. He joined the U.S. Army in 1964, completed combat medic training and served in Vietnam with Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. On 21 June 1967, in Binh Dinh Province, South Vietnam, Specialist 5 McWethy repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to treat his wounded comrades despite being wounded three times himself. He continued to help his fellow soldiers until suffering a fourth and fatal wound.



His Medal of Honor citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Serving as a medical aidman with Company B, Sp5c. McWethy accompanied his platoon to the site of a downed helicopter. Shortly after the platoon established a defensive perimeter around the aircraft, a large enemy force attacked the position from three sides with a heavy volume of automatic-weapons fire and grenades. The platoon leader and his radio operator were wounded almost immediately, and Sp5c. McWethy rushed across the fire-swept area to their assistance. Although he could not help the mortally wounded radio operator, Sp5c. McWethy's timely first aid enabled the platoon leader to retain command during this critical period. Hearing a call for aid, Sp5c. McWethy started across the open toward the injured men, but was wounded in the head and was knocked to the ground. He regained his feet and continued on but was hit again, this time in the leg. Struggling onward despite his wounds, he gained the side of his comrades and treated their injuries. Observing another fallen rifleman lying in an exposed position raked by enemy fire, Sp5c. McWethy moved toward him without hesitation. Although the enemy fire wounded him a third time, Sp5c. McWethy reached his fallen companion. Though weakened and in extreme pain, Sp5c. McWethy gave the wounded man artificial respiration but suffered a fourth and fatal wound. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety, and demonstrated concern for his fellow soldiers, Sp5c. McWethy inspired the members of his platoon and contributed in great measure to their successful defense of the position and the ultimate rout of the enemy force. Sp5c. McWethy's profound sense of duty, bravery, and his willingness to accept extraordinary risks in order to help the men of his unit are characteristic of the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

His family was presented his award posthumously by President Richard M. Nixon at the White House on October 16, 1969. The McWethy Troop Medical Clinic at Fort Sam Houston, Texas and Fort Jackson, South Carolina, are named in his honor.

Thank you for your service, Edgar – You are not forgotten.

Kurt Skinner
Historian





From our Color/Honor Guard Captain

The Honor Guard is one of the most visible programs in the community, both veteran and civilian, for Post 209. The largest part of that visibility is through the Honor Guard's continuing support to Final Honors for our local veterans, which is the primary mission of the team. To help with completing the very important mission, we have seen four (4) prospective new members come to the Honor Guard, including a member of the Auxiliary. The addition of more team members is a great thing to have happen over the last month and a half; however, the number of Honor Guard members is still at approximately 1% of the Post Family's membership. We expect a very busy year ahead of us, we need to have more new members in order to reverse last year's record 21 requests for Final Honors being denied due to a lack of available team members.

And now 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 “The American Legion Neal Thomas, Jr. Centennial 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

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, 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. 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

The Spring 2024 JSSP Marksmanship and Young Guns Basic Courses have started. As usual, we have some talented young men and women learning the safe handling of firearms and marksmanship fundamentals. The Marksmanship Course is also continuing to support the implementation of the NRA Marksmanship Qualification Program for Qualification Air Pistol.

As of the submission of this month's newsletter article, an NRA Basic Range Safety Officer (RSO) Course is scheduled for up to ten (10) volunteers wanting to support the Post 209 JSSP by becoming an NRA Certified RSO. RSOs are important part in supporting the Post 209 JSSP, ensuring a safe range for the students.

If you are interested in volunteering, or just learning more about the Post 209 JSSP, please email: jwhaas.al209@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

Jerseys:

As you can imagine the Flight Deck of an Aircraft Carrier can get pretty loud. We use a lot of hand signals to communicate. One other thing we do is we do not wear the normal uniform shirt when on the Flight Deck. You can tell what someone's job is by the color or jersey they

wear. This is a list of some of the jersey's you might see on the Flight Deck along with the job they perform:

Yellow Shirt – Launch Officer/ Landing
Signalman Enlisted
Red Shirt – Crash and Salvage
Blue Shirt – Aircraft Handler (chairs & chains)
Purple Shirt – Fueler
Green Shirt – Arresting Gear & Catapults
White Shirt – Medical or Safety Officer



You will find others but these are the main ones I worked with.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Commander



Bringing A Little South to the West

I have said for years that I think shoes are a curse of civilization. Growing up in the south, most of the kids in our neighborhood didn't wear shoes or socks until about November. Unless of course you were going to school. I attended a Memphis City School, and even though we weren't required to wear uniforms as mandated in the Catholic Schools, we had some pretty strict dress codes. Boys had to wear slacks and a collared shirt. We weren't able to wear tennis shoes or "sneakers" until they laxed the requirements in my senior year. Hair could not cover your ears, and if you had a mustache, it had to be of military standard; meaning it could not extend below your upper lip. And until my senior year, girls had to wear a skirt or a dress. Pant suits weren't allowed.

