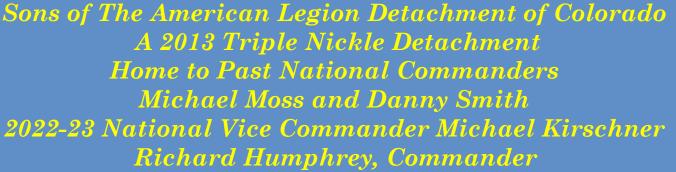


"Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage"







Colorado Sons Electronic Update February, 2023



This publication does not express the official position of the SAL Detachment of Colorado, The American Legion Department of Colorado or their respective National Organizations. It is a forum to share information about events and happenings within the Detachment of Colorado, the National Organization of the Sons of The American Legion, and information that is pertinent to the programs and four pillars of The American Legion. This publication is compiled and published as a volunteer service by Detachment Adjutant Mark A Kilstrom. Submit questions, comments, photos and stories to saladj@coloradolegion.org.

Commanders Mission Objective: Rekindle the Spark

Mission Statement: To not only honor our fathers, mothers and grandparents by our continued service to God And Country, but to rekindle the spark of our veterans and community with the ideas of patriotism, citizenship and the American Flag

SPECIAL EDITION

Time for CWF Banquet

From Adjutant Mark Kilstrom

April is Children and Youth Month, it is also the Month of the Military Child.

Accordingly, the Detachment of Colorado hold it's annual Child Welfare Foundation Banquet on the first Saturday in April, preceded by a Detachment Executive Committee Meeting. I know this is still over a month away, but for it to be a success, we need to get things going now.

This year, the meeting will be held at Neal Thomas Jr, Centennial Post 209 in Colorado Springs. The call for the meeting is being mailed to each Squadron to the mailing address on record and a link is also included the email blast that delivered this edition.

Squadron 209 is hosting the DEC and the Banquet, but that does not mean that it's up to them alone to raise the thousands of dollars we expect to. This is a Detachment event and all are welcome and expected to assist by brining items suitable for silent auctions and/or raffle. In the email blast that delivered this edition is a link to download a donation letter that individuals can bring to local merchants

asking for donations either monetary or in merchandize..

There is also a link for the CWF banquet announcement. We ask that you print it out a post it on the bulletin board in your home Post. The more the merrier I always say.

Can't make the banquet but want to contribute? Here's a link to a donation form that you can complete and send in to the Adjutant with your donations

CWF Donation Form - fillable (1).pdf



Time for End of Year Reports

From Adjutant Mark Kilstrom

Well, we've reached everybody's favorite time of the year, or about to. Nobody likes doing reports, including me, but it's part of the territory and now, some are more important that ever before.

Lets face it, we are in the 21st Century and that means technology is becoming a bigger part of our lives, and The American Legion is no different.

Several Squadrons have been processing their membership online, and now individuals can renew online. Those two factors make the Squadron Data Report (SDR) very important, and the Squadron Officer report just as important.

No longer does the national organization provide the Detachment or Squadrons with a printout of their membership. To get a list of members, you need access to it through www,mylegion.org. Without submitting these to reports, you cannot access your membership roster.

How does it work? The SDR gives National the information on Squadron contact information and the amount of their dues, which includes Detachment and National per-capita. So if a member renews on line, National will know how much per member the Squadron will get and where to send the check. Otherwise if a member renews online, he pays only Detachment and National dues which, for now is \$12.00 combined. The member can print a card, but the Squadron gets no money for the dues and won't even know the member renewed.

The Squadron Officer Report gives the Detachment Adjutant the information to submit his report to National, telling them who is authorized to get access to member data on www.mylegion.org. This is where the

Squadron Commander and/or Adjutant

can view and print out membership rosters and see who renewed online. Both reports were sent hard copy to Squadrons with the call letter. To make things simpler here's a link to a fillable pdf document. You can save it and email it to the Detachment Adjutant.

 $\underline{Annual\ Squadron\ Data\ Report\ (SDR)\ \&\ Instructions--fillable.pdf\ (legion.org)}$

Fill out the form as completely as possible. Writing in "Same as last year" or "No changes" has the same effect as not submitting one.

