COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

What a great month March was with all the support and fun activities we had and we’re full speed ahead to the warmer weather, the summer season is just a blink away!!

We had quite a bit going on in March and if you missed it you missed some good times! We celebrated the American Legion’s 99th Birthday, we had the opportunity to recognize exemplary military service by awarding some special veterans their own Quilt of Valor, we celebrated St. Pat’s Day in style with fabulous food, decorations and amazing music by the crew of “Just add Vodka.” We also had the all-important elections of our officers for the new year, and a really tasty Installation Dinner where we celebrated and installed our new officers. Congrats to the new officers of the Post, Auxiliary, Sons and Riders! We have a great year ahead of us!!!!

I’d be remiss if I didn’t thank our outgoing officers and those who are willing to hang in there to continue the forward momentum of our post in all our efforts to serve our veterans and the community. I particularly want to thank all our officers for stepping up with the attitude of selfless service in support of all our activities. We couldn’t do even half of what we do without your service not only “on the board” but all your volunteer hours to make our events so successful. You guys “Rock it!!!”

On to April, we’ve started off well with our fabulous Easter Breakfast and as always the “Breakfast Crew” has once again put out an amazing feast with the extra “goodies” and goodness commensurate with the special day that Easter is for us all. April is also a special month as it is also the time for the 99th Department of Alaska Convention for all the American Legion posts in Alaska. It is a great time where we meet with other Legionnaires throughout the state and work to help support veterans and their families and continue to promote programs that are the core of the American Legion including all the “Children and Youth” programs. These are vital to many children in communities throughout the state and are varied depending on the need. Alaska has several programs such as American Legion Baseball, Boys State/Nation, Oratorical Competition, Scouting, junior shooting programs, etc.

During the convention we also have the opportunity to meet individuals from American Legion “National” who are the rising stars and will be our leaders at the top ranks of the organization. These folks are the ones who advocate for all of us veterans, our families, and our active duty personnel when they testify before Congress.

Each month the American Legion has programs that focus on veterans, their families, and the community for support and observance: April is the Children and Youth Month, which also happens to be 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.

As April progresses we will be forming our scholarship committees and will be in receipt of scholarships request from graduating seniors from Seward High School. Each of our organizations provides 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, positive and community minded in addition to performing well in school.

We are looking forward to the onset of real spring weather and that will mean sprucing up at the post, making repairs as well getting the cemetery policed up after the long winter. As you know that is initially a lot of work, but it pays off throughout the good weather when we’re a good looking and well performing organization. We will also be preparing for our big events in May including the Armed Services 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!
As it is now April we are fully in the new membership year. If you have renewed - thank you for doing so. Your support and membership keep us strong as an organization and allows us to continue to serve our veterans and our community. If you have not renewed, please consider doing so, it is so critical to help us help others. Not only does your renewal allow us help others it permits you to have continued access to the activities and privileges that go along with being a member. A healthy membership shows a mature and vibrant post that is engaged and able to continue the mission we are chartered to do in service for others.

You can renew online or at the post which makes it quite convenient. If you don’t remember your membership number, give Mike a call at the post 907-224-5440 or email him at americanlegionpost5@qci.net and he’ll get your number for you and get you back on track. Thanks!

Let’s Connect!!!!

Our American Legion Family has a wonderful and committed history of serving veterans and our town and has done so since 1919; we fully intend to keep that going for as long as we can. It must be noted however in this day of increasing life’s demands on the individual and family, everyone’s time is tightly scheduled all day long. Once the day is done people choose to remain at home. Also, with the ease of connectivity and entertainment right from the living room many people have no reason to go out to socialize and connect; and, that has significantly affected the membership for service organizations such as ours and others (Moose, Elks, other veteran organizations, Eagles, etc.), membership has declined for all of us for many years.

This decline in membership has not gone without notice in our organization and we’re looking for ways to accommodate people with their busier and more technologically involved lives. We understand the speed at how our families live and the daily demands that are placed on them. We want to provide the best service and sense of community for our members and to be conscious of their valuable time.

Most people who aren't regular participants in our organizational activities look at us as a “place” to go for an event or a meal (Steak Night, Polar Bear, 3rd Sunday Breakfast, etc....) or for other individualized purposes, and those same people have not formed a real relationship with the organization or its mission. Most appreciate who we are and what we do, but they are not fully aware of what goes on day to day regarding support and service. And, that isn't a criticism it is more of an observation as there is so much competition for an individual’s attention. What I have found in my research is that there has been a shift in what many people want in their non-work lives or leisure time. Today, it appears that in order for people to want to go and join an organization and form an association with it, it cannot be a “place” per say, rather people want to go engage in something that provides a sense of community and meaning whether it is for the family or an individual. This different view is reflective of the sense of belonging to something that provides a sense of purpose and community. Think about it, look at all the causes individuals and families participate in - walks/runs for charity, fundraisers and auctions for a particular cause or event, etc. Once involved there is a common purpose that propels people forward to continue to participate or they move on.

