



For God and Country Seward Post 5 Newsletter

February 2018
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American Legion Seward Post 5
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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Bobby Dunno



So, it is time to put January in the history books and start working on February. As everyone probably realizes by now February some of us always start getting the itch because the days start getting noticeably longer and that signals the coming of spring and that also means the warmer temperatures that melt the winter away is also right around the next page of the calendar. Of course, for some of us it means that time is running short on getting our motorcycles ready for the upcoming riding season. But of course, before we start daydreaming of cruising the highways of our great state, we still have to finish the chores and activities we always have with the end of winter and the month of February.

The end of January was Seward's annual Polar Bear Jump off Festival and once again the American Legion Family from Post 5. As our own Clare Sullivan stated in a recent e-mail to the American Legion Department of Alaska "American Legion Seward Post #5 is in full Polar Bear Jumpoff Weekend frenzy! The Post is nearly the epicenter for the weekend's activities. All fundraising goes to the American Cancer Society to help people in Alaska with Cancer." Everywhere I went that Friday and Saturday I saw someone from Post 5 out and about supporting activities and our Post opened its doors to the community and was home



to many of the activities ranging from Breakfast and a Fish feed to hosting evening activities like Steak Night and the Karaoke Competition. The Polar Bear Jump Off is an incredible event in support research for finding a cure and treatment of Cancer, and to be able to participate in support of such a cause has value for each and every one who takes time to give a little of themselves to help so many others.

The Cub Scout Pack 327 will be holding their **Blue and Gold Banquet** celebrating the birthday of the Boy Scouts and we will be making sure all those young lads and their families are well fed again this year. When it comes to food Post 5 is no slouch because we will also once again be playing host to breakfast for the

National Ocean Science Bowl. The NOSB is a great activity hosted by the Seward Marine Science Center and the University of Fairbanks. Young high school students interested in science, from all over will be converging on Seward to compete in knowledge and science based events, and Post 5 will once again play a supporting role. Seems no end to what Mike and crew can do in support of our community, and if you want to be a part of the excitement and activities Mike is always looking for assistance.

February also brings with it our **first call for officer elections**

that cover all facets of the American Legion Family. If you ever wonder how we come to make the decisions we do, want to know what is going on and want to put your two cents in, the one way to be truly counted is to attend our monthly meetings, even better you can step up and fill the role as an officer on one of the American Legion Family Committees. Having filled a few seats on these committees and as the current Post Commander I have found the experience to be a rewarding and fulfilling time, garnered me some recognition in our community and that has provided me a sense of civic pride. And it is refreshing to know that while I am no longer an active duty military member there is still a role for me to play in service to my country and community.



February is Americanism Month

The American Legion was founded 99 years ago and its preamble embodies what is called the Four Pillars. Essentially what these "pillars" focus on are service and advocacy and are organized as....

- Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
- National Security
- Americanism
- Children & Youth

Americanism which we are celebrating this month, as one of the Four Pillars of the American Legion, is an unflinching love of country, loyalty to its institutions and ideals, eagerness to defend it against all enemies, individual allegiance to the flag, and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.

No one should ever question the patriotism of the members of the American Legion Family. Upon the pillar of Americanism, this organization promotes obedience to law and order, and respect for the U.S. Flag. The American Legion builds enthusiasm for public service among young people through such programs as Boys Nation and the National Oratorical Contest. Our support of the Boy Scouts of America helps build strong young men through confidence building and patriotic activities. We also believe and work to keep God in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Through the National American Legion Americanism Commission, the programs of Americanism that foster service and advocacy include:

National High School Oratorical Contest
 Junior Shooting Sports Program
 Boys State and Boys Nation
 American Legion Baseball
 Scouting
 Citizenship and Immigration Reform
 Flag Etiquette and Protection
 Scholarships
 Get out and Vote Program
 Youth Alumni Programs
 Junior Law Cadet

As we celebrate Americanism this month, take a look at some of these programs and see what you find interesting and get involved. We do what we can with many of these programs but as you can see there are more out there that can benefit our veterans, our youth and our town.

