

The Centennial



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From the Desk and Mind of the Commander

Mike Barger

December is here. Can you believe it? This is the time for family and I'd like to take this time to wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from my family to yours. You know, it sure is getting to be disappointing that all the stores these days are more concerned about making a buck, and pushing out Christmas earlier and earlier. Whatever happened to not seeing things in the store for the upcoming holiday until the month of the holiday? Just once, I like to see nothing in the store for Christmas until after Thanksgiving. It's like Thanksgiving doesn't exist anymore, except for a day that comes before Black Friday.

With another year coming to a close, let's reflect on some of the great things this Post has accomplished in the last year. On the Legion side, we were able to surpass our membership goal of 1026, and remained the largest Post in the state. Thanks to all of you that renewed and believe in what we do. Without you, we wouldn't exist. Jay Bowen finished his successful year as Department Commander. Jay represented the Department and this Post with the utmost dedication we all expect. We're also in talks with Home Depot to see about getting our Post revitalized with upgrades throughout. More to come on this. There are many more things we did, but so little space to write about it.

Our Auxiliary had a very successful year at membership, finishing with 151 members. They are growing every year, and without them, this Post wouldn't be running as efficiently as we are. They had another successful year at the Stand Down, coming back with only 1 box of items. All other items were handed out. Auxiliary can be proud that Evelyn Espinola finished up her year as Department President, and was elected as the new National Auxiliary Chaplain. May her year at this new endeavor be as successful as her year as President. Auxiliary also has a knack of coming up with great fundraising ideas, to include the always popular Butter Braids and this year, the first ever cookbook with all proceeds going to the Post, and creation of the Post-Christmas ornament. There's plenty of these still available.

Our Riders hosted the annual Biker Ball, held to raise money to support McCandless Veteran's Home in Florence. They also has another successful Annual Poker Run. Although the weather was bad for the Annual Neal Thomas Jr Memorial Ride, the Riders were still able to raise some money to donate to the Veterans Assistance Fund. Also, the Riders have been fortunate to meet with an acquaintance that has graciously donated funds to this Post. They stepped up and had another banner year when it came to the holiday food boxes. Thanks to all who brought in food. There are some out there that aren't as fortunate as some of us, and it feels good to be able to help out when we could.

SAL had another successful year. They were able to meet their goal of \$1500 for the Child Welfare Fund with the help of all you. They have the same goal again this year, so please help out when you can. They were able to do more deliveries of the Josh Dogs to the hospitals, which every kid that was fortunate to get one, loved them. They also completed another year of successful Young Guns, and had one of our shooters that was sponsored by Post 209 become a National Shooting Champion.

If you've been to the Post lately, you will have noticed the new floor in the main meeting room. It sure makes this Post look great. Thanks to Art for coming up with this idea and for those that stepped up to assist. Art continues to rent out the Post when he can, and that helps with the overall cost of keeping this Post open. Although we may not be as financially secure as we want to be, there's progress being made with the Capitol Fund coming up with fundraising ideas to keep this Post solvent. It's our hope that the more ideas we come up, the more we can take these ideas and implement them and make them annual events. Keep in mind, this means volunteers are needed, so please find it in your heart to give back this next year.



From the Unit 209 President

Cathy Barger

The annual Veterans Day Parade in downtown Colorado Springs was attended by the American Legion Family of Neal Thomas Jr. Centennial Post 209, Department of Colorado and Department of Colorado Auxiliary President Ann Ritacco. The weather was a bit windy, but it didn't spoil the day to honor our Nation's heroes. We had Scouts helping us decorate the grandstands for our Military past and present heroes. It was a great day.

The Legion Family Cookbook is available. You can purchase them for \$15.00. And the one of kind Neal Thomas Jr. Centennial Post 209 Christmas Ornaments are still available. These make a great gifts. You can purchase one for \$15.00.

I also want to thank those volunteers that help with cooking and serving the meals and provided desserts for the homeless Veterans housed at the Clarion Hotel.

Thanks to all those that supported the Butter Braid/Rada Cutlery sales. We had another successful fundraiser with your help.

Happy Birthday to Doris Carroll, Cassandra Eagen, Alexia Espinola, Carol Kennedy, Jane Kerr, Chris Kinnard, Sharon Rawson, Carolyn Schubert and Janet Schwarzbart. Make sure to wish these ladies Happy Birthday when you see them.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR! May everyone have a safe and joyous holiday season and may we come back after the holiday season with the same spirit and desire to help others that need assistance as we have this year.