But when we got home from school, the slacks were replaced with jeans or jean shorts cut-off when the jeans got faded or ragged. We had holes in our jeans, which I guess is the style today, but we didn't buy them that way. They got holey through the normal wear and tear (pun intended) activities for boys of our age and environment. Collared shirts were replaced by tee-shirts or no shirt at all, and shoes and socks came off. If you wanted to wear shoes, it was almost always sneakers or flip flops with no socks.

Sure, there was the occasional bee sting on the bottom of our feet if we didn't watch where we were going. And maybe, just maybe a small cut from a shard of glass, but for the most part we didn't have anything harsh enough that would make us want to put on shoes.

We could walk on gravel just as easily as grass. Our feet were tough and calloused. And filthy from the dirt and gravel. I spent more time in the evening washing my feet than I did the rest of my body. But I didn't care. It was worth it.

During the middle of summer, the asphalt and sand on the beach would get hot, even for us who were accustomed to it. But all we had to do is find a shady spot on the sandy beach, or wade in the water using the shoreline for travel. Most of the time, we didn't have any place in particular to go, we just wanted to go. So having to walk down the shoreline was just as good as walking along the beach. And as far as the asphalt, we were never far away from a neighbor's yard. And as long as we were just passing through, none of our neighbors cared if we walked through their yard.

Even today, I can't stand to wear shoes. The first thing I do when I walk into my or anyone's home I may visit is take off my shoes. Most people think I'm just being polite not tramping through their house with shoes, but the truth is I HATE SHOES! And when someone stops by our house, the first thing they see is a pair of shoes next to the front door. First time or infrequent visitors often take it as a sign that we would prefer shoes to be off inside the house. But I don't care if someone wants to leave their shoes on while visiting. I quickly explain my perspective that shoes are a curse of civilization and they are positioned by the door for me to put them on when I walk down to our community mailbox. I truly don't care if they want to leave their shoes on while visiting. But I've also discovered that when I give them the choice, more often than not, they too shed their shoes.

The callouses are gone now because I rarely walk around very long outside barefoot. But the upside is that it doesn't take nearly as long to clean my feet at night.

Jay Bowen
Past Commander



UPCOMING EVENTS

Yum, Yum, Eat'em up!!

Butter Braid Sale Starting February 16th, and ending March 22nd. Delivery date will be March 28th. Tell your friends, neighbors, and your neighbors' friends about the sale. Please turn in orders no later than March 22nd. I will call or email you with the delivery time. Make checks payable to ALA Unit 209. The price is \$15.00 per braid. We need the payment before the delivery date. You may call Jackie Bowen, (901) 481-0673 or email jackiebowen2005@yahoo.com with an order and then mail a check to her or discuss receipt of payment. Watch for reminder/update blasts to be sent. Thanks in advance for helping us make this a success.



FLAVORS: Caramel Rolls (9 rolls), Apple, Blueberry & Cream Cheese, Cinnamon, Strawberry & Cream Cheese, Bavarian Crème Cheese, and Cherry. Also available are Gluten Free Chocolate Chip cookies.

AL Post 209 Family

fundraiser benefitting



HONOR BELL FOUNDATION

March 29, 2024 6pm at American Legion Post 209

3613 Jeannine Dr., Colorado Springs

Jaegersnitzel, Spaetzle, veggies, rolls, dessert \$15

Please rsvp to jackiebowen2005@yahoo.com or at

legion209.org by noon on March 27, 2024

BE THE ONE

Suicide Prevention Symposium
Presented By American Legion Post 209
and Veterans Trauma Court Mentor Team

March 30, 2024

American Legion Post 209

3613 Jeannine Dr.

Colorado Springs, Co 80917

0900-1000 Breakfast will be catered

1000-1200 Suicide Prevention Presentations

- The rate of suicide for veterans is more than 50% higher than that of nonveteran adults
- 17-22 veterans commit suicide daily
- The goal of The American Legion is to reduce veteran suicide by saving at least one life each day by using every Department, every Post, every resource and the entire American Legion Family to do so.



OUR PRESENTERS OUR PROUD SPONSORS

Brian Murphy
Brian.murphy3@va.gov
VA SAVE Program Info



Daniel Schreiter, MA, LPCC
www.resurgenceoflife.com
Resurgence of Life Suicide Awareness
And Prevention Presentation




Combat to Community
Resilience, Community, Courage, Service, Empowerment



CEDAR SPRINGS
HOSPITAL
Celebrating **100** Years



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 PosterMyWard.com



The American Legion

Rocky Mountain Boys State

A Week that will shape a Lifetime



"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction... it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation."

