



For God and Country

Seward Post 5 Newsletter

June 2020
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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

What a busy month!!!! Even with COVID-19 restrictions our Post 5 Family was "on it!" I'd like to thank everyone for all their hard work and help during our closure and once we began almost "normal ops." May usually is one of our busier months, and even with several of our normal activities being cancelled we were still serving our veterans and our community. Seven days a week we were providing free meals to our membership and those in need. THANK YOU!



Seward Community Foundation
An Affiliate of The Alaska Community Foundation

I also want to give a huge shout out to the Seward Community Foundation, the Seward Senior Center and many of our members who provided funding to allow us to help others. In partnership with the Senior Center, the Seward Community Foundation provided us with a generous grant to help us keep going when we needed additional funds so we could keep partially open and continue serving others.



Our American Legion Family with some other good folks in town and the Iron Mountain FFA accomplished a lot this month in remembering our departed fallen heroes and helping at the cemetery in

preparation for Memorial Day. Your actions speak volumes as to your character and your commitment to this community and our veterans. I thank you all; your selfless service makes the difference for our American Legion and for many in this town.



I would like to list everyone who was involved in all our service-oriented projects but I think I'd have a 10 page

newsletter in order to get everyone listed. That might not be the best use of my space here, but if you get an opportunity, please take a look at our Facebook page. You'll get a good idea of what we do and what we've accomplished. Scroll through the timeline and you'll get an appreciation of what a small town post can still do in service. You'll see our American Legion Family "in action." 😊 We have some special people in our organization!

This month looks to be another good month, just not at the same frenetic pace, and as needed with "social distancing." 😊 We should be able to schedule ourselves with expected activities including our weekly events that you'll see on the calendar, plus of course we will have a **Flag Day Ceremony** on Sunday, June 14th at around 6pm and **Father's Day Breakfast** on Sunday June 21st.



Flag Day, like our other important patriotic Holidays, is necessary to preserve our significant history and to educate and keep traditions alive. Observing Flag Day does not just honor a great flag but it also reminds us of where we have been as a young country fighting for our freedom, and the incredible journey we have travelled to be the great nation that we are now. The road to where we are has been paved with bravery and the blood of those who found it worthwhile to keep pursuing our ideals of freedom and justice. As life's events compete for our attention, these patriotic holidays frequently get shelved or receive token attention. Sometimes the overt demonstration to display patriotism is met with a bit of resistance, condescension or hesitancy simply because the observances have taken the backseat to other unrelated activities surrounding the day. With that said, we have the obligation as members of the American Legion Family to keep these traditions alive and inspire others by our actions of Patriotism and our love of country.



Please consider reading up on our patriotic holidays, particularly Flag Day for this month and fly our US flag. We have a great country and all our patriotic holidays are so very important to us to remember as a nation and to continue as a free people.

For God and Country

Directors Notes....

By Bobby Dunno



This summer's motorcycle season has been one of questions for most of us. Mainly, it is not so much can we ride but where can we ride and can we ride together. Speaking for myself and the frustrations I am experiencing with the whole COVID-19 "no you can't do that" attitude of control some government officials in and around our state have adopted. I can see that the ALR might get together for a ride just as an exercise in freedom and as always in support of the Legacy Scholarship Fund.



Moving into June there are no planned rides although there are those who are planning and are confronting the roadblocks that come with planning.



The Riders of Post 5 had our Bike Blessing on the 16th and we rode to Copper Landing for an Ice Cream run and although no one had any

Ice Cream we had a great day and it was nice to get together and ride and still do it safely.



Debbie and I rode alone over to Soldotna for the day on 29th of May had a sit-down lunch, stopped at Walmart and rode home had no problems or issues. So, if you want to ride and have somewhere you would like to ride too, perhaps we can talk and plan something.

Yea, Bobby wants to ride, and he is missing the riding together for purpose and the good that comes from our group efforts.

So our next scheduled event will be the 4th of July Parade (if Seward actually holds our annual celebration of our country's birthday) and you're a member of the ALR or a member of the American Legion Family with a motorcycle looking to participate, show off and maybe join the ALR, come on out and join us to ride in the parade and eat ribs and baked beans at the Post when the parade is over (of course that is if we are allowed to do that also).



The parade is always a fun happening and hopefully we might get real lucky and have a nice day with no rain to ride in. But regardless if you have a bike it is that time to make the time, check 'em out, warm them up, and **Get On Your Bike and Ride!**

Why are Coins Left on Veterans' Gravestones

After this Memorial Day as we were clearing the cemetery of the crosses, poppies and flags I recalled an old tradition that some may not know about. If you ever visit a veteran's grave you may see coins on the gravestone. A coin left on the headstone is a message to the deceased veteran's family that someone has visited their grave and paid their respects and to show that someone has visited the grave site to let them know that they are not forgotten and are still cared for. Each coin left on the top of the headstone for the veteran has its own meaning.