From the Adjutant

Marvin Weaver, Jr.

I would first like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I hope you have a safe holiday season and enjoy this time of year with family and friends. The Post will be having the Annual Christmas Party on December 9th and rumor has it a special guest will be making an appearance; I hope to see you there. Please RSVP to Jackie Bowen by December 6th so we can get a headcount of kids coming.

We are doing well on membership for 2018 but still have a ways to go. Our goal is 1,037 members and we still need about 300 members. If you have not renewed by December 31, 2017 you will be carried as delinquent on your membership. Please, if you have not renewed yet, send in your renewal.

We have had an incredible year and I look forward to seeing what we can do in the next year with all of your help. Post 209 is recognized by the Department and Nationally as a Post who is growing and doing great things. That is because of members such as yourself and what you bring to our Post. Thank you for all that you do for us, our Veterans, and the community.

RSVP! RSVP! RSVP!

We're sending out a plea for your support. Have you noticed at the bottom of every page in this newsletter there is an RSVP contact name and number? In addition, have you noticed on our calendars there are dinners listed that indicate we need your RSVP?

This is critical to help keep prices low. If Art has a headcount, he knows how much food to buy and prepare. Food is not wasted, and that helps to keep costs low.

The only two meals we serve that don't require an RSVP is Hamdogger (1st Friday), and our breakfast.

Sadly, this past month at our Thanksgiving Holiday Dinner we had to turn away several people who had RSVP'd because there were SEVERAL who came for dinner who did not, and they got there first. The Commander told Rusty to start adding another \$2.00 to the cost of the dinner for anyone who shows up not on Jackie's RSVP list. Folks, this is not to punish but to encourage and provide incentive to RSVP. He indicated if this continues, we may ask people who come to a dinner without RSVP to wait until all who did is served.

Let's all our part to help keep prices low, and allow everyone to enjoy a Friday night dinner.



HO! HO! HO!

MERRY CHRISTMAS! Dec 9th, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., we will have our annual Christmas party instead of our monthly meeting. It will be **POT LUCK** event so please be sure to bring something that can feed 2 to 3 more people more than what you are bringing for your family. If you are bringing your children or grandchildren ages 1-12 please RSVP for them, let us know their age when you RSVP, and bring a wrapped gift with their name for Santa to give the kids. We will have a small gift for each child ages 1-12, from the Legion family. This is the reason we ask you to RSVP for the children you are bringing so that no child gets left out.

Also, we ask that you consider bringing an unwrapped toy for our “Toys for Tots” drive. This will be distributed to families with kids who probably won’t have a nice Christmas because they’ve fallen on hard times.



Hope to see everyone there.



From Squadron 209
Commander Ken Taylor

Squadron 209 stopped collecting "gently used" clothing for distribution to Veterans at the end of November 2017. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this worthy cause, it’s very much appreciated.

The Child Welfare Foundation goal for this year is \$1,500 and we could use your help to reach that goal. Please help fill the red piggy banks in the Dining Room and turn in the piggy banks you have at home.

Squadron 209, along with Post and Auxiliary members presented Josh Dogs to St Francis Hospital in Colorado Springs on Friday October 27th, 2017. This Young Lady was the first recipient!



On Monday, November 20, 2017, Squadron 209 presented Josh Dogs to Memorial Hospital (Children’s). It’s great to see all the smiles that Josh brings out! We continue to hear many good stories about this program. If anyone knows of a child who could benefit from a Josh Dog, please contact the Post at 719-599-8624 or any SAL Squadron 209 Officer. Officers phone numbers are listed at the end of each monthly Newsletter.

****NOTE****

NO SAL MEETING IN DECEMBER. WE WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THE POST CHRISTMAS DINNER. COME ON OUT AND JOIN THE FUN!