1st Vice Notes

By Clare Sullivan

Happy February everyone! Wow, the sun is making her presence more and more every day! Now she just needs to warm things up!!! Brrrrr, "baby it is STILL cold outside!!!!"



And, as I understand it Punxsutawney Phil predicted another six weeks of winter, but I guess that is one of the reasons we live in Alaska.... We like our winter seasons or maybe we put up with it so we can get to the hunting and fishing season!



This time of year sometimes is a time for "Cabin Fever" but don't let it get to you. Get on your cleats and get out and get some fresh air. It is amazing how good you feel with some fresh air in your lungs!!! The holidays are over, Super Bowl and Valentine's Day are just around the corner and before you know it we'll be looking at longer and brighter days!

Okay before I get off on anything else, I'd like to thank everyone for their support during our annual events during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, Polar Bear Jump Off, and the community meals that we have provided over the last months. Holiday meal preparation, special events, and service are huge undertakings and you all "rose to the occasion" and did it in true "Legion Fashion" - great food and exceptional camaraderie! The food, the post décor, the service was and continues to be outstanding, all thanks to our incredible volunteers! Thankfully, we had a lot of helping hands to make it happen. You guys are great and uniquely talented! You jump right in and find what needs to be done and get it accomplished. That is huge! I am also pleased to mention it is a wonderful mix of Post, Auxiliary, and Sons who are participating and making things happen. Thank you so very much, without you we couldn't provide what we do for our veterans and the community.

Heartfelt 
THANKS
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

I would be remiss if I didn't make a special mention to Dave Dieckgraff from Squadron 5 and Metco for keeping our rather large parking lot plowed and graveled during the tough Winter months. Thanks Dave and your crew for helping keep us all upright and moving forward in this brisk and icy Winter! As you will see we have things planned (as always) for February at the club with food and activities.

House and Vice Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice/Club

We started the new year with a very busy January. We had our New Years celebration with live music performed by **Just Add Vodka** and they were very good with music that appealed to many different tastes. We hosted the Coast Guard Auxiliary for their annual Change of Watch ceremony and dinner.



We had our community breakfast and we finished the month off with the Polar Bear Jumpoff Festival activities. We had live music, Just Add Vodka, on Jan 6, we hosted the Polar Bear breakfast, the fish feed, the mini auction, the Corn Hole Bean Bag toss (no Turkey Bowling), and the Karaoke Contest.

We had lots of great volunteers from the Post, Auxiliary, and Sons. Without these great volunteers we would never have pulled it off. Thank you all for your continued dedication to our mission of service to veterans and our community.



This month we will prepare a breakfast for Seward High School Basketball, we will host breakfast for the **National Ocean Science Bowl on Feb 9,10,11**, and we will have our **community breakfast on Feb 18th**.

If you would like to come help with any of these activities just let us know and we will gladly put you to work.

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 and 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, Feb 6th 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.

2018 has sure started out with a bang! Earthquakes, Polar Bear Jumpoff Festival, but unfortunately not much snow. Hopefully we will get some before spring gets here.



Last month Squadron 5 members assisted with many Post 5 Family functions. We had squadron volunteers help with New Year's Eve, the Coast Guard Auxiliary dinner, the community breakfast, all the Polar Bear Jumpoff activities, and of course, all of the Steak night dinners. Squadron 5 participation continues to be an integral part of the Post 5 Family machine.

This month we will have all the usual activities to help with plus breakfasts for the National Ocean Science Bowl on Feb 9,10,11 plus prepping for the **Cub Scouts Blue and Gold banquet** on Feb 9th. Plenty to do so keep your volunteer hats on and come give some time and effort as you are able to.



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, and a strong Squadron membership only 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.

The History of the Four Chaplains



On Feb. 3, 1943, the United States Army Transport Dorchester - a converted luxury liner - was crossing the North Atlantic, transporting more than 900 troops to an American base in Greenland. Aboard the ship were four chaplains of different faiths: Reverend George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reverend Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic).