Historically, service organizations fit this same niche and were additionally the place to socialize and perform community service for people who already had a common background or interest. Service organizations were (and still are) a place for helping people in need, camaraderie and a “place” to unwind from the day’s stresses that otherwise couldn’t be done elsewhere. Now people can “unplug” by plugging in with electronic devices that monopolize our time and have captured our interest, hence the decline of membership. Also, with so many state and federal agencies that provide support to individuals in need service organizations are not as frequently looked to for this kind of help.

The forgotten benefit of service organizations is they provide a “social area” that allows people to personally connect and in a fast-paced world the opportunity to slow down. If given the chance to slow down, connect and actually talk without the aid of a “device” oftentimes that sense of “community” and resultant friendships will emerge as well as the lasting benefits of being involved in a service organization such as the American Legion.

Just remember, we’re here for you and if there is anything we can do to enhance the sense of community and inclusiveness for all, please let us know as we definitely don’t have all the answers, but we want to find them. We want to continue to have an organization that serves, viable and meets the needs of our membership and community. We can only do that with input by our members who can help us direct our organizations and meet the needs of the people who we serve. Our American Legion Family looks to be the place of community for all.

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 1920s. 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 2016 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:

- 13,290: Number of American Legion Children & Youth program activities conducted by reporting posts
- $489,696 Temporary Financial Assistance Fund
- $1,243,175 American Legion Riders Legacy Scholarship
- $1,779,043 VA Hospitals
- $1,561,264 Other Charities
- $14,383,067: Dollar amount of cash aid provided by posts nationally for Children & Youth activities
- $915,556 School Assistance
- $133,929 Children's Hospitals
- $197,534: Amount posts provided for the Family Support Network
- $29,560 Family Financial Assistance
- 4,046,682 Community Service Hours

American Legion Post 5 Family Officer Selections for 2018

POST OFFICERS
Commander: Clare Sullivan
1st Vice Commander: Bobby Dunno
2nd Vice Commander: Michael Calhoon
Adjutant: Michael Calhoon
Finance: Melody Moline
Service Officer: Tom Sears
Chaplain: Fr. Bill Hanrahan
Historian: Justin Olson
Judge Advocate: John Moline
Sgt-at-Arms: Tom Sears
Executive Board: Dave Joslin

AUXILIARY OFFICERS
President: Debbie VanTassel
1st Vice President: Michelle Oliver
2nd Vice President: Sharon Dillon
Secretary: Lori Wolfe
Treasurer: Angela Schwertfager
Sgt-at-Arms: Kathy Balcom
Historian: Susan St. Amand
Executive Board: LaNno Settles, Marilyn Sutherland

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
Commander: Randy Kockritz
1st Vice Commander: Michael Calhoon
2nd Vic Commander: Scott Wilde
Finance: David Dieckgraeff
Sgt-at-Arms: David Osborn
Chaplain: Mike Mooter
Historian: Bill Wolfe

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS
Director: Bobby Dunno
Assistant Director: Larry Gentry
Sergeant of Arms: Terry Moon
Historian: Mike Mooter
Secretary/Treasurer: Mike Calhoon
Chaplain: Larry Gentry

Congratulations!
Greetings from your friendly neighborhood Service Officer! For this newsletter I’d like to tell you about a visit I recently made to a couple of other American Legion Posts. But first the back story: A few months ago we received a request for donations from American Legion Post IR63 in Dublin Ireland. They were working on a project to help maintain and mark graves of American Servicemen that were buried in Irish cemeteries around the Dublin area. Our Post voted to make a donation to such a worthwhile cause by fellow Legionnaires, and since I was already traveling to Ireland, I volunteered to deliver our donation in person.

While coordinating this trip, I also started talking to members of American Legion Post IR02 in Killarney, Ireland and was scheduled to meet them as well. But due to the worst snow storm in over 30 years (aka “The Beast from the East”), my visit with Post IR02 was interrupted, so I left behind one of our Post 5 License plates, a Department of Alaska Centennial coin, and some Post 5 Salmon pins. Our Post License plate will be displayed in The "Flesk", which is an amazing Restaurant/Pub in the middle of Killarney. I encourage everyone to visit the Flesk and beautiful Killarney when in Ireland!

Now back to Post IR63: I met a couple of times with Liam Kane, post Commander of Post IR63, who regaled me with stories of Ireland and history of the Military and American Legion Posts in Ireland. Even this meeting with the Post IR63 members and Officers was interrupted by the “Beast from the East”! But in the end we had a great meeting on the tail end of my Irish adventure with my Mom. I thoroughly enjoyed trading stories and ideas of Legion events they have, their history, and sitting around and visiting with fellow Legionnaires that are so far away from us in miles, but very close to us in spirit and common goals.

