



FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

SEWARD POST 5 NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021
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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan



Well, this time last year we were in full Covid-mode with the post closed and we were providing "to go meals" to the community since nearly everything in town was shut down. It has been a long year and we've made it through the worst, and we're getting back to normal...whatever that is these days! 😊 Our American Legion Family at Post 5 has stepped up throughout this crazy pandemic year and made things happen. We've lost some good folks (not Covid related) who were integral to our mission and they will continue to be missed but between the loss of friends and the year of Covid we're stronger and pressing on to serve our veterans and our community!

The weather is getting better, the snow is going away and we're happy about seeing our out of state members and tourists coming up for another tourist season. I hear from our fishermen and outdoor tour folks that things are shaping up to be a really great year. I'm guessing folks from the "Lower 48" are getting tired of being locked down and cooped up and where better to get to the "great outdoors" than Alaska! 👍👍 😊

As we are in May, we are planning on our regular activities, which means a really busy month! This includes first and foremost taking care of our "Post Everlasting" grounds. Our cemetery clean-up will begin in mid-May and I'll send out info on that date and time once we have that set up; we'll be working hard to get the cemetery grounds spiffed up in anticipation of our **Memorial Day** ceremony on the 31st. We will also be having the **ALR Bike Blessing, Harbor Opening Hot Dog Feed**, a dinner for the **Coast Guard Cutter Mustang** and another dinner for **JAG, 3rd Sunday of the Month Breakfast** and **Mother's Day Breakfast**, the **Pioneers Igloo #9** will have their



monthly meeting as will the **Coast Guard Auxiliary**. And to top it off we will be supporting our local **Scout troops** with their meetings and other activities. So, as you can see, we're continuing our busy schedule and providing support where we can with our amazing volunteers! 😊😊😊

No newsletter for a non-profit can go without acknowledging membership and the volunteers who are also our members. I want to give a huge thank you for all of you who renewed and a big welcome to all who have joined for the first time! Your support has allowed us to hit all our target dates for our membership goals!



Well, it looks like we're pretty much back into the Post 5 swing of things, and it's been a haul getting here but I "gotta" thank all the membership for continuing to support us during the dark days of Covid and those who adapted to the changes that we had to make in order to serve our community and our membership. From all the "to go orders," calling and checking in on folks who were "locked up" during this pandemic and those brave enough to leap back into normalcy when we got the "Green Light" to do so. You all are awesome!!!

As mentioned before we have an exceptionally busy May ahead of us and if you're looking for something to do or want to volunteer some time, we'd be happy (really, really happy) if you'd come on by and lend a hand. We have a fun time helping others, putting on events and serving our community. We particularly enjoy celebrating our



awesome holidays and putting on special events - whether it's Memorial Day, Independence Day, Flag Day, Veterans Day.....Combat Fishing Tournament support, Membership & Volunteer Appreciation special dinners or traditional holiday meals such as Thanksgiving, Christmas or Easter. Its important we keep our traditions, heritage and our history alive as we have an amazing

American culture that is the envy and the goal of so many who are not privileged to call the USA home.

The Summer is coming, so come on by the post. We have nightly meals for donation (except Friday Steak night - we can't afford donation only for that meal 😞), and they really are quite good! We welcome new folks and new ideas on how we can better support our veterans, our membership and our community.



House and Vice Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice,

Spring break-up has marched on, and most of the snow in town has disappeared. I think it just migrated out of town where many yards are still covered. Hang in there.

I would like to thank all the great volunteers that continue to support the Post 5 family in its mission of service to the veterans and the community of Seward. Without those volunteers Post 5 would not be able to provide everything we do for our members and the community. You are truly the backbone of the organization. The Club and Kitchen volunteers have been amazing and continue to provide good food and service for our membership.

This month the Post will host the final pool league night on May 1st, a dinner for the JAG shipyard on May 8th, Mother's Day breakfast on May 9th, Armed Forces Day Hotdog Feed on May 15th, the Bike Blessing on May 15th, 3rd Sunday of the Month Community Breakfast on May 16th, Combat Fishing on May 26th, Memorial Day on May 31st.

how can I help?

