

## FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

### **SEWARD POST 5 NEWSLETTER**

MAY 2020 **YOLUME 17, ISSUE 05** 

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## COMMANDER'S COMMENTS By Clare Sullivan

Well, normally I am writing about all the things we are planning to do in May in support of our veterans and our community as well as getting excited about all the coming great weather. Also, we usually get happy about seeing our out of state members and tourists coming up for another tourist season - but this year it is a little different. We're still providing support where we can but on a very modified level. It is not news to anyone that we're all in an odd form of stasis and our old normal ways are definitely impacted; but, often times crises, tragedy and particularly this

pandemic has given us pause to reflect on what we have been doing currently and the things we've done in the past. We have "time" to reevaluate where we go



from here. This "pause" in all our lives most definitely has "tested our metal" and from what I can see in our American Legion Family here in Seward is we are doing extremely well and are cut from a good stock - as we are still making it happen, even with all the challenges and limitations we are undergoing at this time.

As we are in May, we still have to keep doing what we can to maintain "normalcy" and that includes taking care of our "Post



Everlasting" grounds. Our cemetery clean-up will begin on Saturday, May 9th and we'll be working hard to get the grounds spiffied up in anticipation of our Memorial Day ceremony. We'll have

it one way or another. Maybe by that time we can all come out but just keep our distancing and continue our tradition of remembering those who have fallen with honor and courage.

We are contending with lots of interim changes such as the cancellation of many events for us and the larger American Legion Family. Boys State, Girls State and the Oratorical Constitution Speech Contest have been cancelled for this year. Although disappointing these temporary changes just allow posts to assess and see where they can help others in this time of pandemic, and those posts who have the ability are stepping up for their fellow Legion Family members and their community at large. Such examples are found in our

Seward Post 5 Family who have been making and donating facial masks, volunteering to help with our nightly free curbside dinner

service for our membership and for those in need. And of course, those that come in to prepare our special breakfast meals and distribute these hearty breakfasts at curbside





and for those 24/7 workers out on the front line when the others are at home. The wonderful thing about this is, the helping spirit isn't just found at the post, we have many members who are scattered throughout our community stepping up to help others.

Although we're pretty well known for great food and fun we still are just as serious about our veterans in their time of need or when we can help honor them. Just this past Wednesday our Riders stepped up to help honor a Korean Veteran who recently passed. He lived out of state for a while but years ago was a critical part and considered a founder of the Bear Creek Volunteer Fire Department and was the Port Engineer at the Seward Marine Center. Our Riders rode in procession with the local fire departments to help bring solemn attention and respect to the cremains that were returned to his family and Alaska.













The Post 5 ALR rallied and spread the word and other ALR members also rallied for the funeral escort on 29 April 2020. In addition to Post 5 Director Bobby Dunno the escort riders included: Bill Pike, Larry Gentry, Debbie and Danny Dunno from Post 5; State ALR Director DJ Jones, Tim Campbell and Charlie Brown from Post 1; Kevin Stevenson < Willie Kunesh and Skip Thronson from Post 35.

Way to go Riders! The Frozen Chosen did great and thank you for honoring another to Post Everlasting.

# House and Vice Report...... By Mike Calhoon

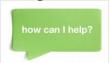


Hello from the Second Vice,

We were hoping to be open for regular operations by now but will have to wait a bit longer. It looks like the City of Seward Administration is following the guidelines set forth by Governor Dunleavy so it will be at least May  $8^{th}$  before we find out the opening schedule. We will keep you informed as we know more.

I want to thank Sharon Dillon, Clare Sullivan and Karla Nemitz for their help in providing take-out dinner service each night at the Post. We continue to provide meals, at no cost, every night. Our folks have been very generous with donations to help with this service. If you are interested in getting food to go, come by between 5-7pm. You can call or watch for an email, for those on the email list, to see what is for dinner. You can be added to the email list if you are not on it at this time.

Please feel free to contact us and let us know if you need a meal or other assistance and we will try to help where we can. It is a tough time for all of our Post 5 Family members, but



we can help each other get through this. We will be having breakfast to go, unless we can serve inside by then, on May 10<sup>th</sup> for Mother's Day

and on May 17<sup>th</sup> for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. Obviously, we hope to be back to somewhat normal operations by then but will have to wait and see.



Cemetery clean-up will begin on May  $9^{th}$  and we will keep you informed about Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day activities. Combat Fishing has been postponed and we will let you know when and if that takes place this summer.



There are only two months left in the 2020 membership year. We have reached all monthly goals so far and only need a few renewals or new members to reach our 100% goal. I want to thank everyone who has already renewed their memberships and urge those that have not to consider doing so. 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. You can renew at the Post, mail in your renewals, or go to MyLegion.org and renew.

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.

I want to thank all Squadron 5 members who have continued to support the mission of the Post during this tough time. April 30, 2020 marked the Post being closed for 44 days but meals were still given to go each night and breakfast was available for pick-up and delivery on April 12<sup>th</sup> for Easter and April 19<sup>th</sup> for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month.

