



VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA SEWARD POST 5 NEWSLETTER

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan



Hey Post 5 Family, we're getting the daylight back (yay!), and what a weird, for the most part, snowless winter and hugely cold and windy..... Well, we don't need to talk about that one, we're "veterans" in that department, and still dealing with it!! 😊 We're not finished yet, but at least we have some more daylight, and better weather just around the corner. We'll soon be able to do more outdoor activities that do not require a ton of winter clothes!

We have some fun and important things planned for this month including the final round of nominations for all our organizations and we will elect our new officers for the new year. Along with identifying our new officers, we will be planning a yummy Installation Dinner toward the end of March and, as I write this, the Tax Crew will be here to help on Saturday the 21st from 10am to 2pm. They are a free service that has come for the last several years and have been a huge help and service for our Legion Family!



We will also celebrate St. Patrick's Day, and we will celebrate the American Legion Birthday of our National Organization that was the beginning of all our posts! So hang the calendar on the fridge and look for updates on the email, Facebook and Instagram for the activities we have going on and those that spontaneously crop up! 😊



Just to remind you, March 15, the designated birthday of The American Legion (TAL), is the day in 1919 when the first American Legion Caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris. Much as the birthday of the United States is celebrated on July 4th for the day in 1776 when the revolting patriots declared their independence from the British and the Spirit of America was born - March 15 is the date on which the Legion came to life. Today, membership stands at about two million legionnaires and close to 12,000 posts worldwide. The posts are organized into 55 departments: one each for the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines.



One of the big accomplishments of the American Legion is the successful effort to create what we now have as the Veterans Administration. This effort has influenced considerable change in how veterans are treated in our country. Through our legislative efforts veterans have won hundreds of VA educational in the form of the GI Bill, as well as rehabilitative and compensatory benefits for veterans.



As the American Legion grew it produced many important programs for children and youth such as numerous scholarship and leadership programs. We have quite the legacy and have done some incredible things in our 107 year history and we are still moving forward with our commitment to service to our veterans, community and country throughout 2026 and beyond!

For those who have renewed for 2026 thank you very much! And if you haven't yet, please consider doing so. Your membership continues to make us a strong organization with the ability to help others right here in town. Every membership, locally through the national level, helps us all as many members create a very loud voice for veterans' rights and benefits on Capitol Hill. As mentioned last month, we have veterans throughout Seward ranging from nearly every war and conflict as well as our active-duty members who are scattered throughout the globe. We have a good core group in Seward and are so fortunate that we have many in our American Legion Family who step up to the plate and help in all our post activities. And, for that I sincerely thank every one of you for taking time out of your busy lives to be of service for our veterans and our community.

So how does all this information get to the National Level to benefit our veterans? Take a look at the Legion website; I've pulled a few excerpts from there that tells us what they do for us. There is a section of The American Legion called the National Legislative Division. These folks do the heavy lift in DC to get our priorities moved forward on Capital Hill. Their mission as written is to *provide staff support to the Legislative Commission and its Convention Committee; serve as the principal advocate of servicemembers, veterans, and their families on Capitol Hill; provide Members of Congress and their professional staff valuable information that furthers their and our goals along with our standing as an institutional authority in the veteran community; to facilitate the completion of goals set by our members through Resolution; to enhance strategic collaboration and partnerships ensuring benefits and services are available to servicemembers and veterans for generations to come.*

So what does all that translate into? They are working hard to be "The Voice of the Veteran," to the United States Congress. The Legislative Division's primary responsibility is to our 2 million members; serving Legionnaires, the National Commander, the National Executive Commission (NEC), the National Legislative Commission, its convention committee, the National Legislative Council, The American Legion Family, and national staff.

And for those of us who are often involved in the legislative process here in Alaska, they support Departments and Posts of The American Legion across the country in order to provide guidance and expertise on strategic lobbying and federal engagement efforts.

The Legislative Division also serves Members of Congress as an institutional authority on all matters relating to the veteran community. The Legislative Division serves as a resource for Members of Congress, congressional committees, and their professional staff when they need information, opinions, or anecdotal evidence of prospective changes to legislation, regulations or professional testimony.

