

For God and Country Seward Post 5 Newsletter

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American Legion Seward Post 5

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

Here we are in rolling into spring and we have over 16 hours of daylight and gaining!!! Come on good weather!!!!

We thought April was going to be a slower month since it is the "pre-tourist" month and we only had a few items planned but as is normal we had lots going on particularly the amazing work our outstanding volunteers did to support the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and of course our Easter Breakfast. One mention I must make is about the incredibly delicious cookies and pastries made by Pinky Bleth for all our holidays and special events. These things take so much time and so many thoroughly enjoy them at all our meals! We also have an amazing core group of volunteers who continue to work on the cemetery expansion and clearing the lots behind the post! This American Legion Family has some real talent out there and it shows every day! Total "props" for the leadership and direction of David "Ozzie" Osborn for the excellent planning and coordination of these efforts. His expertise is evident by our progress and he is a pleasure to work with - rain or shine; and we've had both to contend with during these projects!

As we were busy with the events and the ongoing projects at the post, several had the opportunity to close out the month with the 100th Department of Alaska Annual Convention at Jack Henry Post 1. A lot was learned about our organization and many of its people, what also makes it run and of course the good info about the programs. By all reports, a good time was had by all!

I want to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication irrespective of when & what you have been able to do it, whether at our weekly activities, the heavy lift at the cemetery, or visiting with others at our "social area" - it does not go unnoticed and every little bit helps immensely to move us forward as an organization. I appreciate your genuine support and attitude of "service not self" in support of "our" post, our American Legion Family and our community.

Now we're into May and it will be a busy month! We'll be cooking up a storm and having Mother's Day Breakfast on 12 May to honor our Moms. We will also be celebrating



the beginning of the "Riding Season" with a Bike Blessing at the Catholic Church and just an hour later we will be celebrating Armed Forces Day down in the Harbor with the Chamber of Commerce on 18 May during the Harbor Opening Weekend. And of course, the 3rd Annual Mermaid Festival will be going on at the same time.

We'll be cooking up hot dogs, beans, potato salad, etc. for Armed Forces Day so come on down for a free lunch and enjoy a little camaraderie in the Harbor, who knows you might just see a mermaid walking by!!

Toward the end of the month we will be really busy with one of our big support events - the **Armed Services YMCA Combat Fishing**Tournament. We will be partnering with the Armed Services YMCA,

the Fishing Charter
Boat Association in Seward,
and other local businesses
to give a heroes' welcome
and good time for those
military members from



Alaskan military bases who have participated in the conflicts in Afghanistan and other areas of conflict. These warriors will be treated to a fun day of fishing and some good eats after they have taken in their haul of fish!



Following all the earlier activities, we'll be rolling into the end of the month and we will be remembering those servicemen and women who have passed before us on Memorial Day at the American Legion Cemetery beginning at 1100 hrs.

Once the ceremonies are concluded we will be having lunch at the post for all in attendance. It will be another day that we can honor our military comrades who have answered the final call and still share a good meal with those who remain.

Moving on to another topic, the summer brings opportunities for high school students in their junior year to participate in two excellent programs that will help them immeasurably in future years and even help them if they eventually choose to work in government. These one-week programs offered every year in June are called Boys State and Girls State. These programs provide invaluable training and insight as to how our government works by helping them understand the governmental process on bills and legislation....

Con't

Boys State is a program geared for boys between 11th and 12th grade. The purpose of this program is to develop leadership skills and citizenship interest. Boys State a long existing



American Legion Program beginning in 1937; it is held in June for a week in each state. Boys participate in and function as governmental entities. This helps them learn about government and its process. Participants are first divided up into subgroups referred to as cities. The citizens of each of these cities elect mock municipal officials and representatives to the mock state legislature. The participants also elect state officials, such as governor, lieutenant governor, and other state-level officials that their real state has. The legislature meets to organize, elect leaders, and to pass bills, in a way that is similar to how their actual legislature operates. Depending upon how it is organized some programs tend to have a more traditional education focus, providing speakers and training throughout the week and then concluding with mock political functions. Other programs take a more hands-on approach by running the mock government activities all week.

