



For God and Country

Seward Post 5 Newsletter

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American Legion Seward Post 5
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National Commander's Comments By Denise Rohan



Standing at the podium after being the first woman elected as American Legion national commander, Denise Rohan had one question for the delegates to the Legion's national convention in Reno, Nev.: "Are you ready?"



The Wisconsin resident challenged Legionnaires to work together to continue the organization's 98 years of service to the nation, and its veterans, military and their families. "Are you ready to continue to join forces as part of the nation's largest veteran service organization's family?" Rohan asked. "Are you ready to Purple Up and show the nation that we are a family that not just takes care of our own members, we stand ready to take care of our active-duty military and their families, we take care of our veterans and their families and, in reality, when you look at our four pillars and all of our programs, are you ready to continue to take care of our entire nation's families?"

Rohan said her theme this year will be "Family First," and that the theme is based on The American Legion's motto of "For God and Country."

"I believe we were put here, where you are today, and in the positions you hold currently for the greater good," Rohan said. "We are not here to judge one another. We are here to nurture and take care of one another. Families grow through love and support for one another. As an American Legion family - we need to treat each other in that same spirit - like part of our larger extended family."

Taking a cue from the U.S. armed forces, Rohan chose the color purple for her membership shirts. "I chose purple for this year's membership shirts to show that we are joining forces as an American Legion family," she said. "Just like all branches of the military started working together and joined forces, they purpled up over the last several years, it is time for The American Legion family to also purple up as we all work together for the common good."

A 33-year Legionnaire and current member of Post 385 in Verona, Wis., and U.S. Army veteran, Rohan has served as post and department commander. But when her husband, Mike, was first approached about joining The American Legion and Denise identified herself as an eligible veteran, she said she was informed 'Women join the Auxiliary.' "That post that denied me membership 37 years ago, they have a picture of me on the wall with a sign that reads 'She could have been a member of our Post. Remember, women are veterans too!'" Rohan said. "It is a great reminder that since the birth of The American Legion back in 1919, our leadership knew that a veteran was a veteran regardless of race, religion or gender. Women could vote for national commander before they could vote for the president of the United States. I know that women have been and continue to be in leadership positions in this organization."

Rohan urged delegates to keep up the support for military families as servicemembers continue to be deployed across the world. "The American Legion family will stand tall next to our heroes and their families," she said. "There are National Guard and reserve families living in your home towns who are feeling alone and afraid. Please continue to step up and make connections with those families. And, whenever possible, make that connection before the family member is deployed."

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"Get to those Yellow Ribbon events that are happening prior to deployment. Get to know the Family Readiness Group leader for your units and let the families know what we do, who we are and what assistance we can offer on a daily basis."

Rohan shared the story of being at a Veterans Day event in a community a few years ago. The main speaker, a Gold Star father, shared the story about his son who had been killed in Afghanistan. During his speech a girl in the choir began crying and was escorted to the back of the room.

Con't on pg 7

"Carry the Legacy Forward"

By PNC Charles Schmidt

Addressing delegates to The American Legion National Convention

Aug. 22 in Reno, Nev., National Commander Charles Schmidt said

that while the work of the organization continues to make an important and positive impact on this nation, membership needs to be on the minds of every Legionnaire.



"The reason Congress pays attention to us is because we are large, we are principled and we are altruistic," Schmidt said. "And while I see no diminishment of our principles and our good works, our voice will get proportionally smaller as our numbers go down.

"And so will our ability to run the programs that benefit so many people and their communities."

Programs such as American Legion Baseball, Boys State and Nation, Oratorical, Shooting Sports, Scouting and flag etiquette all will suffer if the Legion's membership rolls don't increase.



"Who is going to advocate for veterans, just as the doughboys returning from World War I did when they formed an organization that pledged to leave no American

servicemember behind and to ensure that their widows and orphans would receive the compassion and assistance of a grateful nation?" Schmidt asked. "Who is going to lobby Congress, encourage the White House and convince the media that freedom is not free and America must maintain a strong national defense in order to protect our way of life?"

