



The Centennial

Volume XIII
Edition 12

December 2022

AMERICAN LEGION NEAL THOMAS JR. CENTENNIAL POST 209



Photo credit: Jay Bowen Nov. 12, 2022. Our new awning looks great with all four emblems on the front.

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www.legion209.org

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



The American Legion Post 209 Officers 2022-2023

Commander:	Marvin Weaver, Jr.	(719) 244-3535
Adjutant:	Doug Millison	(719) 599-8624
Sr. Vice Commander:	Steve Hayes	(719) 494-7166
Jr. Vice Commander:	Jerry Hopper	(918) 953-9980
Honor Guard:	Joel Haas	(719) 482-4496
Finance Officer:	Sarah Tobin	(719) 439-7724
Service Officer:	Brian Murphy	(719) 930-4147
Judge Advocate:	Marvin Weaver	(719) 638-4763
Historian:	Kurt Skinner	(719) 963-3517
Exec. Cmtman/Club Mgr:	Art Kimbrel	(719) 339-4610
Chaplain:	Brad Henderson	(830) 660-4072
Immediate Past CDR:	Lino Calica	(719) 963-0956
Sgt.-at-Arms:	Bobby Senter	(719) 660-3775



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 209 Officers 2022-2023

President:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
Vice President:	Cathy Barger	(719) 290-3163
Secretary:	Pat Weaver	(719) 638-4763
Treasurer:	Kellie Hayes	(719) 494-7167
Chaplain:	Mary Bramer	(719) 633-8612
Exec.-at-Large:	Jackie Bowen	(901) 481-0673
Historian:	Sarah Tobin	(719) 439-7724
Sgt-at-Arms:	Michelle Bresee	



Sons of The American Legion Squadron 2022-2023

Commander:	Rob Barry	
Adjutant & Finance Officer:	Ken Taylor	(719) 461-4047
Sr. Vice Commander:	Brad Henderson	(830) 660-4072
Chaplain:	Brad Henderson	(830) 660-4072
Jr. Vice Commander:	Chris Hollingsworth	(910) 364-1677
Sgt-at-Arms:	Bob Ingram	(480) 353-8234



American Legion Riders Post 209 Officers 2022-2023

President:	Ed Santos	(719) 329-4357
Vice President:	Jerry "Rico" Shay	(719) 244-3901
Secretary:	Royce Hopper	(918) 953-9993
Treasurer:	Scott Laudan	(719) 238-2679
Sgt-at-Arms:	Bobby Senter	(719) 660-3775
Road Captain:	Sean Cope	(719) 246-4820
Historian:	Tina Cope	



American Legion Amateur Radio Club (TALARC) Officers

President:	George Johnson	(910) 494-9768	KE0ALQ
Vice President:	Jim Johnson	(719) 201-5829	W0GTA
Trustee & Secretary:	Harvey LeCato		W1JU
Treasurer:	Henry Russell J		KCONAJ



From the desk and mind of the Commander

December! This year has already flown by, but it seems like they all do. This time of the year is always an exciting one. The weather has changed, college football is winding down, and all the rivalry games are being played. Then comes all the bowl games. My favorite rivalry game is the Navy/Army game. I remember when we were underway in the Mediterranean, we would have camera crews come out to the ship to record Go Navy, Beat Army messages that would be played during the games, and also record holiday greetings to loved ones back home.

I spent four Christmases deployed while I was in the Navy; each was a little different. When I was on the John F Kennedy CV-67, we were supposed to spend Christmas in Trieste, Italy, but our Captain canceled our trip there because the pier we were going to tie up to was not operable, and he did not want to anchor out. The seas at that time of the year around Trieste can get nasty quickly, and he did not want to make us have to stay on the ship if that happened. So we ended up pulling into Palma De Mallorca, Spain, to spend Christmas that year. Palma is an island off Spain and a popular vacation spot, especially for the British. It is not too cold so you can go to the beach and normally run into an English-speaking person.

When I was on the Inchon LPH-12, we spent Christmas in Malaga, Spain, and then the following year, we spent Christmas in Palma De Mallorca, Spain, for me a second time. Malaga was lovely; we were moored right off the beach, and one day we grabbed a football, and about 12 of us went out to play football on the beach. We grew a crowd with a lot of Spaniards watching us play. The following year the Flight Deck Handler organized a flag football tournament held on the beach in Palma. Unfortunately, we could not play tackle because we had gotten in trouble the previous year when one of the guys got hurt. We played a double elimination tournament, and my team got sent out quickly. The only problem with playing football in Palma was that it happened to be cold that day, and I sweat a lot when playing. I ended up coming down with pneumonia, so I spent the next week after we got underway in medical.