Boys State is staffed by Legion members and community leaders who volunteer their time and effort. Administrative costs are defrayed by the local post. So there is no fee to the student participant. Although recruitment procedures vary, Boys State participants are often selected with the help of high school principals or guidance counselors, however this is not necessary, an interested high school junior can directly contact the post and we can give them more information.

Of note, participants learn quite a bit of information on the government process which is class normally required for those in the pursuit of an undergraduate degree. Important to remember, those who participate generally are first considered for available scholarships. Think about it, this is a win-win program, the participant gets to involve himself in an opportunity that will benefit him in life and educational opportunities as well as positions him for financial support for further schooling.

Graduates!

















The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors a separate but similar program for young women called Girls State.

Successful completion of Boys State and Girls State is recognized by employers, service academies and university admissions boards as an indicator of strong leadership and character traits. Many colleges and universities offer scholarships or admission preference to attendees of Boys or Girls State programs.



The Oratorical Contest is a "Constitutional Speech Contest."

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. The program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. The program has featured numerous politicians and prominent contestants over the years, including former president candidate Alan Keyes and Fox Business Anchor Lou Dobbs.

The overall national contest winner gets an \$18,000 scholarship. Second place takes home \$16,000, and third gets \$14,000. Each state winner who is certified into and participates in the national contest's first round receives a \$1,500 scholarship. Those who advance past the first round receive an additional \$1,500 scholarship. The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States.

Speaking subjects must be on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with some emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to our government. Speeches are eight to 10 minutes long; three- to five-minute speeches on an assigned topic also are part of the contest.

The Oratorical Contest is normally held at the local post in January to compete at the state to move on to the national competition.

House and Vice Report.... By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice/Club,

May is here so we are entering the busiest month of the year as far as activities go. More people are returning for the summer and the weather has been pretty good. The busy season is upon us.

This month we have continuing work at the cemetery and the two lots east of the Post. If you are into land clearing activities come and give a hand. Thank you to all the great volunteers who have been working very hard on these projects and on all the other activities at the Post.







Mother's Day breakfast is May 12th, Armed Forces Day hotdog Feed is on May 18th, Combat Fishing is on May 22nd, Marathon Wrestling Fundraiser is on May 23rd, and Memorial Day is on May 27th. Lots of opportunities available to volunteer your time and effort to help the Post 5 family fulfill its' mission.

Mixed in with all of these activities will be spring cleaning at the Post and the cemetery. If you are bored or just have your volunteer hat on, give a call and we can put you to work.



The end of the 2019 membership year is approaching. We are 11 memberships away from reaching our goal for 2019. If you have not yet renewed, please consider doing so. If you know a veteran who may be eligible to renew please bring them by or have them give a call so we can discuss membership with them. 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.

Bingo is going strong on Mondays at 6:30 and we have food every night.

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.



Squadron 5 members again have stepped up and donated their time, effort, and equipment to help the Post accomplish its goals. David "Ozzie" Osborn, Roger Bleth, Tony Shandy, Scott Wilde, and David Dieckgraeff really helped make things happen. Thank You.

This month, along with continuing work at the cemetery and the lots just east of the Post, there will be Mother's Day breakfast, Armed Forces Day Hotdog Feed, Combat Fishing, Marathon Wrestling Club fundraiser, and Memorial Day activities.

A lot of things going on so keep your volunteer hats on, give us a call and we will put you to work.

We are deep into the new membership year and I thank all those who have renewed their memberships and ask everyone else to consider doing 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.

Military Appreciation Month

May, marked officially as Military Appreciation Month, is a special month for both those in and out of the military. Not only do we pause on Memorial Day to remember the sacrifice and service of those who gave all, but the month also holds several other military anniversaries and events, including Military Spouse Appreciation Day and Armed Forces Day

Congress designated May as National Military Appreciation Month in 1999 to ensure the nation was given the chance to publicly show their appreciation for troops past and present.