Post IR63 gave us some beautiful gifts and a Plaque which will be displayed with honor in our Post. I am truly honored to have had the opportunity to visit our fellow Legion posts, and proud that we were able to help them, even in a small way, with projects that help with one of the Legion's common goals.

I encourage everyone in your travels around the World, the USA, or even just Alaska, find the local American Legion Post and say “Hi!” You might just come home with a memory that will last a lifetime.

From the ALR Director’s Desk

By Bobby Dunno

OK, so Bobby is back where he is happy as Director of the American Legion Riders here at Post 5, not that I wasn’t happy as Post Commander of our American Legion Post 5, but it did not take me long to realize that I was a better Director than I will ever be a Post Commander. And being able to do something well makes me happier than doing something and not being able to be my best. Post Commander takes time that I just do not have anymore, but I need to thank Mike, Ozzie, Connie, Tom and as always Clare for they had my back and took up the slack on a daily basis. Clare Sullivan is a proven and outstanding Post Commander that inspires the best in everyone and it is going to be nice seeing her close to home again instead of answering the call of duty and responsibility elsewhere.

So on to the ALR stuff, because the roads are clearing, and it is actually not completely insane for most reasonable people to get their bikes out and see some road pass beneath our foot pegs even if it is only in town and slowly. So, riding season is upon us and it’s time if you have not done so already let’s get the bikes prepped and ready to ride. So, if you have a bike and have not finished everything you wanted to do over the winter, or you are one of those that just parked it and plan on getting the oil changed before firing it up now is the time to get the fingernails dirty and get it done. I, myself still have more than a few projects I need to get done to accomplish that goal myself, so Bobby needs to get busy too. I have already taken a brief spin as 42 degrees and sunshine at lunchtime is just too hard to pass up!
House and Vice Report……

By Mike Calhoon

Hello from the Second Vice/Club

Spring is creeping up on us. Come on warmer weather!!

I am sending a big Thank You to all the great volunteers that gave their time and effort to the Legion Family in March. It was not a particularly busy month activity-wise but the activities were important. We had a great St Patrick’s Day celebration. Great food prepared by Connie Kullander and beautiful decorating done by Clare Sullivan and Susan St Amand. Great Job!!!! We also had live music supplied by Just Add Vodka. Really good band. If you missed it you missed a great time.

We also had our normally fantastic community breakfast and a wonderful Officer Installation Dinner. Our volunteers are great and we could not do what we do without them.

This month we will have Easter breakfast on April 1st, continuing Post renovations on April 7-15, community breakfast on April 15th. Also, some of our members will be attending the Department Convention on April 26-28th at Post 28 in Anchorage.

We started prepping to put up new siding on the rest of the building. Thanks goes to everyone that came out on March 24-25 to help with that. Lots of work and a great job done by all!!

We are months into the new membership year and some of you have not renewed. Please consider renewing your membership if you have not done so. We are checking for 2018 membership cards when you come in the club. Membership is the foundation for everything we do. A larger and active membership helps us plan more ways to assist our veterans and the community of Seward.

Pool, poker, and bingo are all going strong so come on in and enjoy some good food, drinks, and harassment from the bar staff.

Remember, those of you on the Building Committee, the next meeting is on Tuesday, April 3rd at 7:00pm.

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.

Looks like spring has finally sprung!! Not summer yet but we can see it on the horizon.

Last month Squadron 5 members were instrumental in assisting the Post 5 family. They gave time and effort to the community breakfast, St Patrick’s Day, renovation of the Post, and Installation Dinner. Great job as always.

This month the Post will have the Easter Breakfast on April 1st, Community breakfast on April 15th, Post renovations on April 7-15. Many volunteers are needed for these activities so if you have the time please come by and give a hand.

Officer elections were held at March’s meeting and the new officers were installed on March 31st. Randy Kockritz will again lead the Squadron through the year with Mike Calhoon, Dave Dieckgraeff, Scott Wilde, David Osborn, Bill Wolfe, and Mike Mooter holding the other positions. Thank you all for your continued commitment to the SAL and the Legion Family.

Also, we are deep into the 2018 membership year. Thank you if you have already renewed your dues and, for those who have not done so, please consider taking care of that. Membership drives everything we do. A strong Squadron membership makes the Post 5 Family that much more capable of serving our veterans and the community of Seward.

Thank you again for all your hard work and support of the Post 5 Family mission of service to the veterans and other community members in Seward.