Probably my favorite Christmas deployment was while I was down in Antarctica. We did just like we had for Thanksgiving and invited people to join us at the firehouse for dinner. We had about 40 people at the firehouse enjoying the food and conversation. The Crash/Fire guys all had a gift exchange between us. Most of the gifts ended up being the same since we only had one ship's store to buy gifts. It made being away from home and isolated more palatable.

I hope you all have a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, or Happy Holiday and I look forward to seeing everyone again after the first of the year. One last thing:

GO NAVY, BEAT ARMY!

Thanks for all you do to help veterans and the post.

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Commander





From the desk of the Sr. Vice Commander

I wish the best to all our post and family members as we enter your holiday season and transition to the new year! Coming up, watch the events calendar for times and dates for December. The regular dinners and meetings will be scaled back so that you can take this time to spend with your family and friends. Also, don't forget to come out to the Post for our annual Post Christmas Party on December 10th! The party will be a potluck; rumor has it, we will have a special guest in attendance. Membership is going well this year, but we have more to do. We are currently approaching 700 renewed members. If you have not renewed yet, please send in your renewal today. You can pay online at Legion209.org, or you can bring it by post, and if Doug is there, he will try to give you your new membership card before you leave. Finally, a great Christmas present could be membership in The American Legion if you have a friend, neighbor, or family member. You know why you joined and all the benefits you get from being a member and representing in Congress, so why not pass that along as a gift to someone you know?

Steve Hayes

Senior Vice Commander



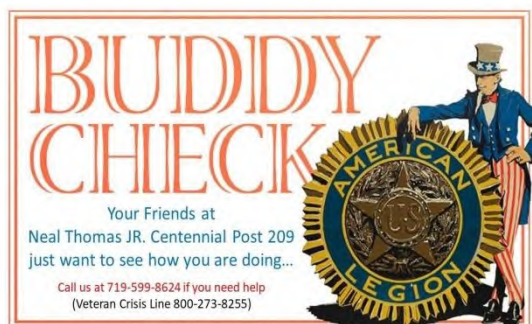
From the desk of the Jr. Vice Commander

We are into another membership year. As a part of my new duties in The American Legion Neal Thomas Jr Centennial Post 209, I need to find ways to spice up meetings and events to make them more enjoyable for the membership (YOU). I'm not asking you to attend all of our events/meetings, but it would be nice to meet all of you at some time during the year. I need to know what would entice you to come to the Post. Call me, text me, or email me with suggestions. It may be something you would like us to do or something you would not want us to do that we are doing. My phone number and email address are listed on our web page at legion209.org When you come, look me up.

Remember The Mission of The American Legion: To enhance the well-being of America's Veterans, their families, our military, and our communities through our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Jerry Hopper

Jr Vice Commander



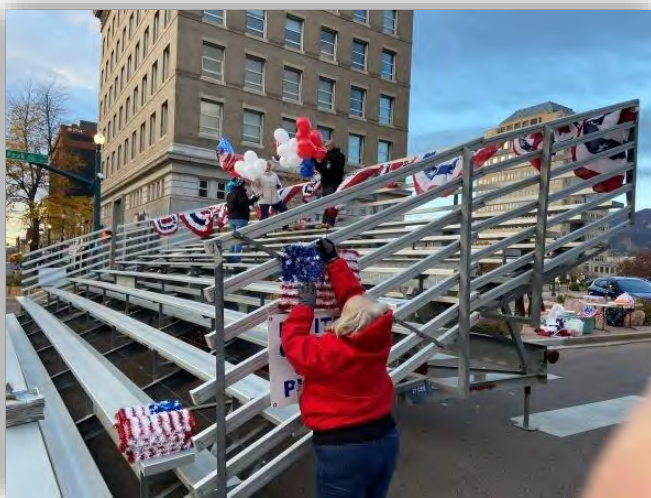


Post 209 Stepping off at the Veterans' Day Parade.

Post 209 down the streets of Colorado Springs at the 2022 Veterans' Day Parade.



