



# Veterans Strengthening America

## Seward Post 5 Newsletter

September 2022  
Volume 19, Issue 09

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### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan



Yay!!!! We're heading into the 'ber" months! These months are some of the loveliest months of our year. Soon, we should experience the peaceful transition out of the frenetic pace of Summer - and what a summer it has been! Our American Legion Family has been amazingly busy helping others this month, whether it was delivering fish, taking care of Post Everlasting, welcoming the USCG crews as they arrive in port or helping in the final farewell to cherished members, they have always stepped up to the plate and made things happen. A huge thank you goes out to the amazing volunteers to keep our Post Home and our events going. It couldn't happen without you!



So far it looks like we're approaching a regular Fall season weather-wise (I hope); it should be a nice transition; we've had a lot of wet days this summer and we are seeing the beginning of the leaves turning golden down the highway. The daylight is getting shorter and we're beginning to drive with headlights on at night now. 😊 It is a sure sign that the cooler 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. So brace yourself! 🙄🙄🙄🙄



I also want to thank our membership who do an amazing job in our town in their **other** volunteer activities. Not only do these folks have regular 9-5 kind of jobs but because they also love this community, they take valuable free time to serve others. The folks at our voluntary Fire and EMS Services and the Scout troops all continue to serve our community in amazing ways when we most need it, and they haven't "skipped a beat" in volunteer support in serving our youth in our communities or in times of need.

We also have an amazing Senior Center who has maintained consistent operation in keeping up with our seniors all through the residuals of the pandemic and as we have transitioned back to a "near" normal way of life of life here in town. Not only does the Senior Center provide daily meals but good human contact and tons of programs for all the seniors and others who choose to get into the fun and healthy activities. Check them out and grab one of their fun newsletters, chock full of great info!



We are still optimistic for a gentle and well-deserved transition to the cooler months, and as such we have good things planned for September. One of our September "fav's" is the yummy **Early Bird Dinner** 🍴 and the return of our weekly activities that we shelved during the busier summer months. We look forward to the return of poker, pool league and of course cribbage! 🎲

During this month we have a few days of remembrance and celebration. We have **Patriot Day** (Sept 11<sup>th</sup>) 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 in the **American Legion Day** also on Sept 16<sup>th</sup>.

The **American Legion Day** celebrates official chartering of the American Legion and celebrates what it has accomplished throughout the country with well over 12,000 posts and two million members representing the largest veterans support organization in the country. On September 16, 1919 The American Legion was granted their federal charter by Congress, and over 100 years later this organization has kept its commitment to serve not only as a resource and a voice on behalf of veterans across America, but also as an organization dedicated to the betterment of America through community service. As stated by House Representative Deb Davidson (Illinois) in 2009 when American Legion Day resolution was brought to the floor and passed, she said - "Since their founding charter, The American Legion has not wavered from the guiding principles and vision that can be found in their Four Pillars of Service." This day honors veterans who continue to serve their fellow veterans and are committed to community support.

Seward Post 5 is one of 29 American Legion Posts in Alaska, and we have been in existence since 1919. We, as the rest of our Alaskan posts, remain committed to carrying on that tradition of service by supporting local veterans and the community, as well as our military service members.

We work to assist our veterans in securing benefits, treatment, and compensation from the Veterans Administration 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. And in recent days, this is all the more important that we remember and keep educating our ourselves and our youth about this great country that still makes us the "Shining City on the Hill."

We work to provide help to those in need and provide scholarships to our graduating seniors and others in post-secondary schools for their educational goals. We as an American Legion Family look to continue to contribute where we can and seek opportunities to employ much in our preamble - particularly our desire for "mutual helpfulness."

As you know we are in the new membership year and for those who have renewed - Thank You! I want to thank you for your membership at Seward Post 5. By being a member, you help us do all that we can for our veterans, our children and youth and ultimately this fabulous community of Seward we call home. Dues really are an investment in our future as they are an important source for funding for many programs that impact all of us, and not just in Seward. Our dues support the Legislative watchdogs at our National HQs who significantly influence the effort in protecting our earned benefits via our military service, as well as the Legion's efforts to support all The children and youth programs, particularly its focus on volunteerism and education about our amazing American History.