From the Sergeant-at-Arms

Stan "Sgt. Ski" Kransinski

Good reading to all my American Legion Post 209 family,



In sports, a most valuable player (MVP) award is an honor typically bestowed upon the best-performing player (or players) in an entire league, for a particular competition, or on a specific team. John Maxwell says there are seven tips he offers for becoming the MVP on your team - even if you don't think you're the most talented member:



1. Play till the whistle blows. Don't walk off the field in the game. Even if you're behind - especially if you're behind - you can make a winning contribution. But you'll never do it if you quit early.
2. Practice good communication. For me that all comes down to clarity, responsiveness, and frequency. Be clear, don't bottleneck information, and keep everyone who needs to know in the know as often as they need to know it.
3. Work hard. More accurately, work harder than you think you need to. Doing the minimum will win no points with people who are putting in extra effort. If you have more to give, do it.
4. Share your best. If you want to serve your team members, don't hold back. Creativity, talent, learning, insight - they can make all the difference in the final outcome, so share your best stuff.
5. Own your mistakes. Responsibility is the mark of a strong team player. If there's a problem and it's yours, own it. Accountability frees people to work on the problem, not fester about the one who created it.
6. Affirm others. Team spirit is critical for victory, and everyone on the team is responsible to improve the mood if possible. Catch others doing good work and call them out.
7. Be positive. By its very nature, cynicism kills teamwork. Unlike constructive criticism, it's defensive and self-indulgent. It's designed to protect the cynic at the expense of everyone else. A positive attitude about problems is the best way to help the team get past them.

If I may, I would like to reflect the acronym MVP back on what that means to the American Legion.

M is for mem·ber. ['membər] NOUN - a person, animal, or plant belonging to a particular group: a person, country, or organization that has joined a group, society, or team.

V is for vol·un·teer. [ˌvɒləntɪr] NOUN - a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. VERB - freely offer to do something.

P is for par·tic·i·pant. [ˌpɑːtɪsəpənt] NOUN - a person who takes part in something.

We have all chosen to become members of the largest American Legion Post in Colorado doing big things. The Post needs you to freely volunteer to take part, in some way, with what the Post does...assist Veterans, youth and children. The Veterans, youth and children need all of us to be a participant in this effort.

Please become an American Legion Post 209 MVP-step up and help. Assistance is needed throughout our efforts.

'We can only make a difference if we are involved...participants not spectators.'

Thank you for your continued service and please have a great day/week!



From the Sr. Vice Commander
Eric Testorff

One of the Four Pillars of the American Legion is Americanism. As a member of the Legion’s National Americanism Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to remind our readers that Americanism is something we should employ when we interact with our community. It is something that we model before our children with the Flag and the Anthem. It is something that the Legionnaire strives to promote, and it is something we should never take for granted.

Americanism is sometimes equated with patriotism or love of one’s country, but it is at the same time... something more. Many countries in the world have patriotism. They have citizens who love their country, love where they grew up, love the home of their ancestors. This should be respected and never dismissed. To be an Irishman, a Frenchman, a Greek, Japanese or a host of other nationalities means that your country—warts and all—is still your country. You take great pride in it, and in being a citizen.

But to me, Americanism is an idea unique in 5,000 years of human history. Our Constitution, while having aspects of English common law and French egalitarianism, is really a break with the long march of clans, tribes, kingdoms, nations and empires. The common thread of this long march is the ever-consolidating, ever-centralizing aggregation of power into the hands of the few - even the one.

Instead, our Founding Fathers said, “Let us design a Constitution from the ground up. Let us build a government that limits itself, and let it be a government of the People, by the People and for the People.” Our States said that they would neither ratify nor join with such a Constitution without a Bill of Rights for its citizens--rights that were self-evident, and given to us by a Creator, not by a government.

Those who have put on the uniform, and have sworn that we would defend this American idea from all enemies foreign and domestic, know something of Americanism. We know it is worth fighting for. Of all the earthly ideas produced from the long march of human struggle, we know this is the one most worth dying for.

Americanism is a way of living. It is a year-round effort. We as Veterans and Legionnaires are attending school assemblies for Veterans Week, marching in the parade, attending flag ceremonies on Veterans Day, or laying wreaths at the graves of the fallen and flowers at our local Vietnam memorials. As Americans, the Flag and the Anthem are the symbols of our unity. Their message is: “e pluribus unum.” Regardless of political bent, they deserve our attention and our respect. At times they bring a tear to the eye, or a lump in the throat. They rise above, and rest upon, our hallowed dead.

As we display our patriotism, let us never forget the unifying presence of the Flag and Anthem. Let us honor those who have served, and those gone on before us. Let us uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, and let us always foster and perpetuate a 100% Americanism.

