



FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

SEWARD POST 5 NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021
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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan



Hey Post 5 Family! The daylight is coming back (yay!), and boy has it been a long cold Covid winter, although it hasn't been too bad in the snow department; the ice department, well we won't talk about that one! 😞 We're not finished yet, but at least we have some more sun and with the better weather around the corner and we'll soon be able to do more outdoor activities that do not require a ton of clothes to keep warm.

We have some fun and important things planned for this month including the final round of nominations for all our organizations and we will elect our new officers for the new year. Along with identifying our new officers, we will be planning a modified Installation Dinner toward the end of March (thank you Covid 😞) We will also celebrate St. Patrick's Day, and of course we will celebrate the American



Legion Birthday of our National Organization that was the beginning of all our posts! So hang the calendar on the fridge and look for updates on the email and/or Facebook for the activities that we have going on and those that spontaneously crop up! 😊



Just to remind you March 15, the designated birthday of The American Legion, is the day in 1919 when the first American Legion Caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris.

Much as the birthday of the United States is celebrated on July 4 for the day in 1776 when revolting patriots declared the independence



of the British colonies and the spirit of America was born - March 15 is the date on which the Legion came to life. Today, membership stands at about two million over 12,000 posts worldwide. The posts are organized into 55 departments: one each for the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines.



Over the years, the Legion has influenced considerable social change in America, won hundreds of VA benefits for veterans and produced many important programs for children and youth. We have quite the legacy

and have done some incredible things in our over 100 year history and we are still moving forward with our commitment to service to our veterans, community and country into the next century!

For those who have renewed for 2021 thank you very much! And, if not please consider doing so. Your membership continues to make us a strong organization with the ability to help others right here in town. Every membership makes us a stronger organization locally through the national level. Our collective membership numbers are a very loud voice for veterans' rights and benefits. As mentioned last month, we have veterans throughout Seward ranging from nearly every war and conflict as well as our active duty members who are scattered throughout the globe. We have a good core group in Seward and are so fortunate that we have many in our American Legion Family who step up to the plate and help in all our post activities. And, for that I sincerely thank you every one of you for taking time out of your busy lives to be of service for our veterans and our community.

All our post members have served in the military and all deserve the consideration due to them for their honorable service. The post is the starting point for them to learn what they are eligible for at the VA and VBA and can start receiving in terms of benefits and support, but support can be found at all levels of this organization and with about two million members we have a darn good fighting force to ensure veterans will continue to receive what they are entitled to from their military service.

Just to inform as well, The American Legion (TAL) works for all veterans and uses our membership funds for efforts to work with Congress to prioritize veterans and their particular needs and entitlements due to their honorable service. American Legion priorities for the 117th Congress are as listed below:

Address Toxic Exposure & Burn Pits - A disturbingly high percentage of post-9/11 veterans have been exposed to airborne toxic hazards, often the result of personal proximity to burn pits for extended times during service. The American Legion has fought for service-connected disability benefits for conditions linked to toxic exposures for decades and will continue to do so for this generation. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass the Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act of 2020 and supports further studies into conditions directly related to contaminants in order to establish a complete list of presumptive diseases caused by toxic exposure during service.

Improve Health Care for Women Veterans - VA has an obligation to develop and expand healthcare services for women, the fastest-growing demographic in the veteran community. A high percentage of women veterans who are not enrolled in VA health care say lack of gender-specific services and lack of awareness about VA benefits are primary reasons. The American Legion urges Congress to diligently oversee implementation of recently passed VA pilot programs, research initiatives, and policy revisions to address this. Additionally, The American Legion encourages expansion of newborn care and gender-specific services at VA.

Telehealth/Rural Health - Accessibility is often a barrier for veterans and caregivers when pursuing health services from VA. They should have consistent, quality access to care, regardless of location or availability of broadband networks. To address this, The American Legion has worked with VA to introduce a pilot program that provides telehealth sites in American Legion posts to serve rural areas, known as Project ATLAS. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation that expands broadband capabilities and services for veterans in remote areas to better meet their needs.

Address the Forever War - Nearly two decades after 9/11, U.S. troops continue to wage war in Iraq, Afghanistan and other corners of the world, under the 2001 and 2002 Authorizations for Use of Military Force (AUMF). However, the global security environment the United States faces is no longer the same, with the rise of great-power competition and other threats. Too often, the use of military force, as opposed to diplomacy, is considered the primary instrument of national power. The American Legion urges the renewal of a proper constitutional balance to U.S. foreign policy decision-making by urging Congress to renew its war-making oversight role beginning with repealing or replacing the outdated post-9/11 AUMFs and by properly resourcing civilian tools of diplomacy.

