



For God and Country

Seward Post 5 Newsletter

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

Happy New Year! What a great year we have had and it has been one that was exceptionally full and rewarding. We had the opportunity to help many in our community and our veterans in our Seward Post 5 Family. I especially want to thank all our volunteers who took the time to make things happen here. You have risen to the challenge every time to help veterans and their families, our active duty, and our community. We are very fortunate to have the members we have who volunteer their time to help our mission to serve others. We have some incredibly generous and talented people who help out wherever they can. From our everyday patrons who keep the place fun and cheery to the amazing volunteers who show up for all our events in service to our veterans and community. It is a great feeling to live in a town where people care for others and work to improve things for all. We also even manage to have a bit of fun while we're working to help others.



For a small post we accomplish quite a bit, and this is where I also put on my Historian hat to chronical and memorialize what we do. So, with that in mind, I would like to highlight some of our events in 2019. We started the year of course with a New Year's Eve party at the post, and music every weekend provided by Chris Crane, closely followed with our all hands on deck in support of the **Polar Bear Jump-Off Festival** where we helped the Polar Bear Jump-Off Committee with the weekend activities. Throughout the early part of the year, we also had nightly activities of poker and pool league, once again supported by incredible volunteers. And how can I not mention the fabulous meals provided on a nightly basis and the 3rd Sunday of the Month breakfasts for our membership and the community.

Moving onto February we had our **Super Bowl Party** and remembered the sacrifices made on **Four Chaplains' Sunday**, later in the month we supported the **National Ocean Science Bowl** in their annual competition of bright and enthusiastic minds of the kids in schools participating from around the state. In March we celebrated The American Legion's 100th anniversary. Our national organization came into being on March 15th 1919! We also couldn't forget our **St. Patrick's Day Party** where we all were Irish for the day! We also celebrated the installation of our new officers from all in our Legion Family at our combined **Installation Dinner**.

In April, besides tax relief day ☺ we celebrated all the good works of our volunteers with our **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner**, we also had a yummy community **Easter Breakfast**, and had a few folks attend the annual **Department Convention** at Jack Henry Post 1 where fun was had by all and many learned quite a bit about our department and its "leadership!" ☺

We followed in May with lots of activities including our **Mother's Day Breakfast**, the **Armed Forces Day** cookout in the Harbor during the Harbor Opening, the **ALR Bike Blessing**, and the **YMCA's Armed Forces Combat Fishing Tournament** support at AVTEC and we closed out the month with the **Memorial Day Weekend** ceremonies at the Legion Cemetery. Fortunately, the weather cooperated for most of the events - even for the massive cemetery clean up and expansion project lead by David "Ozzie" Osborn!

June really kicked off our amazingly sunny and hot summer and our long days, we celebrated **Flag Day** with a ceremony and we "retired" several flags that completed their service; and we had a yummy **Father's Day Breakfast** to honor our dads! July's



activities followed quickly with **4th of July** festivities where we marched and road motorcycles in the parade and served up the Post 5 "world famous ribs!" We also had a great representation by our **USCGC Mustang** crew in the parade. What a great surprise having these wonderful folks representing our military in our town's parade!

In August we helped to celebrate the **USCG Birthday** at the post, we also geared up for the **Seward Silver Salmon Derby** and all the members who came to town, visited the post, and had a great time fishing. We also had another first with the **Legion Act** that was a bipartisan bill, originating in the House of Representatives that expanded the membership eligibility for membership in the American Legion! This bill allows for membership for all veterans serving since WWII. We gladly brought more folks into the post who are helping us in our mission of helping others!



In September, we celebrated **American Legion Day** on the 16th as well as Constitution and Citizenship Day, remembered those lost on **Patriot Day** (9/11/01) and remembered those who fought for our country and never returned on **POW/MIA Recognition Day**. And to close out the month we had our **Early Bird Dinner** and it was a great turn out with a tasty meal for all as continue to bring in members and renew our memberships.



October brought brisk weather and we had a great time decorating the post and enjoying all that a cool October has to offer including a fun filled Halloween at the post.