Royce Hopper, Kellie Hayes, Lino Calica, and Jackie Bowen getting the VIP Reviewing Stand decorated for the Colorado Springs 2022 Veterans' Day Parade.





From our Post Adjutant

As we approach the end of our membership year and the midpoint of our leadership year, I wanted to cover a couple of topics at the center of what I do as an adjutant: membership management and Consolidated Post Reports (CPR). But, unfortunately, there are misunderstandings or a complete lack of knowledge of the subjects.

Membership. Regardless of when you joined, your membership is by the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December. Now, there are some caveats to that. If you join after the first of the year, say March, you only get ten months before your membership expires, but you still get the 12 magazines that your initial dues pay for, so that expires the following March.

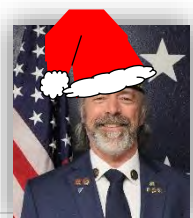
We started mailing out those expensive renewal reminders in July to get our almost 2 million members renewed by 1 January. So, in that process, new members who join after July 1st get enrolled in the following membership year, say 2023, in this case, getting up to 18 months. But your magazine subscription ends halfway through in July of 2023, so if you don't renew that following July, you will miss out on a couple of issues until you do renew.

Why the push? From our officer's guide; "If dues are not paid by January 1 of each calendar year, the member becomes delinquent. If dues have not been paid by February 1, the member is suspended, but a member with no privilege except reinstatement...." If not paid by June 30th, "...the member is dropped from the roll by constitutional mandate and membership forfeited."

So, The American Legion and the Post spend a lot of funds to try and get everyone renewed by the first of January. We ask that you please renew with that first notice in July or as soon as possible. If you do wander into the suspended ranks, you have no vote in anything the Post brings forward or place at conferences and conventions. So, please renew as soon as you can. Other than becoming a Paid Up For Life (PUFL) member, my favorite way to do that is to renew online at <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Membership/Renew#legion-org> and check the block for automatic renewal. Then every July, the card you just used gets charged, and you are renewed with no fuss, no muss, easy peasy, and all that. The first of January is coming up quickly. Does your card say 2023?

Now to the CPR. All year long, I collect data on what the Post and its members are doing as part of our mandate and four pillars. Those numbers are reported to Congress by the National Commander annually. I rely on the project, committee chairs, and YOU to get that info. One big one is Community Service Hours. Many people think it is only while working as part of the Post. It is any community service you perform. For example, volunteering at your church, at a food bank, or highway cleanup, in addition to our Boys State, Oratorical, Service Dog fundraiser, etc. This covers all activities from 1 June to May 31st and is due to National by July 1st. Please keep track of your service hours. You can send them to me near June 1st or update me by email as you go. But please, let's show Congress what our members are made of and provide the numbers!

Doug Millison
Adjutant



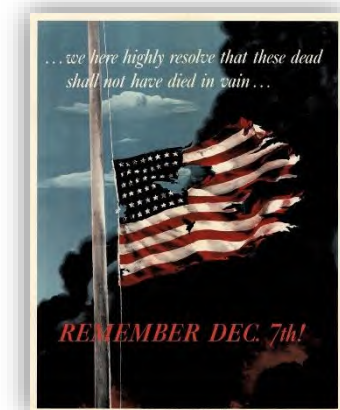


From our Post Historian

In our nation's military history, the month of December has often presented, as Thomas Paine phrased it, "times that try men's souls." American prospects looked dim in December 1776, as General Washington's ragged Continental army was in retreat, having endured months of crushing defeats; most army enlistments were due to expire at year's end. By order of General Washington, Paine's stirring words from *The Crisis* were read to the men:

These are the times that try men's souls. In this crisis, the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will shrink from the service of his country; but he who stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet...the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.

In the late hours of Christmas day 1776, General Washington's 2400 American troops crossed the icy Delaware River to launch a successful surprise attack on Hessian forces at their winter quarters in Trenton, NJ. Though only a modest military victory, it nonetheless provided a critical morale boost to the American cause and enabled Washington to persuade his men to extend their enlistments another month.



The 20th century also presented many soul-trying December episodes in American military history.

Perhaps the most notable was "a date which will live in infamy." On 7 December 1941, after months of secret preparation, Japanese carriers launched hundreds of dive bombers in a "dastardly attack" on the American naval and air base at Pearl Harbor, killing 2403 Americans and damaging or destroying 21 U.S. ships and over 300 aircraft. Within 24 hours, Japanese forces conducted an extensively coordinated attack on British and American bases throughout the Pacific Theater. Days later, Hitler also declared war on the United States, and America suddenly found itself in a global conflict with two of the most formidable military powers on Earth.