Around 12:55 a.m., a German U-boat fired a torpedo that struck Dorchester's starboard side, below the water line and near the engine room. The explosion instantly killed 100 men and knocked out power and radio communication with Dorchester's three escort ships. Within 20 minutes, the transport sank and more than 670 men died.

As soldiers rushed to lifeboats, the four chaplains spread out, comforting the wounded and directing others to safety. One survivor, Private William Bednar, later said, "I could hear men crying, pleading, praying. I could also hear the chaplains' preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going."

Another survivor, John Ladd, watched the chaplains distribute life jackets, and when they ran out, they removed theirs and gave them to four young men. "It was the finest thing I have seen, or hope to see, this side of heaven," he recalled. As Dorchester sank, the chaplains were seen linked arm in arm, praying.

Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington were posthumously awarded the **Distinguished Service Cross** and the **Purple Heart**, and in 1948, Congress declared Feb. 3 to be Four Chaplains Day.



Because of the Medal of Honor's strict requirements of heroism under fire, Congress authorized a one-time Chaplain's Medal for Heroism on July 14, 1960. The award was presented to the chaplains' next of kin Jan. 18, 1961.

On Feb. 3, 1951, President Truman dedicated a chapel in the chaplains' honor at Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia. When the building was sold, the chapel fell into disrepair, and the foundation overseeing the chapel moved it to the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in 2001. The chapel was repaired in 2004 and given the name Chapel of the Four Chaplains.

In 2006, at The American Legion's 88th National Convention in Salt Lake City, the National Executive Committee passed a resolution that supported awarding the Medal of Honor to Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington.

1st Vice Comment's Continued...

We also have elections for officers for all our organizations. You know what we do and how we serve in this community. All our organizations have a variety of positions that don't require a huge commitment of time and can help one learn more about the American Legion at the post level and if you're interested at the higher echelons as well. As you know we're a nationwide organization that is committed to helping veterans, families and communities. All I ask is that you think about it and if you're interested in being a part of a proud and prestigious organization that has a near 100 year commitment of serving other, give us a call and we'd be happy to show you what we do as a service organization in our efforts to help others.



Moving on, every one of our memberships allows us to be a stronger organization locally and through the national level. Our membership numbers are a very loud voice for veterans' rights and benefits. With over 2.4 million members nationally we collectively can influence the decisions made for what we as veterans and future veterans will receive due to our service whether the benefits are medical, disability, education, or ongoing support. We have many veterans throughout Seward from a multitude of war eras to active duty from the ongoing military activities worldwide. All have served and all deserve the consideration due to them for their honorable service. Our post has been the starting point for many of them to learn what they are eligible for and can receive in terms of opportunities and benefits from the Veterans Administration. By coming by the post, and speaking to one of our officers, a veteran can potentially learn what is out there for them. Although membership for a veteran isn't necessary but why wouldn't one want to become involved? Think about it, and if you know of a veteran who can use some help or support let us know.

"For God and Country!"

Desert Storm, the First Gulf War

On August 2, 1990, Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait. Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein had been making threats against Kuwait for some time, but his actual invasion caught most of the world by surprise. The magnitude of the invasion also was a surprise. Those who had expected an attack, such as the commander of U.S. Central Command, Norman Schwarzkopf, expected a limited attack to seize Kuwaiti oil fields. Instead, within a number of hours, Iraqi forces had seized downtown Kuwait City and were headed south toward the Saudi Arabia border.

Word of the Iraqi attack reached Washington, D.C., as Iraqi forces assembled at the Saudi border. The Pentagon had plans in place to aid the Saudis, and U.S. forces went on standby for the Saudis' request. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and General Schwarzkopf met with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia to brief him on the plans, which he approved. Within minutes of the meeting, orders were issued, and thus began the largest buildup of American forces since the Vietnam War. Within a short period, members of the 82nd Airborne Division, as well as 300 combat aircraft, were headed for Saudi Arabia.

