



The Centennial

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AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL
POST 209

HAPPY
INDEPENDENCE
DAY!!!



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Chaplain:	Bob "Odie" O'Donnell	(719) 432-6018
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Finance Officer:	Ken Taylor	(719) 461-4047
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Sgt-at-Arms:	Chris Roebuck	(719) 412-3145
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Chaplain:	Jim Bird	(719) 231-4928



From the Desk of Our Commander

As we look forward to celebrating our Independence Day, we should make note of the significance of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in our journey to become a nation, as well as the evolution of our nation in all the following years. The Declaration of Independence was a significant milestone. It was the culmination of several decades of conceptual development for what our emerging nation could and should be. It was a concept that grew from historical research, debates, arguments and discussions in town squares, churches, town halls, taverns, inns, and other gathering places. Its evolving form was documented in newspapers, letters, and other treatises. The Declaration of Independence marked the transition of our emerging nation from concept to action...action that endured through to victory in the revolution and resulted in our nation, which formally came to fruition with the adoption of our Constitution. To get a feel for the significance of the struggle and that process, imagine if your parents, as young adults, began such an effort, which was passed on to you, then by you to your children, passed yet again and finally brought to fruition by your children and grandchildren. Multiple generations of people from diverse backgrounds successively working to build consensus on a dream and, with the signing of the Declaration of Independence, begin to form and shape that dream into reality. Many of the key individuals who began that effort never lived to see us emerge as a nation. They forged ahead on blind faith. It is a truly phenomenal story to study, to remember, and to celebrate every year on July 4th, our Independence Day!

This year the Post will continue our tradition of celebration and fellowship by hosting a barbecue. We will provide the hamburgers and brats. The sides and dessert will be a potluck, so please bring enough for your family plus 2 or 3 more people. We will start at 11:00am and go until no one is still hanging out at the post. Once complete, make sure to pick from one of the many places in and around town to (safely) watch fireworks to continue celebrating the 4th of July.

I look forward to serving as your Post Commander for the coming year and I thank each and every one of you for all you do to help our veterans and our Post.



Steve Hayes
Post 209 Commander





From Our Adjutant

As the Adjutant I am here to assist you with membership issues and answer questions you may have about membership or The Legion. The beginning of the renewal season is upon us and I want to start by saying Thank You to all who have joined or transferred into Post 209. Some of you are new, some have been here for what seems like forever. The trust you have placed in us to accomplish the mission of The American Legion is gratefully appreciated.

National will be sending out the first renewal notices for 2025 soon and a reminder that dues have increased to \$55. Please respond to the first mailer, the more money and time we spend on printing and mailing reminders the less we have to dedicate to our programs and charities.

You can use the provided envelope that will come with the renewal notice, or you can renew on National's website after logging into your MyLegion account. Or you can come on down and see me on most Monday's when I am at the Post or even a Friday meal. I cannot process credit cards at the Post, but I can go online at one of the sources noted above and help you process it there if you wish. If you are NOT opting into a multiyear option you can renew through the Post website at www.legion209.org. That will cost \$2 more to cover most of the PayPal service charge.

A final reminder, ALL 2024 memberships expire on 31 December 2024, not on the anniversary of your last renewal or initial entry date.

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

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

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Adjutant



From Our Senior Vice Commander

Good day to all my brothers, sisters and family members of Post 209. I am writing this article from my new position as The Sr. Vice Commander. My grammar and spelling hasn't improved so far, but maybe you will overlook that. I wasn't going to write anything this month, but I was guilted into it. This is the first report I will be writing as Sr. Vice Commander. It won't be terribly long. Hopefully it will be informative. I guess I became Sr. Vice Commander officially on 6/23/24. Among other duties, I will be The Membership Chairman for the Post. I will do my best to assist all of you with any questions about memberships. If I don't know, I'll know where to find your answers. I will also be contacting as many of you as possible to get any and all of your inputs regarding how you think we as a Post can improve. I want you to be honest with me. If you don't tell me, we can't fix it. One of the things most on my mind is why with over 1000 members we see less than 100 of you. We are the Largest Post in Colorado, membership-wise. Surely we can find something of interest to all of you.