From the Presiden'ts Desk.

By Debbie VanTassel

Anyone who thinks that April is still one of our "slow" months at the Post Family-should have been here this last month! Our Volunteers were a busy bunch and accomplished so much to benefit our Veterans and Community.

First on April 13^{th} we have the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. I know I say it every month and I will say it again- without our volunteers we would not be able to accomplish any of the projects and programs we do. We really do owe a huge thank you to all the volunteers and the dinner is a way for us to express that appreciation. Many volunteers and partners were recognized for assisting the Post Family in the many projects throughout the year. For the Auxiliary, our volunteer of the

year was Katherine "Pinky" Bleth.
"Pinky" is simply amazing!
Throughout the past year we have
all enjoyed her delicious desserts,
candies and other goodies she
brings up to the Legion. Pinky has
also many times donated jewelry
that she has made so that the
Post and Auxiliary can sell it during
an auction to fund either the



building fund, The Auxiliary fund raiser or the ALR riders Legacy Scholarship donation. Thank you so much Pinky for all you do!

Speaking of volunteers, in last month newsletter I said I would provide the impact report for the Auxiliary. In the past year, May through April our Unit has donated 4217 hours and \$5208.00 in service to our Veterans and Active Duty military. We have received in kind donations of \$3902.00 - these are the monies that the volunteers have spent out of their own pocket to benefit our Veterans and Military. The Auxiliary has spent 928 hours and \$3910.70 providing services to the youth in our community. Our biggest project of course is our Santa Parade/Toys for Tots program. Unit 5 Auxiliary members also donated 4178 hours and \$1028.74 in service to our community. And, last but not least, an estimated 3404 miles were driven in providing service to our Veterans and community. We also provided 3 scholarship for a total of \$1500 to graduating seniors last year. I think all Auxiliary members should give themselves a big pat on the back for all they do. I would also say that these hours and donation amounts are underestimated- I know more of our members contribute and provide service to our Veterans, community and youth but those hours are not reported to the Unit.

Another great volunteer effort has been the American Legion Cemetery expansion. Thank you to all the volunteers who have been out there making it happen. If you have not been by the cemetery to look at what has been done-you should stop by- it

looks amazing. Also, if you have been at the Post lately you might have noticed we are getting our view of the bay and mountains back- the trees in the lot that were blocking the view have come down. A lot of long hours and hard work have been put into these 2 projects.



Easter and the 3rd Sunday Breakfast coincided this year, so a delicious Eggs Benedict breakfast was served. A great crowd enjoyed the meal. Again

"Pinky" provided amazing cookies and homemade "Peeps."

At our April meeting many of the members wore Purple to show support for April being the month of the Military Child. It is important to recognize these children who because one or both parents serve in our Military they are also serving. They may end up moving and changing schools several times while their parent(s) are in the military.

On April 22nd Debbie attended the City Council meeting to receive the proclamation making May Poppy Month. Thank you- Mayor Squires and Council Woman Susie Towsley for the proclamation. The Auxiliary will be putting the Poppy Cans out



The end of April found several Auxiliary and Jr. Auxiliary members in Anchorage for the 100th Department of Alaska Convention. The Post 5 family was well represented with members from the Post, SAL and Riders also in attendance. Tom Sears, Post 5 was elected as the Department Executive Committeeman. The Jr. Auxiliary had a very successful 3 days with 3 of our Unit members being elected to Department offices: Krysten Johnson-Gray- Honorary President, Crystal Maddox- Historian and Angel Schwertfeger- Secretary. Congratulations to the Jr. Auxiliary!

