



# For God and Country

*Seward Post Five Newsletter*

*American Legion Post 5*

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The color of the year is Marsala: "a naturally robust and earthy wine red."

## Commanders Comments

By Clare Sullivan

Another successful year down! Happy New Year to all in our American Legion Family at Post 5 and the Department of Alaska! What a great Year we have had and it has been one that was exceptionally full and rewarding because of all the good work by our volunteers through their service to our veterans and our Seward Community. I especially want to thank all our volunteers who took the time to make things happen. You have risen to the challenge every time to help out and make things better by helping veterans and their families, our active duty, and our community. We are very fortunate to have the members who consistently volunteer their time to help our mission to serve others. We have some incredibly generous and talented people who help out wherever they can. From **Dave Dieckgraeff** at **Metco** plowing the snow and spreading gravel at the post, the **USCGC Mustang** crew who help out during special holiday events and in honor of our veterans who have passed to Post Everlasting, to the **amazing volunteers** who show up for all our events that occur throughout the year and contribute their considerable talents! It is a great feeling to live in a town where people care for others and work to improve things for all. We also even manage to have a quite a bit of fun while we're working to help others.



For a relatively small post in a small town we manage to accomplish a lot. I would like to mention some of our events in 2014 to highlight of what we can and did do. We started the year of course with **New Year's Eve** at the post, closely followed with supporting the **Polar Bear Jump-Off Festival** where we helped the Polar Bear Jump-Off Committee with the weekend festivities.



Throughout the year, we also had nightly activities of poker and pool league, once again supported by incredible volunteers - of particular note **Charlie Jackson and Dan Coisman**.

In early February we had our **Super Bowl Party** where we enthusiastically rooted on some great teams and had a wonderful **Valentines' Day Dinner** for our members and their sweethearts. In March we had the **Annual Spring Breakup Festival** where our outdoorsmen and women in town showcased their skills, outdoor enthusiast equipment, and outdoor culinary prowess! We also couldn't forget our **St. Patrick's Day Party** where we all were Irish for the day! We also celebrated the **95<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the American Legion** and we installed our new officers at our **Installation Dinner**.



In April, besides tax relief day :) we had a community **Easter Breakfast**, and good participation in the annual **95<sup>th</sup> Department Convention** over in Kenai Post 20. Our Post 5 Family did amazingly well with all sorts of awards! It was a proud day for all of us at Post 5 and reflects the dedication and hard work by all of us in our American Legion Family!



We followed in May with our **Mother's Day Breakfast**, the **Armed Forces Combat Fishing Tournament** support and the **Memorial Day Weekend** at the Legion Cemetery. We also had good representation at the **Memorial Day Byers Lake run** with our **ALR riding proudly** - we all were fortunate, we had great times and once again great weather for all of these events. What a busy month but we got it all done!



June really kicked off our summer and our long days, we celebrated **Flag Day** with a ceremony and we "retired" several flags that were no longer of service. We had a yummy **Father's Day Breakfast** to honor our dads, as well as celebrating **Armed Forces Day**. July's activities followed quickly with **4th of July** festivities where we marched and road motorcycles in the parade and served up the Post 5 "world famous ribs!" We also had a great representation by our **USCGC Mustang** crew in the parade. What a great showing having these wonderful folks representing our military in our parade! They are always a hit and a shining example of our military!



In August we helped to celebrate the **USCG 224<sup>th</sup> Birthday** at the post, we also benefited by the arrival of the **Seward Silver Salmon Derby** and all the members who came to town, visited the post, and had a great time fishing.

September, we had our **Early Bird Dinner** and it was a great turn out and a tasty meal for all as we looked to continue our membership drive. We also observed **Patriot Day, POW/MIA Recognition Day** and **American Legion Day**.

As we started looking toward the cooler weather we forged ahead with activities, we honored our veterans with **Veterans' Day** ceremonies and a dinner at the post. The Auxiliary had their **Toys for Tots Auction** where funds were raised to buy presents for children and families in need during the holidays, and of course we had our ever tasty **Thanksgiving Dinner** where we fed many in the community on a truly American Holiday. As the year was winding down, we surely weren't!