As we started looking toward the cooler weather we forged ahead with activities, we honored our veterans with **Veterans' Day** ceremonies at the elementary school and at the Senior Center, and we topped it off with a yummy dinner at the post, and of course we had our ever-tasty **Thanksgiving Dinner** where we fed many in the community on a truly American Holiday. As the year was winding down, we surely weren't!



December brought lots of activities including getting ready for the holidays. We sent out **Operation Apple Pie** packages to the servicemembers from the Seward and Moose Pass areas and the Auxiliary had their **Christmas Parade**



wonderfully supported by the Seward Fire Department and volunteers including the folks from the Future Farmers of America. Once the parade was done **Santa and Mrs. Claus** arrived at the post



to pass out lots of wonderful gifts for the children in town. It was one of the busiest visits from Santa we've had in a long time, but we had a great visit with tasty snacks and warm beverages for all!

We also prepared, delivered food and fed many in town with many folks coming to the post to share in a wonderful **Christmas Dinner** - and to end the month (and our centennial celebration) we had a fabulous **New Year's Eve** get together with our membership!



Now, I'd like to address something that is essential to our organization - **Membership**. We often discuss how good it is to have a healthy membership and the reason is if we're healthy in membership then we can help others in our community. We don't spend much time patting ourselves on the back or advertising what we do but your support and membership have allowed us to do some good work in town over the last year, as in many the years before. And, as "bit ticket items" we as an American Legion Family have donated several thousand dollars in post-secondary scholarships and technical school training. We also donated \$18,000 for veteran meals throughout the year at the Senior Center for their "Take a Vet to Lunch" program; we've paid over \$7,500 for utility and heating bills for those in financial distress, provided holiday meals for many in the community, and have provided many gifts for children in town during the holidays; we sent presents to our Seward and Moose Pass sons and daughter in the military in our Operation Apple Pie program; and, assisted Coast Guard relief efforts when the government shut down and our Coasties were without a paycheck for a while. Our combined American Legion Family has donated over \$100,000 to local causes and military support functions in this past year. As you can see with a strong membership we can help others and make a difference in people's lives.

Inasmuch as it is 2020 we'll be having the **election of new officers** in all our organizations in the next few months. The selection of new officers keeps the forward momentum of the organization and infuses new ideas with new people; new folks keep things fresh and exciting. Membership participation and the new and bright ideas from individuals who get involved energize all to do what we can in the areas of veterans support, child welfare and education, and community service here in Seward.

On a related point, volunteering is not a time-consuming activity within our organization, and many of our positions do not require a lot of effort, but we can always use a helping hand here and there with input and new ideas. It is fun to be involved, and you get a good feeling when you do something positive for others without the expectation of anything in return. Actually, you get quite a bit in return by establishing friendships with good people who are also motivated by doing what is right and contributing positively to our community. Please consider volunteering, encouraging others to join, or come to a monthly meeting (or all of the above 😊) if you have even just a few hours in a month to help.

Our American Legion Family has been here for many years (100 years now!!!! 😊) and it has been a solid foundation as a service organization within our community; we're a reliable source for assistance and camaraderie for veterans and many folks in Seward. So, if you like what we do, come on down and get more information - - we look forward to "seeing you at the Post!"



House and Vice Report.

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice/Club!

2019 was a very busy year around our Post 5 home. I won't try to list all the activities but here are a few of the highlights.

We hosted a free community breakfast every 3rd Sunday of the month in addition to Polar Bear Jumpoff, Easter and Mother's Day. We supported the Polar Bear Committee with activities at the Post. We supported the National Ocean Science Bowl and we supported school athletic programs throughout the year. We had a Super Bowl party. We celebrated St. Patrick's Day, Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, the 4th of July and Veteran's Day. We had dinner for the Combat Fishing Tournament and for many Coast Guard and Navy crews who were in port. We hosted numerous memorial services and celebrations of life. We hosted fundraisers for Auxiliary Unit 5, the Polar Bear Committee and for the Marathon Wrestling Club. We provided a free community meal and delivered food into the community for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We fed close to 200 people on each of those holidays. We provided free meals for our members 6 days a week, only charging for Steak night.