Serving as *The Voice of the Veteran* on Capitol Hill, the division advocates for servicemembers, veterans, and their families by advancing The American Legion's legislative agenda, guiding Congress with trusted expertise, and building strategic partnerships that ensure veterans' benefits and services endure for generations.

I suggest you look at the legion website for more information on this amazing service these folks do that affects all of us down to the individual post and veteran. Here's the link for lots greater [info!](#)

National K9 Veterans Day

Excerpts from [Military.com](#), [Wikipedia](#), [militaryhistorynow.com](#) & [wearthemighty.com](#)

As an acknowledgement of our furry veterans, National K9 Veterans Day, March 13, is a day set aside to honor commemorate the service and sacrifices of American military and working dogs throughout history.

It was on March 13, 1942, that the Army began training for its new War Dog Program, also known as the "K-9 Corps," according to American Humane, marking the first time that dogs were officially a part of the U.S. Armed Forces. The rest, as they say, is history.



Sgt Stubby

Officially, the dogs of war span centuries and include such American heroes as [Sgt. Stubby](#), the original war dog,

[Chips](#), the most decorated dog in World War II and [Lex](#), who retired with his fallen owners family and [Cairo](#), the Navy SEAL working dog on the bin Laden raid.



Chips



Lex with Handler Dustin Lee



Cairo

America's greatest dog of its greatest generation was likely Chips, a German Shepherd, Collie, Husky mix that forced the [capture of 14 Italian soldiers in one day](#) during the invasion of Sicily despite being wounded.

Kaiser was a German Shepherd and one of 4,000 dogs who served in the Vietnam War. His handler was Marine Lance Cpl. Alfredo Salazar. Kaiser and Salazar did more than 30 combat patrols and participated in twelve major operations together. After they joined "D" Company for a search-and-destroy mission, they were ambushed by the Viet Cong while on patrol in 1966. Kaiser was hit in the initial contact and died while trying to lick Salazar's hand. Kaiser was the first war dog killed in action during Vietnam.



Kaiser

On December 4, 1966, **Nemo** and Airman 2nd Class Bob Thorneburg were on patrol near an airbase in Vietnam when they suddenly came under concentrated enemy fire. Nemo took a round to his eye while Thorneburg was shot in the shoulder after killing two Viet Cong guerillas. Nemo viciously jumped at the enemy, giving Thorneburg time to call in reinforcements. After Thorneburg fell unconscious, Nemo crawled on top of his body to protect him. The dog didn't



Nemo

let anyone touch his handler, and it took a veterinarian to sedate Nemo so medics could attend to Thorneburg. Both survived, and Nemo lived until 1972.

Lex was the first active duty, fully fit military working dog to be granted early retirement in order to be adopted. Working for his United States Marine Corps handler, Corporal Dustin J. Lee in the Iraq War, he was wounded in an attack that killed Lee, and subsequently awarded an honorary Purple Heart.

While some of the dogs in modern special operations are trained to engage directly with the enemy, [Cairo went on the kill/capture mission against Osama Bin Laden](#) but was there to search out hidden passages, enemies, or weapons.

These are just a few examples of heroic war dogs. Take some time to look up the many that have served and saved servicemembers throughout the decades of conflict, police work and throughout history.

Adjutant and Vice Report...

By Mike Calhoon



As we move closer to Spring, hopefully the cold and windy weather will subside. Dress warm, check on your friends, and stay safe.

Thanks to everyone who dedicated time and effort towards all our February activities. We appreciate everyone more than a few words can say. We could not accomplish what we do without the great volunteers.

As always, I do want to thank the great Club volunteers that give their time each week to keep the social area running while providing beverage and food service for all of you. Please remember, these folks do not get paid and work for tips only.

This month we will have the ALR breakfast on Mar 14th, community breakfast on Mar 15th, and food support for the Tsunami Bowl Mar 27-29. Let me know if you would like to help with any of these activities.

We have started selling tickets for our next gun raffle which is for a Bear Creek Arsenal AR 10, 6.5 Creedmoor. \$20.00 per ticket with only 120 tickets to be sold and the drawing to be held on March 21st at 7:00pm.

The Post will be holding officer elections at the Post meeting on March 10th. Each current member of Post 5 can attend our monthly meetings and can run for a position on our Board of Directors.