My phone number starts with 918. If you receive a call from a number beginning with 918, it is most likely me. Please answer it. If for no other reason, tell me not to call again. I hope to see you at the Post for one or more of our events. Despite what Jay says, I really am a likable guy.

Jerry Hopper
Senior Vice Commander



And the Drive is On!

Beginning 1 July, we start our 2025 membership drive for The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion. Please remember your membership due date of 31 December is NOT when you should consider renewing. **You should do it when you get that first renewal notice!** This will ensure there is no lapse in your membership status, keep the Legion magazine coming to your doorstep without a hitch, and save our organizations from spending hundreds of thousands of dollars sending renewal reminder notices. This is money that could and should be used to further our great programs. And don't forget, effective 1 July, dues for our Legionnaires will go up to \$55/year, and up to \$45/year for the Auxiliary. The Auxiliary juniors will stay at \$12/year. 2025 dues for our SAL Squadron will be \$30/year for adults and \$20/year for juniors under 18. These new rates are the result of the increase announced by our respective national organizations. We're still the best deal in town, and this is the first increase we've seen in nine years. Don't you wish inflation would have done the same thing? And oh by the way, if you get your renewal in early, you will be eligible to receive a "free meal" in October when we have our "Early Bird" dinner event.

Thank you in advance for getting those renewals in early. We appreciate your continued support.
The Post 209 Family Leadership Team.



From Our Auxiliary President

Our Department Convention was a lot of fun. Our officers are now officially taking over their elected positions our members chose to represent our Unit this year. Your officers are as follows:

President- Royce Ann Hopper
Vice President - Michelle Castillo
Secretary - Patricia Weaver
Treasurer - Kellie Hayes
Historian - Sean Cope
Sgt-at-Arms - Monalisa Taylor
Chaplain - Priscilla O'Donnell
Member-at-Large - Jackie Bowen

Thank you to our officers for volunteering and accepting their positions.

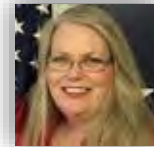
Cathy Barger volunteered to serve as communications officer. She has done an outstanding job!

Our 2024 ALA Colorado Girls State was a huge success! Unit 209 sponsored 29 girls, thank to everyone who graciously sponsored one of these young women. Let's double the number of 2025 Delegates! If you are interested in helping to reach out to schools, put up flyers/posters, help interview, or help with other events we do for our Girls State program, please let us know!

Want to help plan, cook, etc. an Auxiliary dinner? You can volunteer by letting Jackie know!

Royce Hopper

**Unit President
American Legion Auxiliary**



From Our American Legion Auxiliary Chaplain

I am Priscilla O'Donnell. I am honored to be serving Unit 209 American Legion Auxiliary as Chaplain in this upcoming 2024/2025 year. I just wanted to introduce myself.

I am the youngest of five children. Born and raised in Pittsburgh PA. I graduated with a BA with a dual major in Sociology/Psychology and Religion and a minor in Music (instrument: voice) from Concordia College in Ann Arbor, MI.

I worked various jobs until about 38 years ago, at which time I started as an Administrative Assistant to the University Computer Department at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. Demonstrating a knack for logical thinking, I was hired by the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN - the 'parent' of Regent University) doing Computer Application Support. I am still working full time for CBN and honestly love my job even though it is frustrating 😊

I met my husband, Bob (aka "Odie") in Virginia in late 1996 and we married early 1998. I was a single parent of the 3 ½ year old girl, Rachel, when we met, and Bob adopted her after we married. We moved from VA to PA in the fall of 1998 and I became CBN's first remote worker. Working from home gave us the opportunity become a foster family. We fostered for 9 years while in PA, and then another 7 years in CO when we moved here in the spring of 2007. We stopped fostering after my diagnosis with MS 10 years ago.