Unit 5 received recognition for their contribution to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. Sharon and Debbie received certificate of appreciation for their work on recruiting new members and Debbie was selected as the Department Woman of the Year. Kathy Balcom and Sharon Dillon will serve as committee chairman for this next year. Kathy will be Leadership chairman and Sharon will head up the Education Committee. The members attending learned a lot and got a lot of ideas on new ways we can assist our Veterans and the community.

Moving into May, it is going to be another busy month. Work on the cemetery expansion will continue as well as general clean up of the cemetery in preparation for the Memorial Day ceremonies. This month we will have 2 great opportunities to enjoy breakfast at the Post. Mother's Day and the 3rd Sunday breakfast-come on down for a great breakfast.

The Annual Combat Fishing Tournament will be May 22nd this year. The Post can certainly use all the volunteers that are available. This is always a big event and a great way for us to show our Active Duty Military how much we appreciate them and Thank them for their service. Check with Mike or Clare at the Post to find out how you can help out.

The weekend of May 17-19 will also be busy with the Harbor opening festivities and the Military Appreciation Day. Again, the Post will be serving food at the Harbor Masters office.

We will end the month with Memorial Day Ceremonies held at the American Legion Cemetery come rain or shine. The Friday before Memorial Day is National Poppy Day. Wearing the

poppy on National Poppy Day and throughout Memorial Day weekend is a way to honor and remember our fallen soldiers who served and made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. We must never forget their sacrifice. The poppy also honors disabled veterans Who handcraft the paper poppy flowers.





The Memorial Day ceremony will be on Monday May 27th at the American Legion Cemetery, please join the Post Family to honor and recognize those who have served our great nation.

Memorial Day Poem Flanders Fields

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.

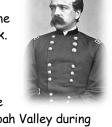
"Taps"

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 (Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, Army of the Potomac) in July, 1862.

Daniel Adams Butterfield (31 October 1831-17 July 1901) 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 12th Regiment of the New York State Militia, he was promoted to Brigadier General and given command of a brigade of the V Corps of the Army of the



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.



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, wrote Taps to honor his men while in camp at Harrison's Landing, Virginia, following 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.



Memorial Day

Memorial Day was originally started as an event to honor Union soldiers, who had died during the American Civil War. It was inspired by the way people in the Southern States honored their dead. After World War I, it was extended to include all men and women, who died in any war or military action.

Memorial Day was originally known as **Decoration Day**. The current name for this day did not come into use until after World War II. Decoration Day and then Memorial Day used to be held on May 30, regardless of the day of the week, on which it fell. In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed as part of a move to use federal holidays to create three-day weekends. This meant that that, from 1971, the Memorial Day holiday has been officially observed on the last Monday in May. However, it took a longer period for all American states to recognize the new date. It is traditional to fly the flag of the United States at half-mast from dawn until noon.





Memorial Day Trivia:

- Memorial Day is a day of remembrance of those who have died serving our country.
- General John Alexander Logan ordered the Memorial Day holiday to be observed by decorating the war dead.
- On Memorial Day, the flag should be at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff.
- Red Poppies are recognized as the Memorial Day flower
- "Taps" is often played at ceremonies on Memorial Day.
- Memorial Day was first called "Decoration Day" because of the practice of decorating soldier's graves with flowers.
- New York was the 1st state to officially recognize Memorial Day.
- Flowers and flags are the two most popular items people use to remember soldiers.
- The south refused to honor the dead on Memorial Day until after World War I when the meaning of Memorial Day changed from honoring civil war dead to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war.
- Memorial Day was declared a federal holiday in 1971.

Director's Notes....

By Bobby Dunno

In case you have not noticed it is RIDING SEASON!! And while I know the car wash in town still is not working properly so if you ride it will get dirty, but it is time to get it out and make the break across the windscreen. If you need a little added incentive Herman Leirer (Exit Glacier) Road is open to the last set of gates so all the good parts with smooth curves and nice scenery is open. Yes, Bobby had fun today before lunch.



