COMMANDER’S COMMENTS
By Clare Sullivan

Wow! What a Summer it has been so far, and it has been quite the soggy run for us! Let’s hope for some sun soon, and a good day for the runners on the Mount Marathon Race on the 4th!

We’ve been super busy, beyond what we have in the past with lots of military visitors and of course our standard busy times in both May and June. Even with all the rain, our amazing volunteers have continued to step up. Thank You!!! We’re even getting out of town friends offering to help out as well. It sure is good to see our seasonal friends and family year after year and all their help. They definitely make it happen!

I also want to thank all our year-round folks who make this place happen in service to our membership and the community. Many don’t know that nearly all positions are volunteer positions in our “social area.” That means apart from the Club Manager, all services – cooking, bartending and kitchen, cleaning etc. are accomplished by volunteers; so, when you see them running stairs with food or hauling dishes to be washed let them know you appreciate what they do, and maybe throw a bit more in the tip jar! 😊 We couldn’t provide what we do for everyone without them!

Year after year Bill and Joanne Casey donate the wonderful hanging baskets outside the post! Bill carefully designs the baskets and brings them down to us to beautifully adorn our post home. Thanks guys you are awesome!! And, they’re doing well in spite of the cold and wet this summer!

There have been so many who have done amazing work in contributing to our post home. Whether you’re working at the cemetery, setting up or cooking for events or nightly meals, or simply patronizing our club for a meal or an “adult beverage,” I am extremely grateful for all who have taken time out of their busy lives to contribute in whatever capacity to our post and ultimately for our veterans and our community. Thank you for all you do!

We had an excellent June with our Flag Day celebration, the Army Birthday, Father’s Day Breakfast, a few USCGC Kukui “Wetting Down” parties, a Kukui Crew Dinner and the ALR ROMP! You guys were amazing “getting it done!” 😊❤️❤️❤️

With the onset of July, we are entering the 2024 membership year. We didn’t hit our 100% goal but we did pretty darn well for a small town of about 2,700 people! Be sure to check your mail for your membership renewal: renew online at legion.org, or stop by the post and renew – and please bring a friend, especially if you like what we do for our Post 5 Family members and our community. As you know we try to serve where we can, and we can only do what we do with a strong membership and participation.
Membership Eligibility

The American Legion believes that membership in the organization should be extended to all U.S. military personnel who served on active duty during all wars and hostile events that are not seen as a “period of war.” What that means is if you've served in the military and have an honorable discharge anytime since December 7th, 1941 (or are still serving on active duty) you are eligible for membership in the American Legion. Please renew for 2024 and invite others to join; we can only support our fellow veterans from a position of strength and membership is key to that strength!

House and Vice Report.......

By Mike Calhoon

Still waiting on summer but we will continue with all the Post 5 Family activities as they come along.

I would like to thank all the great volunteers for their help this last month. There are way too many to name individually, just know how much your help is appreciated and needed to help accomplish all the activities the Post 5 family is involved in on a daily basis. A special thanks to JoJo, Teagan, Chris, and Brandon from the USCGC Kukui for their great help with Friday steak nights and with the flooring and painting project in the meeting room!! Also, A great big thanks to Suzi Towsley for being a great karaoke DJ during the three parties held for the USCGC Kukui.

This month we will have our 4th of July activities, community breakfast on Jul 16th, cemetery maintenance, and a visit from the USCG Icebreaker Healy. If you would like to volunteer and help with any of these activities just contact us and let us know. We will gladly put you to work.

Please remember that it will be very busy at the Post during the 4th of July holiday period and be patient with our volunteers as they provide service to you and your family or friends.

Sounding Off from the Sons....

By Mike Calhoon

Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

June was a busy one for the Legion Post 5 family. Thanks to all Squadron 5 members who helped and volunteered time during June. Scott Wilde and Tyson Alderman assisted with the Flag Day ceremony and Scott Wilde, along with Auxiliary member Jackie Wilde, mowed and weed whacked around the Post and Al Dykstra came in and helped with our community breakfast and helped clean the grills for Friday night steak night. We look forward to assisting the Post with July activities.

The Squadron is now working on a flagpole project at the Legion Cemetery and we hope to have that completed this summer.

This month the Post will hold its 4th of July BBQ Rib feed on Tuesday the 4th, with lots of prep for that. The community breakfast will be on July 16th. There will also be continuing upkeep and maintenance at the cemetery. Let us know if you can help with any activities.

We have come to the end of the 2023 membership year, but you still have time to renew your 2023 membership. We did reach our membership goal for 2023 and will begin the 2024 membership year on July 1st. Dues are $35.00 and your membership helps us support the mission and goals of the Sons of American Legion and the Post 5 family.