The American Legion has been doing that for 98 years, Schmidt said, thanks in part to Legionnaires at the local level. "You don't have to be a famous national leader like Harry Colmery or Teddy Roosevelt Jr. to be a legend in your own communities," he said. "In fact, most of the great work by The American Legion family is performed by unsung heroes - people whose names we don't know and probably will never know."

Those Legionnaires volunteer hundreds of thousands of hours at Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, conduct blood drives and facilitate Operation Comfort Warriors grants. Schmidt also pointed to the efforts of American Legion Post 171 in Colorado, which teamed up with the Home Depot Foundation to renovate the home of a 100-percent service-connected disabled veteran - Andrew Smith - and his 8-year-old special needs child. The family had been forced to vacate their home when it was determined uninhabitable, but thanks to the post and others the man and his son were able to move back into it last Father's Day.

"The American Legion saw a challenge and our family stepped up," Schmidt said. "Now who is going to fill their shoes and help the many other Andrew Smiths that are out there?" Schmidt asked Legionnaires to focus both on those serving in National Guard and reserve units, as well as former members. He suggested using MyLegion.org to get a county-by-county list of those who have not renewed their membership in The American Legion.

"Make sure that every one of those former members within your post, district and department receives a personal contact - not just a form letter - from someone who cares," he said. "Sometimes a phone number is not included in the contact information. If that is the case, Google the information that you do have or call directory assistance for a phone number. But a personal visit works even better. Find out why they left the fold and find a way to fix it. If people feel wanted and appreciated, they will renew."

Schmidt asked national convention delegates to take what they've learned in Reno and take it back home with them.

"Membership determines our ability to implement and execute our Four Pillar programs," he said. "It also determines our ability to effectively advocate, since numbers matter to Congress, the White House, governors and state legislatures. The numbers in our communities can also make the difference between mayors and city councils supporting American Legion programs or ignoring us.

"I am hopeful that with all of your help we will stop this membership slide."

Please continue to support your fellow veterans, troops, their families, youth and our nation.

RENEW NOW

Your annual dues help support programs in your community and across the nation. American Legion programs and services include: Troop Support, Child Welfare Foundation, Heroes to Hometowns, American Legion Baseball, Department Service Officers, Family Support Network, Flag Advocacy & Etiquette, Junior ROTC & ROTC, Operation Comfort Warriors, Scholarships, Veterans Job Fairs, and many others.

Thank you for ensuring that The American Legion remains the most powerful voice in America on behalf of veterans, servicemembers, their families, and communities across the nation.

From the Desk of the 1st Vice

By Clare Sullivan

Well we made it through another summer and what a summer it has been! A mixed bag of weather but it was still summer! We had the opportunity to visit with many of our membership who come to Seward in the summer to work and play. It always good to see these folks, and it is bitter sweet when they leave because we enjoy their company while they're here but are a little sad when they have to go back to the Lower 48 to their families and their regular lives. We wish them well and look forward to their return next summer!

It looks like we're heading headlong into Fall; hopefully it will be as nice a transition. The daylight is getting much shorter and we're starting to drive with headlights on at night now in town. It is a sure sign that the colder days are on their way. With this in mind, we need to think about getting our homes ready for the cold weather and for many we'll need to budget for the increased heating and utility charges with the cold and dark.

I'd like to mention the great job that **David Osborn (Ozzie)** has done throughout the summer at our cemetery and continues to do so. It is a big piece of land with a lot of headstones memorializing the loved ones of many in Seward in their final resting place. It is of great comfort that Ozzie has done such a superb job in a place of dignity of our American Legion Family. Thanks Oz, your selfless service truly helps our post, our veterans and their families, and the community of Seward.