We have finished with the 100th annual Alaska Department Convention and the ALR Alaska meeting went well. The resolutions were reviewed and while one is going to be rewrote and then sent out for review, The resolution to provide the ALR with national leadership is

on its way to national again. Officer elections went as well as can be expected. Bobby Dunno is not the State Director anymore the New Director for the ALRA is DJ Jones from Jack Henry Post 1 and Bobby is now the Assistant Director. DJ is a former Air Force Major who left active duty 7ish months ago.

DJ is a joyful individual and lots of enthusiasm, energy and rides a real nice beamer, I will be working with him until he gets the familiar with the, what's up and how come of ALR in Alaska. And just to demonstrate how things are progressing the ALR Director was selected to sit on the Unity Committee and had to sit at the head table for the installation dinner. Looks like some of Clare rubbed off while she was at Department. (3) If you wish to hear a complete report on Bobby and Larry's adventures at the convention you can attend either the ALR meeting on the 2nd of May or the Post meeting the following Tuesday.

Our next meeting is scheduled for the evening of the 2nd of May and we have lot to discuss. For starters, review the scheduling for our initial Dessert auctions, as we are holding two of them the month of May. It is time to ride but first we need to update our records so please everyone provide a recent copy of your driver's license and a copy of your current insurance. There are rides to discuss and the



possibility to consume ice cream or hot chocolate depending on weather, and we need to finalize plans for the Blessing of the Bikes on 18 May. We will also be looking to update our "Spur of the Moment" rider phone list.

There is probably more information to document, but I need to strap on my leather and go ride! It is sunny outside, so if ya'll have the same itch to ride I suggest you time the time and scratch it, get them bikes checked out, make sure they are safe, fuel them up and then <u>Get On Your Bike And Ride!</u>



Excerpt from legion.org. After World War I, the poppy flourished in Europe. Scientists attributed the growth to soils in France and Belgium becoming enriched with lime from the rubble left

by the war. From the dirt and mud grew a beautiful red poppy. The red poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following the publication of the wartime poem "In Flanders Fields." The poem was



written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. while serving on the front lines.

On September 27, 1920, the poppy became the official flower of The American Legion family to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during the war. In 1924, the distribution of poppies became a national program of The American Legion.

Led by the American Legion Auxiliary, each year members of The American Legion Family distribute poppies with a request that the person receiving the flower make a donation to support the future of veterans, active-duty military personnel and their families with medical and financial needs. Here in Seward the American Legion Auxiliary has placed cans at several businesses throughout the town for people to obtain a poppy and to make a small donation to help.



Poppy Day is celebrated in countries around the world. The American Legion brought National Poppy Day® to the United States by asking Congress to designate the Friday before Memorial Day, as National Poppy Day.

On May 24, wear a red poppy to honor the fallen and support the living who have worn our nation's uniform.



Each month the American Legion has a theme for the month. This month celebrates our fabulous military members past and present and remembers those who have gone to Post Everlasting, it also marks the 100^{th} anniversary of the St. Louis Caucus, where organization of The American Legion was completed in 1919.

May 1st - Loyalty Day is observed annually on May 1st. In the United States, National Loyalty Day is a special holiday meant for the reaffirmation of loyalty to the United States of America, and for the recognition of the heritage of American freedom.

May 8^{th} - Victory in Europe Day aka V-E Day. May 8^{th} , 1945 is the day when Germans throughout Europe unconditionally surrendered to the Allies. This day marked the end of World War II in Europe.

May 10th - Military Spouses Appreciation Day. Traditionally set for the Friday before Mother's Day. A day to honor military spouses with appropriate ceremonies and activities. Recognizes the important role our military families play in keeping our Armed Forces strong and our country safe.

May 18th - Armed Forces Day. A single holiday for citizens to come together and thank our military members for their patriotic service in support of our country.

May 24^{th} - National Poppy Day. The red poppy is a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice worn by Americans since World War I to honor those who served and died for our country in all wars.

May 27th - Memorial Day. Commemorates the men and women who died while in military service.

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