There's a link in the email that delivered this edition to download an officer report. The form has been modified to ask for less information. If you are a Squadron Commander or Adjutant I encourage you to register at www.mylegion.org. Make sure on the officer list you provide the same email address you used to register online.



Your 2022-2023 Detachment Leadership



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Sergeant-at-Arms

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Squadron and Member Recognition

By Adjutant Mark Kilstrom

It's that time of year for reports and as we do them, it's a great time to consider our accomplishments over the past year.

One of the things I've observed over my 35 years as a Legionnaire and 28 years as a Son, is that we do a lot of great things. But, we really stink at letting people know and taking credit for what we do. Well, that's what volunteers do. We don't do it for the recognition. Well, sometimes we need to brag on ourselves and the Squadron Consolidated Report (SDR) is that tool..

There are several awards available of those high achieving Squadrons and individuals that most folks don't know about.

Let's start with Squadron recognition for CWF. This is an easy one that almost all Squadrons can achieve. All it takes is \$1.00 per member during the time frame of June 1st through May 31st the following year. Squadrons can submit this on their own. Here's a link to a fillable pdf.

<u>CWF Banner Order Form 2022-2023 - fillable 0.pdf (legion.org)</u>

Just as a courtesy, if you submit one,

please send the Adjutant a copy.

The Detachment Adjutant will submit the Squadron Certificate of Achievement for Squadrons that meet or exceed their membership total from the previous year by the Legion Birthday.

This also applies for the 100% membership ribbon for Squadrons that meet or exceed their previous years membership by July 1st.

Has your Squadron Commander gone above and beyond? You can nominate him for Squadron Commander of the year. Certain criteria have to be met and only one nomination per Detachment can be submitted. This nomination must be received by the Detachment Adjutant prior to our Spring meeting, so it can be properly submitted to National prior to the May NEC Meeting. This link gives you the nomination criteria:

SAL Squadron Commander of the Year Award Criteria.pdf (legion.org)

And this will bring you to the nomination form:

SAL Squadron Commander of the Year Award Nomination Form - fillable.pdf (legion.org)

Do you know of someone who goes

above and beyond providing for veterans and volunteering? There are recognition awards available for them at the national level. The George B Evans Grassroots Veteran's Advocacy award is one of them. This award recognizes a Son's Member who has performed outstanding service and made significant contributions in time and effort to Grassroots Veterans' Advocacy work. An award may be presented each year to a member who takes on a bold leadership role by building relationships with elected officials who directly impact public policy; by actively taking the message of the National Sons of The American Legion to key media outlets; and by developing strong grassroot initiatives.

Here's link to the nomination form:

SAL George B Evans Veterans Advocate of the Year Form - fillable (legion.org)

There are more on the national website www.legion.org/sons

Don't forget our Detachment level awards; Member of the Year. Dual Member if the Year, Mother of the Year VA&R Volunteer of the year. Get more information on our Detachment website www.salcolorado.org.



healingfield.org/event/fortluptonco23

The Great Plains Field of Honor Committee is a volunteer-led, community effort of the City of Fort Lupton, Colorado in partnership with the Colonial Flag Foundation. Questions? Please call Linda at 720.466.6166 or Christy 720-928-4071.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE JANUARY 10, 2023

CONTACT:

Christy Romano, Special Event Coordinator

TELEPHONE:

720.928.4071

EMAIL: WEBSITE:

<u>CROMANO@FORTLUPTONCO.GOV</u> healingfield.org/event/fortluptonco23

STATEWIDE EFFORT HONORING COLORADO's VETERANS & FIRST RESPONDERS

Great Plains Field of Honor Returns April 26 – 29, 2023 FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Fort Lupton, Colorado January 10, 2023 – The Great Plains Field of Honor to be erected in Fort Lupton, Colorado.

The Great Plains Field of Honor (FOH) will stand in silent tribute to the men and women who have served — and continue serving - our communities and country daily. Each flag bears the name of a public servant (Fire, Police, EMS), a soldier, a Veteran, and a hero. Led by volunteers working with the City of Fort Lupton, organizations from across the state, cities along the Front Range and citizens will work together in support of this special project that builds community pride through education, tributes, and celebration. We are proud to collaborate with the Colonial Flag Foundation.