Citizenship for Honorable Service - Many veteran immigrants say they have been deported after discharge because they failed to acquire U.S. citizenship while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. The American Legion supports measures to ensure the process of naturalization through military service is completed prior to discharge, to include reinstatement of the USCIS Naturalization at Basic Training Initiative, training for military recruiters and commands about the naturalization process, and the reopening all USCIS field offices abroad to serve servicemembers stationed overseas.

Pay the Coast Guard - U.S. Coast Guard personnel carry out daily missions vital to national security, but they serve in the only military branch forced to work without

shutdowns, due to their status under the Department of Homeland Security. The repeated and all too common threat of government shutdowns brings severe hardship on Coast Guard men, women and families. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass the Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act, which would guarantee that Coast Guard personnel are paid without delay, even in the case of a government shutdown.

Close the 90/10 Loophole - Proprietary schools offer students valuable education options, but some bad actors use a loophole in the 90-10 rule to evade a cap on federal financial aid by aggressively targeting veterans, service members, families and survivors for their education benefits. The American Legion is committed to ensuring that veterans and their families receive the highest quality of education when using the GI Bill and encourages legislation and federal action to provide higher quality and student outcomes for institutions approved for use of VA education benefits by adding Department of Defense and VA funds to the Title IV revenue sources calculation under the Higher Education Act.

Military Awards for Minority Veterans - The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation lifting statutes of limitations and other obstacles that may impede proper investigation and expand the review of minority veterans from all wars and conflicts whose military records and official descriptions of combat actions support consideration for the Medal of Honor and other military citations or medals.



National K9 Veterans Day

Excerpt from Military.com

National K9 Veterans Day, March 13, is a day set aside to honor and commemorate the service and sacrifices of American military and working dogs throughout history.

It was on March 13, 1942, that the Army began training for its new War Dog Program, also known as the "K-9 Corps," according to American Humane, marking the first time that dogs were officially a part of the U.S. Armed Forces. The rest, as they say, is history.



Officially a part of the service of not, the dogs of war span centuries and include such heroes as [Sgt. Stubby](#), the original war dog, [Chips, the most decorated dog in World War II](#) and Lex, [who retired with his fallen owners family](#) and Cairo, the [Navy SEAL working dog on the bin Laden raid](#).

House and Vice Report...

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice!

Hope everyone is enjoying this late winter and the outdoor activities we all have right now. Try to get out and soak up some natural vitamin D and some good clean air.

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 a traditional St Patrick's Day dinner on March 17th and the community breakfast on March 21st. Installation of new officers will be announced a bit later.



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.

Sounding Off from the Sons...

By Mike Calhoon



Looks like Spring is just around the corner so let's enjoy the great snow sports opportunities before break-up gets here.

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 the traditional St Patrick's Day dinner on the 17th and the community breakfast on the 21st. Let us know if you would like to help with any of these functions.

The Squadron will hold its monthly meeting on March 11th at 7:00pm. We will be having our third round of officer nominations and election of the 2021-2022 slate of officers. All current members are welcome and encouraged to attend.



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.

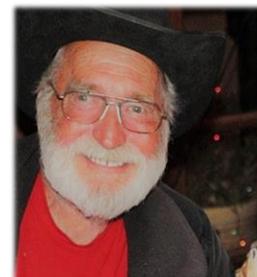
If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 224-5440. Thanks again for all your support of the Post 5 family and I look forward to seeing you all around the Post when possible.

Director's Report...

By Bobby Dunno



My question is as March takes over and the onset of spring is, when is the roads going to melt off and dry out enough for me to get the bike out? Yea, like many others in the state I have the itch and desire to sit my butt in a saddle and take the bike out for a ride. But before I get into talking about what the ALR has going on this summer, I have to reflect on the passing of our friend and fellow rider Don Sutherland, Don was a sometime cantankerous and argumentative, not shy about making his opinions known. He was also quick with a smile, welcoming and gracious for this he thought of as friends. But all of us will miss him and carry fond memories of rides, ice cream runs and fun days some in the rain but mostly sunny and dry barreling down the highway generally enjoying ourselves.



Like most of us Don had a passion for motorcycles and it is my prayer that where he ends up he has two wheels and an engine with lots of rolling hills and winding road. What we will do as the ALR for Marilyn in remembering Don I do not know yet, I have attempted to call but end up hanging up because I get so choked up I can't talk. But it is truly up to Marilyn and what she wants we will do.