Bob was always involved with The American Legion through our time in PA and here in CO, but I never joined up with the Auxiliary until back in 2022 when we found and joined Unit 209. I love the comradery and the attitude of the people at this unit. Being part of the Auxiliary, I am constantly learning how the Auxiliary has a heart for our veterans, active-duty servicemembers, and families.

Feel free to reach out to me with your prayer requests, etc. Please title any prayer request emails with "Prayer Request" so I do not overlook them. I want to be here to support you any way I can. My cell number is listed on page 2 above, or Email: priscilla.odonnell@comcast.net

Looking forward to serving,

Priscilla O'Donnell
Auxiliary Unit 209 Chaplain





Chaplain's Corner

Happy Independence Day! It's great to be an American! But there's a freedom even greater!

[Jesus,] who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins. Colossians 1:14 (NLT)

We've made Independence Day a celebration of excess with lavish displays in the sky and fun. It's so easy to forget the price paid when a party is on our minds.

What about our soul's freedom? We say we're conscious of the price Jesus paid to set us free. But do we celebrate only with flashy experiences and fun stories about how Jesus freed a parking space for us just when we needed it? Or do we give the honor and reverence He deserves for what it cost Jesus emotionally, physically, and spiritually to win our freedom? Do we pause to imagine the moment when midday turned to the blackest night, when the air chilled as if all warmth had been sucked from earth's atmosphere, when tremors unlike any a human has known coursed through Christ's dying form? Do we ponder the torment of both body and soul that the King of glory endured so we could live free? Fireworks? Or sober silence?

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

Be The One!



From our Sons of The American Legion Commander

I am honored and thrilled to introduce myself as the new Commander of Sons of The American Legion, Squadron 209. This esteemed position is both a privilege and a responsibility that I do not take lightly. I am excited to work with such a dedicated and passionate group of individuals who are committed to serving our veterans, our communities, and our nation.

As your new Commander, I would like to first start by saying thank you to Rob Barry for his past work as commander. His hard work and those that proceeded him led to the solid foundation upon which we stand today.

Moving forward, there are a few key areas I would like to focus on during my tenure:

1. ****Membership Growth and Involvement****: Growing our membership base and increasing involvement is crucial for the continued success of Squadron 209. I aim to implement new strategies to attract and retain members, particularly younger generations. By fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment, we can ensure that our squadron remains vibrant and

dynamic. **This is where we need your help. If you know anyone that meets the membership criteria to join SAL and is not currently a member, please encourage them to join the Squadron.** Additionally, please participate. I encourage you to join us at the next opportunity!

2. **** Promote Patriotism and Americanism****: Investing in the development of our members is vital. I plan to organize workshops and training sessions that encourage participation in the *Ten Ideals* and *5 Point Program of Service* to empower our members with the skills and knowledge they need to take on leadership roles within the squadron and beyond. By cultivating strong leaders, we ensure the longevity and effectiveness of our organization. I urge you to participate if you have not completed them in the past and encourage you to push the events to the youth.

3. **** Continue and expand the Jr. Shooting Sports Program****: **Cultivating youth understanding and appreciation of the Second Amendment is vital for safeguarding our constitutional rights.** Through the Jr. Shooting Sports Program, we offer a secure, structured platform for learning responsible firearm ownership and usage. This initiative not only imparts marksmanship and safety skills but also instills a profound respect for the rights and duties associated with gun ownership. By educating our youth about the Second Amendment, we foster informed and conscientious citizens who cherish and defend their constitutional freedoms. Additionally, **the program instills discipline, focus, and confidence, nurturing the holistic development of our young members.** Through its expansion, we reinforce the bedrock of American values and empower our youth to champion their rights throughout their lives.

