March has flown by, and we’re heading into a wonderful April! We’ve already had some great weather and it looks like we’re going to have some more. This time last year we were still buried under snow so I am thrilled about how far ahead we are for Break Up.

We just had our installation of the new officers of all our organizations on Saturday night and we have a great slate of officers for the Post, Auxiliary, Sons and the Riders! We also had some really great food - thanks to our consistently great volunteers! We are so fortunate to have the talent we have at Post 5, whether it is in the kitchen, on our board of officers in any of our organizations, or just rolling in to volunteer during our special events - we definitely have dedicated people who really care for our veterans and this community. Some of our officers are new, some have come back to once again serve, whatever their motivation, I’d like to thank all who have stepped up to help others.

Each month the American Legion has a mission that focuses on veterans, their families, and the community for support and observance; April is the Children and Youth Month, which also happens to reflect one of the Four Pillars of the American Legion on which we stand as a service organization. We have many ways to get involved from simply making donations to child welfare organizations to active involvement in school programs that help in the areas of children’s education, safety and health. As we know our youth is our future so we have an obligation to invest in our future for the benefit of all.

April is a good transition to better weather and at this point we are planning our annual Easter breakfast for the community and are getting geared up for all our May activities. We also are getting ready for the annual Department Convention in Kenai at Post 20. We have selected our delegates who will represent each of our organizations for the work at the convention. The purpose of the convention is to discuss the important issues that affect veterans in Alaska that need to be addressed either within the state or brought forward to the national level to be resolved. Additionally, we will work in committees to discuss and develop resolutions on topics affecting Children and Youth programs, select awards for posts that have achieved excellence in certain areas, discuss veteran rehabilitation and benefits concerns, and have the opportunity to hear informative presentations by other agencies that assist veterans and our youth.

As April progresses we will be forming our scholarship committee and will choose scholarships for graduating seniors. Each of our organizations will provide scholarships to these students to further their education and to recognize their scholastic excellence, as well as their community service efforts. We look to reward those students who are well rounded and community minded, in addition to performing well in school.

We are also looking forward to the onset of real spring weather and that will mean sprucing up at the post as well as the cemetery. As you know that is initially a lot of work but pays off throughout the good weather. We will also be preparing for our big events in May including the Armed Services YMCA Combat Fishing Tournament support and Memorial Day ceremonies at the American Legion Cemetery. If you have time and want to help, give us a call at the post or email us. We can always use the help.

It is now April and we are fully in the new membership year. We’re getting close to our goal of 95% by April 9th, so if you have renewed, thank you for doing so. Your support and membership keeps us strong and allows us to continue to serve our veterans and our community. If you have not renewed, please consider doing so. Not only does your renewal help us help others it permits you to have continued access to the activities and privileges that go along with being a member.

Thanks again to all who are members and those that volunteer at the post. Whatever your participation, everything helps and is truly appreciated.

Looking forward to seeing you at the post!
April is Children and Youth Month

Children ... Our most precious natural resource is the American Legion's national theme for "April Is Children & Youth Month."

As Americans, we need to remember amid the problems we face daily with the environment, crime, unemployment and financial uncertainty, the one constant that will make or break this nation is our young people. They are our future. Our hopes and dreams for a better tomorrow rest in their hands.

The American Legion has been actively involved with children's issues since the early 1900s. In many instances, the American Legion has been the driving force on the federal, state and local levels representing their interests and voicing their concerns.

In 1938, April was formally designated as Child Welfare Month (now called Children & Youth Month) and has continued on an annual basis. During this special time, we urge each of you to show your community that The American Legion family is committed to Children... Our Most Precious Natural Resource!

The following numbers, gathered from the 2011-2012 Consolidated Post Report from all posts nationally, shows how Legion members and posts influenced the lives of children and youth in their community and beyond:

- 14,297: Number of American Legion Children & Youth program activities conducted by posts
- $156,012: Amount raised by Legion posts to help children's hospitals
- $1,993,951: Dollar amount of cash aid provided by posts for Children & Youth activities
- $376,495: Amount posts provided for the Family Support Network
- $301,478: Amount posts provided through the Temporary Financial Assistance program

American Legion Post 5 Family Officer Selections for 2014

POST OFFICERS
Commander: Clare Sullivan
1st Vice Commander: Bobby Dunno
2nd Vice Commander: Michael Calhoon
Adjutant: Michael Calhoon
Finance: Melody Moline
Service Officer: John Christensen
Judge Advocate: Jerry Blair
Chaplain: Vernon Willet
Historian: Don Lynch
Sgt-at-Arms: Ludwig Everett
Members at Large: Ronald Buckley