We have some scheduled events, 25- 27 June will find us riding to see our fellow ALR members in Fairbanks as the ALRA will be doing the loop again. But this time with a trip out to Tok, Alaska. Here's hoping that the road between Tok and Glennallen is a lot smoother than it was when I road nearly ten years ago 😊.



22 - 25 July will find the ALRA participating with South Peninsula ABATE / Chapter 20 Riders at the **Salute to Vets** in Sterling, AK. It was a great time last summer even with the Spector of COVID hanging over everything, but we managed and will do so again. Whether or not there is a 4th of July parade this year I have not heard but you can bet the ALR will be showing the

Flag and riding around town one way or another. May 15 is a Saturday and we will continue our tradition of holding out bike blessing at the Post that morning.

Let's not forget that Chapter 5 is coming out of the dark and holding our first meeting on the 4th of March and taking care of the business of getting our officers elected and approved by the Post; along with updating anything new on the ride schedule. So, despite the fact that it is still cold and the roads are still slick and we all are still antsy, it is time to start dusting them off, charging the batteries and checking them out to ensure that when it does thaw we are all ready to...



Get On Our Bikes And RIDE!



From the President's Desk

By Debbie VanTassel

Happy Spring! Well Almost. It is March and if nothing else the days are getting longer, and we can hope spring is not far behind.



February is behind us and once again our volunteers put in lots and lots of hours to support the ALA projects. Again, thank you to all the volunteers who put in the time and effort to help our Veterans, active-duty military and our community.

As we head into March, it will again be a busy month. The Auxiliary monthly meeting will be on the 10th, this will be the 2nd and final call for officer nominations and officer elections. If you are interested in serving in an office, please contact an Auxiliary officer. Also, we will be selecting delegates to attend the Department meeting in April in Wasilla. If you are interested in attending the Department Convention, please attend our monthly meeting.

As we prepare for Department Convention, please submit all volunteer hours to Debbie by March 31st so that the year-end reports can be completed. It is so important for these hours to be recorded and reported, it shows just how much our members contribute and support the ALA mission and projects. We will also be submitting our **Unit Scrapbook** which showcases all the hours and projects we have completed this year. If anyone has pictures from events or wants to help put the scrapbook together please let Debbie know.

MEMBERSHIP - currently we are at 94.8% for the year. Thank you to those who have already paid their membership dues. For those that haven't paid yet, please consider renewing your membership. The membership dues are vital to the Unit, Department and National Organizations so that we can continue our missions and projects. It would be amazing if we could reach 100% membership renewal for the year. We only need 8 more members to renew to achieve 100%.

St Patrick's Day- the Post will be decorated in the green and sure to have a special celebration. 🍀🍀🍀🍀🍀

Bingo continues every Monday night- Doors open at 6 pm and games begin at 6:30. Everyone is Welcome to attend.



Special Days in March to Remember

March is **Women's History Month** and well over 200,000 women serve on active duty in the U.S. military. The contributions of women to military history (and well beyond) cannot be ignored. While Women's History Month isn't a time to focus exclusively on the contributions of women in military service, the contributions of female veterans are certainly an important part of American history.

March 3 - Navy Reserve Day

March 4 - Hug a GI Day

March 13 - K-9 Veteran Day. With the creation of the United States K9 Corps on March 13, 1942, dogs were officially adopted into US military ranks during WWII. The Army's Dogs for Defense program trained 10,000 dogs who were again donated to the war effort by American families.

March 21 - Rosie the Riveter Day

March 25 - National Medal of Honor Day is observed every year on March 25 and is dedicated to Medal of Honor Recipients. Each branch of the U.S. military awards the Medal of Honor to those who have distinguished themselves "conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity" above and beyond the call of duty, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs official site.

March 29 - National Vietnam War Veterans Day- National Vietnam War Veterans Day is observed every year on March 29 and is a way to thank and honor our nation's Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. U.S. Armed Forces personnel with active-duty service between November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location of service which includes:

- ✚ Nine million Americans serving during that time
- ✚ 6.4 million Americans living today
- ✚ 2.7 million U.S. service members who served in Vietnam
- ✚ 58,000 whose names are memorialized on a black granite wall in our Nation's Capital
- ✚ 304,000 who were wounded
- ✚ 1,253 Missing in Action (MIA) heroes who have not yet returned to American soil
- ✚ 2,500 [Prisoners of War](#) (POWs)

The commemoration makes no distinction between veterans who served in-country, in-theater, or were stationed elsewhere during those 20 years.