Need a Christmas Gift Idea?

The best Christmas gift you can give is to help others while helping yourself. You can do this by making a donation (see form to the right) to our Capital Fund. This money will be placed in a special account and used to keep our Post operating. If you’ve been to our monthly meeting, you’ve heard Rusty talk about how we are “in the red” most months. This is because we help Veterans and often have to dip into savings to pay the bills. We are trying to come up with ideas to stop the bleeding! We do not want to stop helping our Veterans, but our money tree is running out of leaves. Please help us help all of us! Your donation is greatly appreciated. You can also donate online at Legion209.org. Click on “Donate” and add special instructions to designate the donation to go to “Post 209 Capital Fund.”

Please accept my tax deductible (check with your tax advisor):

Monthly or One Time donation

in the amount of:

\$500 \$150 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 Other _____

Make checks payable to “AL Post 209-Capital Fund”

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for supporting:

Neil Thomas Jr, Centennial American Legion Post 209 Capital Fund,”

3613 Jeannine Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80917

****PLACE IN LOCKING DROPBOX NEXT TO COFFEE BAR****



From the Historian

Chris Earley

December, oft remembered as the month of peace and Good Will is alas, also a month of significance in our military history. December 7th will forever be the “day that shall live infamy” as Japanese forces attacked our naval and air units at Pearl Harbor in 1941. After 2.454 days of captivity, journalist Terry Anderson was released by his Lebanese captors on December 4th, 1991. On December 10, 1898 the Paris Peace Treaty was signed ending the Spanish-American War giving the United States the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico. A bunch of colonist chose to dump British Tea into Boston Harbor on December 16, 1773 in protest of unfair taxes, and on December 20, 1860 South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union leading up to the Civil War. It was of course on Christmas Day 1776 that General George Washington led his men across the Delaware River and defeated Hessian troops at Trenton New Jersey.

But today I want to talk about the time the war changed because an army chose to camp. The army in question was the Continental Army of the United States. A year earlier, Congress declared independence from Great Britain. But the declaration would be a mere piece of paper if General Washington could not defeat the British Army, and frankly it wasn't looking good. The Americans had lost battles at Brandywine and Germantown, and now the British occupied Philadelphia.

Congress demanded Washington attack the British in Philadelphia, but the General had a different plan and on December 17th, 1777 he marched his men to encampment 20 miles north of Philadelphia at Valley Forge. The Army he led into camp was a rag tag collection of militias from across the eastern seaboard. 11,000 men would hunker down on the banks of the Shuylkill River that harsh winter of 1777-1778. Ill-equipped, underfed, without proper clothing and few supplies, some 2,000 would be lost to disease, starvation, and the cold.

Members of Congress were openly questioning Washington's leadership, but his men stayed loyal to the General and to their cause. To keep his battered Army together, Washington instituted policies of lashing as punishment and threatened to shoot deserters on sight. In February 1778, a Prussian officer by the name of Baron Friedrich von Steuben joined Washington at Valley Forge. Von Steuben introduced a new training regimen to the troops, including the precision marching that was so important to Revolutionary-era warfare. New hygiene standards in the slovenly American camp, including the first latrines were instituted. Baron von Steuben was appointed as inspector general of the Continental Army while Nathanael Greene took charge of procuring supplies. These new appointments left Washington free to concentrate on developing strategies to confront the British. France committed to the Revolutionary cause in May.

Then, exactly 6 months since the start of their encampment, Washington's revitalized troops broke camp on June 17th of 1778. Marching to New Jersey, a week later, they defeated the British in the Battle of Monmouth. The tide of the war had been turned, thanks to a little camping and a lesson in discipline.

Merry Christmas everyone! And that is history!



Auxiliary Fundraiser; Christmas Ornament Jackie Bowen, Past Unit President

You still have time to get this “One-of-a-Kind” Neal Thomas Jr.-Centennial Post 209 Christmas Ornament. As you can imagine, this will almost immediately be a collector's item as it features our Post home and name. It makes for a beautiful gift for someone special or for yourself and a lasting memory of the best American Legion family Post in Colorado.



This lacquered brass ornament is approximately 2 1/4” high by 2 3/4” wide. We are selling the ornaments for only \$15.00 each.