The Post got a new roof installed, at no charge, by G & P Enterprises. All our snow removal and parking lot care in the winter was done, at no charge, by METCO. We should all thank them. 🙏 thank you

Volunteers made all this possible. You are all the heart and soul of this organization. I will not try to name everyone because I will forget some and I don't want hurt feelings. I will, however, name a few. Sharon, Suzi, Dan, and Michelle all did a great job as volunteer bartenders and cooks. You were all awesome!! Melody did a tremendous job handling the finances and daily paperwork when I was not around. Ozzie put in time every Friday and during all functions hosted by the organization. And, a special shout out to Pinky Bleth who has consistently provided amazing desserts, cookies, dinner rolls and so much more throughout the year. These volunteers, along with so many others that filled in where and when they could, helped the Club provide a good place for members and their guests to come hang out, enjoy some good food, and consume a few beverages of their choice. All our volunteers have my heartfelt gratitude for the time and effort they have put in to make this "Social Area" our second home.

The 2020 membership year is here. I want to thank everyone who has already renewed their memberships. 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.

Bingo is going strong on Mondays at 6:30 and we have food every night. Pool league is on Saturday night at 7:00pm when no other function is scheduled.

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. Christmas season has come and gone and the Post 5 100th Anniversary was celebrated on New Year's Eve. What a great way to end an historic year.

I want to thank everyone who, throughout 2019, has given of their time, effort, and money to support the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 5 and the entire Post 5 family. Without the generous donation of time, money, and materials, so much of the community support would not happen.

This past year, Squadron 5 helped expand and main the Legion Cemetery with those efforts being led by David Osborn. Squadron 5 helped to improve and maintain the Post 5 building. Squadron 5 provided financial support to the Veterans lunch program at the Senior Center, scholarships for local students, and support for all Post 5 family activities.

Thousands of hours of your volunteer effort were needed in 2019 and thousands will be needed in 2020. Keep up the tradition of support this coming year and the success of the missions of Post 5, Auxiliary Unit 5, Squadron 5 and American Legion Riders Chapter 5 will be a certainty.

Remember that membership is the key to all the success. The 2020 membership year is here so think about 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.



From the President's Desk...

By Debbie VanTassel

As we get ready to move into 2020, we can reflect back on the past year and be very proud of all the accomplishments of the ALA Unit 5. Through our dedicated volunteers we have been able to contribute so much towards the many ALA programs. Not only should we reflect back on the past year, but also in 2019, the American Legion Auxiliary celebrated it's 100th birthday- 100 years of providing service to our veterans, communities and children and youth. We should all be proud to be members of an organization that has accomplished so much and provided so much support to veterans and active duty personnel.

As always, December was a month in which our volunteers really stepped up and shined with all the projects and programs. Thank you to those volunteers who came in and helped get the Post ready to host the Annual Firetruck Parade with Santa and the Toys for Tots program.

It made the Post look festive for Santa's arrival.

Later that day, another

group of volunteers arrived to wrap over 120 presents so Santa would have a gift for each child. I must say I was



very impressed with how quickly those presents were wrapped and ready to go. December 14 was the big day and mother nature cooperated by giving us just

enough of a break in the rain and miserable weather to get the Firetruck Parade done. We had just over 100 children along with several parents load up on the trucks for a trip around town. A huge Thank you to the Seward Volunteer Fire Department and Seward Police Department for making this Parade happen each year. Also a huge thank you to the volunteers who helped serve refreshments and act as Santa's elves to make the day a huge success. A special thank you to our Jr. Auxiliary members and the Iron Mountain FFA members for their assistance.



Again this year, the Unit provided food baskets to families in the community that need a little extra assistance during the Holidays. This year the Unit delivered 21 food baskets to families in the community. Again thank you to Safeway for their assistance with this program.

The month started off with the USCG Mustang crew Christmas party. Again this year the Unit provided stockings for each crew member filled with goodies to thank them for their service. Thank you to Katherine Bleth for providing the awesome calendars!