We work to remain good community stewards and a good service organization for all in our American Legion Family.

*Thank you*

We have an amazing group of people who continue to step up to help our neighbors and our community. Once again, thank you for your membership,

investment and support of Seward Post 5. And, if you haven't renewed, please consider renewing.

## Dates to Remember for Post 5 Family Activities in September!

Suicide Prevention Walk - 7 Sep: 4:00-6:00pm, Branson Pavilion  
Vet Center Visit - 19 Sep: 11:00-2:00pm, Post Meeting Room  
Jewelry Classes - Every Wednesday at 6:00pm  
Auxiliary Unit 5 Bingo - Every Monday at 6:30 pm  
Early Bird Dinner - 24 Sep: 6:00pm (Saturday)

## From the President's Desk

By Sharon Dillon



Hello September... after a soggy and very wet August, we are sure looking forward to a brighter month ahead.

Thank you to everyone who has donated time and money to our wonderful organization. Your time and donations do not go unrecognized. We appreciate all that you do!!

In the Spirit of Service, Not Self, is the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support the American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who served by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad.

For God and country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

## Days to Remember in September:

9/5 Labor Day  
9/7 Suicide Prevention Walk  
9/8 National Literacy Day  
9/10 National Patriot Day and National Day of Service  
9/11 National Day of Encouragement in the U.S.A.  
9/16 National POW/MIA Recognition Day  
9/16 American Legion Day  
9/17 Constitution Day

We also want to congratulate all those who fished in the derby and the big derby winner!! It was a wet one, but someone got the big one so congratulations!!!

We now have our 2023 membership cards, so renew your membership and get your early bird stamp. And speaking of early bird, don't forget we are having Early Bird Dinner on September 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm for those who signed up and got their stamp.



We would like to thank Mike for another fabulous summer of putting the meals together for us to enjoy! Also, for he and a few other for their hard work at the cemetery, Thank you!!!

Thank you, Commander Clare, for your continual work on the newsletter and keeping us informed on all upcoming events!!

## From the Unit Historian..

By Victoria Monaco



Hi, I am Victoria Monaco, and I am the new American Legion Auxiliary Unit 5 Historian. I am relatively new to Seward and have agreed to plan the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Unit 5! I will be researching what I can find at the library and want to document our history and have a celebration with a "Roaring 20's" theme. I am asking for help where I can get it from all our long time Seward people and other Auxiliary, Post and Sons members. Maybe you have a story to tell or an idea that can help me in this task. I appreciate all the information that any of you may have, so I can make this a successful and memorable event. Thanks much and I look forward to meeting and chatting with everyone!



EMAIL Update for the Auxiliary, please send us your comments, updates or if you want to be added to the Unit 5 email group! The new email is" [sewardunit5@gmail.com](mailto:sewardunit5@gmail.com). Looking forward to "hearing from you!"



## Gold Star Mothers' Day

Excerpt from: [www.militarybenefits.info/gold-star-mothers-day](http://www.militarybenefits.info/gold-star-mothers-day)

Gold Star Mother's Day is observed on the last Sunday in September which will be **Sunday, September 25, 2022**. Gold Star Mother's Day is intended to recognize and honor those mothers who have lost a son or daughter in the service of the U.S. Armed Forces.



Each year there are events and meetings to publicly express love, sorrow and reverence toward Gold Star Mothers and their families. Flags are also mandated to be displayed on government buildings on this day. Army.mil says Gold Star Mother's Day is intended "to recognize and honor those who have lost a son or daughter in the service of the U.S. Armed Forces".

## The PACT Act

Excerpt from [va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/](http://va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/)

The PACT Act is perhaps the largest health care and benefit expansion in VA history. The full name of the law is The Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

### The PACT Act will bring these changes:

- Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras
- Adds more than 20 new presumptive conditions for burn pits and other toxic exposures
- Adds more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation
- Requires VA to provide a toxic exposure screening to every Veteran enrolled in VA health care
- Helps the VA to improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures

If you're a Veteran or survivor, you can file claims now to apply for PACT Act-related benefits at the above link.