- SPONSORSHIPS AND FLAG DEDICATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED.
- THE F.O.H WILL HOST A FREE YOUTH DAY FOR STUDENTS FRIDAY, APRIL 28.
- FORMAL CEREMONY WITH SPEAKERS, BAGPIPES, LIVE CHOIR, FLYOVERS, AND PRESENTATIONS WILL BE ON SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023 AT 1PM.
- FOR 2023, PROCEEDS BENEFIT TWO COLORADO BASED NON-PROFITS WORKING TO
 BETTER THE LIVES OF OUR VETERANS AND FIRST RESPONDERS THROUGH PEER-LED
 COUNSELING, MENTORSHIP, SUICIDE PREVENTION AND WELLNESS SERVICES: WarriorNow
 and Building Warriors.

DATES & LOCATION

April 26 – 29, 2023 Pearson Park Fields, HWY 85 & HWY 52 in Fort Lupton, CO

Field is open daily, April 26 - 28 from 1pm - 8pm

Saturday, April 29, 10am – 3pm
*Formal ceremony at 1pm







Sons of the American Legion CWF Fundraising Banquet

1 April 2023

Each year the Sons of the American Legion are the largest national sponsor for the Child Welfare Foundation. These funds ensure that children in need can get the help they deserve. Needs vary greatly from cancer treatment, transportation to medical facilities, survivors of traumatic events, and more.

All proceeds raised from the dinner, raffles and tips will go to support the CWF as well as any donations

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

1700: Social Hour with music by one of our Crew 762 members

1800: Post 209 Color Guard will Post Colors

1815: Announcements and introductions by Squadron 209 Commander, Rob Barry

1830: Banquet will include Chicken Fried Steak, Mashed Potatoes and gravy, Veggies, Salad and a dessert for your generous donation

- * Silent Auction and 50/50
- * Cash bar available throughout the evening

RSVP:

NLT 28 March 2023

https://legion209.org/rsvp-for-post-events/

via call/text Mrs. Jackie Bowen: 901-484-0673 and specify CWF Banquet

LOCATION:

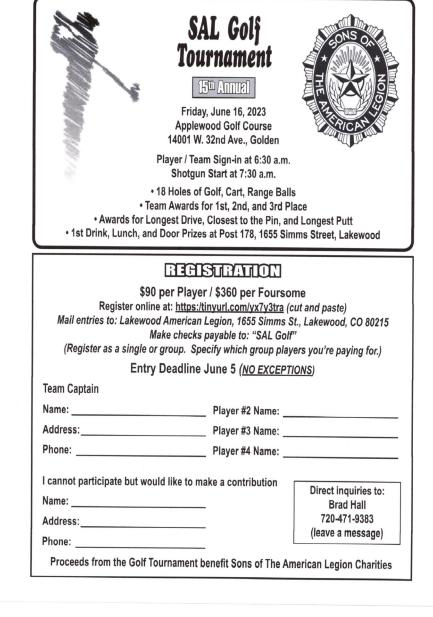
American Legion Post 209 3613 Jeannine Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80917

Your help is greatly needed with Silent Auction Items!!

Please contact Rob Barry: colo.rsb@yahoo.com

Lets make this year's CWF Banquet a success and get back on top. After two years of Covid lockdowns and isolation, the CWF banquet returned last year, and all things considered, it was a tremendous success. The Ovie Vernon Post 2 family did a great job, and given we are one more year past the pandemic, we should really knock this one out of the park. But it will take all of us as a Colorado Legion Family to make it happen. We need a large turn out and lots of silent auction items. Please do what you can to collect items from local merchants in your area, and remember to show them appreciation for their contributions. You can provide Adjutant Mark with their information and we can get them a certificate of appreciation signed by the Commander.









Squadron 209 Sponsors Blood Drive

SAL Squadron is sponsoring a Blood Drive at Post 209 on Monday February 27, 2023. The Blood Draw times are between 2 PM and 6 PM. Please use the links below for more information or to register if you would like to participate.