Three years later, on 16 December 1944, as Allied forces were confidently looking to advance into Germany, Hitler's Panzers launched a surprise counteroffensive in the densely forested Belgian Ardennes region, creating a "bulge" (salient) in Allied lines. The six-week "Battle of the Bulge" was one of the deadliest American battles of WWII, resulting in over 90,000 U.S. casualties.

By mid-October 1950, the Korean War seemed all but over, as United Nations (predominantly



American) forces had nearly destroyed the communist Korean People's Army and advanced through the North. In early December 1950, however, American military gains in the Korean War were dramatically erased, ending hopes of an early victory and reunification of the peninsula. Vastly outnumbered by an influx of six Chinese divisions at the "Frozen" Chosin Reservoir, the 1st Marine Division (U.S. X Corps) conducted a heroic fighting withdrawal in brutal sub-zero conditions. As a result, 17 Medals of Honor were awarded to members of the "Chosin Few."

In December 1969, President Nixon announced that because of his "Vietnamization" plan to decrease U.S. troop presence, the war in Vietnam was "reaching a conclusion." However, as the war continued three years later, Nixon ordered a massive B-52 bombing campaign (Linebacker II) over North Vietnam in December 1972. Derided by critics as "Christmas bombings," the campaign prompted a ceasefire and the negotiated U.S. troop withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973.

Enough of the "soul-trying" stuff – let's look at some encouraging December history now!

In December 1943, Past National Commander Harry Colmery was tasked with drafting the blueprint for comprehensive post-war veterans' assistance legislation. Colmery's hand-written draft on Mayflower Hotel stationery, displayed today at The American Legion headquarters in Indianapolis, formed the basis for the 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act, popularly known as the "G.I. Bill of Rights."

The modern aviation age was born on 17 December 1903, when Orville and Wilber Wright successfully piloted the first heavier-than-air, controlled powered aircraft at Kitty Hawk, NC.

As the commander of NASA's final lunar mission, Apollo 17, Navy Captain Gene Cernan became the last human to set foot on the moon's surface on 13 December 1972.

The Continental Air Defense Command Center (later NORAD) in Colorado Springs, employing its network of early warning radars, first started tracking Santa's Christmas eve toy delivery missions on 24 December 1955.



Christmas blessings to Post 209!

Kurt Skinner
Historian





**SAL
Presents:**

Refuse To Be A Victim®

Safety experts agree that the single most important step in ensuring your personal safety is making the conscious decision to Refuse To Be A Victim®. You stand a much better chance of preventing criminal confrontations if you develop a safety plan before you need it. That is why the Refuse To Be A Victim® seminar was developed by the National Rifle Association.

The Refuse To Be A Victim® crime prevention and personal safety seminar will discuss how to create layers of safety in your life to protect yourself and your family from criminal confrontations. You will learn the tools you need to develop your own personal safety strategies, including information on:

The Psychology of Criminal Predators
Home & Cyber Security
Automobile & Travel Security

Personal & Technological Security
Self Defense Devices and Training Options
And more!

WHO: Post 209 Family & Friends

WHAT: Refuse To Be A Victim® Seminar

WHEN: 08 JAN 2023 @ 1300

WHERE: Post 209, 3613 Jeannine Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80917

WHY: To improve your personal safety strategies

Please RSVP for the seminar NLT 10 DEC 2022 to allow for delivery of training materials.

The Refuse To Be A Victim® program is not a firearms or self-defense class. It is a seminar that will help you improve personal safety strategies and will provide you with valuable information that you can apply to every area of your life.

Cost: \$15 - price covers training and materials

Contact Christopher L. Hollingsworth now
@ christopher.hollingsworth@rocketmail.com or 910-364-1677
to RSVP or obtain more information!



From our Honor Guard Captain

The Veterans Day Parade was a great success, even with a very chilly start to the morning. There were various pictures and videos posted on the Post's Facebook page; you should look. While there were not as many spectators as expected, seeing everyone's faces, especially the Veterans and kids, as we marched down Tejon helped make the March go more quickly...well, that and TC's excellent cadence calling.