Busy month for the Post 5 Family. Let us know when and where you can volunteer your time and we will put you to work.

The Legion Cemetery clean-up will begin on May 15th so let us know if you can come and support that effort.

The Post has been sponsoring gun raffles on a regular basis and the support has been very strong. We will continue to do this as long as the interest remains high. Check your email or contact us to find out about the current raffle.

The 2021 membership year is moving right along and the Post has reached all monthly goals so far. I would like to thank everyone who has renewed their membership and encourage those who have not to consider doing so. You can renew online at mylegion.org, by mail, or in person at the post. 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.

Renew now



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



Spring Break-up continues but it looks like summer will be here sooner than later. Clean-up time.

I want to thank the Squadron members who continue to support the Post 5 Family and all the activities offered to the membership and the community.

This month we will have the raffle drawing for the 12 gauge shotgun and 9mm pistol on May 1st at 7:00pm. May 1st will also be the last Pool League Night. Mother's Day breakfast on the 9th, dinner for the JAG shipyard on May 8th, Armed Forces Day hotdog feed on May 15th, community breakfast on May 16th, Combat Fishing on May 26th, and Memorial Day ceremony on May 31st. As you can see, it is a busy month for the Post 5 Family so let's show our support and volunteer as we can.

David Osborn has begun to organize for the Legion Cemetery clean-up and we will let you know the schedule as we go.



Squadron Commander Mike Mooter and Finance Officer Randy Kockritz attended the Department Convention in April and we will be interested to hear what is coming for the SAL in the future.



Thanks to everyone who has renewed their dues this year. Remember the dues are \$35.00 this year. Membership is foundation for all the SAL programs so please consider renewing your dues if you have not done so.

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

It looks like spring has finally sprung and we are having some really nice warm weather and in many places, the white of winter has been replaced by brown (breakup) and soon green grass and trees. It is so nice to see many things starting to return to normal!

It has been great to see more and more people back visiting the Post and sharing the comradery of good friends and good food.

In April, we celebrated Easter with a fantastic Easter breakfast provided by the Kitchen volunteers. This was followed by the 3rd Sunday breakfast.

Many thanks to Sharon Dillon for her work on our poppy wreath for Memorial Day. The old wreath was retired last year after many years of service- many in the rain. Sharon did an amazing job. Please plan to join us for our Memorial Day Ceremonies on May 31st.



Also another shout out to Sharon for running Bingo every Monday night- Come on down and join the fun! Doors open at 6 PM and games start at 6:30 PM.

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Alaska convention was held April 14-17 in Wasilla. Again, it was great to be able to have the meeting in person and see so many people attend. A few of the highlights from the meeting; Department officers were elected- the Majority were re-elected for their 2nd consecutive term. A few changes were made to the By-Laws and Standing rules. The changes to the By-Laws are to keep Department By-Laws inline with National. The Standing Rule changes were to allow the Department to hold meeting virtually by Zoom or telephonically if needed.

Unit 5 received a few certificates of recognition. The first one was for 3rd place in recruiting the most new members. Our unit recruited 21 new members for the reporting period. The other was for achieving 103% of our membership goal for 2021 by March 31st. Congratulations Unit 5.

Sharon Dillon and Katherine "Pinky" Bleth received certificate of appreciation and service Pins for their hours of volunteer service to help our Veterans. These 2 volunteers were nominated for these Pins in 2020 but because no convention was held- the Certificates and Pins were presented at this year's convention. Congratulations Sharon

and Pinky! And thank you for all the hours you have volunteered in Service to our Veterans.

Unit 5 also nominated Kona Achterhof as Unit Woman of the Year. Kona is an Auxiliary member eligible through her grandfather who served in the Navy. When Kona first joined Unit 5 she spent countless hours assisting with the cemetery expansion project; helping cut down and haul off trees, brush and other debris. Since then, Kona has helped with Santa Parade, gift wrapping, has helped in the kitchen for breakfasts, helped with Combat fishing in 2019. Unfortunately, Kona was not selected as the Department of Alaska Woman of the Year. Thank you Kona for your hours of volunteerism to Unit 5. So what is coming up in May?