In closing, I am incredibly excited about the journey ahead and the opportunities we have to make a difference. I am confident that, together, we can achieve great things and continue to honor and preserve the memories of our members and our forefathers in all wars. I look forward to meeting and working with each of you in the coming months.

Chris Hollingsworth
SAL Commander



From our Post Historian

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





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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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



The Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall

Kurt Skinner

Historian



From our Color/Honor Guard Captain

Every once in a while, a veteran’s family will touch you in a way you can never forget. I am sure every member of the team has the one or two particular Final Honors they supported that stand out for them, myself included. Back in early April, Valerie, our Honor Guard Coordinator, was contacted by the family of a veteran requesting our support for his Final Honors. This request was a little different than the usual requests that we receive. SGT Bernard Diaz served in the

Army during WWII, was 100 years and four months old when he passed, was eligible to be interred at Arlington National Cemetery, and his wishes were to be interred here at Pikes Peak National Cemetery. Since he did not retire, the Army would provide the required two personnel for the playing of TAPS and folding / presenting the American Flag, so we were needed for the rifle volleys. Valerie spoke with the family periodically to keep them updated on the status of our support, but with being two months out we did not expect to see the signups for support to be solid until later. As weeks went by, the signups for support on the Honor Guard Event Calendar were not looking good for that service. We were sitting at only two members signed up for the Final Honors (three is the minimum required to support). The thought of having to tell this family that their veteran was not going to receive the Final Honors he greatly deserved was starting to really bother Valerie. She dreads having to deny requests for support from a funeral director, but absolutely hates it when she has to tell a family directly that we cannot get the three members necessary to be there for their veteran's Final Honors. With this family, the thought of saying "we cannot be there" was hitting harder since the family she had built a rapport with was so kind and hopeful that the Honor Guard would be there for a veteran of the Greatest Generation. Finally, with little time to spare and some team member schedule changes, there were enough members available to support the event. The look on Valerie's face showed the sheer joy she felt being able to tell the family a couple of days prior to the event that our team would be there. We ended up with four members signed up to support the event, which is actually the number I prefer to have since it allows for the command / presenter of the expended rounds to be outside the rank of the firing party. Four members also helps ensure that we have enough available in case someone is unable to support at the last minute, which unfortunately was the case with this event. So, the team was very lucky to still have enough personnel available to provide the requested support. I was present at the event yesterday for this veteran, though due to a uniform mishap, I sadly was unable to provide support (again, luckily there was fourth member). I saw the family waiting after everyone else had started for their cars, looking towards the Honor Guard building. Valerie had told the family I would be present and they were looking for me. As I left the Honor Guard building to meet with the family, one of them (great-granddaughter?) had started walking towards me with a small bag. She thanked me for having our team out there to support, to which I responded with the customary "it is an honor and a privilege for us to be there for our veterans." While we sometimes are handed donations after the events, this time I was told that this was a small gift for Valerie to thank her for the support and compassion she provided their family during the time leading up to the service. I could see the other family member (daughter), holding the folded flag, still waiting and Bill waving me over. The look of sincere thanks and appreciation on her face when I took her hand and offered the team's condolences was all it took, no words were needed. While a part of me does get a little "emotional" at every Final Honors I attend, there are a few that hit quite a bit harder. The family and the impact of our support makes this Final Honors one I will never forget. When I returned home, I handed Valerie the bag and told her how it was a gift from the family to her. She was quite surprised, to say the least, since no one has ever done that before. I am quite sure that this will be a family that Valerie will not forget either. Oh, and the gift was what former (and greatly missed) Honor Guard team member Brad Henderson would describe as "a bottle of grape juice – aged in oak" along with a personal note written to her on a picture of a very young SGT Diaz in uniform.

I want to take a moment to thank Bill Thomas, Jeff Heischman, and Steve Hayes for their support the last couple of months. While there are several Honor Guard members that provide much

needed support to the team, these three team members were crucial to the team's success. Due to multiple work and personal commitments (some very unplanned), the team was able to continue providing our veterans Final Honors largely due to the efforts of these three team members and their dedication to our mission. Thank you very much for your extraordinary efforts during a difficult time, I am extremely grateful.

