COMMANDER’S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

I usually start this paragraph every year with “what a busy month we’ve had,” and amazingly we have been really busy even with the slow yet careful easing up of the pandemic restrictions. We’ve been fortunate that our City Leaders sought common sense solutions to this year’s major issues which helped us survive. So, our year of Covid has, for the most part, settled down with folks taking vaccines and those who recovered from Covid. We’re slowly but surely returning to “our norm” at the post! This month we celebrated the 102nd Birthday of the National organization of The American Legion, we had good fun for Saint Patrick’s Day with good friends, good food and good drink! A nice way to get us back to what we call “normal” 😊

As most know, even before the pandemic, our nightly meals are complementary or for donation except Steak Night; it really is a great deal, especially in this challenging time for all of us. Throughout the last year we actively reached out to ensure that people in town who needed food were able to come and get a warm meal for dinner, particularly when everything was shut down. We follow all precautions for social distancing and sanitization and still managed to provide some yummy and warm dishes – from Halibut Olympia to Burgers, Bacon Mac and Cheese…. We’ve been here to help.

As we closed out March, we had one last celebration for the month which was our new officer Installation & Dinner. We had a wonderful meal and then installed our officers for the 2021-2022 year. We look for some good things to happen in our new year!

We have a great slate of officers who have rose to the mission during this “unique time” in the Post, Auxiliary, Sons and the Riders! We are so fortunate to have the talent we have at Seward Post 5. As we work toward our regular Spring-Summer schedule, I fully expect all these great folks to be back at it providing support to our veterans and those in need.

So, as we enter April, I’d like to let you know 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.

I want to thank Department Adjutant Sharon Cherrette, Don “DJ” Jones and Pete Toloff for taking time out and being our installing officers for all our organizations. A great time was had by all!

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As April progresses, we will be forming our scholarship committees and will be reviewing the applications for scholarships from graduating seniors from Seward High School.

Each of our organizations provide scholarships to select 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-service minded in addition to performing well in school.

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 by the American Legion (now called Children & Youth Month) and has continued on an annual basis. During this time, we will show the American Legion Family is committed to Children...

Each year The American Legion Committee on Children & Youth focuses on three primary areas of concern, including:

**Child health**
- Immunization programs
- School nutrition programs
- Teen pregnancy prevention programs

**Child safety**
- Child pornography
- Drug abuse prevention
- Drug trafficking
- Alcohol abuse prevention
- Child/sexual abuse and neglect
- Teen suicide prevention

**Family support**
- National Family Week activities
- Day care safety
- Foster care
- Temporary Financial Assistance
- Missing and exploited children

American Legion Post 5 Family Officers for 2021 - 2022

**POST OFFICERS**
- Commander: Clare Sullivan
- 1st Vice Commander: Bobby Dunno
- 2nd Vice Commander: Michael Calhoon
- Adjutant: Melody Moline
- Finance: John Moline
- Service Officer/Judge Advocate: Fr. William Hanrahan
- Chaplain: Clare Sullivan
- Historian: James Natale
- Sgt-at-Arms: Daniel Oliver
- Executive Board: David Squires
david Joslin

**AUXILIARY OFFICERS**
- President: Deb VanTassel
- 1st Vice President: Sharon Dillon
- 2nd Vice President: Michelle Oliver
- Secretary: Lori Skaggs
- Treasurer: Susan St. Amand
- Chaplain: Valerie Rose
- Executive Board: LaNno Settles
- Marilyn Sutherland

**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**
- Commander: Mike Mooter
- 1st Vice Commander: Michael Calhoon
- Adjutant: Scott Wilde
- 2nd Vice Commander: Randy Kockritz
- Finance/Chaplain: David Osborn

**AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS**
- Director: Bobby Dunno
- Assistant Director: Larry Gentry
- Sergeant at Arms: Terry Moon
- Secretary: Debra Dunno
- Treasurer: Mike Calhoon
- Chaplain: Larry Gentry
- Historian: Clare Sullivan

Congrats to the New & Returning Officers!!!!!
House and Vice Report......
By Mike Calhoon

Spring break is over and break-up is close at hand. Get out your mud boots and water wings for the next couple of weeks as the weather warms and the snow melts.

I would like to thank all the great volunteers that continue to support the Post 5 family in its mission of service to the veterans and the community of Seward. Without those volunteers Post 5 would not be able to provide everything we do for our members and the community. You are truly the backbone of the organization. The Club and Kitchen volunteers have been amazing and continue to provide good food and service for our membership.

This month the Post will host Easter breakfast on April 4th, the community breakfast on April 18th, and a retirement dinner on April 24th. Let me know if you are interested in helping with any of these activities.

The Post has been sponsoring gun raffles on a regular basis and the support has been very strong. We will continue to do this as long as the interest remains high. Check your email or contact us to find out about the current raffle.