May will be more of the same, at least in the beginning. The Post will continue to do meals each night for pick-up and will have breakfast on May 10<sup>th</sup> for Mother's Day and on May 17<sup>th</sup> for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday breakfast.



Cemetery clean-up will begin on May  $9^{th}$  around 10:00am as the Post prepares for Memorial Day so keep that in mind and come give a hand if you can.

The Post will keep us informed on any other meetings or acceptable functions that come up prior to a return to normal business.

Remember that membership is the key to all the success. The 2020 membership year is here so consider renewing your membership if you have not already done so. Membership is the cornerstone of our organization and we need to continue to strive to be a strong and active part of the Post 5 family.

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 when possible.

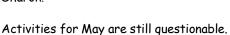
### From the President's Desk...

#### By Debbie VanTassel

I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and healthy! What a crazy last several weeks. I know this pandemic has affected everyone, all in different ways. Hopefully, we will be able to move forward safely so that we can get back to a new normal.

At the Unit level there is not much to report. We continue to provide service where we can to the community and veterans. Huge thank you to Sharon Dillon who has worked tirelessly making face masks for anyone

who needs them. Also, Sharon has been at the Legion most every night helping with curb side food service. Thank you, Sharon!





May is poppy month and we will be putting out the poppy cans in businesses that are open or that may open during the month. As part of the Legion family we will participate in the Memorial Day ceremony.

At the Department Level there have been several changes due to the mandates.

The Department of Alaska Convention had to be canceled. As a result, the Department Executive Committee met by telephone and voted to retain the current Department officers for the next year. This is in line with what was decided at the National level as well. The National and Department officers will end up serving a 2-year term. Along with this all year end reports that were due in April will also continue for the next year and be a 2-year report. Other awards such as Member of the Year and Military Service member of the year will be postponed until next year's convention.

Unfortunately, due to the current mandates, it was decided to cancel Girls State which is normally held in June. It has already been scheduled for 2021.

The fall Auxiliary Conference will be held on Oct 2-4, 2020 (assuming current mandates have been removed by then) at Post #28 in Anchorage.

We will restart Bingo once mandates are lifted that allow us to do so.

I apologize this is an abbreviated report but with the current situation we haven't been able to do many of our normal activities. Hopefully, the Post will be able to open

again soon and as I said earlier start getting back to a new normal.

### Memorial Day Poem: In Flanders' Field

A hallmark Memorial Day poem was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae. It is titled "In Flanders Fields" & remains to this day one of the most memorable war poems ever written. It is a lasting legacy of the terrible battle in the Ypres Salient in the spring of 1915.

As a surgeon attached to the 1st Field Artillery Brigade, McCrae, who had joined the McGill faculty in 1900 after graduating from the University of Toronto, had spent seventeen days treating injured men -- Canadians, British, Indians, French, and Germans -- in the Ypres Salient.

One death particularly affected McCrae. A young friend and former student, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer of Ottawa, had been killed by a shell burst on 2 May 1915. Lieutenant Helmer was buried later that day in the little cemetery outside McCrae's dressing station, and McCrae had performed the funeral ceremony in the absence of the chaplain.

The next day, sitting on the back of an ambulance parked near the dressing station beside the Canal de l'Yser, just a few hundred yards north of Ypres, McCrae vented his anguish by composing a poem. The major was no stranger to writing, having authored several medical texts besides dabbling in poetry.

In the nearby cemetery, McCrae could see the wild poppies that sprang up in the ditches in that part of Europe, and he spent twenty minutes of precious rest time scribbling fifteen lines of verse in a notebook.

In Flanders fields the poppies blow Between the crosses, row on row, That mark our place; and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.





## "Taps"

Composed By Major General Daniel Butterfield
Army of the Potomac, Civil War

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than the call Taps. The melody is both eloquent and haunting and the history of its origin is interesting and somewhat clouded in controversy. In the British Army, a similar call known as Last Post has been sounded over soldiers' graves since 1885, but the use of Taps is unique with the United States Military, since the call is sounded at funerals, wreath-laying and memorial services. Taps began as a revision to the signal for Extinguish Lights (Lights Out) at the end of the day. Up until the Civil War, the Infantry call for Extinguish Lights was the one set down in Silas Casey's (1801-1882) Tactics, which had been borrowed from the French. The music for Taps was adapted by Union General Daniel Butterfield for his brigade (3BDE/1ID/5AC, Army of the Potomac) in July, 1862.

Daniel Adams Butterfield was born in Utica, New York and graduated from Union College at Schenectady. Despite his lack of military experience as the superintendent of the American Express Company when the Civil War broke out, he rose quickly in rank.