They will look great on any Christmas Tree or displayed prominently on a shelf in your home. Please consider supporting our Auxiliary fundraiser with a purchase. All proceeds will go to help our local area Veterans and their family. Contact me with questions and to buy one of these great ornaments.

Thanks in advance and Merry Christmas!



Motorcycle Minute

Bob "Big Sexy" Caddell; President

Hello Legion family. What a month it has been. Your Riders have been super busy with all sorts of events and functions.

The Veterans homeless initiative this year was a big success. The Riders provided security at the City Auditorium. I heard about 194 Vets came thru this year. At the time of this writing, your Riders have provided security for the Auxiliary at the Clarion hotel while they provide dinner. One of the many things that is done for the Veterans is they are put up for 30 days and are fed by many different groups that care. They get assistance in VA and finding a home and job.

We participated in the Veterans' Day parade. The event itself was outstanding! If you have never made it out to one you're really missing something. People line the street, children and adults, young and old. Veterans and Veteran supporters. It's awesome.

The Honor Guard performed a rifle salute at the DAV on Veterans' Day. This is an event that if you haven't made you really should try to attend. No police were called this time. LOL. It went off with out a hitch.

We won't be doing Christmas gifts this year at McCandless, but we will be making a Christmas donation to them.



From the Junior Shooting Sports Chairman Ken Taylor

Article and Pictures taken from a Facebook Post by Eric Testorff

The Young Guns Junior Shooting Sports program ended its Fall 2017 semester with Awards Night and a Pizza party. Post 209 Commander Mike Barger led off the night with a few words of advice for the students. This was followed by PIZZA, then Instructor Ken Taylor started the awards.

The graduates received their Certificates of Completion for the course, and 4 Top Shot awards were given out. There was also an award for a 10X bullseye!

Next were the vests, certificates and rockers handed out to the recipients of Pro Marksman, Marksman, Marksman 1st Class and Sharpshooter awards.

We rounded out the night with a few group photos. Congratulations go to graduates, parents and instructors alike on a job well done!



Class Picture



Class Top Shots



Eagle Eye Award for a 10X

The next Young Guns Class for new shooters starts February 15, 2018 at 6:30 PM. At this time, we have 5 shooters enrolled in our class of 12. Please contact the Junior Shooting Chairman, Ken Taylor, at 719-761-4047 for more information or to enroll.



****Rusty Bower's column to bring a little "salt" to the Post.****

Origin of NAVY Terminology

Rusty Bower



Effectively running and fighting a warship relies on bridging the gap between officers and enlisted personnel. It was from this need that the creation of the rank of chief petty officer was born. The chief petty officer as it is recognized today was officially established April 1, 1893. Armed with official recognition, chiefs of the past went on to lay the foundation for their modern day counterparts.

10 Things you probably didn't know about US NAVY Chiefs:

1. The earliest known use of the title "chief" dates back to 1776 when Jacob Wasbie, a cook's mate, was pronounced "Chief Cook" aboard USS Alfred. The title was largely informal and was used to denote him as the foremost cook aboard the ship.
2. Since 1797, only two ratings for chiefs that have remained in continuous use are boatswain's mate and gunner's mate.
3. On March 21, 1917, Loretta Walsh became the first woman Navy petty officer when sworn in as a chief yeoman.
4. The advent of a rocker device was the first distinction and was originally borrowed from the master-at-arms rating and became official in 1894. The foul anchor cap device was approved in 1905, and collar devices became official in 1959.
5. By 1941, all chief petty officers were authorized to wear khaki working uniforms. ALNAV 16 (Feb. 21, 1941) authorized khaki working uniforms for all chief petty officers and officers serving on all ships and shore stations.
6. There are approximately 30,000+ chief, senior chief and master chief petty officers in the Navy.
7. A chief petty officer is equivalent to a gunnery sergeant in the US Marine Corps, Sergeant First Class in the US Army, and a master sergeant in the US Air Force.
8. US Navy chief petty officers are afforded more responsibility than any other enlisted rank in the world.
9. More than 50 chief petty officers have been awarded the Medal of Honor.
10. On average, Sailors advance to chief petty officer in about 13 years of active duty.