Hope everyone has a great month and we will see you at the Post.

For God and Country

Basic Training for the American Legion

Every American Legion Post is unique as they work to serve the veterans and their individual communities. Our post right here in Seward is no different and our hope is we are meeting those needs, however all of us, close to 13,000 posts worldwide, have a common history and mission of service.

For those who would like to know and understand more than what we do just at the local level and to get a "bigger picture" The American Legion (TAL) at the National Level has developed training programs for Legionnaires. And now, most if not all, are online. I still have a few of the "old school" basic training courses, formerly known as the American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI) and is a wonderful foundation to understand much of how the organization is structured to work from "the Post" through "National." The new course, now called "Basic Training, is updated and online with streamlined and enhanced videos, digital photos, clickable links and many other features. This course is now the official training program for officers, members, Legion College applicants and those who just want to expand their knowledge of this amazing organization. It is divided into six easily digested sections for learning. The sections are:



History & Organization

Learn why and how The American Legion came into existence after World War I.



Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

The foremost pillar of American Legion service, learn the ways in which the organization is dedicated to compassionate care, timely delivery of benefits, career development and other areas of advocacy for those who have served in uniform.



National Security

Outlined here is The American Legion's position on a strong, well-equipped and effectively deployed U.S. military, including a decent quality of life for those now in uniform and retirees of the Armed Forces.



Americanism

This pillar of American Legion service is filled with respect for the nation that those in the military swore with their lives to defend, from proper treatment of the U.S. flag to voter education to youth programs that make life-changing differences.



Children & Youth

The American Legion's long-held position that "every child deserves a square deal" is explained here, to include such programs and efforts as the Child Welfare Foundation, the Family Support Network, Temporary Financial Assistance and other initiatives that aim to help children and youth follow their dreams, no matter their circumstances.



Course Conclusion

See how all the pieces of American Legion service and advocacy fit together to best serve our nation and learn where other committees and commissions play vital roles.

Each section has a quiz at the end to test your knowledge and a final exam. All in all it takes only a few hours and at the end you'll have a much better understanding of the organization that you have earned to right to belong to!

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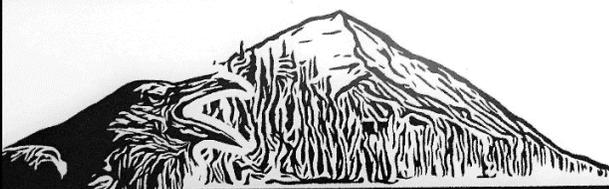
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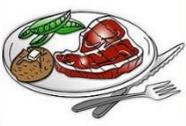
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ERASONES

Sam Clemons Jewelry Artist/Owner

*  **MARCH 2021** 

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| | Chili Dogs & Chips 1 Bingo 6:30 pm  | Taco Tuesday 2  | 3 | B, B, M&C 4 ALR Meeting 5:30pm  Pioneer Igloo #9 Meeting 6:30pm | Steak Night 5  | 6  Pool League 7:00 pm |
| 7 Luscious Leftovers  | Chili Dogs & Chips 8 Bingo 6:30 pm  | Taco Tuesday 9 Post Meeting 5:30 pm  Post membership target - 90% | 10 Auxiliary Meeting 6 pm  Post membership target - 90% | 11 B, B, M&C 11 SAL Meeting 7 pm  | 12 Steak Night 12  | 13 K-9 Veterans Day  Pool League 7:00 pm |
| 14 Luscious Leftovers  Daylight Savings Time Begins | Chili Dogs & Chips 15 Bingo 6:30 pm  American Legion Birthday!!!  | Taco Tuesday 16  | 17 St. Patrick's Day Corn Beef & Cabbage with all things Irish!  | 18 B, B, M&C 18 | 19 Steak Night 19  | 20  Pool League 7:00 pm |
| 21 Luscious Leftovers  Community Breakfast | Chili Dogs & Chips 22 Bingo 6:30 pm  | Taco Tuesday 23  | 24 | 25 B, B, M&C 25 Congressional Medal of Honor Day  | 26 Steak Night 26  | 27  Pool League 7:00 pm |
| 28 Luscious Leftovers  PALM SUNDAY | Chili Dogs & Chips 29 Bingo 6:30 pm  Vietnam War Veterans Day | Taco Tuesday 30  | 31 |  | |  |

Happy Saint Patrick's Day!!!



FOOD SERVED EVERY NIGHT AT THE POST