It's important to fill out the Fast Track Health History Questionnaire on THE DAY OF YOUR BLOOD DONA-TION

Here is your direct signup Link: https://

donors.vitalant.org/dwp/portal/dwa/appointment/guest/phl/timeSlotsExtr?

token=yhGVohqKh78I9E7iQ1npSx9Hbn3hqbIcYKTg% 2F2XZ8jQ%3D

Donor Notes:

Fast Track Notes: Fast tract: https://vitalant.org/

health-questionnaire

Day of overview: https://vitalant.org/blood-

donation-process

Eligibility: https://vitalant.org/blood-donation-

requirements

American Legion Legislative Agenda, 118th Congress

The American Legion is the voice of nearly 1.6 million U.S. military veterans and servicemembers. A resolution-based organization, The American Legion's positions represent the views of its membership and shape the organization's legislative priorities for the 118th Congress: Mental Health & Suicide Prevention The leading issue facing the veteran community is suicide. The suicide rate among veterans is nearly double that of their civilian counterparts, with more than 6,000 veterans taking their lives annually. It is imperative to destigmatize asking for mental health support. Simultaneously, access to such support must increase. The American Legion encourages Congress to enhance access to alternative therapies, robustly fund VA's suicide-prevention outreach budget and continue to invest in mentalhealth research. VA Healthcare Modernization The future of VA healthcare is as a hybrid system consisting of Veterans Health Administrationprovided inpatient and outpatient care, telehealth and community care. Ensuring VA is equipped to meet the unique needs of an increasingly diverse veteran population requires that VA fully leverage all healthcare modalities and ensure a seamless transition between them. Modernizing electronic health records, veteran-centric access standards, and a transparent online scheduling system for VHA-provided care and community care alike are all essential to ensuring veterans receive the care they deserve. The means by which VA delivers care may change, but one thing will not: VA should continue to provide the best care anywhere to our nation's veterans

Support our Afghan Allies In the U.S. military, there is a code: "no one left behind." For two decades, members of the U.S. Armed Forces fought shoulder-toshoulder with brave Afghan allies who served with and protected Americans, fighting for the freedom of Afghanistan and its people. The United States must honor its promises and provide genuine, lasting protection for the Afghans who have made it safely to the United States, and for those who were left behind. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass legislation that would grant permanent legal status to Afghan refugees and improve the Special Immigrant Visa process for Afghans who served alongside U.S. servicemembers. Military Quality of Life The U.S. military's greatest resources are individual servicemembers and their families. Without highly qualified and committed men and women, even the most sophisticated weaponry will not provide the deterrent necessary to defend our nation. Factors that contribute to quality of life include proper compensation, career development, appropriate housing, quality healthcare, reasonably priced commissaries and access to affordable daycare. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation that would increase access to child care for military families, increase appropriations to address matters involving servicemember food insecurity and increase funding to renovate military housing.

Pay the Coast Guard U.S. Coast Guard personnel carry out vital national security missions, but they are the only U.S. military branch that works without pay during government shutdowns, due to their status under the Department of Homeland Security. The common threat of government shutdowns brings severe and unnecessary hardship on these men, women and their families. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass the Unwavering Support for our Coast Guard Act, which would guarantee that Coast Guard personnel are paid without delay, even in the case of a government shutdown.

Protect the American Flag The American Legion urges Congress to approve an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the U.S. flag. Additionally, The American Legion urges Congress to pass the Flag Code Modernization Act of 2021 to amend the U.S. Flag Code to codify multiple common patriotic customs and practices, as described in American Legion Resolution No. 19: Flag Code Amendment

PACT Act: Implementation & Oversight Passage of the SFC Heath Robinson PACT Act in the 117th Congress ensured millions of toxic-exposed veterans will now have access to healthcare and compensation they rightfully deserve. VA estimates there will be up to 7 million new disability claims filed, due to eligibility expansion under the PACT Act and that the claims backlog will increase to 450,000 by October 2023. The efforts put forth by the VA workforce to reduce claims backlogs in recent years have been admirable, but substantial backlogs of hundreds of thousands of claims for sustained periods of time are not acceptable. It is imperative that VA fully leverage the resources made available in the PACT Act to assist in the continued modernization of information technology systems, as well as the hiring of additional employees to ensure veterans claims are adjudicated in a timely manner. The American Legion urges Congress to provide necessary oversight and funding to ensure VA has the resources needed to properly implement this legislation. Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors America's veterans are targeted by predatory actors that seek to profit from an array of benefits that have been rightfully earned by those who have served

our nation. From claims companies that charge exorbitant fees (for services provided free by veterans service organizations) to lawyers vying for billions of dollars set aside for victims of diseases associated with contaminants, veterans and their families are met by promises of large payouts if they agree to surrender substantial portions of their benefits. Predatory actors often attempt to overwhelm veterans with aggressive marketing tactics and complicated contracts. The American Legion urges Congress to oppose legislation that elevates the standing of unaccredited claims companies or legitimizes predatory practices that target veterans and encourages Congress to impose a cap on legal services provided in association with the Camp Lejeune Justice Act.

