

For God and Country Seward Post 5 Newsletter

January 2021 Volume 18, Issue 01

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

Happy New Year! What a year it has been \bigotimes ; it has been one that has been exceptionally challenging and unexpectedly rewarding. We had the opportunity to



help many in our community and our veterans during this pandemic. I especially want to thank all our volunteers who took the time to keep our post going in service to 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 (and socially distanced (3)) 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 2020. We started the year of course with a New Year's Eve party and celebrating our 100^{th} Anniversary (pre-Covid) at the post, closely followed with 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. And how can I not mention the fabulous meals provided on a nightly basis, weekly Bingo and the 3^{rd} Sunday of the Month breakfasts for our membership and the community. That is until the Covid Shutdown but the Post 5 Family of volunteers adapted and overcame with nightly meals "curbside" for anyone in the community who needed any help.

At the outset we were pretty limited in what we could do other than provide nightly dinners but eventually the City & State loosened up restrictions and we could do more of the "normal" activities. Granted they were mostly outside but were endeavoring to keep things going and not let this pandemic adversely affect lives more than they have. We celebrated Flag Day, Armed Forces Day as well prepping the cemetery for Memorial Day and Memorial Day!















The 4^{th} of July was far more subdued in town but Chapter 5 ALR and several ALR riders from the posts on the road system brought the town alive with their amazing display of bikes and flags!





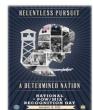


In August the town had its 65th Silver Salmon Derby and a great way to "socially distance!" A great time was had by all and a some great fish were hauled in.



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**.







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





As we started looking toward the cooler weather we forged ahead with planning Covid safe activities, we honored our veterans with **Veterans Day** with a yummy a dinner at the post and we were able give some "Honor Quilts" for some of our senior veterans - thanks to the Seward Area Quilters.







Later in the month
we had our ever-tasty
Thanksgiving Dinner where
we fed many folks in the
community on a truly
American Holiday.

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 with Santa,



Mrs Claus & the elves to pass out lots of wonderful gifts for the children in town. It was one of the busiest visits from Santa in a long, long time!





We also prepared, delivered food for over 120 folks in town and fed many with Covid conscious with take-out dinners. We also served many folks who came to the post to share in a wonderful Christmas Dinner - and to end the month we had a fabulous New Year's Eve get together with our membership!



HAPPYANEWAYEAR

Now, I'd like to mention something that is essential to our organization - Membership. We often discuss how good it is to have a healthy membership and the reason for that is if we have a good membership then we can help others in our community. We don't spend much time advertising what we do in the community, but your support and membership has allowed us to do some good work over the last year. And, as "big ticket items," we as an American Legion Family have donated several thousand dollars in post-secondary scholarships and technical school training. Also, we as an American Legion Family donated \$11,500 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, we provided holiday meals for many in the community, donated to the "He will Provide" food pantry and the Ministerial Association. Our Auxiliary provided gifts for children and food baskets in town during the holidays and we sent presents to our Seward and Moose Pass sons and daughters in the military in our Operation Apple Pie program. Our combined American Legion Family has donated just over \$90,000 to local causes this past year. As you can see with a strong membership and our amazing volunteers we can help others and make a difference in people's lives and continue to serve our community.

Inasmuch as it is 2021, 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 from these 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.

I would like to acknowledge the help that we have received from the Seward Community Foundation and the City of Seward since the we've been in the "throws" of this pandemic.





Their support in our work to navigate the grant process for the non-profit CARES Grant funding has been no less than amazing! All their help allowed us to stay open and keep our activities going to support our community.

Our American Legion Family has been here for many years (101 years now!!!! (2)) and it has been a solid foundation as a service organization and a good community partner. We're excited to continue our second century of service. So why don't you check us out, we're a good place for positive 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 2nd Vice!

We have moved into Winter and cruised through the Christmas season. I hope you have all found ways to enjoy your time with friends and family. Now we can look forward to a better year in 2021.