I am sure you are well aware by now, the Honor Guard continues to work very hard support our veterans and our community... but, we **NEED YOUR HELP!** A large portion of the team have full time jobs, or are otherwise not available, there are only a handful of team members supporting the majority of all events. Unfortunately, this has led to the team denying requests to support Final Honors at veterans' services due to not having the minimum three members available. This means veterans are not receiving the Final Honors they both earned and deserve; which is something each of us have earned and should expect when it is our turn. Please, read the next paragraph and ask yourself – “Do I have a few hours each month to support even just one event?”

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 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, 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. 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 Fall 2024 Junior Shooting Class flyer has been posted on the Young Guns website. The Young Guns brochure, Basic Course Application (new shooters), and Marksmanship Course Application are also available on the website. The cost for students is \$30. It is never too early to sign up, so send in your youth's application today! The Fall 2024 classes start with Marksmanship on Wednesday September 11 and Young Guns on Thursday September 12.

The JSSP needs Instructors and Range Safety Officers (RSOs) to support the program, ensuring quality instruction and a safe range for the students. A tentative schedule has been set for holding NRA Basic Rifle and NRA Basic RSO Courses this summer. The scheduled courses are based on interest and number of student signups, a minimum of four students are needed for each course at least two weeks prior to the course date (to allow for ordering materials from the NRA). The cost for each course is \$60 and covers: all materials, range time, firearm use, ammunition, and lunch. The courses scheduled are:

- NRA Basic Range Safety Officer Course 07:00-17:00 at Post 209 Saturday August 3 (Sign up by July 19)
- NRA Basic Rifle Course 07:30-17:00 (07:30-15:00 at Post 209, 15:30-17:00 at a range TBD) Sunday August 18 (Sign up by August 2)

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

Chewing the Fat:

"God made the vittles but the devil made the cook," a popular saying by seafaring men in the 19th century when salted beef was staple diet aboard ship. This tough cured beef, suitable only for long voyages when nothing else was cheap or would keep as well (remember, there was no refrigeration), required prolonged chewing to make it edible. Men often chewed one chunk for hours, just as it were chewing gum and referred to this practice as "chewing the fat."

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Adjutant





Bringing A Little South to the West

Every year since childhood, the 4th of July brings fond memories of Black Kat Firecrackers, Sparklers, and many other types of fireworks we set off in celebration of our Declaration of Independence from England. There were many brands of firecrackers, but nothing compared to Black Kat. They were loud and pretty powerful for a firecracker. But if you wanted something to really blow things up, you got M-80's or Cherry Bombs.

Cherry Bombs were aptly named. They looked like a cherry. They were red and round and the fuse resembled the stem. But there was nothing sweet about them. Just watching one go off earned enough respect to know you don't hold it in your hands when you light it. And if they weren't scary enough, we had M-80's. These monsters were about 1 ½ inches long and tube-shaped with the fuse coming out from the middle of the tube. They looked harmless, but they had been known to blow a couple of fingers off if you were dumb enough to hold them in your hand to light. I don't think you can even buy M-80's these days. Good! Both of these were for very special use, but they gave us a big thrill to watch them go off. Growing up I'd heard of some kids putting Cherry Bombs in the commode in the Boys Room, but I don't recall anything like happening in my school. We did some stupid things, but nothing that was destructive to school property.