August was a good month with the Silver Salmon Derby bringing in some good fish even though the weather was a bit sketchy but I heard some good "fish success stories." 😊

I'd also like to acknowledge Ozzie again who took the lead with the folks from the USCGC Healy who were instrumental in helping us out at the cemetery with working on the entry arch and getting in prepped for painting. Fortunately, it was a great day and we had some good help plus the donation of the manlift from Metco to get it done!



During this month we have a few days of remembrance and celebration. We have **Patriot Day** (Sept 11th) where we remember the tragic day of 9/11 and those lost in the terror attack in NY, the Pentagon, and Flight 93 in Pennsylvania. We also have **POW/MIA Recognition Day** on Sept 21st where we remember and honor the sacrifices made by this nation's prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action. We also have a day of celebration on the **American Legion**

Day which falls on Sept 16th. This day was dedicated by Congress in 2009 on the anniversary of the establishment of the American Legion in 1919.

This year the American Legions throughout the country will celebrate **American Legion Day** for 98 years of service that the American Legion has performed throughout the country with over 14,000 posts honoring veterans and providing community support. Believe or not, our Seward Post 5 has been in existence since that time as well and remains committed to carrying on that tradition of supporting local veterans and the community, as well as our military service members.



We assist our veterans in securing benefits, treatment, and compensation from the Veterans Administration (VA) commensurate with their military service. We work hard to keep patriotic holidays alive in the minds of our community, because we know our holidays are a celebration of our incredible history as a country, and if you lose your history you will lose your sense of who you are as a nation. We also work to provide help to those in need when times get hard and provide scholarships to our graduating seniors and others in post- secondary schools.

As you can see we work hard to provide help and support for many through many activities; however, like any viable organization we are only as strong as our team. **This is where I need your help** - our post, similar to many posts throughout the country, is experiencing a slight decline in numbers. Our senior members are passing to "Post Everlasting" and our younger veterans are not as inclined to join due to a variety of reasons, but what I have found common among these reasons is a lack of understanding by them of the big picture regarding what the American Legion does for them and their families. Right now, our younger veterans are fortunately receiving good services from the VA and from the military as they depart their military service, but in order to keep these benefits in place we, as an organization, need to keep the pressure on to ensure "us veterans" keep these benefits and services. We can only do this by strong membership and by advocating at the congressional level to ensure they do not go away.

As you can see in many of our articles throughout the years, we have an incredibly dedicated group of volunteers who work hard in our American Legion Family, and we still manage to have fun in the service of our veterans and the community. Thank you for all you do, please consider joining or renewing - and for your service to this community and this great nation.

House and Vice Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice/Club!

Here comes fall. Guess summer got worn out early this year!

Big thanks to everyone that came and supported our building and cemetery projects in August. We had great project leaders in Tom Sears and David "Ozzie" Osborn, plus volunteers like Al Dykstra and a nice group from the crew of the USCGC Healy. METCO also let us use a forklift/manlift to reach the upper portions of the cemetery entry arch. Great job everyone!!



We hosted the crew of the USCGC Healy for a promotion party and crew dinner on August 12, had a great community breakfast on August 20, and we hosted the Spring Creek Correctional Center Officer Liaison Program meeting on August 30.



Our **Community Breakfast** is on **September 17** and I am sure other things will come along that will give you all a chance to show your volunteer spirit and come help out at your Post.

This month we will have the **Early Bird Dinner** on **September 9th** to show our appreciation to all who have renewed their 2018 membership.



Renew early and come join us for a great dinner. Many of you have already renewed your membership. Thank you for your continued support. If you have not renewed yet please consider doing so. Membership is the driving force behind all Legion programs and the support we can give to our veterans and community.

You will see a couple of new faces behind the bar from time to time as **Angela Schwertfeger** and **Tom Sears** are a couple of our new volunteer bartenders. They will be working on some Friday nights, Saturday nights, and a night now and then during the week. Stop by and put them to work!!!! 😊



Thanks again to all of you who continue to support your Post and Club. 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



With "Termination Dust" on Mt. Alice the other day it appears summer is coming to a close. It has been a busy and productive summer and I want to say thanks to all the great Squadron 5 members who have given, and continue to give, their time and effort to help us support all the Post 5 family functions, maintenance needs, and general help to the community of Seward.