And of course December would not be complete without the Annual Christmas Dinner held by the Post. Thank you to all the volunteers who came in to help cook, deliver meals and clean up. This is a huge program for the Post family and a huge service to the community. Job Well done!!

Thank you to all the volunteers - the ones who are always willing to come in to help and the new ones who came in- We would not be able to accomplish any of our goals and programs if it wasn't for our volunteers- THANK YOU!



As we say good-bye to 2019 and hello to 2020, it doesn't look like things will slow down at all. On New Years Eve the Post will host an open house to celebrate the Post's 100 birthday!. The Seward Journal had a great article about the history of the Post. If you didn't get a chance to read it, you should. It had some interesting history and facts about the Post.

This is also a reminder for those who have not renewed their membership- now is definitely the time. Your 2019 card will no longer be valid- you need a 2020 card to come to the Post. Plus remember membership dues go to fund many of the projects of the ALA at the local, state and national level. If you know of others who might like to be members please have them contact us- with the Legion Act passed by Congress last year - it opened up membership to individuals who in the past might not have been eligible. It is always worth checking to see if they are eligible.



Our January meeting on January 8th will be the first call for nomination of officers. If you would like to serve and get involved please contact Sharon Dillon- she would love to hear from you.



Happy New Year and Happy Centennial to All in Our Seward Post 5 American Legion Family!

Thanks to everyone who came to the post to celebrate both ringing in the New Year and our 100th Anniversary last night! You guys "Rock!" Not only is it 2020 but you were there for a once in a lifetime celebration of our organization that has served our veterans and our community for 100 years!



Great Info on American Legion 5 Programs Available During the Open House




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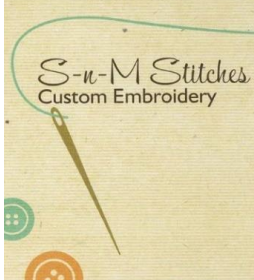
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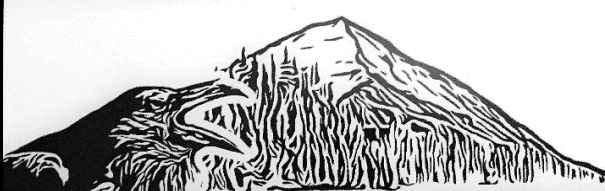
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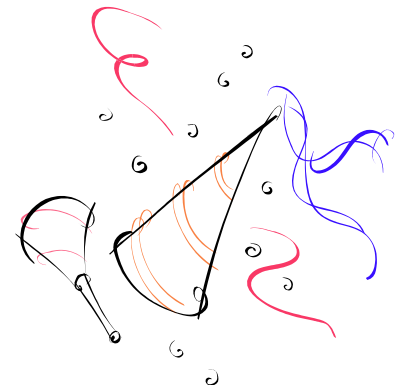
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January 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		New Year's Eve	New Year's Day 1	2	Steak Night 3	4
		Post 5 Open House and Centennial Celebration 	 Ham, Turkey and Bacon Cheese Potato skins! 🍷			Pool League 
5	Chili Dogs 6	Mexican Martes 7	8	9	Steak Night 10	11
Luscious Leftovers	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 		Auxiliary Meeting 6pm 	SAL Meeting 7pm 		Pool League 
12	Chili Dogs 13	Mexican Martes 14	15	16	Steak Night 17	18
Luscious Leftovers	BINGO!!! 6:30PM 	Post Meeting 5:30pm 				Turkey Bowling 2:00pm PB Karaoke Contest 8:00pm
		Polar Bear Jump-Off Festival				
19	Martin Luther King Day 20	Mexican Martes 21	22	23	Steak Night 24	25
Community Breakfast 	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 				 gg62987899 GoGraph.com	Pool League 
26	Chili Dogs 27	Mexican Martes 28	29	30	Steak Night 31	
Luscious Leftovers	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 		Guest Chef Night Building Fundraiser  Cajun Blackened Rockfish or Pan Fried Rockfish with butter and Garlic!			

JANUARY

Food Every Night at the Post!!!