Attention all Korean War-Era Veterans

From Department Chaplain, Stan Hamamoto

I just completed going on Honor Flight number 10. It is something that you must experience by yourself. They are looking for Korean War-era Veterans because there are hardly any more World War II Veterans that can make the flight. The Southern Colorado Honor Flight is looking to fill seats to go on the next trip, which I think will be in October 2018. This last flight there were 22 Veterans that went on the flight and of that only 12 were World War II Veterans, the rest were Korean War Veterans. We had a great time and some even met a friend they have not seen in ages. The trip is **FREE** and all you give up is three days, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Everything is paid for, all meals, air fare, hotel, bus rides and snacks. If can give up three days, I would suggest that you contact Marvin Weaver Jr. our Post Adjutant, and ask him to give you the form that you will need to fill out. When we went on our trip, there were 12 to 14 wheelchairs because some could not walk that far or stand too long. They will take good care of you, this is for sure. Again, if you are a Korean War-era Veteran, please sign up for it is a trip that you will not forget. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me: (719) 322-6959.

Shalom,



Something New! We Want To Hear From You!

As previously mentioned, we are introducing a new feature to *The Centennial* newsletter. We are now offering a "Letters To The Editor" section, and we want you to help. Remember the ground rules:

- Send it via email to letters@legion209.org, or;
- Send it via "snail mail to: Letters to the Editor, C/O American Legion Post 209 at our P.O. Box address
- It must have your name. No letters will be published without that information
- It cannot be about a political party or candidate (this is an American Legion publication)
- If the letter exceeds 250 words, we may condense or not publish the letter
- The Editor (Commander) and Publisher (Jay Bowen) reserves the right to edit and/or not publish the letter

Here are a couple we've received over the past month:

A Telephone Call

Dear Centennial:

With regards to Jay Bowen's article for the November newsletter, I too can remember our old phone number. We lived in North Kansas City, near the little hamlet of Gladstone, Missouri. Even though our house was on the Kansas City side, I guess our telephone switching office was on the Gladstone side. Therefore, our phone number was GL3-2233. And yes, when giving out our number, we would say "Gladstone 3-2233." I even remember my grandparents' phone number: "Emerson 3-8017."

Telephone wall jacks in those days were not modular: The customer could not plug or unplug the phone cable and move it around the house. Instead, it was just a couple of terminal screws, and technically speaking, you were supposed to call Ma Bell to send a technician out if you wanted your phone to be in a different room.

This was in the days before "Touch Tone" service. Every phone had a dial which you would rotate with your finger to create a different number of "pulses" (the number of pulses representing each digit being dialed.) People even had "push-button" phones that, nevertheless, created dial pulses. You could quickly punch in the number, but then had to wait while the phone sent out the sequence of pulses. The invention of Touch Tone meant an extra charge on your bill, and people like my mother were penny pinchers. No Touch Tone for us until telephone banking became the new thing.

Eric Testorff

American Legion Prayers

This past weekend I attended the Saturday morning breakfast and monthly meeting, and while it was an enjoyable time, I was very concerned about one part of the meeting. I was very surprised that it seemed the Legion is solely a Christian organization or at least seems so, as both the pre-breakfast and pre-meeting prayer were specifically and only in the name of Jesus. You most likely have Post members that practice religions other than Christianity. I was disappointed that the Post, in its prayers, seemed to disregard others of the Jewish faith or any other. By that disregard and seemingly associated disrespect the Post seemed to therefore be exclusionary in its nature. The Post Chaplain, or anyone acting on his/her behalf represents the Post as a whole, and should show all of its members equal respect and acceptance. The prayers offered did not do this. As an added note --you will never hear an active duty Chaplain pray solely in the name of Jesus to a mixed gathering of troops. It is always a religious prayer to God.

I hope you will accept my thoughts in an objective and potentially helpful manner.

Harvey LeCato USAF Ret.

Response to the above letter from the Sr Vice Commander: The American Legion is non-denominational. The first line of our National preamble states, "For God and country..." The reference to Jesus in the prayer offered this past month was not intended to offend and on behalf of Post 209, I apologize if anyone felt slighted or offended by the prayer. I will speak with and remind our Post Chaplain and anyone else who offers a Legion prayer to ensure we remember to continue to seek God's blessing and guidance.

Bringing a Little South to the West

By Past Post Commander Jay Bowen

The first car I ever owned was a '64 Buick Special, 4 on the floor convertible. It had a 215 cubic inch aluminum block engine that the previous owner "tweaked" a little (a fact not readily noticeable when I bought it, but I'll explain more later). I was 16 years old and paid a whopping \$400 for it. Yes, I paid for it by working odd jobs and part-time after school.