A Colonel in the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the New York State Militia, he was promoted to Brigadier General and given command of a

Potomac. The 12th served in the Shenandoah Valley during the Bull Run Campaign. During the Peninsular Campaign Butterfield served prominently when during the Battle of Gaines Mill, despite an injury, he seized the colors of the 83rd Pennsylvania and rallied the regiment at a critical time in the battle. Years later, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for that act of heroism.

brigade of the V Corps of the Army of the



As the story goes, General Butterfield was not pleased with the call for Extinguish Lights feeling that the call was too formal to signal the days end and with the help of the brigade bugler, Oliver Willcox Norton, Harrison's Landing, Virginia, following wrote Taps to honor his men while in camp at

the Seven Day's battle. These battles took place during the Peninsular Campaign of 1862. The call sounded that night in July, 1862, soon spread to other units of the Union Army and was even used by the Confederates. Taps was made an official bugle call after the war. As the years went on many

more versions were created. There are no official words to the music but here are some of the more popular verses:

"Fading light dims the sight,
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.
From afar drawing nigh -- Falls the night.
"Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky.
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.
"Then good night, peaceful night,
Till the light of the dawn shineth bright,
God is near, do not fear -- Friend, good night."

"TAPS" is customarily played at funerals at Arlington national Cemetery as well as at ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknowns there.

## Directors Notes... By Bobby Dunno

So am I the only one who is chaffing at the fact a microscopic organism is changing our life style. Ben Franklin once said "Those who give up freedom for security will soon have neither." Of course, he also said the "Those who fail to prepare are preparing to fail." Both sayings ring true in our current situation and the restrictions that seem to have enveloped our lifestyles.

Have expounded with that I need to say that the weather has turned and we have started riding and several riders who have been itching to get out on the road have done so. And with the Governor lifting of the community travel restrictions, Riders have been traveling to visit and ride together. After all riding in a group of motorcycles is practicing social distancing at its best. While we have not sat down and planned any organized rides, I believe that soon the prospects of seeing medium groups of motorcycle cruising our beautiful Alaskan highways are looking pretty good.

Last Wednesday a group of six motorcycles from Posts 1 & 35 rode down to Seward to join with the Riders from Post 5 to

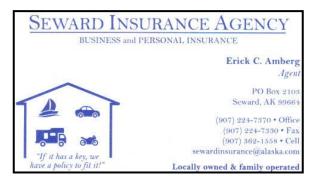


provide an escort for the remains of Leonard Weimer as the Bear Creek Fire Department delivered him to his family.

I also want to put in Mike Calhoon and Sharon Dillon for a well-deserved pat on the back, round of applause, blue ribbon award or possibly schedule a Post Parade in their honor for the efforts they have made keeping our Post up and running and providing what services they could.

So, with that I have run out of things to write but as the weather continues to warm it is time to get out of the house, breath some fresh and Get On Your Bike and Ride!

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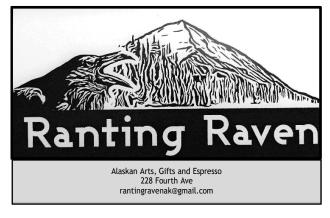


Outdoor Adventure Center Seward, Alaska





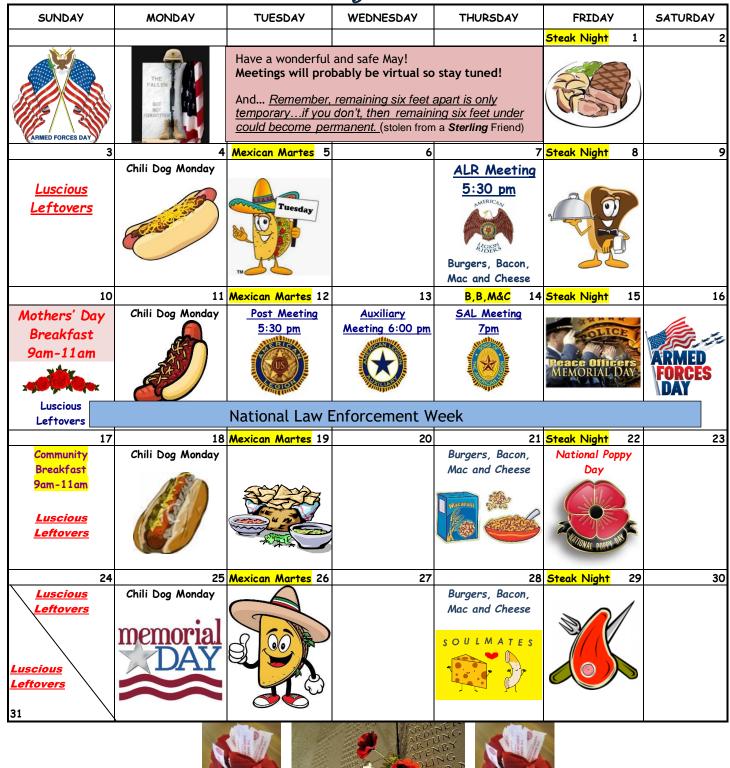




It is traditional to fly the flag of the United States at half- mast from dawn until noon.













Remember we still have complementary curbside dinner pickup at the Post between 5:00 – 7:00 pm (Saturday thru Thursday) for all in our American Legion Family and those in our Community in need