- ✚ A penny left on the gravestone means the grave-site was visited.
- ✚ A nickel left on the gravestone means that the person visiting the grave trained at boot camp with the deceased veteran.
- ✚ A dime left on the gravestone means the person served with them while in the military.
- ✚ A quarter left on the gravestone means the person who left the coin was with the veteran when they were killed.

The money placed on the gravestones is collected and put toward cemetery maintenance and for future burial costs.



House and Vice Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice:

Well, we have finally been allowed to resume normal operations at the Post and Club. Hopefully, the summer will continue to turn in a positive direction, and we can be a part of the economic resurgence in Seward. There will still be many who are struggling as many business will not reopen at all this summer, so if you know of anyone in need of assistance be sure to let us know so we can try to help as much as possible.

I want to thank Sharon Dillon, Dan Oliver, Michelle Oliver, and Suzi Towsley for their help with Club operations as we have reopened. I'd also like to thank Fr. Bill Hanrahan for taking the time to weed whack our dandelion crop outside the post. We had a healthy amount this year!!! 😊 Without our great volunteers, we would not be able to operate under the restrictions and limited resources we have had.

thanks

I would like to give special thanks to the Seward Community Foundation who, through the Seward Senior Center, awarded us a grant for \$4500.00 to help cover utility costs during these tough times. It certainly helps us continue to support the veterans and community of Seward.

Along with our normal operations, you can still get dinner to go each evening. If you do not receive our email notifications, you can always call to see what is being served each day. Please feel free to contact us and let us know if you need a meal or other assistance and we will try to help where we can. It is a tough time for all our Post 5 Family members, but we can help each other get through this.

This month we will be celebrating Flag Day on the 14th and Father's Day/community breakfast on the 21st. If you would like to help with any of the activities or functions at Post 5 just let us know and we will gladly put you to work.

This is the last month in the 2020 membership year. We have reached all monthly goals so far and only need four renewals to reach our 100% goal. I want to thank everyone who has already renewed their memberships and urge those that have not to consider doing so. Membership is the backbone of our organization and we need to keep that backbone strong to continue to carry the load we do for our



veterans and the community of Seward. You can renew at the Post, mail in your renewals, or go to MyLegion.org and renew.

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



Summer is here and at least things are approaching some type of normalcy. The Post has re-opened and the Squadron members are supporting all Post activities and functions.

I want to thank Squadron Commander Mike Mooter for helping with the cemetery mowing and Randy Kocktritz for his help with the Firing Detail during the Memorial Day ceremony. Those actions embody the mission of the SAL in support of the Post, and the veterans in the community of Seward.

The Squadron congratulates Seward High School graduating class of 2020. We awarded Three scholarships this year. Michael Honebein was awarded \$750.00 to attend AVTEC, Justin McMurray and Kyrsten Johnson-Gray each were awarded \$500.00 to attend the college of their choice.

This month we will support the Flag Day Ceremony on June 14th, the Father's Day and community breakfast on June 21st and looking forward to support of the 4th of July celebration.

Moving forward things should continue to improve but there are still tough times to come. If you know of those in need be sure to let us know and we will try to assist as we can.

Remember that membership is the key to all the success. The 2020 membership year is here so consider renewing your membership if you have not already done so. Membership is the cornerstone of our organization and we need to continue to strive to be a strong and active part of the Post 5 family.

Thank you again for all your hard work and support of the Post 5 Family mission of service to the veterans and other community members in Seward.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 224-5440. Thanks again for all your support of the Post 5 family and I look forward to seeing you all around the Post when possible.



From the President's Desk....

By Debbie VanTassel

Normally with the June newsletter I can start we WOW how busy we were in May- unfortunately with the current COVID-19 situation- we were not very busy in May. But it looks like things maybe slowly getting back to the "new normal". It is wonderful to have the Post back open again and it is great to see so many members venturing out.

Bingo has started up again so if you need some lively excitement on Monday nights venture on down. It is one of the Auxiliary many fundraising events. The monies earned go back into the community through many of our various programs.

In May we awarded 3 scholarships to deserving young members of the community. Two scholarships were awarded to graduating High School Seniors and another 1 to a student who will be a Senior at UAA this fall. Congratulation and Best wishes for a bright future to those scholarship winners. In May the Auxiliary lost a longtime member, Kathleen Verschuere. Kathleen had been a member of Unit 5 for many years along with her sister Cheryl. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Cheryl and the rest of the family.