### What does it mean to have a presumptive condition for toxic exposure?

- To get a VA disability rating, your disability must connect to your military service. For many health conditions, you need to prove that your service caused your condition.
- But for some conditions, the VA automatically assumes (or "presumes") that your service caused your condition. The VA calls these "presumptive conditions."
- The VA considers a condition presumptive when it's established by law or regulation.
- If you have a presumptive condition, you don't need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption.

Upon going to the VA site there will be more instructions that pertain to you depending on the war-era you have served in. The site is fairly easy to navigate and get questions answered - whether you are a veteran or a surviving spouse of a veteran.

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



## House and Vice Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice!

We continue to have a very busy summer even with the rainy weather last month. We will be hoping for an extended summer with better weather as we move through September.

I want to thank all our members for their continued support of the Post and Club. Last month we had memorial services for Hugh Darling and for Charlie Jackson's mother Virginia Hansen. We had our community breakfast on August 21<sup>st</sup> and hosted a luncheon for Senator Dan Sullivan and the Commandant of the Coast Guard on August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

This month we will have our **Community Breakfast** on September 18th and will have the **Early Bird Dinner** on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Also, cemetery maintenance is ongoing so we can always use help with mowing and trimming. If you want to help with any of these activities just let me know and we will gladly put you to work. 😊

I want to thank Al Dykstra, Dennis Bailey, and Clare Sullivan for helping with cemetery maintenance. Also, I want to thank Scott and Jackie Wilde for mowing and weed whacking around the post.



The 2023 membership year is in full swing, and you can renew online at [Mylegion.org](http://Mylegion.org), by mail, or here at the Post. The dues remain \$60.00. Membership is the backbone of

this organization, and we need to keep that backbone strong to continue to carry the load we do for our veterans and the community of Seward.

Thanks to all of you who continue to support your Post and all the activities designed to support our membership, our veterans, and the community. We look forward to seeing you all and please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns.

## Sounding Off from the Sons...

By Mike Calhoon



Guess we have seen what happens when we all ask for rain. Well, at least the fire danger is low! 😊😊😊😊

I want to thank all Squadron members who continue to volunteer their time and effort in support of the mission of the Post 5 family. August was a busy month for the Post and

help will also be needed in September. Thanks to Al Dykstra and Scott Wilde for their help with lawn maintenance at the cemetery and around the Post.

This month the Post will be hosting the **Community Breakfast** will be on September 18th and the **Early Bird Dinner** on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Other activities will be announced to the membership.



The 2023 Membership year is underway, and the 2023 cards have come in so please consider renewing your membership at any time. The dues will remain at \$35.00 for the 2023 year. Membership is the foundation for all the SAL programs.



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.

## September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Release Date: September 2, 2021, DHS

Suicide is a problem that touches the lives of many Americans. Many of us may know someone, such as a friend, family member, or coworker who has attempted or died by suicide. Over the past two decades, suicide rates have steadily risen in the United States. Suicide is currently ranked 10th for cause of death among all ages. It's important for you to know that suicide is preventable. With commitment and engagement in workplaces and homes, together we all can help reduce the number of suicides.

There are many resources out there here in town and nationally. **As a veteran you don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.** Veterans in crisis can connect with a counselor by:

- Dialing 988 then press #1
- Chat online on the web at the site: [veteranscrisisline.net](http://veteranscrisisline.net)
- Texting 838255
- Calling the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press #1



## 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.



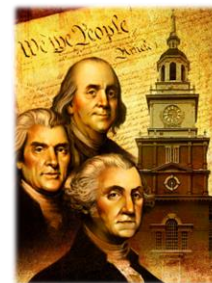
## Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

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, 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.

However 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 reached by 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 from September 17-23** and the movement was soon passed.



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 72,000 Americans are still unaccounted for from World War II; 7,555 from Korea; 120 from the Cold War; 1,584 from Vietnam; and 3 from the Gulf War. 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 tablecloth 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 16 September 2022

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.