As a reminder, the Honor Guard will be supporting the Wreaths Across America event at Pikes Peak National Cemetery (PPNC) on December 17, 2022. The team will coordinate a rifle volley with a cannon volley, like what was done for the Memorial Day event at PPNC. Due to the weather conditions generally present at PPNC, the event starts one (1) hour earlier than normal. The event will begin at 9:00 am and is open to the public.

Due to the holiday season, there are only a few meetings left for the Honor Guard this year. After the first of the year, the Honor Guard team will resume holding weekly practices at 6:00 pm on the 1st Monday, 2nd Tuesday, 3rd Wednesday, and 4th Thursday. Come to the Post and check out one of the meetings, and see if the Honor Guard is something you would want to help support.

The Honor Guard continues to gain new members; however, there is no such thing as having too many members. While not everyone has a lot of time to participate in the Honor Guard, all someone needs are the time to participate a night or two for training meetings (a meeting is scheduled for every week, check the newsletter calendar) and even just **ONE** event a month. Members of The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, and American Legion Auxiliary are all eligible members. If you or anyone you know might be interested in supporting the Honor Guard or Competition Color Guard, please reach out to me at (719) 482-4496 or honor.guard@legion209.org.

Joel W. Haas
Honor Guard Captain





From the Chaplain: Christmas Surprises!

CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM: The word spread quickly. A baby would be King of the Jews. This is the fulfillment of the prophecies. Um – WHAT? You'll find him wrapped in cloth and lying in a *feed trough*. Herod the Great, known for his cruelty, was troubled anyway. There could be only ONE king of Judea, and that was he. So Herod sent three emissaries "...that I may come and worship Him also." (Matt. 2:7). The Truth was Herod planned to kill the child, but The Good Lord intervened. After they had worshiped Him, the three "departed for their own country in another way" (Matt 2:12).

SILENT NIGHT: One of our most beloved Christmas carols came about by accident in the winter of 1818 in Oberndorf, a tiny village in Austria. Josef Mohr was the priest of the local church. He needed a carol for worship. On Christmas Eve, he discovered that the church organ was broken. Herr Mohr visited a friend, Hans Gruber, and presented Gruber with a poem he had written. That evening at Midnight Mass, Herr Gruber strapped on his guitar and led the congregation in the first rendition of "*Stille Nacht*" ("Silent Night").

THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE: Infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, were spending Christmas Eve in their trenches, "shivering in the muck, trying to keep warm." The constant, soaking rain at Flanders Field gave way to frost, and light snow blanketed the area. At about 10 p.m., the soldiers could hear a noise. The Germans were singing Christmas carols. Then, a voice called, "Come over here." The British replied, "You come here. We'll meet you halfway." Then, the enemy came nervously out of their trenches to meet the British in "No Man's Land." Normally, the two traded bullets. But, that night, fathers and sons, uncles, and brothers from both sides, gave handshakes and words of kindness. The soldiers traded songs, tobacco, and wine, joining in a spontaneous holiday party on a cold night. One soldier wrote home, "There was not an atom of hate on either side."

AN ORPHAN CHRISTMAS: It was 1968, and I had recently arrived at the 579th Ordnance Company (Pershing missiles) in Neu Ulm, Germany. I was 19 years old and a long way from home. The company had "adopted" a local German orphanage. Our commander took a Sears catalog to the director and invited the children to our unit for Christmas lunch. He asked the director to share the catalog with the children. Each child could select an item from the "Wish Book." They did not know that St. Nikolaus would arrive and that each child would receive their wish. I wish you could have been a little bird on the windowsill to see the children's eyes as each opened their gift. It was, for me, the best Christmas ever.

Regardless of your faith, or if you have no religious faith at all, Pam and I wish you and yours a holiday filled with Love – and the peace of a little Child.

One night, a Viking named "Rudolph the Red" looked out his window. He turned to his wife and said, "It's going to rain." "How do you know that?" she asked. "Because," he replied, "Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear."

*Brad Henderson***Chaplain**

Serving God and Country



From the desk of the Unit President

The holiday season is very special to me. Growing up, we did not have a lot of stuff. Being part of a very large family, though, always made the holidays more special. Homemade gifts to this day are still my favorite gifts ever!

December is typically our downtime with The American Legion Auxiliary. We do, however put on an outstanding Christmas party. This year it will be on December 10th from 4-6 pm. Watch your email for more information.