Pool League, for members only, is going strong on Saturday nights and Bingo is happening every Monday night. We still have food every night for dine in or take out.

The 2021 membership year is moving right along and the Post has reached all monthly goals so far. I would like to thank everyone who has renewed their membership and encourage those who have not to consider doing so. You can renew online at mylegion.org, by mail, or in person at the post. Membership is the backbone of our organization and we need to keep that backbone strong to continue to carry the load we do for our veterans and the community of Seward.

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.

For God and Country

Sounding Off from the Sons...
By Mike Calhoon

Everyone get ready for break-up. Could be a messy one this year.

I want to thank all Squadron 5 members who continue to support the Post 5 family mission of service to the veterans and community of Seward. Your dedication to the mission of the S.A.L. is commendable.

This month the Post will be having Easter breakfast on the 4th, the Community Breakfast on the 18th, and a retirement dinner on the 24th. Let us know if you would like to help with any of these functions.

The Squadron will hold its monthly meeting on April 8th at 7:00pm. All current members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

During the March meeting officers for the 2021-2022 year were elected with the following results:

Commander
Mike Mooter

1st Vice Commander
Mike Calhoon

2nd Vice Commander
Scott Wilde

Finance Officer/Chaplain
Randy Kockritz

Historian/Sgt-at-Arms
David Osborn

Adjutant will be appointed at the April meeting.

The SAL will be sponsoring a gun raffle later in April in conjunction with the Dept Convention.

Thanks to everyone who has renewed their dues this year. Remember the dues are $35.00 this year. Membership is foundation for all the SAL programs so please consider renewing your dues if you have not done so.

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 when possible.

**********************************************

Sons of the American Legion Installing Officer Pete Toloff receiving his Seward Post 5 Family sweatshirt after the installation and dinner conclude. Good times had by all!!!!
MEMBERSHIP Notes!

It is now April and we are fully in the new membership year. We’re getting close to our goal of 95% by April 14th, so if you have renewed – thank you for doing so and if you like what we do please spread the word to others! We need just 14 more members to renew or join to get us to 100% goal. Your support and membership keep us strong and allows us to continue to serve our veterans and our community.

If you have had one of our free meals whether during the holidays or during the week, had a child who received a scholarship, or a neighbor who received help in times of need, please know we can only do this due to having a strong and active membership. We as Seward Post 5 are only as good as the strength of our members. With that strength it permits us to reach out and help others. So please strongly consider renewing and encouraging others to join too! We really have a great organization and have a solid group of folks dedicated to our veterans and our community!

Thanks again to all who are members and those that volunteer at the post or simply stop by to visit with friends and family. Whatever your participation, everything helps and is truly appreciated.

Director’s Report

By Bobby Dunno

What is going on this is supposed to be the beginning of RIDING SEASON!! Last year this time I was riding and waiting for them to open up Herman Leirer road. And if you are like me and have the itch, the dry pavement seems a long way off as it continues to snow. Perhaps we need Father Bill to give us a weather prayer so that the snow can melt off before May 15 that is the date, we normally have our bike blessing ceremony. But regardless days are getting longer and sooner or later (Lets go with the sooner thought©) it will heat the land and the snow will melt and we will have an excellent summer of riding and fun.

Our next meeting is scheduled for the evening of the 1st of April and although the meeting is not going to last very long there is much we have lot to discuss. For starters, we should have a clearer idea of what rides are happening when. It is also time to update our records so please everyone provide a recent copy of your driver’s license and a copy of your current insurance. There are rides to discuss and the possibility to consume ice cream or hot chocolate depending on weather, and we need to finalize plans for looks like our first official event the Blessing of the Bikes on 15 May. We will also be looking to update our “Spur of the Moment” rider phone list.

We have the ALR Convention Meeting scheduled for 14 April, and I should say there are going to be some conversation as to Resolution #19, I will bring several copies of the resolution to the meeting for you to reference. But the main issues are 1st, 2nd amendments of The U.S. Constitution. As it sits right now, Riders, if they are wearing an American Legion Rider Patch cannot place any patches on the vest that might be deemed derogatory or offensive, and Section 8 states that Riders are no longer allowed to open carry or have a sheath knife. As I told the National Director Mark Clark since the fear of COVID steamrolled through our society, we have seen our freedom of speech severely limited and right to assembly taken away and legal penalties upheld by the court system when citizens attempted to disobey mandates. These rights while guaranteed do not exist in many cities and states today and it will take time and effort to pry them back from the hands of politicians. It could take several election cycles and probably a few Supreme Court decisions to achieve if we can at all. It is for this reason, I for one and I speak only for myself, that I will not allow anyone or organization to limit any more of my rights and that includes my right to open carry regardless of what I am wearing at the time. And there are questions to be asked and I am real interested as to the answers we get. Now having said that National has backed off on some of this and are stating that they will amend Resolution 19 so it will only be for national sanctioned rides. As for me, is my belief that as a honorable retired member of military service that it is my continuing duty to stand for the rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution. So regardless of item 8 in Resolution No. 19: updated Program Guidelines for the American Legion Riders National Program I will continue to exercise my rights as a American within the scope of the law. But if the Legion is going to make it an issue it could be the last time I wear anything representing the American Legion, it won’t be me quitting the Post just I don’t see me supporting the National Organization when they are making rules that limit any way my Constitutional Rights and are contrary to the principles that are written in the Preamble of the American Legion.