While Sparklers were cool to light up at night and have sword fights, firecrackers were our primary source of pleasure and not just during the Independence Day holiday. We pretty much played with them year-round. I remember on one occasion we were visiting grandparents on their farm in Missouri. They lived on a gravel road and had a neighbor across the road who had a farm and also raised chickens for laying. The chickens were kept in a pen on the side of their house and the pen was large enough for the chickens to wander around outside the coop. Also near the pen was an apple tree. There was always a large supply of rotten apples laying on the ground. Me, Bubba, and the kid who lived at the house and was about our age got the idea to use the rotten apples as hand grenades. We, being the geniuses we were, thought it would be really funny to put a Black Kat firecracker in the top of the rotten apple, light them up and toss them into the pen. When the apple grenade exploded, it was hilarious watching the chickens screech and scamper. Yep, it was great fun until the kid's Mom saw us from the kitchen window. The three of us found it a little uneasy sitting down for a few days after that. My grandparents didn't often spank us, but they also didn't shy away from it when warranted. And looking back, this was one of those times. I also heard those chickens didn't lay eggs for several days.

But back to our Independence Day celebration. Other than firecrackers, Roman Candles, Bottle Rockets, and Sparklers, the other major attraction was always the fireworks over the Mississippi River. We would drive down Riverside Drive and park along the river. We'd get out of the station wagon, lay on the hood and/or on top of the car and wait for nightfall. Every year the city would put on a firework's show that was the highlight of the day. Hundreds of cars would be parked along the Drive watching the show. And they never let us down.

I don't know if I've outgrown the thrill of playing with firecrackers, but I can tell you the cost would keep me from buy them now. Wow! The thought of spending a couple hundred dollars for 15 minutes of fun isn't appealing. But I do still enjoy watching a good firework's display like the one over Pikes Peak or at the Baseball Stadium. They always bring back great memories, and it doesn't cost me a cent. That also makes me smile.

Jay Bowen
Past Commander



UPCOMING EVENTS

Post 209 Blood Drive!

Details for the drive:

- Date: Monday, July 15
- Draw time: 2pm – 6pm
- Setup/ Breakdown time: 1:00pm – 7:00pm
- Address: 3613 Jeannine Dr. Colorado Springs CO 80917
- Open to the public
- 0 of 24 appointments filled
- Goal is to collect 19 units

Other notes:

- **Arrival:** Our team will arrive 60 – 90 min early
- **Staff break:** Just a reminder our staff will take their break from: 1:30pm – 2pm
- **Number to call:** 719-599-8624
- **Tables:** Just a reminder we will need to borrow 3 tables and 10 chairs
- **Temperature:** Just a reminder to keep the room temperature between 62 - 65 degrees for donor safety
- **Social media:** If you have time, we love when you share pictures on social media!

Marketing Materials:

1. Direct link for [drive](#)
2. Coordinator portal is [here](#)
3. Social Media post and digital posters are [here](#) – My favorite is Facebook Week4 – This also has digital posters and fliers too

Donor Scheduling Options:

- **QR Code:** On digital flyer located in Social Asset link
- **Direct Link:** [Here](#)
- **Website:** On www.vitalant.org using Blood Drive Code: 10053910
- **Telephone:** 877-258-4825 and use Blood Drive Code: 10053910

Donor Notes:

1. **Fast Track Notes:** Fast tract: <https://vitalant.org/health-questionnaire>
2. **Day of overview:** <https://vitalant.org/blood-donation-process>
3. **Eligibility:** <https://vitalant.org/blood-donation-requirements>

Sign in Table Overview

1. Working with the team lead
2. Making sure a donor has eaten in [the last two hours](#)
3. Making sure donors have completed their fast track (needs to be filled out the day of your donation)
 1. Fast track link: Vitalant.org/health

If the donor is under 18 they need a [parent permission slip](#)



**1st Annual
Neal Thomas Jr.
Memorial Golf Tournament**
Where: Antler Creek Golf Course, Falcon, CO
When: Monday, 9 September, 2024
Time: Player Check-in 7:00 am
Shotgun Start 8:00am – Scramble Format



**Play “Hooky” or take a PTO day and support a GREAT cause!
Better still, invite the boss to come along and play. Join us for a fun
day of Golf and support our local area Veterans!**