It was a beauty. It was black with a tan rag top. I bought it in '69, so it was only about 5 years old, which also made me very proud. The car was in pretty good shape. The engine ran very smooth, even better than I or my Dad initially expected. The seats covers were in good shape, no rips. The convertible top worked. The AM radio produced a great sound and blasted loud and proud the magical songs of the 60's as I drove around town. The tires were fair and it passed the required safety inspection on the first try. This was a boast many of my friends couldn't make about their car. And it was light enough that if I coordinated the clutch "pop" and gear shifting just right, I could "get rubber" in first and second gears. Doing that cost me a clutch not long after I bought it and some new rear tires, but it was worth it. It also got me my first speeding ticket, and that was also worth it. I was a hero to my circle of friends after I got the ticket, although Mom and Dad weren't that thrilled even though I paid the ticket.

As was the norm for the day and our part of the country, Dad went with me to buy the car. I bought it from an individual who had advertised in the Commercial Appeal. That was the morning edition of the Memphis newspaper. There was an afternoon edition, the Press Scimitar, but at 16 years old I didn't want to spend too much time reading a newspaper. I had a car to buy and this was the first one I saw that fit my budget and looked cool.

Dad was the consummate haggler. He NEVER bought a car at the asking price, and he had an innate ability to buy and sell cars just by parking them in the yard with a For Sale sign in the window on the corner lot on which we lived. I remember him doing this for several years and classics such as a '57 Chevy, a '64 Chevy Corvair and a '54 Nash Rambler sat in our yard at one time or another. Man, how I'd love to own any of those cars today. Dad would scour the newspaper and find great deals from individuals just wanting to get rid of their car. Dad was the best "shade tree mechanic" around and could easily fix what may have been wrong with the cars, then he'd turn them around for a nice little profit. That's why he was perfect to go with me to buy the Buick. But sometimes even Dad got a surprise.

Jackie and I had been dating for a while when I bought the car. She had a step-brother (David Marinin, a Yankee from Ohio) that recently moved below the Mason Dixon line to live with Jackie and her Mom. He was my age and Jackie made me take him under my wing and try to help him "fit in" with the Southern good ole boys and girls that made up our little group. But that's a story for another time.

David was a pretty decent auto mechanic in his own right. He was visiting at my house one day and we were changing the oil when he noticed stainless steel cut-off pipes coming off the exhaust manifold. They were bolted shut with a stainless steel cover. We opened the cover, and OMG! The car sounded like a Class C stock car. It was a beautiful sound!

When Dad got home from work that evening, I couldn't wait to call him outside to hear and witness our latest discovery. You should understand, Dad was a pretty conservative country boy who really never embraced the '60s culture or many of the changes of this new world. When he heard the "Barump, bump, bump, bump, bump" of the engine, his face turned beet red. Dad almost never cursed around us kids, but on this day he looked at me and David and said, "I don't know what you did to that damn thing, but you better fix it NOW!"

From that day forward, I would wait until I was a block or two from the house before pulling over and opening the cut-off pipes, then I'd close them back up before getting close to the house. This worked great for a while, until someone told Dad about the loud noises emanating from the car as I drove past. This prompted him to break out his welder and seal the cover shut forever.

Even though I lost my signature engine sound, I still thoroughly enjoyed driving that car around town. I kept it right up until I left to join the Army in '71. As I recall, I sold it (read that to mean Dad sold it for me) for \$400, the same amount of money I bought it for 2 years previous.

That same car today is worth about \$13,000 in Excellent condition and about \$8,000 in Good condition. If only I knew then what I know now.



Post Officers 2017-2018

Office	Name	Telephone
Commander	Mike Barger	719-290-3218
Sr. Vice Cdr	Eric Testorff	719-510-4177
Jr. Vice Cdr	Jerry Lollar	719-641-2778
Adjutant	Marvin Weaver, Jr.	719-244-3535
Finance Officer	Rusty Bower	719-649-0654
Chaplain	Paul R. Darrow	719-237-4461
Sergeant-at-Arms	Stan "Sgt. Ski" Krasin-ski	719-373-7814
Historian	Chris Earley	719-338-1398
Post Exec. Cmtee	Bill Burd	719-330-1279
Service Officer	Lyle Hagelberg	719-231-2364
Judge Advocate	Marvin Weaver, Sr.	719-638-4763
Club Manager	Art Kimbrel	719-339-4610
Honor Guard Capt.	Eric Testorff	719-510-4177