I would like to ask everyone to be considerate of others when you come to enjoy the food here. We provide these meals as a benefit to our membership and would like to see as many members have had the opportunity to eat as possible. Please limit yourselves to one helping until it is apparent that most folks, who want to, have eaten. Thank you for your consideration.

Join or Renew
your membership

The new membership year of 2026 is in full swing. Your membership supports all the programs and activities of Post 5

and those of the Department of Alaska and the National Organization. You can renew your membership by going to mylegion.org to renew online, you can mail your renewal when you receive it in the mail, or you can stop by the Post and we will get to see your smiling face. The dues have remained \$60.00 for Post members.

Thanks to all of you who continue to support your Post and all the activities designed to support our membership, our veterans, and the community. We look forward to seeing you all and please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Sounding Off from the Sons

By Mike Calhoon



Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

Chilly and windy but warmer weather is on the horizon. Check on each other and stay warm and safe.

Remember, as we roll through early 2026 your continued support of our Legion Family here at Post 5 is needed and appreciated. The support you provide is very important in helping the Legion family carry out its mission for the veterans and community.

THANK
YOU!

Squadron 5 members continue to be involved with all the Post 5 Family functions and activities.

Thank you for everything you do on a daily basis.

This month the Post will host the ALR breakfast on Mar 14th, the community breakfast on Mar 15th, NOSB on Mar 27-29. If you would like to help with any of these activities, please contact us and we will put you to work.

The new membership year, 2026, is in full swing. If you have not yet renewed, please consider doing so. Dues are \$35.00. You can renew online at mySAL.org, come to the Post to renew or mail in your \$35.00 to PO Box 3091. Remember, your membership helps us support the mission and goals of the Sons of American Legion and the Post 5 family.

Our monthly meeting is held on the 2nd Thursday of the month, and all Squadron 5 members are invited to attend.



The Squadron will hold its 3rd round of nominations and elections for the Board Officers at the monthly meeting. If you are interested, please let us know and attend our upcoming meeting Mar 12th.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 907-224-5440. Thanks again for all your support of the Post 5 family and I look forward to seeing you all around the Post when possible.

From the President's Desk

By Debbie VanTassel

Happy St. Patrick's Day and Happy Spring. Days are getting longer and hopefully most of the winter weather is behind us. As we move into Spring, there are lots of things going on at the Post.

Monthly meeting is March 11 at 6 PM. This will be the 2nd and 3rd call for Officer Nominations to serve for 2026. If you are interested in serving as an officer, please attend the meeting. Also, at the meeting we will be discussing the Department Convention to be held in April in Wasilla, AK. The Auxiliary will send up to 3 delegates to the convention. Again, if interested in attending please be at the meeting on the 11th. Installation of the new officers will be held on March 28th. Come down to recognize the new officers and wish them well for a successful upcoming year.

St. Patrick's Day is March 17th, and the post will definitely be all decked out in celebration. Come on down for some great Corned Beef and Cabbage and Irish Stew.

Bingo continues every Monday night. Doors open at 6 PM and games start at 630 PM. Come on down and have some fun.

Important Dates in March

March 1 - Seabee Birthday- Who/What is a SeaBee? Seabee is an abbreviation for the United States Naval Construction Battalions. Seabee comes from abbreviating "Construction Battalions" to C.B. and a bit of Navy speak provides the spelling as Seabee. Happy Birthday!

March 3- Navy Reserve Birthday

March 4 - Hug a GI day 🍷

March 8 - Daylight Savings Time Begins
Women's History Month

March 13 - K-9 Veterans Day - K-9 Veteran Day. With the creation of the United States K9 Corps on March 13, 1942, dogs were officially adopted into US military ranks during WWII. The Army's Dogs for Defense program trained 10,000 dogs who were again donated to the war effort by American families.

March 15 - American Legion Birthday - HAPPY BIRTHDAY! On this day 107 years ago, members of the American Expeditionary Force convened in Paris for the first American Legion caucus.

March 21 - Rosie the Riveter Day - Mae Krier is one of the women recognized by the Department of Defense as an original Rosie the Riveter. Like many women of her generation, the North Dakota native worked in aviation factories, contributing to the production of warplanes. She and some friends got jobs at Boeing in the 1940s, where she said she fell in love with the B-17 bomber. Her role was to transport rivets for 93 cents an hour.