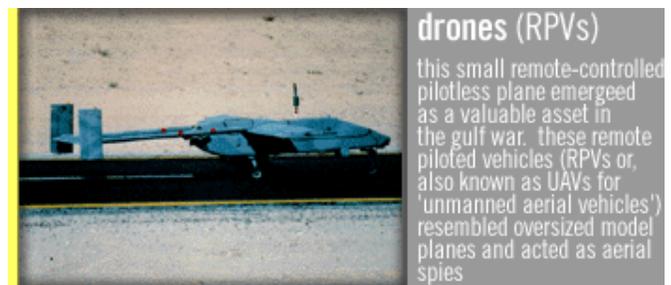
On the morning of January 16, 1991, Allied forces began the first phase of Desert Storm, also known as Desert Shield. American forces first destroyed Iraqi border radar stations, then other key elements of the Iraqi anti-aircraft network; lastly, they began to bomb key targets in downtown Iraq, including the presidential palace, communication centers, and power stations. The Allied forces lost only two aircraft during the attacks. The assault continued day and night.

Those initial air attacks constituted the first time the American military witnessed how their new arsenal performed in combat conditions. With such ground systems as the M1A1 Abrams missile and the MIM-104 Patriot missile, the Iraq military had little opportunity to defend themselves. Also, such other groundbreaking technology as the Global Positioning System (GPS), helped to pinpoint hits by the Tomahawk missile and other weapons.



AWACS surveillance aircraft, F-117A Stealth fighters, E-8C JSTARS radar command posts, and the RPVs (drones).

The damage done by U.S. air attacks was devastating to Saddam's vaunted Republican Guard. The following U.S. aircraft left "a big hurt" on the enemy during the war: AH-64 Apache helicopters, B-52 Stratofortress bombers, E-3 AWACS surveillance aircraft, F-117A Stealth fighters, E-8C JSTARS radar command posts, and the RPVs (drones).



Overall, the coalition air campaign (consisting mostly of U.S. pilots) accumulated a total of 109,876 sorties over the 43-day air war — averaging 2,555 sorties per day. Of those, more than 27,000 sorties struck enemy Scuds, airfields, air defenses, electrical power, biological and chemical weapons caches, headquarters, intelligence assets, communications, the Iraqi army, and oil refineries.

At 3 a.m on January 17, the Iraqis fired seven Scud missiles at Israel. Israelis were awaiting the Scuds with gas masks on, thanks to Saddam's previous threats to burn half of Israel with chemical weapons. As it turned out, the Scuds bore only conventional warheads, but their terror value was high. To avoid a wider war, U.S. officials pleaded with Israeli officials to not respond to the Scud attacks. The Israelis agreed because the Americans promised to target all Scud missile sites and knock them out.

On January 29, following two weeks of punishing coalition air assaults, the Iraqis mounted their one and only attack subsequent to the invasion at the Battle of Khafji. The Iraqi Fifth Mechanized Division attacked south, capturing the Saudi town of Al Khafji eight miles south of the Kuwaiti border. The Iraqis overran the first Saudi force that attempted a counterattack and, despite massive American air attacks, they held on to the town through the day and night. The next day was a different story, however, when Saudis recaptured the town, forcing the remaining Iraqis to flee to the Kuwaiti border.

Day One Ground Attack. On February 24th at 4 a. m., Allied troops led by U.S. Marines crossed the border into Iraq. During the days before the attack, Iraqi troops had been subjected to merciless air attacks; every imaginable target was destroyed with accuracy.

The Allied offensive targeted three major offensive venues: the first aimed at Kuwait City, the second to the west aimed at the Iraqi flank, and the final one far to the west, beyond the major Iraqi lines that would totally outflank Iraqi lines. In the first day of the war the marines advanced halfway to Kuwait City and the western advances proceeded without difficulty — while capturing thousands of Iraqi deserters. The first day of ground fighting resulted in minimal American casualties.

Day Two ground attack. As Day Two approached, an Iraqi Scud missile destroyed the U.S. barracks in Dhahran, killing 28 U.S. soldiers. With morale nevertheless high, American troops advanced on all fronts. The marines approached Kuwait City, while the western flank began to cut off the Iraqi Army's retreat route. Coalition casualties for Day Two were, once again, light.