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.
**The Post Cemetery Update**

Over the years, many of our members have seen, read about, worked at, and helped maintain our cemetery. And, we do have a lovely cemetery for our American Legion members and their family members when called to report to “Post Everlasting.” It is a lot of work, but it is a labor of love to keep the grounds presentable for those interred there, and for our patriotic ceremonies, particularly Memorial Day, we come together to honor our fallen family and friends.

Over the last few years several of our Post, Auxiliary and Sons members have worked the undeveloped land for our cemetery expansion as we still have quite a bit of land, that if needed, can eventually be used for burials. The land is now settled after all the work they have done in clearing it; and we, over the next few years or so will get it prepared and seeded as we want to continue to beautify it and have it available for proper use.

As we have continued the upkeep and maintenance of our Post 5 cemetery, that interment in standard graves for many, is not the preferred way to bury and memorialize a family member. Resultantly, the post has moved forward and purchased two columbaria as an alternative to the standard full grave burial. Many have asked what columbaria are, and essentially it is a mausoleum for cremated remains (cremains). Columbaria are beautiful structures for the placement of urns in niches that protect the urns and are inscribed with the person’s name and information that the family wishes to place on it.

As an organization we want to be responsive to our members’ needs and wishes particularly during a time such as the death and burial of a loved one. We are working with the City of Seward and the Pioneers of Alaska; we all will be installing a complementary style of columbaria for each individual cemetery’s needs. This effort brings the cemeteries visually together as we are literally right next to one another. The similar styles will add a beautiful flow among our respective cemeteries and ties them together in a common theme.

There are many styles and sizes of columbaria and as you would expect, the cost can widely vary based on need and style appropriate to the cemetery. And, as many of you know we do not charge a fee for internment in the American Legion Cemetery however, columbaria are expensive as they are engineered for a cemetery’s particular needs, expertly and beautifully made of materials such as granite and marble and have niches (to hold the urn) that protect and preserve all the cremains as a fitting memorial for the deceased.

We have written grants and have obtained two columbaria that will serve the needs of our veterans and their families for years to come. We also have been fortunate to have received a substantial grant in recent years from the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), the Division of Veteran Affairs that substantially covered all the costs for purchase and soon to be, the installation of the columbaria. These funds will allow us to have a suitable place for post members and their families who are called to “Post Everlasting.”

The columbaria arrived late last Summer, and it was too late to install them in the cemetery. The City of Seward was very generous and allowed us to store our and the Pioneers of Alaska columbaria in the Electrical Department’s warehouse. We have the site nearly thanks to Ascension Construction Services who will complete the base and install the columbaria. We now just need a couple of days of good sun for the concrete to be poured!

My intent was to inform you on one of our larger projects that we feel is important for you to know and if you’re in a position to contribute to this effort or donate please do as we are working on this for all of us in our American Legion Family.
Fourth of July Facts

When the holiday was declared a holiday and although Independence Day is a legal holiday, it was not declared so until 1941. This was the date that signified the formal adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

- The introduction of fireworks. The 4th of July is synonymous with firework displays and are a staple in the celebration. How did they become so popular? Have they always been used?

History shows that they were originally made in China and as early as the 11th century. This was during the time when the Chinese people used pyrotechnic mixtures for war rockets and explosives. We use them for a fine celebration of the end the war of independence and end of Great Britain's control on the "colonies."

- Uncle Sam. The 4th of July facts surrounding the term "Uncle Sam" was finally clarified and popularized during the War of 1812. This is when the term originally appeared on supply containers that held war materials. The "Uncle Sam" symbol became synonymous with servitude and devotion, as in Uncle Sam wants YOU. Although there was heavy recruitment taking place, Congress did not adopt Uncle Sam as a national symbol until 1961.

- Two Facts. Two very important but little known 4th of July facts show that 1) full support of the Declaration of Independence was not supported by all members of the Continental Congress and 2) a representative of Congress rode horseback 80 miles to reach Philadelphia and break a tie in support of independence.

- The Liberty Bell. Like the historical flag, the Liberty Bell was a very symbolic monument for Americans. However, the Liberty Bell has some 4th of July facts that many do not know about. Originally, there were two versions of the Liberty Bell. At the time of their manufacturing, one was found to be defective and had to be melted and recast. The second bell was subsequently also found to be defective. It too had to be melted down and recast, therefore requiring a third version. Without any defective places, the third version of the Liberty Bell rang every Fourth of July from 1778 to 1835. According to history and tradition, as it rang, it cracked as it was being tolled for the death of Chief Justice John Marshall, the longest serving Chief Justice in the Supreme Court.