Hopefully we will continue some building and cemetery projects this month. Please contact me at the club if you have any questions about volunteering or would like to find out what we have in the works.

The main function for the Post family this month is **Early Bird Dinner**. This is a dinner to say thanks to all members who have renewed their membership for 2018 by September 9th. The new membership year is in full swing and we have your 2018 card ready for renewal.

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.

Membership Eligibility Information	
August 2, 1990 to today	(Persian Gulf/ War on Terrorism)
December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990	(Operation Just Cause - Panama)
August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984	(Lebanon/Grenada)
February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975	(Vietnam)
June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955	(Korea)
December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946	(World War II)
April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918	(World War I)

Patriot Day

Patriot Day is an annual observance on September 11 to remember those who were injured or died during the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. Many Americans refer Patriot Day as 9/11 or September 11.



On the direction of the President, the flag of the United States of America should be displayed on the homes of Americans, the White House and all United States government buildings. The flag should be flown at half-mast as a mark of respect to those who died on September 11, 2001. Many people observe a moment of silence at 8:46 AM (Eastern Daylight Time). This marks the time that the first plane flew into the World Trade Center.

On September 11, 2001, four planes were hijacked. The hijackers then deliberately flew three of the planes into two important buildings, the Pentagon in Washington DC and the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York. The fourth



crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The loss of life and damage that these hijackings caused form the biggest act of terrorism ever on United States soil. Nearly 3000 people died in the attacks and the economic impact was immense.



The attacks have greatly increased attention to national security in the United States. This has had huge implications for United States national and international politics. This is particularly true for the relationships between the United States and Islamic countries in the Middle East.



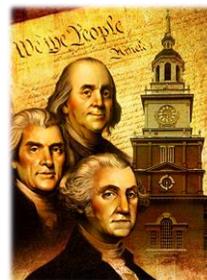
Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

Constitution Day commemorates the formation and signing of the U.S. Constitution by thirty-nine brave men on September 17, 1787, recognizing all whom are born in the U.S. or by naturalization, have become citizens. Now **Constitution Day** is the time to carry on their legacy and develop habits of citizenship in a new generation of Americans.

In 1952 Congress passed a law that September 17 was the official date to commemorate "the formation and signing of the Constitution of the United States" but the day was also designated "Citizenship Day" and retained its original purpose of recognizing all those who had attained the status of American citizenship.

Every September 17th (unless it falls on a weekend or other holiday) Constitution Day (this year it is Monday 18 September), also called Citizenship Day, is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. This is one of the newest federal holidays to be established by Congress, as it was passed in just 2004. Citizenship Day was the name given to the holiday prior to its official designation.

The roots of Citizenship Day stretch much farther back beginning in 1940 when *I am an American Day* was initiated by Congress for the third Sunday in May. The day of September 17th was determined by US citizens themselves. In 1952 Olga T. Weber of Ohio successfully convinced her municipality to name the date Constitution Day. The next year she went a step further and petitioned the Ohio government to celebrate the holiday statewide as Constitution Week. This year we're celebrating it from September 18-24.



Today we consider Constitution Day as a birthday for our country and it serves as a means for American citizens to express their pride in their citizenship. Constitution Day also designates a time to honor the Constitution of America and learn more about the famous piece of legislation. The Act that passed the holiday also states that federally funded schools are required to provide lessons on the U.S. Constitution during the holiday.

POW/MIA Empty Chair

Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th American Legion National Convention, calls for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings of The American Legion.