Memorial Day was celebrated with a great ceremony at the American Legion cemetery. Mother Nature even decided to shine that day and we had a great turnout. Memorial Day is a day for all of us to remember and pay tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms we have today. This years' ceremony was concluded with a very moving tribute by Karla Nemitz- a one hour salute to honor fallen comrades and bring attention to the very high suicide rate among veterans- On average 22 Veterans a day die from suicide.

Moving into June, many of the usual activities will resume at the Post.

As I wrote earlier Bingo will continue every Monday night- so come on down. The Post will also be doing the Father's Day breakfast and 3rd Sunday breakfasts.

Also with Ozzie down in Montana- the Post will be looking for volunteers to assist with keeping the cemetery mowed and weed wacked throughout the summer so if interested or you have some free time let Mike know.

June 6th is the Anniversary of D-Day - On June 6, 1944, more than 156,000 American, British and Canadian troops stormed 50 miles of Normandy's fiercely defended beaches in northern France in an operation that proved to be a critical turning point in World War II.

June 12th is Women Veterans Day- The first Women Veterans Day on June 12, 2018, marked the 70th anniversary of the groundbreaking WAC legislation signed into law by President Harry S. Truman on June 12, 1948.

June 14th is the Army Birthday



Flag Day is also June 14th and the Post will have a ceremony to retire flags which can no longer be flown. The Auxiliary will also do a Poppy retirement for the poppies that have been placed on the crosses at the cemetery the last couple years.

June 23rd is the Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday

June 27th is PTSD Awareness Day - the following information on PTSD Awareness day was taken from militarybenefits.info website.

PTSD Awareness Day is observed every year on June 27th. **PTSD stands for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** and is a condition that many veterans and non-veterans alike suffer. PTSD can occur when someone experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. This condition wasn't always understood properly by the medical or military community, and Department of Defense press releases often point to earlier attempts to identify PTSD symptoms in the wake of service in World War 2, Vietnam, and other conflicts.

PTSD Awareness Day will be observed on Saturday, June 27, 2020. June is also PTSD Awareness Month.

SUICIDE FREQUENCY

22 PER DAY
ONE EVERY
65 MINUTES



How Do People Observe Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Day?

Much of what is done to observe PTSD Awareness Day involves encouraging open talk about PTSD, its' causes, symptoms, and most important of all, getting help for the condition. PTSD is, even in modern times, often misunderstood by those with no firsthand experience with the condition or those who suffer from it. PTSD Awareness Day is designed to help change that.

The Department of Defense publishes circulars, articles, and other materials to help educate and inform military members and their families about the condition. The Department of Veterans Affairs official site has several pages dedicated to PTSD, and when military members retiring or separating from the service fill out **VA claim forms for service-connected injuries**, illnesses, or disabilities, there is an option to be evaluated for PTSD as a part of the VA claims process.

The misunderstanding of PTSD slowly began to change in 1980 when it was recognized as a specific condition with identifiable symptoms. As a result, since that time, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is listed in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). This manual is a diagnostic tool for mental health professionals and paraprofessional workers in the healthcare field and is considered a definitive reference. The addition of PTSD to the DSM was a highly significant development.

Today, the **symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder** are better understood, treatable, and recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs as a service-connected condition. PTSD is not exclusive to veterans or currently serving members of the United States military, but a portion of those who serve are definitely at risk for PTSD.

Hope everyone has a great June- enjoy the long days and sunshine

United States Army Birthday,

By John R. Maass, Historian
US Army Center of Military History

When the American Revolution broke out, the rebellious colonies did not possess an army in the modern sense. Rather, the revolutionaries fielded an amateur force of colonial troops, cobbled together from various New England militia companies. They had no unified chain of command, and although Artemas Ward of Massachusetts exercised authority by informal agreement, officers from other colonies were not obligated to obey his orders. The American volunteers were led, equipped, armed, paid for, and supported by the colonies from which they were raised.



In the spring of 1775, this "army" was about to confront British troops near Boston, Massachusetts. The revolutionaries had to re-organize their forces quickly if they

stood a chance against Britain's seasoned professionals. Recognizing the need to enlist the support of all of the American seaboard colonies, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress appealed to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia to assume authority for the New England army. Reportedly, at John Adams' request, Congress voted to "adopt" the Boston troops on June 14, although there is no written record of this decision. Also, on this day, Congress

resolved to form a committee "to bring in a draft of rules and regulations for the government of the Army," and voted \$2,000,000 to support the forces around Boston, and those at New York City. Moreover, Congress authorized the formation of ten companies of expert riflemen from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, which were directed to march to Boston to support the New England militia.



Washington received his appointment as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army the next day, and formally took command at Boston on July 3, 1775.



Flag Day Celebrated June 14, 1777

Flag Day! On May 30, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson issued a presidential proclamation establishing a national Flag Day on June 14th. Many Americans celebrate Flag Day by displaying the Red, White and Blue in front of homes and businesses. The day commemorates the adoption of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States.