- Our national poem. A Wellesley College professor, Katharine Lee Bates, was the author of the patriotic poem "America the Beautiful" which was published on July 4, 1895.

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

- Firsts. Our country's first father, George Washington, held his first public office at the age of 17 and continued in public service until his death in 1799.

Facts such as these help to make our celebrating more meaningful and help to deepen our commitment to our country and in our service. As we celebrate Independence Day, we can find more reasons to be grateful for the country that we live in.
by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, the 13 American colonies severed their political connections to Great Britain. The Declaration summarized the colonists' motivations for seeking their independence. By declaring themselves an independent nation, the American colonists were able to conclude an official alliance with the government of France and obtain French assistance in the war against Great Britain.

The Declaration of Independence

Throughout the 1760s and early 1770s, the North American colonists found themselves increasingly at odds with British imperial policies regarding taxation and frontier policy. When repeated protests failed to influence British policies, and instead resulted in the closing of the port of Boston and the declaration of martial law in Massachusetts, the colonial governments sent delegates to a Continental Congress to coordinate a colonial boycott of British goods. When fighting broke out between American colonists and British forces in Massachusetts, Continental Congress worked with local groups, originally intended to enforce the boycott, to coordinate resistance against the British. British officials throughout the colonies increasingly found their authority challenged by informal local governments, although loyalist sentiment remained strong in some areas.

Despite these changes, colonial leaders hoped to reconcile with the British Government, and all but the most radical members of Congress were unwilling to declare independence. However, in late 1775, Benjamin Franklin, then a member of the Secret Committee of Correspondence, hinted to French agents and other European sympathizers that the colonies were increasingly leaning towards seeking independence. While perhaps true, Franklin also hoped to convince the French to supply the colonists with aid. Independence would be necessary, however, before French officials would consider the possibility of an alliance.

Throughout the winter of 1775-1776, the members of Continental Congress increasingly viewed reconciliation with Britain as unlikely, and independence the only course of action available to them. When on December 22, 1775, the British Parliament prohibited trade with the colonies, Congress responded in April of 1776 by opening colonial ports—this was a major step towards severing ties with Britain. The colonists were aided by the January publication of Thomas Paine's pamphlet Common Sense, which advocated the colonies' independence and was widely distributed throughout the colonies. By February of 1776, colonial leaders were discussing the possibility of forming foreign alliances and began to draft the Model Treaty that would serve as a basis for the 1778 alliance with France. Leaders for the cause of independence wanted to make certain that they had sufficient congressional support before they would bring the issue to the vote. On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee introduced a motion in Congress to declare independence. Other members of Congress were amenable but thought some colonies not quite ready. However, Congress did form a committee to draft a declaration of independence and assigned this duty to Thomas Jefferson.

Benjamin Franklin and John Adams reviewed Jefferson's draft. They preserved its original form but struck passages likely to meet with controversy or skepticism, most notably passages blaming King George III for the transatlantic slave trade and those blaming the British people rather than their government. The committee presented the final draft before Congress on June 28, and Congress adopted the final text of the Declaration of Independence on July 4.

The British Government did its best to dismiss the Declaration as a trivial document issued by disgruntled colonists. British officials commissioned propagandists to highlight the declaration's flaws and rebut the colonists' complaints. The Declaration divided British domestic opposition, as some American sympathizers thought the Declaration had gone too far, although in British-ruled Ireland it had many supporters. The Declaration's most important diplomatic effect was to allow for recognition of the United States by friendly foreign governments. The Sultan of Morocco mentioned American ships in a consular document in 1777, but Congress had to wait until the 1778 Treaty of Alliance with France for a formal recognition of U.S. independence. The Netherlands acknowledged U.S. independence in 1782. Although Spain joined the war against Great Britain in 1779, it did not recognize U.S. independence until the 1783 Treaty of Paris. Under the terms of the treaty, which ended the War of the American Revolution, Great Britain officially acknowledged the United States as a sovereign and independent nation.
Seward Post 5 Newsletter

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Good Luck from a Fellow Veteran
“Seabees Can Do!”

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VA Approved Provider
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**Food Every Night at the Post!!!
CELEBRATE FREEDOM

Vickie L. Detert (6/28/22)

Celebrate freedom. Watch fireworks fly.

Celebrate liberty. Raise your flags high.

Celebrate people who dreamt of a land
where everyone's equal, woman, child or man.

Celebrate blessings you're given each day.

Thank God for sunshine and also for rain.

Remember the lives lost that others might know
a country that cherishes freedom and home.

Celebrate family and friends you hold dear.

Celebrate living every day, every year.

Celebrate sharing, helping others in need.

Celebrate independence while you pray for world peace.