March 25 - Medal of Honor Day - National Medal of Honor Day is observed every year on March 25 and is dedicated to Medal of Honor Recipients. Each branch of the U.S. military awards the Medal of Honor to those who have distinguished themselves "conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity" above and beyond the call of duty, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs official site.

March 29 - National Vietnam War Veterans Day. National Vietnam War Veterans Day is observed every year on March 29 and is a way to thank and honor our nation's Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. U.S. Armed Forces personnel with active-duty service between November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location of service which includes:

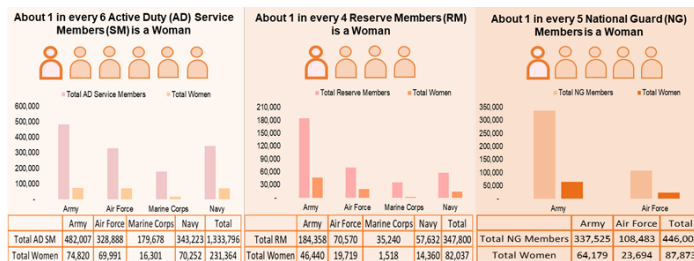
- ✚ Nine million Americans serving during that time
- ✚ Under 610,000 in country estimated Vietnam Vets are living today
- ✚ 2.7 million U.S. service members who served in Vietnam
- ✚ 58,000 whose names are memorialized on a black granite wall in our Nation's Capital
- ✚ 304,000 who were wounded
- ✚ 1,572 Vietnam [Missing in Action](#) (MIA) heroes who have not yet returned to American soil

The commemoration makes no distinction between veterans who served in-country, in-theater, or were stationed elsewhere during those 20 years.

For God and Country



March is **Women's History Month** and well over 244,000 women serve on active duty in the U.S. military and there are more than 2.1 million female veterans alive today. The contributions of women to military history cannot be ignored. While Women's History Month isn't just a time to focus exclusively on the contributions of women in military service, the contributions of female veterans are certainly an important part of American history.



Coming up- April is the Month of the Military Child.

Created in the mid-1980s by former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, April is recognized as the Month of the Military Child. During this month, military support organizations, and even the Pentagon, recognize the more than 1.2 million military children for the challenges they overcome and the sacrifices they make.

From long separation times from parents to having to adjust to new schools, new lifestyles, and being miles away from family — being a military kid comes with many challenges, some loneliness, and frustration.

Did you know that...

- Military children relocate 3 times more than civilian children?
- Since 2001, over 2 million children have had a parent who had to deploy at least once?
- The average military brat will change schools at least nine times before they graduate high school?
- About 42 percent of military children of active-duty service members are younger than five years old?

Military children take the challenges the military life throws at them and learn to bloom where they are planted — something that even adults struggle to do — which is why they deserved to be celebrated and acknowledged for their strength and adaptability.

Enjoy your month of March and enjoy the last vestiges of Winter. ❄️🌨️🌨️

Veterans Strengthening America



For more than a century, The American Legion has advocated for the well-being of America's veterans and their families. Yet there is no single deed or accomplishment that is more important to our organization than the prevention of veteran suicide.

Since the 9/11 attacks, the number of veterans who have taken their own lives far surpasses the number of American deaths incurred during the entire Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War and the Global War on Terrorism combined.

A veteran is 50 percent more likely to take his or her life than a person who has never served in the military. **This must stop.**

Statistics fluctuate but the most important number to The American Legion is **ONE**, as in **Be the One** to stop a veteran from taking his or her own life. If we all save one, collectively we will save thousands.

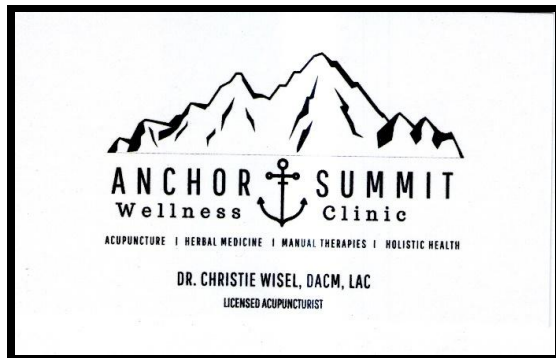
It has been called a campaign, a slogan, a phrase and an initiative. None of these words appropriately reflect what **Be the One** is to The American Legion. **IT IS A MISSION.**

We can accomplish this mission by destigmatizing the issue of mental health. Veterans value courage and it takes courage to ask for help. But through our Buddy Check outreach programs, The American Legion does not sit back and wait to be asked. We take a pro-active approach and ask veterans if they are okay.