Happy birthday to the following members for December. Rob Barry, Katie Jackson, Kaylene Khosla, Chris Kinnard, Melia Palaroan, Sharon Rawson, and Zach Wirth.

Happy Christmas from myself and my family to all of you. I wish you happy memories, time with those you love, and a relaxing December.

*Royce Hopper***Unit President**

From our Sons of The American Legion Commander

Wow, what a busy year! With the holidays upon us, it is a great time to reflect on our amazing year. We have come out of the pandemic full steam ahead. This has been the first "normal" year in some time. It has been a year of celebration, with families and organizations resuming life as usual. Yet, as we enjoy this holiday season, we must always remember those who can not do the same while serving our country and communities.

Next year looks to be a promising year for your SAL. We have numerous activities in the works. From our visitations picking up, our youth activities are growing, and programs will be brought back. I would urge you to keep informed. There will be something for everyone.

Happy Holidays to our Legion Family!

Rob Barry
Commander

Sons of The American Legion 209



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

\$35



For More Information

www.legion209.org/contact_us

(719) 599-8624

3613 Jeannine Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80917

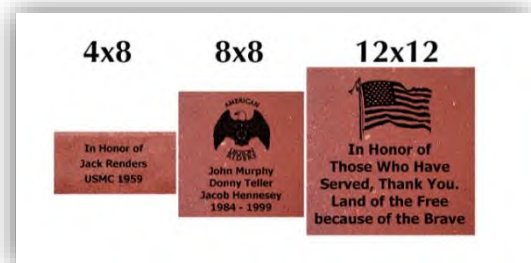
*Additional cost may apply

FUNDRAISER INFORMATION

Walk of Honor



- **What are the costs for the individual bricks?** Prices vary depending on size, style and lettering desired but typically range from \$90 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 \$250 to \$500.
- **What is the difference between individual and corporate bricks?** Individual bricks are for veterans and family members of veterans 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. If you are a landscaper or know a good one (preferably a veteran), have them contact our Adjutant.
- **How long will this fundraiser effort last?** We plan only to sell as many bricks as needed for the first phase of the landscaping project.
- **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 project. If you buy multiple bricks, let our Adjutant know, and we will ensure they are all placed together.

GUEST COMMENTARY



From our Veterans Service Officer

So most of you know that I work with active-duty soldiers who are transitioning from active duty every day. Here is something I came across today:

Left hand, Long finger pain, residuals of gunshot wound (non-dominant hand). The soldier sought treatment for this condition in December 2020 while stationed at Ft Carson, CO, and was attributed to a gunshot injury to his left hand while cleaning his handgun.

This soldier was from the south (**nothing personal Jay**) and had Army training, so you'd think he'd know better! I'm 100% positive the Army taught him how to CLEAR his weapon, check the chamber, and ALWAYS treat it like it's loaded! This error cost this soldier a painful injury, most likely ongoing residual pain and treatment for the rest of his life and his Army career; what a difficult lesson to learn!

MY POINT??? Please get the proper training to handle a weapon! If it has been a while, go back and get gun safety and/or concealed carry training. You do not want an accident like this, and it could end up much worse! Thank you for reading my RANT!! Call or email me with any BENEFITS, claims issues, VA questions, etc. I'm here to help!

Now, I want to share some news and information regarding benefits for veterans.

On Veterans Day 2022, the National Park Service unveiled a lifetime pass providing free entrance to [national parks](#) for veterans and their families. The Interagency Military Lifetime Pass waives entrance fees for the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and standard amenity recreation fees for the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sites for current military service members and their dependents, veterans and Gold Star Families.

Veterans and their families have free access to approximately 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, which host activities to fit any lifestyle—from serene to high octane, including hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, hunting, stargazing, camping, and much more.

The military pass does not expire for veterans and Gold Star Family members. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2022 authorized a free lifetime pass to national parks and other federal recreational lands for eligible veterans and Gold Star Families. In recent years, they were able to receive annual passes.

Are you eligible?

For purposes of this program, a veteran is identified as an individual who has served in the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserve, and can present one of the following forms of valid (unexpired) identification (to access one of the links in this

article, press and hold the "CTRL" key and click on the link with your mouse):

- Department of Defense Identification Card
- [Veteran Health Identification Card \(VHIC\)](#)
- [Veteran ID Card](#)
- Veteran designation on a state-issued U.S. driver's license or identification card

Gold Star Families are next of kin of a member of the US Armed Forces who lost their lives in a "qualifying situation," such as a war, an international terrorist attack, or a military operation outside of the United States while serving with the United States Armed Forces.