ALR Officers 2017-2018

Office	Name	Telephone
President	Bob Caddell	719-393-5180
Vice President	Steve Hayes	719-494-7166
Secretary	Cathy Barger	719-290-3163
Treasurer	Rusty Bower	719-649-0654
Sgt-At-Arms	Tim McDowell	719-510-9907
Road Captain	Grady Mitchell	719-201-3353



Auxiliary Officers 2017-2018

Office	Name	Telephone
President	Cathy Barger	719-290-3163
Vice President	Donna Rae Smith	815-973-0073
Secretary	Pat Weaver	719-638-4763
Treasurer	Kellie Hayes	719-494-7167
Chaplain	Jackie Burd	719-590-6615
Sergeant-At-Arms	Donna Testorff	719-510-4567
Historian	Nancy LaFayette	719-594-6806



Sons of The American Legion 2017-2018

Office	Name	Telephone
Commander	Ken Taylor	719-761-4047
Sr. Vice Com-mander	Marv Weaver Jr.	719-244-3535
Jr. Vice Com-mander	Stan "Sgt. Ski" Krasinski	719-373-7814
Adjutant	Rick Kettering	813-967-6680
Finance Officer	Rusty Bower	719-649-0654
Sgt-At-Arms	Steve P. Cox	970-580-8191
Assistant S-a-Arms	Stanten Krasinski	719-373-7814
Chaplain	Shelten Krasinski	719-373-7814
Historian	Eric Testorff	719-510-4177

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Dinner cancelled 	2
3	4 PP Veterans Honor Guard Meeting; 6:00pm 	5	6	7 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm 	8 Dinner cancelled 	9 Post 209 Christmas Party! 4:00pm
10	11 Honor Guard Mtg/Tng 6:00pm 	12	13	14	15 Dinner cancelled 	16
17	18	19	20	21 Winter Solstice	22 \$10.50 Chef's Choice Holiday Dinner RSVP Required! 	23
24	25 Merry Christmas! 	26	27	28	29	30
31	Notes: Art will serve a Holiday Dinner on 22 Dec. All other dinners cancelled this month. ALR Exe Board Mtg and Rider Monthly Mtg Cancelled SAL Monthly Meeting Cancelled this Month					

January 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
	1 New Year's Day Happy New Year! 				4 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm 	5 Price Varies with order Hamdogger 6:00pm 	
	8 Honor Guard Mtg/Tng 6:00pm 				12 \$9.00 Meal ALR Dinner - 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	13 Membership Meeting Breakfast - 9:00am Meeting - 10:00am  	
	15 Martin Luther King ALR Executive Board 6:00pm 			18 Fundraising Committee Meeting 7:00pm	19 \$14.50 Meal Steak Night! - 6:00pm RSVP Required!   		
	22 Honor Guard Mtg/Tng 6:00pm 	23 ALR Monthly Meeting 6:30pm. Social 5:30pm SAL 5:45pm  		25 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Department Mid-Year Conference - Arvada; 25-28 Jan </div>	26 \$10.50 Meal Chef's Choice! - 6:00pm RSVP Required! 		
28 Department Mid-Year Conference - Arvada				Notes:			

February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30pm 	5 Groundhog Day Price Varies with order Hamdogger 6:00pm 	3
	5 Honor Guard Mtg/Tng 6:00pm 				12 \$9.00 Meal Auxiliary Dinner - RSVP Required! 	13 Membership Meeting Breakfast - 9:00am Meeting - 10:00am  
			14 Valentine's Day Marksmanship 6:30pm 	15 Fundraising Cmtee 7pm Young Guns 6:30pm 	19 \$14.50 Meal Steak Night! - 6:00pm RSVP Required!   	
	15 Presidents Day Honor Guard Mtg/Tng 6:00pm ALR Executive Board 6:00pm  		21 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	22 Young Guns 6:30pm 	26 \$10.50 Meal Chef's Choice! - 6:00pm RSVP Required!   	
		23 ALR Monthly Meeting 6:30pm. Social 5:30pm SAL 5:45pm  	28 Marksmanship 6:30pm 	Notes:		