December brought lots of activities including getting ready for the holidays. We started out with our **USCGC Mustang Dinner** where we welcomed new members and honored our crew of the Mustang who work hard for all of us on the waters surrounding Seward and Western Alaska. We sent out **Operation Apple Pie** packages to the service members from the Seward and Moose Pass areas and we helped out with the **Christmas Parade** wonderfully supported by the Seward Fire Department. Once the parade was done **Santa and Mrs. Claus** arrived at the post to pass out lots of wonderful gifts for the children in town. It was one again one of the busiest visits from Santa we've had where over 120 kids came to visit with Santa and the elves, but we were ready and had a great visit with tasty snacks, hot chocolate and cider! We also prepared and treated many in town by delivery of a Christmas meal and those coming to the post to a wonderful **Christmas Dinner**. And to end the month, we had a fabulous **New Year's Eve** get together with our membership to ring in the New Year!



Whew! That was quite a bit and that was just the highlight of what we do out of our little post and how we help our veterans and the community. Without the American Legion and our incredible volunteers from the Post, Auxiliary and the Sons we couldn't do what we do; I am truly humbled and amazed by what is accomplished. Thank you for another fabulous year of service!

Now, I'd like to address something that is essential to our organization - **Membership**. I know we talk about how good it is to have a healthy membership and the reason I do this is that if we're healthy in membership then we are able to help others in our community. We don't generally brag about what we do but your support and membership has allowed us to do some good work in town over the last year as in many years before. We as an American Legion Family have donated over \$15,000 in scholarships, over \$4,000 for veteran meals at the Senior Center, paid medical expenses, utility and heating bills, airfare for family emergencies, provided free holiday meals for many in the community, and have provided numerous gifts for children in town during the holidays as well as our Seward military members who can't be home for the holidays. And, in total, our American Legion Family has donated over \$75,000 to local causes and military support functions. As you can see with a strong and participatory membership we can help others and make a difference in people's lives.

We're all a part of this town and we can positively influence all we come in contact with; after all, we are a service oriented group of people who are working together for the betterment of all.

Inasmuch as it is 2015 we'll be having the **election of new officers** in all our organizations in the next few months. The selection of new officers keeps the forward momentum of the organization and infuses new ideas with new people; new folks keep things fresh and exciting. Membership participation and the new and bright ideas from individuals who get involved energize all to do what we can in the areas of veterans support, Americanism, child welfare and education, and community service here in Seward.

Volunteering is not altogether a time consuming activity within our organization, and many of our positions do not require a lot of time but we can always use a helping hand and new ideas. It is fun to be involved, and you get a good feeling when you do something for others. One real benefit besides feeling good for helping others is you establish friendships with good people who are also motivated by doing what is right and contributing positively to our community. Please consider volunteering or filling an officer position (or both :) if you have even just a few hours a week or month to help.

The American Legion Family has been here for many years and has been a solid foundation as a service organization within the community, and a reliable source for assistance and camaraderie for veterans and many members in Seward. We have helped many people in the community over the decades and now we could use a little help too, so please consider your post, unit or squadron when you have some free time and know that your efforts will help not only a few but many throughout our community.

## House Notes

Hello from the Second Vice/Club,

Well, another great year at Post 5 has come to an end. What a busy and rewarding year it was. I won't repeat all the activities the Post Commander pointed out in her article, I will only repeat that none of it would happen without the great corps of volunteers in this American Legion Post 5 Family!!! The importance of our membership and volunteers cannot be overstated. Nothing happens without you and you can all see the great work done because of you.

I hope you all understand that when Post 5 gets complimented, praised, awarded honors, it is a reflection on the entire Post 5 Legion family. There is nothing that happens here that does not involve members of each organization. Every event or community service we are involved in has Post, SAL, and Auxiliary members working hard to accomplish the mission. When we all pull at the same end of the cart we can, and do, accomplish great things. I thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart!

Now, get ready for 2015! No rest for the weary. We will have all the normal activities again this year and we decided to throw the Department Convention into the mix. There will be many opportunities to donate your time and effort and I know you will all be ready.

This month we have the Polar Bear Jumpoff Festival on Jan 16-18. We will need lots of

help for that so let me know if you can give us some time during that busy weekend.

Remember to renew your dues if you have not done so. Membership drives the American Legion train and our veterans and community need us to continue to provide all the help and assistance we can. We will be purging the Daily Sign-in Bucket soon and I know you want to keep your name in there for a chance to win.