At the beginning of every American Legion meeting, we remember the incredible cost paid by those who gave their all to help preserve the freedoms we enjoy, those gallant individuals who fought and died for our country. Yet, it is in remembering our fallen comrades that we are reminded of those whose fate is still unknown, those still listed as Missing in Action and Prisoners of War. More than 78,000 Americans are still unaccounted for from World War II; 8,100 from Korea; 120 from the Cold War; 1,810 from Vietnam; and 3 from the Gulf War and middle east conflicts. These courageous Americans, who dedicated their lives to preserving and protecting our freedom, will never be forgotten.

To honor these men and women, we perform the **POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony**. It symbolizes the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs...we call them comrades.

They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay our humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence.

The table set for one is small... it symbolizes the frailty of one prisoner against his oppressors.

The table cloth is white... it symbolizes the purity of their intentions to respond to their country's call to arms. The single rose displayed in a vase reminds us of the families and loved ones of our comrades in arms who keep faith awaiting their return.

The red ribbon tied so prominently on the vase is reminiscent of the red ribbon worn on the lapel and breasts of thousands who bear witness to their unyielding determination to demand a proper accounting for our missing.

A slice of lemon is on the bread plate... to remind us of their bitter fate.

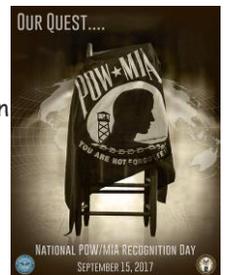
There is salt upon the bread plate... symbolic of the family's tears as they wait.

The glass is inverted... they cannot toast with us tonight. The chair is empty... they are not here.

Remember... all of you who served with them and called them comrades, who depended on their might and aid, and relied on them... for surely... they have not forsaken you.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day

For years, The American Legion supported a National POW/MIA Recognition Day, it is now recognized annually on the **third Friday of September**. This commemoration is set aside to honor the commitment and sacrifices made by this nation's prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action, as well as their families.



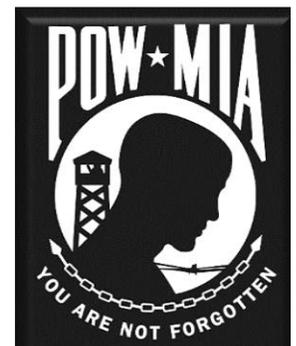
Until July 18, 1979, no commemoration was held to honor POW/MIAs. In the first year, Congress passed resolutions and the national ceremony was held at the National Cathedral in

Washington. The 1st Tactical Squadron from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia flew the Missing Man formation.

A poster was published by the VA which contained only the letters POW/MIA. That continued until 1982, when a black and white drawing of a POW in captivity was used to show urgency of the situation.

The **National League of Families**

Proposed the third Friday of September as a commemoration date. Most of the National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies have taken place at the Pentagon. Now, they're held throughout the nation and around the world on military installations, ships, schools, churches, etc. The focus is to ensure that America remembers its responsibility to stand behind those who serve it and to make sure that we do all that is possible to account for those who have not returned.



National Commander Rohan Comments con't from page 1...

"When the program was over, the mother, who I had never met, sought me out in the crowd," Rohan said. "She wanted to say thank you to The American Legion on behalf of her family. You see, one of the times that her husband had been deployed there was a fire in her home, and they also had a broken water heater. The local American Legion stepped up, helped her apply for Temporary Financial Assistance and then came to her home and helped make repairs.

"The mom said she is confident that had it not been for The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance program and the Legionnaires who helped repair their home, her husband may not have returned home safely. With things being taken care of at home, she knew that she did not need to trouble her husband with those issues. He could concentrate on his mission and could have one less worry on the battlefield, thanks to The American Legion family. Because that's what we do and that's who we are."

Rohan said that along with Temporary Financial Assistance, she also will ask Legion family members to provide financial support to the Legion's service officers program. "We witnessed history here yesterday as President Trump signing The Veterans Appeals Modernization Act of 2017 here on our stage," she said. "This will help claims and appeals get processed faster, but we need trained service officers to assist in getting claims properly submitted. The faster we can get veterans the benefits they earned, the faster they can go on to lead happy, productive lives. It doesn't just help the veteran; it helps the entire family."