-Ronald Reagan

HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS – Your Future starts here!
YOU can join the nation's premier civics program
developing future leaders in Colorado since 1949

- Build leadership skills AND lifelong friendships
- Fun Action-based learning in Self-Government
- Support and defend our Constitution
- Stand up for America's political heritage
- If selected all tuition costs are included



June 2nd - 8th, 2024 – Sterling, CO

Start your application NOW!

www.CoLegionBoysState.org



THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

JUNE 10-15, 2024, NORTHEASTERN JR COLLEGE, STERLING

The American Legion Auxiliary Colorado Girls State program is a unique and exciting government-in-action learning program that encourages high school juniors to become empowered and knowledgeable leaders.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- ☆ Develops pride and understanding of American government, freedoms, and traditions.
- ☆ Inspires young women of all backgrounds and interests to engage with our system of government.
- ☆ Stimulates passion for the democratic processes within our republic and the brave individuals who fight for our freedoms.
- ☆ Fosters confidence, growth, and life-long friendships.

For information, visit us at
**[www.ALAColorado.org/
Girls-State.html](http://www.ALAColorado.org/Girls-State.html)** or contact
your local American Legion
Auxiliary Unit.

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO “FOSTER AND PERPETUATE A 100% AMERICANISM”?



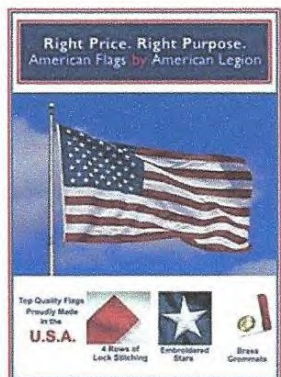
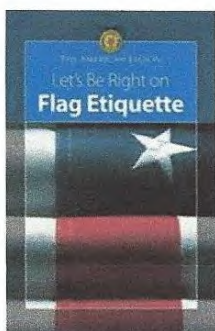
SPONSOR A U.S. FLAG TO A NEW AMERICAN CITIZEN

for presentation at the next
Citizenship Naturalization
ceremony in Colorado Springs



YOUR \$25 GIFT WILL PROVIDE:

- Made in USA All-weather U.S. Flag
- U.S. Flag Etiquette booklet
- Your sponsor gift note to the new citizen



Contact Kurt Skinner
Post 209 Americanism Chair
To Sponsor Your U.S. Flag
TODAY!

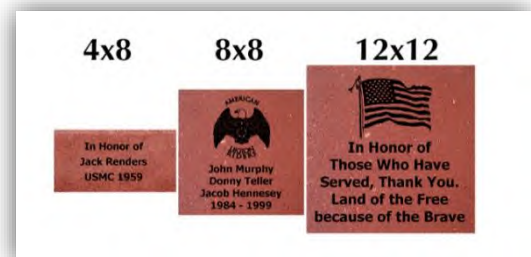
719-963-3517

RoughRiderTR@gmail.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
- 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/>

MARCH 2024

For the most current version see:
https://www.legion209.org/coming_up/

March 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Price Depends on Menu Hamdogger Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	2  Honor Bell Meeting 10:00am
3	4 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm	5	6 Marksmanship 4:45/5:45/6:56pm 	7 Exec. Cmttee Mtg 6:00pm Young Guns 6:15pm Venture Crew 7:00pm  	8 Price TBD Scout Fundraiser Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	9 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
10 Daylight Saving Begins	11 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm	12 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm 	13 Marksmanship 4:45/5:45/6:56pm 	14 Young Guns 6:15pm Venture Crew 7:00pm  	15 \$15/person Happy B'day American Legion! Chicken Fried Chicken 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	16
17 St Patrick's Day	18 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm	19 Start of Spring ALR Exec. Mtng 6:30pm. 	20 Marksmanship 4:45/5:45/6:56pm 	21 Young Guns 6:15pm Venture Crew 7:00pm  	22 Price TBD ALA Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	23 Healing Warriors! 9:00am-1:00pm
24	25 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:30pm	26 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:45pm  	27 Marksmanship 4:45/5:45/6:56pm 	28 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm Young Guns 6:15pm Venture Crew 7:00pm  	29 Good Friday! Price TBD Honor Bell Fundraiser 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	30
31 Easter Happy Easter!	Notes:					

April 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	2	3 Marksmanship 4:45/5:45/6:56pm 	4 Young Guns 6:15pm   Venture Crew 7:00pm	5 Price Depends on Menu Hamdogger Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	6  Honor Bell Meeting 10:00am
7	8 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	9 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm 	10 Marksmanship 4:45/5:45/6:56pm 	11 Young Guns 6:15pm   Venture Crew 7:00pm	12 Price TBD SAL Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	13 ELECTIONS! Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
14	15 Tax Day (Taxes Due) Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	16 ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:30pm. 	17	18  Venture Crew 7:00pm	19 \$15/person Chicken Fried Chicken 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	20 Female Veterans Social 9:00am-11:00am
21	22 Earth Day Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	23 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:45pm  	24	25 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm   Venture Crew 7:00pm	26 Arbor Day Price TBD ALA Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	27 Healing Warriors! 9:00am-1:00pm
28	29 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	30	Notes:			