According to American legend, in June 1776, George Washington commissioned Betsy Ross, a Philadelphia seamstress, to create a flag for the new nation in anticipation of a declaration of its independence.



On June 14, 1777, John Adams spoke about the flag at a meeting of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. He said, "Resolved, that the flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation." There have been twenty-seven official versions of the flag so far; stars have been added to it as states have entered the Union. The current version dates to July 4, 1960, when Hawaii became the 50th state.

Many Americans sing, pledge, and pay respect to the flag, "Old Glory," as a symbol of the country's democracy and independence. Saluting the flag is a way to celebrate and honor the United States of America.

The History of Flag Day

The Fourth of July was traditionally celebrated as America's birthday, but the idea of an annual day specifically celebrating the Flag is believed to have first originated in 1885. BJ Cigrand, a schoolteacher, arranged



for the pupils in the Fredonia, Wisconsin Public School, District 6, to observe June 14 (the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes) as 'Flag Birthday'. In numerous magazines and newspaper articles and public

addresses over the following years, Cigrand continued to enthusiastically advocate the observance of June 14th as 'Flag Birthday', or 'Flag Day'.



On June 14, 1889, George Balch, a kindergarten teacher in New York City, planned appropriate ceremonies for the children of his school, and his idea of observing Flag Day was later adopted by the State Board of Education of New York. On June 14, 1891, the Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia held a Flag Day celebration, and on June 14th of the following year, the New York Society of the Sons of the Revolution, celebrated Flag Day.

Following the suggestion of Colonel J Granville Leach (at the time historian of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution), the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames of America on April 25, 1893 adopted a resolution requesting the mayor of Philadelphia and all others in authority and all private citizens to display the Flag on June 14th. Leach went on to recommend that thereafter the day be known as 'Flag Day', and on that day, school children be assembled for appropriate exercises, with each child being given a small Flag.



Two weeks later on May 8th, the Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution unanimously endorsed the action of the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial

Dames. As a result of the resolution, Dr. Edward Brooks, then Superintendent of Public Schools of Philadelphia, directed that Flag Day exercises be held on June 14, 1893 in Independence Square. School children were assembled, each carrying a small Flag, and patriotic songs were sung and addresses delivered.

In 1894, the governor of New York directed that on June 14 the Flag be displayed on all public buildings. With BJ Cigrand and Leroy Van Horn as the moving spirits, the Illinois organization, known as the American Flag Day Association, was organized for the purpose of promoting the holding of Flag Day exercises. On June 14th, 1894, under the auspices of this association, the first general public school children's celebration of Flag Day in Chicago was held in Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Lincoln, and Washington Parks, with more than 300,000 children participating.



Inspired by these three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day - the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 - was officially established by the Proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson on May 30th, 1916. While Flag Day was celebrated in various communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3rd, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14th of each year as **National Flag Day**.



On June 14, 2004, 108th U.S. Congress unanimously voted on H.R. 662 declaring Flag Day originated in Waubeka, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin.



Now, Stony Hill School is a historical site and is located in Waubeka, WI, and the National Flag Day Foundation (of which Cigrand was once president) is still actively pursuing Cigrand's mission. A yearly celebration of Flag Day occurs on the second Sunday in June, and patriots of not only Waubeka, WI but from across the Union gather to celebrate where Flag Day was founded.



Since not everyone can get to Facebook, I thought I would add a few select photos of the events and our great volunteers for the past month's activities. We have some great volunteers in our Seward Post 5 American Legion Family...

Thanks to all who attended and participated in all our May events!

Curbside Service for our members and community



Bike Blessing with the ALR and Fr. Bill Hanrahan



Cemetery Prep & Memorial Day



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Sam Clemons - Owner/Artist



June 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	Mexican Martes 2	3	4	Steak Night 5	6
	Chili Dogs  BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 			ALR Meeting 5:30 pm AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS  B,B,M&C		
7	8	Mexican Martes 9	10	11	Steak Night 12	13
<u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	Chili Dogs  BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	Post Meeting 5:30pm 	Auxiliary Meeting 6:00pm 	SAL Meeting 7:00pm  B,B,M&C		
14	15	Mexican Martes 16	17	18	Steak Night 19	20
Flag Day  Flag Retirement Ceremony 6pm US Army Birthday	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs 			SOULMATES  B,B,M&C		
21	22	Mexican Martes 23	24	25	Steak Night 26	27
Father's Day Breakfast HAPPY FATHER'S DAY  <u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs 	Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday		 B,B,M&C		PTSD Awareness Day 
28	29	Mexican Martes 30				
<u>Luscious Leftovers</u>	BINGO!!!! 6:30PM  Chili Dogs 			Flag Day! 		
	Food Every Night at the Post!!!					