Rohan also said it's time for Legion posts to start inviting the community in to show all the great work they are doing. She said hosting a Veterans Day meal is a perfect opportunity to do so.

"Make sure to include current and expired members, members of your holding post, Blue Star and Gold Star mothers, student veterans, military recruiters, members of the National Guard and reserve along with their families, veterans in local care facilities or hospitals and their families," Rohan said. "Let's light up social media with the world's largest Veterans Day celebration this nation has ever seen. Let's feed the entire community, because putting on great community meals is another great part of who we are and what we do.

"To make a difference in someone's life, you don't have to be brilliant, rich, beautiful or perfect. You just have to care enough to be there."

President Donald Trump signs into law the "Forever GI Bill" on 16 Aug

"(The Forever GI Bill) is expanding our ability to support our veterans in getting education," said Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin. "Already we've had 1.7 million individuals take advantage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. We hope that many more now will."

American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt praised the legislation. "The signing of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 marks a new era for all who have honorably served in uniform," Schmidt said. "We believe that this legislation, named after a past national commander of The American Legion, will transform America as the original did following World War II."

This bill would improve and extend GI Bill benefits granted to veterans, their surviving spouses and dependents. Specifically, it would:

- Remove time restrictions to use the GI Bill, enabling future eligible recipients to use their GI Bill benefits for their entire lives as opposed to the current 15-year timeline.
- Simplify the benefit for future servicemembers by consolidating the GI Bill into a single program, which would reduce the VA's administrative costs.
- Provide significant increases in GI Bill funding for reservists and guardsmen, dependents, surviving spouses and surviving dependents.
- Provide 100 percent GI Bill eligibility to post-9/11 Purple Heart recipients.
- Restore eligibility for servicemembers whose school closes in the middle of a semester and creates a pilot program that would pay for veterans to take certain high technology courses. It also corrects a Pentagon deployment authorization that has kept thousands of National Guardsmen and reservists from accumulating earned education benefits.

"This lifetime benefit will allow veterans, and their families, to earn degrees and begin rewarding careers that can lead our economy" Schmidt said. "On behalf of the 2 million members of The American Legion, we thank the House of Representatives, the Senate and the president, for working together in a bipartisan manner to assist the fine men and women who have proudly served our nation."

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September 2017



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					Steak Night 1 KARAOKE 7PM 	2 Chicken Parmesan
					3 Luscious Leftovers Texas Hold 'em	4 Luscious Leftovers BINGO 6:30PM Omaha Hold 'em
10 Luscious Leftovers Texas Hold 'em	Patriot Day 11 BINGO!!! 6:30PM Luscious Leftovers Omaha Hold 'em	Mexican Martes 12 Post Meeting 7pm 	13 Auxiliary Meeting 7pm 	14 SAL Meeting 7pm 	Steak Night 15 POW/MIA Recognition Day 	16 American Legion Day Pool League
17 Luscious Leftovers 3rd Sunday of the Month Breakfast Texas Hold 'em	Constitution Day 18 Luscious Leftovers BINGO!!!! 6:30PM Omaha Hold 'em	Mexican Martes 19 	20	21 Steak Night 22 KARAOKE 7PM 	23 Pool League 	
24 Luscious Leftovers Texas Hold 'em	Mexican Martes 25 BINGO!!! 6:30PM Luscious Leftovers Omaha Hold 'em	26 	27	28 Steak Night 29 KARAOKE 7PM 	30 Pool League 	

Poker Season Starts Again!!

Beginning 10 September
Be there!!!
Texas Hold 'em 6 pm (Sunday)
Omaha Hold 'em 6 pm (Monday)



Pool League Starts Again!!

Beginning 16 September
Every Saturday Night at 6:30 pm



Food Available Every Night!!!!