Another not on membership; if you bring a guest and that individual is eligible to join one of the legion organizations, they can only come as a guest three times and then they must join or they will no longer be allowed in the club. This is a long standing Post rule and was developed to make sure people did not just come in to take advantage of what we offer without supporting us with their membership.

At the Club, we will be looking at our pricing which has not been adjusted in five years. This does not mean everything will be going up but it does mean we will take a look and see where adjustments need to be made.

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

For God and Country

Mike Calhoon

## SAL Notes

Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

Another great year of supporting the Post and the community has come to an end, but we all know the work and fun never end!!

I want to thank each and every Squadron 5 member for their support this past year. This squadron exemplifies what the Sons of American Legion is all about. Support your Post, the veterans, and the community. Squadron 5 accomplished that mission in 2014 and I know it will do the same in 2015.

I want to give special thanks to Al Dykstra, Dave Dieckgraeff, and David "Ozzie" Osborn for their ongoing work at the Post and at the Legion Cemetery. You have always answered when the Post calls and I commend you for that.

This month we will be supporting the Polar Bear Jumpoff Festival and will need lots of help so let me know if you can help Jan 16-18.

If you have not renewed your membership please consider doing so. Membership drives everything we do and what we do is very important. If you know someone who may be eligible for membership you can contact me and I will answer any questions you may have.

I thank all of the SAL Squadron 5 members for your support and I look forward to seeing you at the Post.

Mike Calhoon

SAL First Vice Commander

## From the Auxiliary

Connie Kullander

*Happy New Year 2015!*

*Well we did it again. We made it through another year. Thank you everyone for all your help all though the year.*

*We had a great toy for tots with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Clause. Thank you for all the donations and for all those who made it possible for us to give gifts to more than 115 kids. We only had 7 food voucher applications, but we have lots of food in the pantry for those in need. If you know of someone in need please give us a call here at the post or give Sharon or myself a call. Again "Thank you" everyone who helped with the toys for tots, and for the decorating of the post.*

*We also had a great Christmas. We delivered 67 meals to the community and fed 86 at the post. A huge "Thank you" to everyone who helped that day as well. You all are awesome!!!*

*We have lots going on this month as well. First we have convention coming up. The meeting will be the 7<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm to get comities more organized. Next we have Polar Bear Festival. It will be the 16, 17, AND 18<sup>TH</sup> and again we will need volunteers. You can give a call to the club and talk to Mike.*

*Ladies, its first call for nomination of officers. If you want to get involved with the auxiliary this is a good opportunity to come to the meetings and see what the auxiliary is all about. Our meeting will be January 14<sup>th</sup> @7:00.*

*2015 membership dues are due and we will be checking to see if you have current membership. On that note, if you are eligible to join and you are not a member you can only be a guest 3 times in one year. So join, we would to see you in and around the post.*

*We are still doing Bingo every Monday night and would love to do split the pot but we need volunteers to do this. Give Sharon or myself a call for more information.*

*Thank you Arctic wolf for the huge donation of food !!! Thank you to out Mustang crew for always being there when we ask for something to be done. Thank you for your service and for all you do for the American legion family.*

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# January

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>Food Every Night!!!</b>				1	2 Steak Night	3 Pool League 6:30pm
4 Texas Hold'em Poker 6:00pm	5 Bingo at 6:30pm  Omaha Hold'em Poker 7:00pm	6 Mexican Mar- tes	7 Convention Committee Meeting 6:30pm	8 SAL Squadron 5 Meeting 7:00pm	9 Steak Night	10 Pool League 6:30pm
11 Texas Hold'em Poker 6:30pm	12 Bingo 6:30pm  Omaha Hold'em Poker 7:00pm	13 Mexican Mar- tes  Post Meeting 7:00pm	14 Auxiliary Unit 5 Meeting 7:00pm	15	16 Steak Night  Polar Bear Fes- tival	17 Polar Bear Fes- tival
18 Community Breakfast  Texas Hold'em Poker 6:00pm	19 Bingo 6:30pm  Omaha Hold'em 7:00pm	20 Mexican Mar- tes	21	22	23 Steak Night	24 Pool League 6:30pm
25 Texas Hold'em Poker 6:00pm	26 Bingo 6:30pm  Omaha Hold'em 7:00pm	27 Mexican Mar- tes	28	29	30 Steak Night	31 Pool League 6:30pm