This will be played in a 4-person Scramble format, followed by an awards ceremony. The entry fee is \$125 per-person which includes; **Green Fees, Longest Drive, Closest to the Pin, Team Ball, Range Balls, Golf Cart, Lunch, Door Prizes, and Awards.** Team/player check-in will begin at 7:00am, followed by a “shotgun” start at 8:00am. Teams/Players must pre-pay for the event. Payments can be by cash, check, or credit card. **The Registration form and payment must be received by 15 August, 2024. Contact our Committee Chairman to arrange payment and registration, or mail your check, cash or money order with this form to; American Legion Post 209, 3613 Jeannine Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80917.**

This is a charitable fundraiser event sponsored by our Post. Proceeds will be used to offset costs associated with American Legion travel and project/program support for our volunteers. The American Legion works within our local communities to promote our four pillars; support for veterans and their families, continuing education of our youth, promoting Patriotism and Americanism, and advocating for a strong national defense.

Player Representative POC: Jay Bowen
Phone: 901-484-7193
Email: legionnairejay@yahoo.com

TEAM NAME:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Entry fee</u>
			\$125
			\$125
			\$125
			\$125

*Asterisk Team Captain / Main POC.

Total: _____

Thank you for your support!

Jay Bowen, Golf Committee Chairman
legionnairejay@yahoo.com
(901) 484-7193



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 PicnicWise.com

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



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

for presentation at the next
Citizenship Naturalization
ceremony in Colorado Springs

Where: 21c Library
(1175 Chapel Hills Drive)

Date: 26 July 2024

Time: 1100



YOUR \$25 GIFT PROVIDES:

- Made in USA 3x5 All-weather U.S. Flag
- U.S. Flag Etiquette booklet



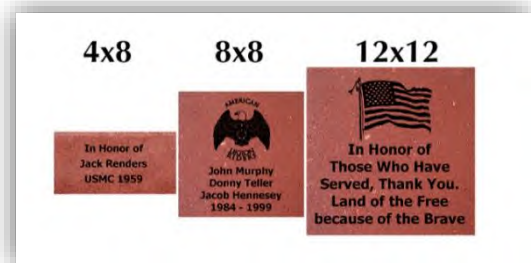
Contact Kurt Skinner
Post 209 Americanism Chair
To Sponsor Your U.S. Flag
TODAY!

719-963-3517

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.org>

Oratorical Contest



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










www.colegionoratorical.org






















Eagle Scout of the Year



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

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

July 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	2	3	4 Indep. Day Independence Day Picnic 11:00am Venture  Crew 7:00pm 	5	6  Honor Bell Meeting 10:00am
7	8 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	9 Honor Gd. Trng  6:00pm	10	11 Exec. Cmttee Mtg  6:00pm Venture Crew 7:00pm 	12 Price TBD ALR Dinner  6:00pm RSVP Required!	13 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
14	15 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
21	22 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 Price TBD Naturalization Ceremony Time TBD  ALA Dinner  6:00pm RSVP Required!	27 Healing Warriors! 9:00am-1:00pm Flagship Health will be available
28	29 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	30	31	Notes: We will not serve Hamdogger night this month.		

August 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1  Venture Crew 7:00pm	2 Price Depends on Menu Hamdogger Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	3  Honor Bell Meeting 10:00am
4	5 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	6 	7  Venture Crew 7:00pm	8  Venture Crew 7:00pm	9 Price TBD SAL Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	10 Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
11	12 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	13 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm 	14  Venture Crew 7:00pm	15  Venture Crew 7:00pm	16 \$15/person Chicken Fried Chicken 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	17 
18	19 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	20 ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:30pm. 	21  Venture Crew 7:00pm	22 Honor Gd. Trng 6:00pm  Venture Crew 7:00pm	23 Price TBD ALA Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	24 Healing Warriors! 9:00am-1:00pm
25	26 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	27 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:45pm  	28  Venture Crew 7:00pm	29  Venture Crew 7:00pm	30 Price TBD Troop 77 Fundraising Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required!	31 