Day Three ground attack Day Three dawned on the largest tank battle in history. The American armored forces engaged the tank forces of the Iraqi Republican guard. Like shooting fish in a barrel, the American tanks destroyed the Iraqi heavy armor without losing a single tank.



On February 26th, Iraqi troops began to retreat from Kuwait while setting fire to an estimated 700 Kuwaiti oil wells. A long convoy of Iraqi troops, as well as Iraqi and Palestinian civilians, formed along the main Iraq-Kuwait highway. That convoy was bombed so relentlessly by the Allies that it came to be known as the "Highway of Death." One hundred hours after the ground campaign began, President Bush declared a cease-fire — declaring the liberation of Kuwait.



Presidents Day - February 19th

Presidents' Day: Origin as Washington's Birthday

The story of Presidents' Day date begins in 1800. Following President George Washington's death in 1799, his February 22 birthday became a perennial day of remembrance. At the time, Washington was venerated as the most important figure in American history, and events like the 1832 centennial of his birth and the start of construction of the Washington Monument in 1848 were cause for national celebration.



While Washington's Birthday was an unofficial observance for most of the 1800s, it was not until the late 1870s that it became a federal holiday. Senator Steven Wallace Dorsey of Arkansas was the first to propose the measure, and in 1879 President Rutherford B. Hayes signed it into law. The holiday initially only applied to the District of Columbia, but in 1885 it was expanded to the whole country. At the time, Washington's Birthday joined four other nationally recognized federal bank holidays—Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Independence Day and Thanksgiving—and was the first to celebrate the life of an individual American.



A move away from the original date of February 22 was made to honor both Washington and Abraham Lincoln, as it now fell between their two birthdays - Abraham Lincoln's birthday falling on February 12th.

Washington and Lincoln still remain the two most recognized leaders, but Presidents' Day is now popularly seen as a day to recognize the lives and achievements of all of America's chief executives. Some lawmakers have objected to this view, arguing that grouping George Washington and Abraham Lincoln together with less successful presidents minimizes their legacies.

Congressional measures to restore Washington and Lincoln's individual birthdays were proposed during the early 2000s, but all failed to gain much attention. For its part, the federal government has held fast to the original incarnation of the holiday as a celebration of the country's first president. The third Monday in February is still listed on official calendars as Washington's Birthday.

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SHERRY L. PERRY

FEBRUARY 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
					Steak Night <u>KARAOKE 7PM</u> 	<u>Chicken Dinner</u>  Pool League
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<u>"Texas Hold 'em"</u> 6PM  Luscious Leftovers	OMAHA POKER 6PM  <u>Luscious Leftovers</u> BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	Mexican Martes Building Committee Meeting 7pm 	<u>Guest Chef Night</u> 	<u>SAL Meeting 7pm</u> 	Steak Night <u>KARAOKE 7PM</u> 	<u>Chicken Dinner</u>  Pool League <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">National Ocean Science Bowl</div>
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<u>"Texas Hold 'em"</u> 6PM  Luscious Leftovers	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM  OMAHA POKER 6PM  <u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	Mexican Martes <u>Post Meeting 7pm</u> 	<u>Auxiliary Meeting 7pm</u>  <u>Guest Chef Dinner</u> Valentines Day		Steak Night <u>KARAOKE 7PM</u> 	Pool League  <u>Chicken Dinner</u>
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Community Breakfast  <u>"Texas Hold 'em"</u> 6PM Luscious Leftovers	President's Day OMAHA POKER 6PM  <u>Luscious Leftovers</u> BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	Mexican Martes 	<u>Guest Chef Dinner</u> 		Steak Night <u>KARAOKE 7PM</u> 	<u>Chicken Dinner</u>  Pool League
25	26	27	28	Food is Available Every Night! Come on by for a tasty meal at an amazingly great price!!!! (Sometimes Free!)		
<u>"Texas Hold 'em"</u> 6PM Luscious Leftovers	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM  <u>Luscious Leftovers</u> OMAHA POKER 6PM 	Mexican Martes 	<u>Guest Chef Dinner</u> 			



Remember President's Day and honor our presidents by reading up on some of your favorite presidents!