Concurrent Receipt Currently, 42,000 military retirees with combatrelated injuries qualify for DoD retirement pay as well as VA disability compensation. However, for retired veterans with disability ratings less than 50%, the VA compensation is deducted from their DoD retirement pay. The American Legion strongly supports ending this unfair policy. The Major Richard Star Act would repeal this draconian offset, allowing disabled veterans to concurrently receive their retirement pay and disability compensation.

Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity Despite the same duties, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers are deprived of education benefits that activeduty servicemembers enjoy. According to current law, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers only accrue GI Bill entitlement when called to active duty under federal orders. When National Guard and Reserve servicemembers are activated under state orders, they do not accrue eligibility for Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, as do their activeduty counterparts. The American Legion believes that every day in uniform counts and urges Congress to recognize the service of National Guard and Reserve servicemembers as eligible for the GI Bill. GI Bill for Honorable Service To receive most VA benefits, a veteran's characterization of discharge from service must be "under honorable conditions." However, education assistance benefits within the GI Bill, require that servicemembers receive an "honorable discharge." If the characterization of service is "general under honorable conditions," the Post-9/11 GI Bill remains out of reach for these veterans. The American Legion urges Congress to correct this statutory incongruity by amending U.S. Code to allow access to VA educational assistance to veterans with "general under honorable conditions" discharges

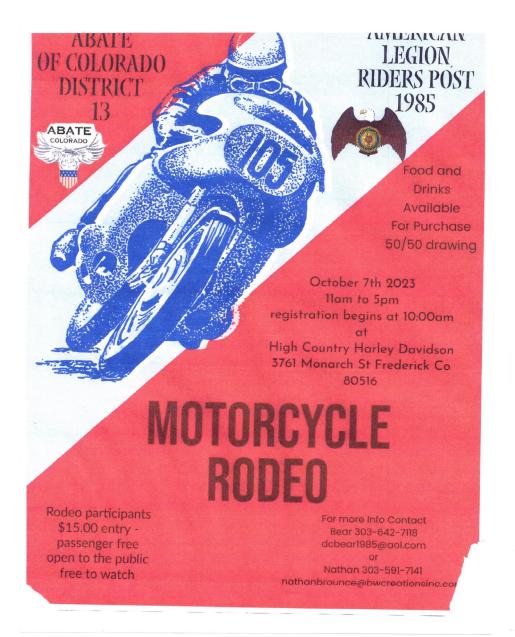


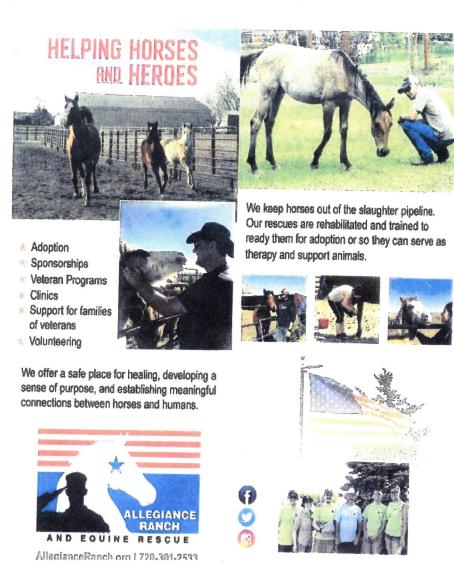




PROMOTE
YOUR
EVENT
HERE

What is your Squadron/Post family up to? We all have events and activities that we do year round. Share your story with the rest of us. If you get this newsletter, you have a computer or other so called smart device that you can send and receive information. We are all about sharing information. Get your event publicized to help make it a bigger success.







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