There is probably more information to document, but I need to go over and say hello to the Shadow and Victory and perhaps start them up (Yea they are ready to go) and sit astride one or the other and wish. So, it can’t stay winter forever and this snow will melt, so ya’ll have the same itch to ride I suggest you get them bikes checked out, make sure they are safe, fuel them up and get ready to Get On Your Bike And Ride!
From the President's Desk

By Debbie VanTassel

Wow! Here we are already ¼ of the way through 2021! It is amazing how fast time flies. Spring is here and summer is right around the corner (hopefully).

March was again a busy month for the Auxiliary. Election of officers was held during the monthly meeting. 2021-2022 officers are: President: - Debbie Van Tassel, 1st Vice President- Sharon Dillon, 2nd Vice President- Michelle Oliver, Secretary- Lori Wolfe, Treasurer- Susan St. Amand, Chaplain- Valerie Rose, E-Board-LaNno Settles and Marilyn Sutherland.

Installation of officers was held on March 27th and they will officially take office after the Department Convention the middle of April.

Speaking of Department Convention we have several delegates planning to attend. This is a great time to meet with other delegates and exchange ideas on ways for us to achieve the mission and goals of the American Legion Auxiliary. It is also a time when we can reflect on what we have accomplished during the last year. I have submitted the year end reports which reflect all the tremendous work done by our volunteers the last 2 years.

A HUGE thank you to Sharon Dillon. Last year after our Memorial Day Ceremony we determined it was time to retire our Poppy Wreath... one too many rainy ceremonies. So, with Memorial Day quickly approaching Sharon took on the task of "rebuilding the wreath." Great Job Sharon! It is amazing and gorgeous!

Also, in April we will celebrate Easter on April 4th, be sure to come to the Post for a great breakfast- again prepared by our wonderful volunteers. Also, 3rd Sunday breakfast will be April 18th- another great breakfast served up by all the Volunteers.

April is the month of the Military Child. This dedication was made to recognize the sacrifices and hardships experienced by the children in a military family.

Some statistics about Military Children
(from the Department of Defense website)

- Approximately 2 million military children have experienced a parental deployment since 9/11.
- There are currently 1.2 million military children of active duty members worldwide.
- Nearly 80% of military children attend public schools throughout the United States.
- The average military family moves 3 times more often than their civilian counterpart.

Purple Up! For Military Kids Day

"Purple Up! For Military Kids" is a day for DoDEA Communities to wear purple to show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifices.

Wearing purple is a visible way to show support and thank military youth for their strength and sacrifices. Purple indicates that all branches of the military are supported: Air Force blue, Army green, Navy blue, Marine red, and Coast Guard blue all thought to combine together as a single color, purple.

As an organization, what impact does the American Legion Auxiliary have on a national level?

From the American Legion Auxiliary Blog on the ALA website:

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) has three-quarters of a million members in over 8,000 communities. The American Legion Auxiliary has come a long way from "doing the activities more suitable for women" – in 2018, the organization's volunteer hours had an impact of over $1 billion through services to service members, veterans and their families, and our communities.

Also in 2018: over 4,000 scholarships were awarded; $18 million was raised and spent on the ALA Girls State program; over $82 million was raised/spent to benefit children; and 5.5 million poppies were distributed with nearly $4.4 million raised. Over 3 million veterans were assisted, 356,000 military families were served, and $189 million was spent on community service projects alone.

The American Legion Auxiliary has advocated for veterans' rights, including the GI Bill and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, and ending homelessness among veterans.

The American Legion Auxiliary can still be seen baking pies and serving dinners to our many veterans as well as sending care packages to deployed troops and writing notes to wounded veterans in hospitals. Our membership makes a difference.

In our small community we also make a huge difference. In the May newsletter I will report what the Unit accomplished in 2020 once the year end reports have been completed. Hope you have a great April - enjoy the spring weather and get ready for a busy and productive summer.
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He is Risen
Easter
# April 2021

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Food is Served Every Night

*Thanks to all our amazing Volunteers who keep things going at Seward Post 5*