AUXILIARY OFFICERS
President: Suzi Towsley
1st Vice President: Nancy Perea
2nd Vice President: Veronica Wilde
Secretary: Michelle Swartz
Treasurer: Joanne Frey
Chaplain: Sharon Dillon
Sgt-at-Arms: Susan St. Amand
Executive Board: Connie Kullander

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
Commander: Al Dykstra
1st Vice Commander: Michael Calhoon
2nd Vice Commander: Mike Mooter
Finance: David Dieckgraeff
Sgt-at-Arms: David Osborn
Chaplain: Vernon Willet
Historian: Charles Walters

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS
Director: Bobby Dunno
Assistant Director: Dave Squires
Sergeant of Arms: Linda Amburg
Historian: Clare Sullivan
Secretary: Michael Calhoon
Treasurer: Don Sutherland
Chaplain: Carolee Chapman
House and Vice Report......
By Mike Calhoon

We had a pretty busy March with the Spring Break Festival, St Patrick’s Day, and Installation Dinner. I would like to thank, as we all should, the Blackwater Railroad Company music group for donating a show here at the Post on March 14th. The music was great and our members and guests truly enjoyed having live music.

I would like to thank all the great volunteers who continue to contribute their time and effort to assist us in providing good food and service to the membership and the community. I won’t try and list all the names because I will surely forget someone. All the organizations of the Post 5 Family should be proud of their volunteers. There is not a function, activity, meal, etc... that happens here when there is not at least one member from each organization helping. I can tell you that the number of volunteers from the Auxiliary and the SAL tend to far outnumber those from the Post on a regular basis. Good thing the organizations are all working toward the same goals.

The one big event planned so far in April will be Easter Breakfast on April 20th. We will also be looking a Post clean-up day not too far down the road but may wait until the cemetery is also clear and hit it all at once. We will let you all know once plans are more concrete.

The Auxiliary is also starting to plan a Rummage Sale for May. Contact the Auxiliary or the Club if you have good items you would like to donate to the cause.

We still have Bingo, Poker, and Pool happening each week so check your calendar and come down to join in the fun.

Congratulations to all the officers of all the organizations for 2014-2015. I am sure you will all do a great job and continue the strong tradition the Post 5 Family has for helping our veterans and the community of Seward.

Once again I would like to thank the Auxiliary and SAL for their financial support of the Post as we work through a tough winter. The doors are open and the lights are on, and we are still providing for our membership and community due, in large part, to your support.

Thanks to everyone who continues to support the Post and the Club. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 224-5440/362-2029.

Sounding Off from the Sons....
By Mike Calhoon

Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

First I would like to thank and congratulate the Squadron 5 officers for 2014-2015. The Squadron Commander is Al Dykstra, 1st Vice is Mike Calhoon, 2nd Vice is Mike Mooter, Finance is Dave Dieckgraefe, Chaplain is Vernon Willet, Historian is Ozzie Walters, and Sergeant at Arms is David “Ozzie” Osborn. You have all proven that you care for the welfare of our veterans and community members and have a desire to assist the Post in successfully accomplishing its mission.

The volunteer and financial support the Squadron has provided the Post has been crucial in assisting the Post to get through a tough winter. All Squadron 5 members should be proud of what has been and continues to be accomplished for our veterans, their families, and the community of Seward.

Mike Banas and David Osborn really stepped up and were instrumental in helping put on a great Installation Dinner. Great job guys.

This month we do not have many major functions planned but will be holding our traditional Easter Breakfast on April 20th. If you would like to help out just let me know and I am sure we will find some fun work for you.

We are getting closer to reaching our membership goals for 2014 so if you have not renewed yet please consider doing so. If you know of someone who may be eligible for membership and would like more info bring them in so we can answer any questions they may have.

If you would like to help or find out more about what the Squadron is doing please feel free to contact me at 224-5440 or 362-2029.

Thank you again for your support and I look forward to seeing you at the Post.
Auxiliary Vice Notes...

By Connie Kullander, 2nd Vice

Well we made it through another month. March came in like a lion and went out like a lamb. What a nice lamb it has been. We couldn’t ask for nicer weather.

As you know, we had election of officers last month. I would like to congratulate all the new officers as well as the reelected. Thank you all for taking these positions as it means a great deal to the rest of us knowing you are here for the mission. This message goes out to everyone in the American Legion family!