The first week of May we will be putting the poppy cans at various stores around town. This will be your chance to get a poppy for National Poppy Day on May 28th. We have sent a letter to Seward Mayor Terry asking for a proclamation designating May 28th as National Poppy Day in Seward. May 3rd at 1 PM we will be at the Legion Cemetery to put poppies on the crosses we use for Memorial Day. Like the Poppy wreath, the poppies on the crosses had seen many years of service and were properly retired last year. If anyone wants to come help, please be at the cemetery at 1.

A sure sign that things are getting back to normal- Combat Fishing will happen this year!! This annual event was canceled last year due to the pandemic but is back again this year. This is a great way for us to say Thank you to our active-duty military personnel. It is scheduled for May 26th. It takes a lot of volunteers to make this happen so if you would like to volunteer, please check with Mike at the Post.

The Memorial Day ceremonies will be on May 31st. Based on weather there will be cemetery clean up days prior to the 31st- stay tuned for specifics. Also depending on weather, we will be placing the crosses on the graves either on the 29th or 30th.

May is **National Military Appreciation Month**- As Part of that recognition VE Day will be celebrated on May 8th. Each year we commemorate Victory in Europe Day (VE Day). On May 8, 1945 Nazi Germany unconditionally surrendered to the Allied Forces of the Second World War. This day in history marked the end of World War II in Europe, although the war continued in the Pacific.

May is also the **Month of the Military Care Giver Day**. The Month of the Military Caregiver is observed in May each year to honor more than five million caregivers in the United States. Paying tribute to the people who care for more than two million veterans is an important part of supporting troops and military families

May 7th is **Military Spouse Appreciation Day**. On Military Spouse Appreciation Day, we honor the contributions and sacrifices made by military spouses. Their commitment and support help to keep our country safe. America's military spouses are the backbone of the families who support our troops during mission, deployment, reintegration and reset. Military spouses are silent heroes who are essential to the strength of the nation, and they serve our country just like their loved ones.

May 9th- **Mother's Day** - come down to the Post for a great breakfast served up by the awesome breakfast crew.

May 15th- **Armed Forces Day** - a day to pay special tribute to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

May 28th- **National Poppy Day**

May 31st- **Memorial Day** -It is a Federal holiday observed on the last Monday in May and commemorates the men and women who died while in the military service. Pay tribute to the U.S. men and women who died during military service by observing a national moment of remembrance with a minute of silence at 3:00 PM local time.

The **National Moment of Remembrance** is an annual event that asks Americans to pause for a moment of silence for a **minute at 3:00 pm on Memorial Day**. The 3 pm time was chosen, because it is the time when many Americans are enjoying their freedoms on the national holiday. It is intended to be a unifying act of remembrance for Americans of all ages. The National Moment of Remembrance Act became law in the year 2000.

Hope you all enjoy the spring weather!

Directors Notes...

By Bobby Dunno



Finally, we have been blessed with some really nice days of riding weather! While it is a might bit chilly in the morning, riding in to work in the afternoons it has been real tempting to turn the other way and head to Cooper Landing and Ice Cream. For those of us who are capable of getting our bikes out and about, please be careful riding around town and pulling into turn offs on the highway. There are still a great many locations with loose gravel left over from winter sanding and we all know the feeling of the bike or our boots sliding on the road when that grit turns into marbles.