The America the Beautiful – the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass (Interagency Pass) Program

The Interagency Pass Program includes a free annual pass for active-duty U.S. military members and their dependents. Current military service members must show a valid (unexpired) Department of Defense ID. Dependents of current service members must show a valid (unexpired) DD Form 1173 AD or DEC.

How to get your Interagency Pass

Interagency Passes can be obtained in person while visiting a participating site. Visit [Places to Get Interagency Passes](#) for a searchable list and be sure to contact the site before you go, to make sure they are open and have passes in stock. In addition, passes are available online through the [USGS Online Store](#) with an additional processing fee. You do not need to obtain a new pass if you already have a Lifetime Senior or Access Pass.

For more information about eligibility and passes, visit [Free Entrance to National Parks for veterans and Gold Star Families \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#).

The participating agencies also offer several fee-free days for everyone throughout the year to mark days of celebration and commemoration. Examples of fee-free days include the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., National Public Lands Day, and Veterans Day.

Fee-free days and fee policies vary among the agencies, so it's best to check the agency website or contact the site you plan to visit in advance of your trip.

[APPLY FOR A VETERAN ID CARD](#)

[APPLY FOR A VETERAN HEALTH IDENTIFICATION CARD \(VHIC\)](#)

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A Poem from the Chaplain:

The Hand of the Carpenter

By Chaplain Brad Henderson

The "C" word is a mystery,
Revealing the Great Unknowns.
"What? Where? How long?" I ask,
And will I fight alone?

Chemo? Surgery? Radiation?
Will I lose my hair, my "pep"?
Dedicated professionals will plan the battle,
And monitor every step.

I must prepare for side effects,
And gird for a lifetime fight.
I'll take my meds and lie on beds
With precision laser for a light.

The Enemy's greatest weapon is Fear.
I engaged him with warriors' prayers.
I parried with the Sword of Truth,
And gained strength from everywhere.

I placed my trust in the Keeper
Of the keys to heaven and to hell.
I took the hand of the Carpenter
And today, I rang the bell.

Brad Henderson

Chaplain

Serving God and Country





Cyber 101- Greeting Card Scams

With Christmas right around the corner, you will start receiving more electronic greeting cards from family and companies wishing you a happy holiday. Most will have a link attached where, when you click, an animation appears with music playing. As fun as these may appear, they come with an added risk. Many fraudulent people and companies will take this time of the year to send you "greeting card scams," which are much like phishing emails. Unfortunately, this can be a little more difficult to spot than just regular old phishing emails. These scams can be sent through email, text, and basically any form of social media. These messages will most likely include a link or attachment that could potentially give way to malicious malware and viruses on your device.

Attention Grabbers

- Most of these messages will include a subject line that is sometimes impossible to ignore; this could include a message from a loved one wishing you a merry Christmas, or a company promoting a black Friday or Christmas special
- The best way to verify that the message is from a real source is to click on the sender's name. Try to make sure the same is spelled correctly, and even go as far as messaging the person who sent you the message to ask if they truly did send it
- If a deal from a company seems too good to be true, then it most likely is
- It's always better to be safe than sorry

Fraudulent Links or Attachments

- These fraudulent messages will all contain a link or attachment within the text promoting you to click the link for supposed access to discounts or just to view a message from someone you know
- It is rarely a good idea to click these links unless you are 100% certain of who sent the link

Matthew Brockie
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Looking for an internship summer of 2023



Salty Dog

Do you ever wonder about the difference between a ship and a boat? Well, now you know.

Boats list (lean to the inside of a turn),

Ships heel (lean to the outside of a turn).

"Turn to Port, heel to Starboard" Word passed from the bridge to Primary Flight Control, indicating a turn and to warn the flight deck crew of deck angle changes.

It is also a watercraft small enough to be carried on a ship (ships may only be called boats by crew members who have completed a deployment on the ship).

Lastly, it can be a submarine (submarines are called boats, with only limited exceptions).

Marvin Weaver, Jr.
Post 209 Commander





Bringing A Little South to the West

For those who read my offerings, you may remember I've written about some of my favorite Christmas toys and memories. Those remanences were of material things I received as gifts growing up. But, probably my most memorable gift during this very special and religious holiday season was not a gift I got; it was one I had a chance to give to others.