As of August 31st, 2022 the number of Vietnam missing and unaccounted for per the National League of Families:

**TOTAL VIETNAM MISSING AND UNACCOUNTED:  
1,582**





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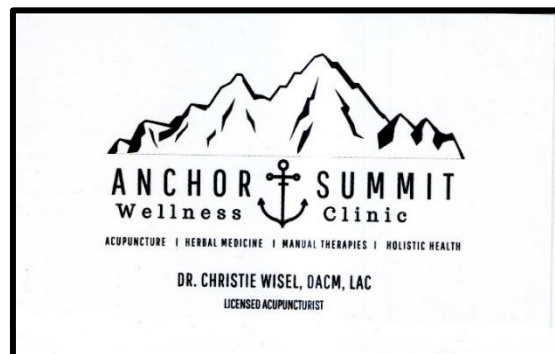
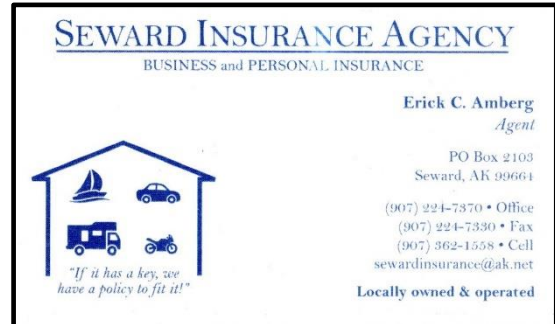
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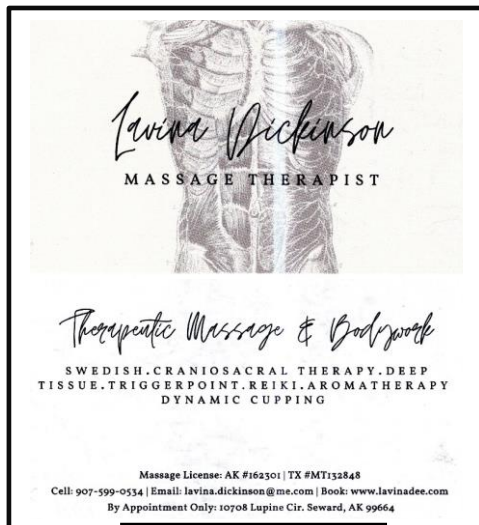
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September 2022



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				B,B,M&C 1 ALR Meeting 5:30pm  Pioneers Igloo #9 Meeting 6:30pm	Steak Night 2 	3
						
4 Luscious Leftovers 	Labor Day BINGO!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs	5 Mexican Martes 	6 Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm 	7 B,B,M&C 8 SAL Meeting 7pm 	9 Steak Night 	10
11 Patriot Day  Luscious Leftovers	12 BINGO!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs	13 Mexican Martes Post Meeting 5:30pm 	14 Auxiliary Meeting 6pm 	15 B,B,M&C 15 	16 Steak Night POW/MIA Day  American Legion Day 	17
18 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month Breakfast  Luscious Leftovers	19 BINGO!!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs	20 Mexican Martes 	21 Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm 	22 B,B,M&C 22 	23 Steak Night 	24 Early Bird Dinner 6:30pm 
25 Gold Star Mother's Day  Luscious Leftovers	26 BINGO!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs	27 Mexican Martes 	28 Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm 	29 B,B,M&C 29 	30 Steak Night 	



Food Every Night at the Post



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# SUICIDE PREVENTION WALK

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Wed. September 7, 4-6 pm  
@ the Branson Pavilion

## Family Friendly Event

Join us for a time of remembrance and sharing  
Walk to the Obihiro Gazebo & participate in the  
candle lighting ceremony

Stay for the cook out & support

### Can't join us in person? Participate Online

Write the name of your loved one and share on  
Facebook with #**OutOfTheDarkness**  
#**StopSuicide** #**Hope4Seward**

Light a candle by your window

More information at 907-224-2273 or e-mail [outreach@sewardhealthcenter.org](mailto:outreach@sewardhealthcenter.org)