I also have another piece of **really great news**. The push back that came from our Legion membership on the Internal Affairs Committee and the NEC on the topic of Resolution 19 and the directives limiting some of our couitional Rights has been rescinded. The guidelines of Resolution B which will supersede 19 does not mention guns at all and when it comes to

our free speech and what we wear on our vest has been changed in Part 6 to read "**All ALR members shall maintain the image of The American Legion, protect The American Legion's Emblems, which symbolizes the integrity and principles of The American Legion and if wearing Emblem items then the Emblem items will be American Legion authorized emblems.**" Then part 7 states "**ALR members' vests should display the integrity, principles and values of The American Legion and the ALR by avoiding patches or pins with (1) explicit or offensive language and/or images and (2) political or partisan language and/or images since The American Legion is a non-partisan organization.**" These statements bring us back to where we were before Resolution 19 with increased emphasis on making American Legion Riders aware that we are always representing the American Legion, like we did not know that already. 😊

Another big change that has cropped up in Resolution B is part 4 which states "**ALR programs may allow current members of The American Legion family to join ALR chapters as supporting members.**" This statement has opened up a conversation about what Supporter's can do in an ALR Chapter. I believe that this statement means that each Chapter and Post can make a decision as to what extent our supporters can do within the Chapter. Does that mean we can have supporter hold offices in the Chapter, I don't think that is the intention, but I do think that it means supports can get a vest and a patch saying SUPPORTER on it. I know more than a couple of people who deserve to wear one and I am going to encourage it😊.

I am going to have to give my bike its first bath of this riding season because May 15 is Armed Forces Day and is our annual Bike Blessing. All bikes are invited and yes that include Bicycles and Scooters. When blessings are available we don't want to be stingy😊. Shortly after that it will be Memorial Day and the Ride to Byers Lake for those who want to head up the Parks Hi-way to the Alaska War Memorial.



We I would like to say that I can expound more but I am going to have to finish up this article and move on to another project. If you have a bike and it is not out yet, bust up that ice get your ride out, check it out, ensure everything is working smoothly, inspect brakes, tires, and change the oil, if ya have not already done it fix all the little things that bugged you last year, give it a coat of polish then...

Get On Your Bike and Ride!

Memorial Day Poem: In Flanders' Field



Taps



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.*



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 in July, 1862.



Daniel Adams Butterfield was the commander of a brigade of the V Corps of the Army of the Potomac and 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** from Harrison's Landing, Virginia, 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 Unknown Soldiers.

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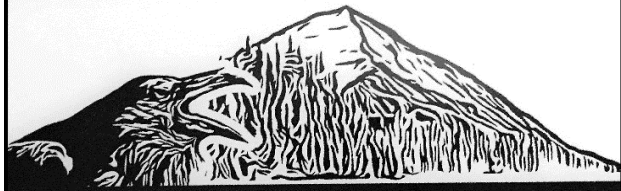
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BRASS BONES

Sam Clemons Jewelry Artist/Owner

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





May 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
 ARMED FORCES DAY		 THE FALLEN BUT NOT FORGOTTEN		 PEACE OFFICER MEMORIAL DAY MAY 15		Pool League End of Season Dinner 7:00 pm 
2	3	Mexican Martes 4	5	B, B, M&C 6	Steak Night 7	8
<u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm	 Tuesday	Scouts Eagle Badge Review Board 6:30 pm 	ALR Meeting 5:30 pm  Pioneers Igloo #9 Monthly Meeting		JAG Dinner 6:00 pm 
9	10	Mexican Martes 11	12	B, B, M&C 13	Steak Night 14	Peace Officers Memorial Day 15
Mothers' Day Breakfast 9am-11am  Luscious Leftovers	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm	Post Meeting 5:30 pm 	Auxiliary Meeting 6:00 pm 	SAL Meeting 7pm 		 Hotdog feed in the Harbor 11-2 pm
16	17	Mexican Martes 18	19	B, B, M&C 20	Steak Night 21	22
3 rd Sunday of the Month Community Breakfast 9am-11am <u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm		Department Service Officer at the Post. Call the post at 224-5440 to set up an appointment 	Burgers, Bacon, Mac and Cheese 		
23	24	Mexican Martes 25	26	B, B, M&C 27	Steak Night 28	29
<u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm		Armed Services YMCA Combat Fishing Tournament 	Burgers, Bacon, Mac and Cheese 	National Poppy Day 	
30	31					
<u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	Memorial Day Ceremony at Cemetery 11:00 am  Lunch Served at Post at noon					

Food Served Every Night at the Post