When I was 17, my then-girlfriend, Jackie, and I joined the youth group at our small, country Southern Baptist Church in Memphis, where we would get married a year later. Like most volunteer organizations, we had quite a few members considering the size of the church, and much like most groups, there were only 8-10 of us that actually did anything. And as Christmas rolled around, we were brainstorming ideas on what to do as a youth group. Someone suggested an event that, for us, was pretty out of the box thinking. And it was this idea that left an indelible impression in my mind, one that will probably be there forever.

It was suggested we find someplace to do some Christmas Caroling. As with many kids of our age back then and probably now, we all thought we were the next Elvis Presley, so showcasing our talents just kind of made sense. This was an easy decision to make, at least in the beginning. We all jumped on the opportunity to croon for an audience; we just couldn't decide on the audience.

As I recall, December was cold, even in the south. So, the idea of walking down the sidewalks and singing Christmas carols to an empty house or to small audiences wasn't really appealing to most of us. Our neighborhood and community were never painted on a canvas by Normal Rockwell. And none of us had a stovepipe hat, as seen in some of his renderings. So, now what?

I don't remember who came up with the idea, but when it was presented, we all knew this was the venue we wanted. So, with a little coordination, we grabbed our Church Hymnals, loaded up our cars, and drove to St. Jude Hospital in downtown Memphis. And unless you've been living in a cave for 60-plus years, you know the significance of that wonderful hospital.

St. Jude Hospital was founded in Memphis by entertainer Danny Thomas in 1960 and opened for business in 1962. It is a treatment and research pediatric hospital focusing on kids with cancer, particularly leukemia. One of the things that makes this amazing hospital unique is they have NEVER charged a patient for treatment, and they house family members of the kids receiving the treatments at no cost. They have helped cure and extend the lives of literally thousands of kids with very serious cancer.

When we arrived at St. Jude, we were met by members of the hospital staff and greeted with open arms. They knew why we were there. They had already selected a few wards for us to visit, so off we went down the corridors singing our favorite Christmas hymns as we strolled through the wards. Kids were sitting in wheelchairs near their room or in the doorway, while others who were not able to get out of bed just had the head of the bed raised so they could sit up. Because we were limited in where we could go, our entire visit probably lasted less than two hours. But those were one of the most memorable two hours I've spent.

That Christmas, we exemplified the adage, "Tis better to give than receive." Never has a Christmas before or since been as impactful as that one. That's not to say I don't enjoy getting a Christmas present (Jackie), but nothing compares with giving someone something from the heart.

On behalf of Jackie and my entire family, Merry Christmas to all!

Jay Bowen
Past Post Commander



PROGRAMS FOR KIDS

Young Guns



NRA-Accredited members of the 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 for six Boy Scouts of America (BSA) units:



- Cub Scout Pack 24 (Boys and Girls): p24@legion209.org
- Cub Scout Pack 386 (Boys and Girls): p386@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/>

December 2022						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
There will be no dinners in December to allow our volunteer staff quality time with family.				1 Executive Committee Meeting 6:00pm 	2	3
4	5 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	6	7	8  TALARC Meeting 7:00pm	9	10 Annual Christmas Party/Pot Luck Dinner 4:00pm-6:00pm  
11	12	13 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	14	15	16	17 Wreaths Across America! 9:00am Pikes Peak Veterans' Cemetery
18	19	20	21 Start of Winter	22	23	24
25 Christmas 	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day 	2 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	3	4	5 Executive Committee Meeting 6:00pm 	6 Price Depends on Menu Hamdogger Night! 6:00pm 	7
8	9 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	10 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	11	12  TALARC Meeting 7:00pm	13 Price TBD Aux. Dinner - 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	14 \$8 normal/\$9 omelet Membership Meeting B'fast - 9:00/Mtg - 10:00  
15	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	17 ALR Exec. Mtng ALR 6:30pm. 	18 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	19	20 \$14/Person Steak Night! 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	21
22	23 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	24 ALR/SAL Monthly Mtng SAL 5:30pm ALR 6:30pm  	25	26 Post Honor Gd. Training 6:00pm 	27 Price TBD Chef's Choice Dinner 6:00pm RSVP Required! 	28 Healing Warriors! 9:00am - 1:00pm
29	30 Troop 77 Mtg. 6:00pm	31	Notes:			