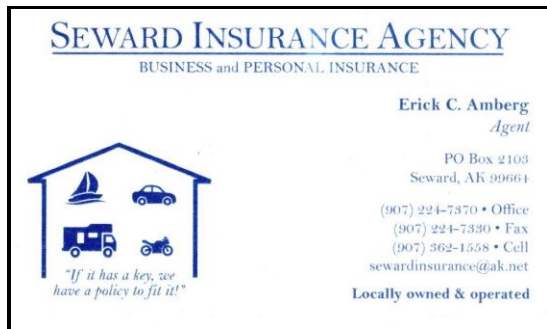
Equally important is listening. The goal is to affirmatively and compassionately engage with the veteran. Pay attention to the responses, body language and other signs. If the veteran is struggling or in crisis, encourage the veteran to call or even text the 988-crisis line. For better outcomes, watch the veteran make the call rather than trusting that he or she will do it at a later time. Follow up with the veteran and ensure that he or she connects with the needed resources. Communicate with family members and friends of the veteran, so they can be vigilant and supportive.

Everyone can Be the One and help reduce the number of veterans lost to suicide. For the latest on Be the One, visit the national Be the One website, at www.BeTheOne.org. That's www.BeTheOne.org. Since 1919, Legionnaires have answered their nation's call. We now call on ALL AMERICANS to assist us in undertaking this new mission. The mission to Be the One to save one.

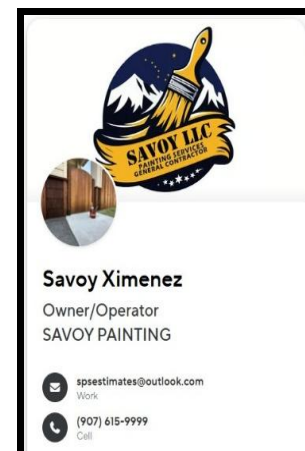
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MARCH 2026



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Luscious Leftovers Members Poker 5:00pm	2 Chili Dogs & Chips Bingo 6:30 pm 	3 Taco Tuesday 	4 Bead Class 6:00 pm 	5 B,B,M&C ALR Meeting 5:30pm Pioneer Igloo #9 Meeting 6:30pm	6 Steak Night 	7 Pool League 7:00 pm
8 Daylight Savings Time Begins Luscious Leftovers Members Poker 5:00pm	9 Chili Dogs & Chips Bingo 6:30 pm 	10 Taco Tuesday Post Meeting 5:30 pm 	11 Auxiliary Meeting 6 pm Beading Class 6:00pm	12 B,B,M&C SAL Meeting 7 pm 	13 Steak Night K-9 Veterans Day 	14 ALR Breakfast 9-11 am Pool League 7:00 pm
15 American Legion B-Day Community Breakfast Luscious Leftovers Members Poker 5:00pm	16 Chili Dogs & Chips Bingo 6:30 pm 	17 St. Patrick's Day Corn Beef & Cabbage with all things Irish!!!	18 Bead Class 6:00 pm 	19 B,B,M&C 	20 Steak Night 	21 \$\$\$ Tax Help 10am to 2pm Pool League 7:00 pm Rosie the Riveter Day
22 Luscious Leftovers Members Poker 5:00pm	23 Chili Dogs & Chips Bingo 6:30 pm 	24 Taco Tuesday 	25 Medal of Honor Day Bead Class 6:00 pm	26 B,B,M&C 	27 Steak Night 	28 Installation Dinner!! Officer Installation Dinner 6:30 pm
29 Vietnam War Veterans Day Luscious Leftovers Members Poker 5:00pm	30 Chili Dogs & Chips Bingo 6:30 pm 	31 Taco Tuesday 				

FOOD SERVED EVERY NIGHT AT THE POST