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

As April begins the Auxiliary has a new slate of officers: President- Debbie Van Tassel, 1st Vice President- Michele Oliver, 2nd Vice President- Sharon Dillon, Treasurer- Angela Schwertfeger, Secretary- Lori Wolfe, Sgt. At Arms- Kathy Balcom, Historian- Susan St. Amand and Executive Board- LaNno Settles and Marilyn Sutherland. I look forward to working with this great group of ladies to continue the many wonderful projects and programs that the Auxiliary is involved with.

I would like to thank Michelle Oliver for her dedication and hard work the past 2 years as the outgoing president. Through her leadership and willingness to contribute countless volunteer hours the Auxiliary has been able to continue to support the many programs of the Auxiliary and the Legion family at Post 5.

Also, a huge thank you to Peggy Hamner who has served as the Unit Treasurer. Peggy has done a tremendous job and will be missed once she and Dave move back to the Valley. Also, I would like to recognize all of the Auxiliary volunteers who have helped with the numerous projects and programs during the past year. Our members' willingness to volunteer and assist with all the projects are crucial to the success of the Auxiliary and our goal to support the Post and the entire Legion Family.

The Auxiliary has a busy spring/summer coming up. In April, several of our members will be attending the State Convention in Anchorage at Post #28. Three of our Junior members will also be attending. This is a great opportunity for our members to meet with members from other units and learn how we can better support the goals and mission of the Auxiliary. We also have a committee looking at possible fund-raising functions. Our scholarship committee has provided applications to Seward High School, AVTEC and KPC. We will also start working on the Poppy Project and continue that into May and Memorial Day.

Beginning in April we will be looking for volunteers to help the Post with the siding project. The week of April 7-15, the Post is going to be replacing the siding on the remaining 3 sides of the building along with several other projects. Any assistance or volunteer hours that our members can provide will be greatly appreciated. The Post is looking for members that can assist with the actual construction type work or something as simple as providing some snacks/meals to keep the construction crew fed. The more volunteers we can get, the merrier.

I would like to mention is membership. Currently, we are at about 50% of our goal. I would like to encourage all previous members who have not renewed yet to please do so. Membership dues provide funding for the local, state and national organization so that we can continue to meet our goal and mission of supporting our veterans, their families and children.

I really look forward to the next year. Our Unit consistently provides numerous volunteer hours and support to the Post Family and in turn that supports our community, our veterans, families and children. We can always use new ideas and suggestions on how to improve and I encourage all members to attend meetings, and volunteer to assist with different projects and programs.

ALR Director's Notes Continued...

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 or 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 on our website alaskalegionriders.org. So please make use of it so we don’t forget anything in our excitement at getting out and on the road. And feel better having a sound ride under you without the doubts that you ignored or forgot something.

Our next ALR meeting is scheduled for the evening of the 5th of April followed by a meeting the 3rd of May and we have lot to discuss. For starters, we will need to re-energize our fundraising efforts for The Legacy Run Scholarship Fund. We will be scheduling when we will be holding our first desert auctions and discussing the ride schedule for the first few months of the summer. So far we have the Memorial Day ride out to Byers Lake 26-18 May, the Wounded Hero’s Escort rolling out from the Bass Pro Shop in Anchorage at 0530 the 8th of June and returning them late afternoon of the 9th. Then it will be the American Legion Riders, Peninsula Patriot Run which will be leaving Post 5 after breakfast and riding to Post 16 in Homer with a break at Post 20 in Kenai for a few activities and lunch. That does not include Ice Cream runs to Cooper Landing and Runs to Hope for Pie. So if ya’ll have the same itch to ride as I do, may I suggest you scratch it, get them bikes checked out, fuel them up and then Get On Your Bike And Ride! Boy, it feels good to write that again! 😊
YOUR BUSINESS CARD SIZE AD HERE FOR ONLY $5 PER MONTH!

To advertise in this space call Clare Sullivan at 224-7662
Rates are $5 per month or $50 per year BUSINESS CARDS ONLY, PLEASE!

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Agent
PO Box 21053
Seward, AK 99664
(907) 224-7350 • Office
(907) 224-7330 • Fax
(907) 302-1638 • Cell
sewardinsurance@alaska.com
Locally owned & family operated

Metco
David Dieckgraef
Vice President
GENERAL CONTRACTOR • EXCAVATION
CONCRETE READY-MIX • SAND • GRAVEL
2701 Seward Highway (907) 224-3151 Office
Seward, Alaska 99664 (907) 224-3154 Fax

Marathon Constructors Inspection Services

Building Safety

ICC Certified
Building Inspection Service
Donald A. Sutherland
HOME INSPECTOR LICENSE #116
11770 Seward Highway
P.O. Box 1852
Seward, Alaska 99664
Phone: 907-224-5230
Cell: 907-362-1727
marcominspec@yahoo.com

BLACK RIFLE COFFEE COMPANY
https://www.blackriflecoffee.com/
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Food Every Night