If you do not know or were not present at the last meeting, here are the elected officers:
President: Suzi Towsley
1st Vice: Nancy Perea
2nd Vice: Veronica Wilde
Secretary: Michelle Swartz
Treasurer: Joanne Frey
Chaplain: Sharon Dillon
Sgt. Of Arms: Susan St. Amand
E- Board: Connie Kullander

We had great fun last month as we celebrated Spring Break Up. IF you were not here, you missed out on a great band, Blackwater Railroad. A group of very talented folks right here in our community, who played for one night here at the post.

St Patrick’s was a great time as well; we had good food and lot of fun. Thanks to everyone who helped width the food. Thank you to all that help and show up for every Sunday of the month breakfast. Speaking of that I would like to thank all those who helped with our science bowl breakfast we had in February. You all were great!!!

This month we don’t have as much going on. It is TAX time, so don’t forget to do your taxes. We will also be having Easter breakfast on the 20th. That is the 3rd Sunday as well, so if you feel like it we could use the help.

Just a reminder to let everyone know: We are family!!! That’s the Post, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and the Legion Riders. Everyone have a great spring.

For God and Country

US Enters World War I

6 April 1917

The United States was a formal participant in World War I from April 6, 1917 until the war’s end on November 11, 1918. Before entering the war, the US had remained neutral, though the US had been an important supplier to Britain and other Allied powers. Neutrality ended after the sinking of the British Cruise Liner Lusitania. President Wilson demanded an apology from Germany and stayed his neutral course as long as possible. Germany’s unrestricted submarine warfare, however, was an intolerable affront to America’s dignity and honor.

At the start of 1917, British intelligence intercepted the Zimmermann telegram, a secret German communication to Mexico promising United States territory to Mexico in return for supporting the German cause. On April 2, 1917, Wilson finally asked Congress for a formal declaration of war.

During the war, the US mobilized over 4,000,000 military personnel and suffered 110,000 deaths, including 43,000 due to the influenza pandemic. The war saw a dramatic expansion of the US government in an effort to harness the war effort and a significant increase in the size of the US military. After a slow start in mobilizing the American economy and manpower, by spring 1918 the U.S. was poised to play the decisive role in the conflict.

Under the leadership of President Woodrow Wilson the war represented the climax of the Progressive Movement as it sought to bring reform and democracy to the world.
Directors Notes....

By Bobby Dunno

We’re already out and riding! The roads are clear and the weather has been great! So riding season is upon us and it’s time to get out! You need to break out the bikes and get them ready to ride. In fact a few of us have already taken a spin or two around town this past week, after all it’s sunny and 40 degrees - it is just too hard to pass up!

On that note we need to think about not just freshening up that coat of wax, (yea I know that’s important too!) but every rider needs to check out the bike and make sure it is truly ready to carry our butts safety out for miles and miles of enjoyable riding. During storage tires lose air pressure, clutch plates and brakes bind up, cables and linkages start sticking, and that’s just scratching the surface. If you are wondering what it is you should check, we have a check list available, just so we don’t forget anything in our excitement at getting out and on the road. Come to the meeting this Thursday at 7:00 and pick one up. Once we are out and making our own wind, we need to be aware of those people who are still traveling around in cages. They have not had to look for a motorcycle in months and are not aware we are on the road now.

This month is going to be interesting because not only will most of us see the highway flow past our foot pegs for the first time in a while, but on the 23rd the Alaska Department Convention starts; and we’ll be meeting the evening before the morning everything kicks off. By meeting the night before, it will allow us to participate in Post, Auxiliary, and Sons meetings when the formal convention starts on the 24th. This is the second time the ALR has been formally involved in the Department Convention. It is another step in bringing the Alaska Chapters of the ALR more in line with the rest of our American Legion Family, it’s a great thing and a long time coming.

We will be looking to start our dessert auctions again for the summer so dust off your recipe books and let’s get cooking! These auctions are a great means of fundraising for The Legacy Run Scholarship Fund. If you have not received word yet expect a challenge out of the Valley from Post 35 to challenge other chapters to a fundraising contest for The Legacy Run. If you are interested in making a dessert dish for the auction, Clare will have a sign up list.

One more important item to mention here, we’re sponsoring the 2014 ROMP (Riders on Motorcycles Parade) on 13-15 June. The ROMP is a gathering of all the ALR chapters for fun, food and rides! We get some ALR business done but more importantly we get out and ride!

The registration form for the ROMP is at the post and will be online on the Alaska American Legion Riders webpage: http://www.alaskalegionriders.org/
We’ll have quite a few things going on and should be quite the time! Take a look at the registration page for the schedule and see that we have lots happening!

So if ya’ll have the same itch that needs scratching, get your bike checked out, fuel it up and then Get On Your Bike And Ride!
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