I would like to thank all the wonderful and dedicated Post 5 family members and volunteers that supported the Post 5 family with your memberships, time, effort and financial support. Because of all of you, we have been able to provide the support of our veterans and the community of Seward during the difficult times this passed year. It has been an amazing team effort from everyone to keep Post 5 alive and kicking in 2020. You are all awesome!

This month we will host the Pioneer's of Alaska Igloo #9 meeting on Jan 7th. The American

Cancer Society of Anchorage is planning to have a jump on Jan 16th in the harbor.
There will be no planned activities in Seward but may be people in town that want to get out of Anchorage for the weekend. We will have our



community breakfast on Jan 17th. Other opportunities for volunteering at the Post may come up and we will let you know about them.



Pool League, for members only, is going strong on Saturday nights and Bingo is happening every Monday night. We still have food every night for dine in or take out.

The 2021 membership year is moving 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.

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...



Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

Normal winter has come back to Seward. Hope you are all safe and enjoyed the Christmas season. With 2020 in the rearview mirror, we are all looking for a return to normalcy in 2021.



I want to thank all Squadron 5 members that supported the organization with their membership, volunteer hours and donations of time and effort. You are an integral part of the Post 5 family helping ensure the success of our mission to support the veterans and community of Seward.

It remains to be seen what events will come back to life this year and we will keep you informed as opportunities to volunteer and serve become available.

This month we will have our community breakfast on Jan 17th. We will let you know about other activities as we can.



The new membership year is moving right along, and we are meeting the monthly goals as set by National Headquarters. 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.

Happy New Year Post 5 Family!!!



From the President's Desk...

By Debbie VanTassel

Well 2020 has finally come to an end and I am sure most of us are more than ready for it to be gone. It will definitely be remembered as a year of change and challenge and learning new creative ways to continue some of our long standing programs and traditions.

We were able to continue one of the Unit 5's biggest programs- Santa and Toys for Tots this year-just with a few changes. Unfortunately, we were not able to do the Firetruck Parade which is always such a big success with the children- but we still had the visit from Santa with a drive thru gift distribution. Thank you to all the volunteers that assisted with this. Sharon for helping shop for all the presents. The awesome team that did all the gift wrapping and all the volunteers that were there to help on Dec 12 when Santa came to town. Thank you, Susie and Randy for again being great Santa and Mrs. Claus. The Unit was able to make Christmas special for about 110 children.









This year the Unit also helped the Seward Fire Department with their Angel tree program by selecting 10 angels to purchase gifts for. Thank you Joanne for doing all the shopping for this project.



The Unit also worked with Safeway to provide 28 food baskets to families within the community that needed assistance with providing a holiday meal for the family. We were also able to provide Christmas cards and a little present to the crew of the Coast Guard Mustang- as a thank

Also January 1 means that the old 2020 membership cards are no longer valid- so please renew. Currently we are at about 82% which is awesome. We only need about 25 more people to renew to hit 100%



so please renew. Remember the membership dues are what helps the Unit and Department pay for many of the programs that are the Core of the Auxiliary. Also a huge welcome to our new members!



One of our usual January activities - Polar Bear Jump off will be very different this year. From what I have heard they are still doing the jump but most of the other activities have been canceled so we will not see as much activity at the Post as usual.

As I close this letter- I reflect back on 2020- it was a very challenging year in so many ways but as usual the Legion family found ways to adapt to change so that they could still support our Veteran's and Community. I am very proud of the Auxiliary Unit 5 and the Legion family for all the great work and volunteerism that was shown in 2020. My hope is that 2021 brings Joy and Happiness to everyone.



Nost 5 Family Celebration at 101 Years Old!!!

December 31st, New Years' Eve!!!

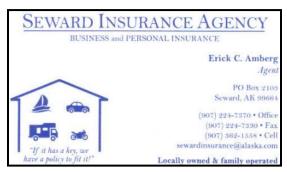




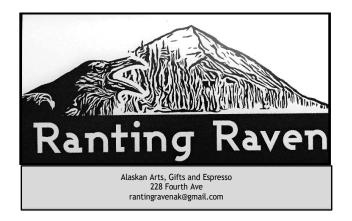


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Outdoor Adventure Center Seward, Alaska 907-224-2600











Food Every Night at the Post!!!