



# VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA

## SEWARD POST 5 NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025  
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American Legion Seward Post 5

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### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan



The weather is finally getting better, and we're happy about seeing our lawns starting to show - but that now means cleaning up yards during "Break Up!" 🙄🙄 Given we had a fairly calm winter that shouldn't be too bad... I hope. 😊

Although we had a busy winter at the post, it's starting to look like "Tourist Season" in town as we're getting more people stopping in and our snowbirds are returning to Seward for the spring and summer months. I'm guessing a lot of people from the "Lower 48" are getting tired of doing the same old grind and are heading out to get to the "great outdoors," and I can't think of any place better than Alaska, particularly our part of 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 spiffed up in anticipation of our **Memorial Day Ceremony** on the 26th. Please plan on attending the ceremony which begins at 11:30 am.



The month starts out with the ALR monthly meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> as well as the Igloo #9 having their monthly meeting right afterward; the following week will be meeting week for everyone else. Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup> the ALR will have their monthly breakfast feed. And, Don't forget Mother's Day on the 11<sup>th</sup>, and we'll have a hearty breakfast for all those Moms out there!!! So, bring Mom by!

On the 17<sup>th</sup> we will also be having the **ALR Bike Blessing, Armed Forces Day** celebration in the harbor, **Harbor Opening Festivities** and the **Mermaid Festival**. During that same weekend we also have the **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month Breakfast** at the post.

On May 21st we'll be providing support to the **Armed Services YMCA Combat Fishing Tournament** which is an every year event, and we'll need lots of volunteers from early morning to early evening.

Take a gander at the calendar, all this is on there!!!! 📅

No newsletter 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 volunteer and all those who renewed your membership and a big welcome to all who have joined for the first time! Your support has allowed us to keep our membership in good shape and our post home filled with good fun and good camaraderie!



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, Polar Bear events, Membership & Volunteer Appreciation special dinners or traditional holiday meals such as Thanksgiving, Christmas or Easter. It is important we keep our traditions, heritage and our history alive as we **have an amazing American Culture** that is the envy of so many who are

not privileged to call the USA home. We have a jewel of a country, and although not perfect, it is the best nation and form of government for an amazing and diverse citizenry that we have.

The Summer is coming, so come on by the post. We have nightly meals for donation (except Friday Steak night - we can't afford only donations 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.

On a final note, congrats to all the new officers elected at the Department's annual convention at Post 15 in Palmer. All the best for a fabulous year and we look forward to our attendees info at our May meetings.

*Congrats*

More on Page 4 😊

## Vice & Adjutant Report.....

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice and Adjutant.

Well, a wet Spring season so far but maybe we will have a nice Summer in the next few months.

Thanks to everyone who dedicated time and effort towards our April activities. We could not accomplish what we do without the great volunteers. Whether you volunteer often or just occasionally, we truly appreciate it.



This month we have the **ALR breakfast on May 10<sup>th</sup>**, the **Mother's Day breakfast on May 11<sup>th</sup>**, and the **community breakfast on May 18<sup>th</sup>**. Additionally, we have the **Armed Forces Day hotdog feed on May 17<sup>th</sup>**, the **Combat Fishing Tournament banquet on May 21<sup>st</sup>**, and, of course, **Memorial Day on May 26<sup>th</sup>**. Please let us know if you wish to donate your time and effort to any of these activities.



We will have another raffle starting soon so watch for the announcement on that.

I would like to ask everyone to be considerate of others when you come to enjoy the food here. We provide these meals as a benefit to our membership and would like to see as many members have had the opportunity to eat as possible. Please limit yourselves to one helping until it is apparent that most folks, who want to, have eaten. Thank you for your consideration.

We have reached our membership goal for 2025. Thanks to everyone who renewed their memberships or joined the Post this year. If you have not renewed, please consider doing so. Your membership supports all the programs and activities of Post 5 and those of the Department of Alaska and the National Organization. To renew for 2025, you can go to [mylegion.org](http://mylegion.org) to renew online, you can mail your renewal when you receive it in the mail, or you can stop by the Post, and we will get to see your smiling face. The dues have remained \$60.00 for Post members, \$40.00 for Auxiliary members, and \$35.00 for SAL members.

**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, SAL 1<sup>st</sup> Vice



Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

April showers bring May flowers so there should be a gazillion flowers this month.

I want to thank everyone for your continued support of our Legion Family here at Post 5. The support you provide is very important in helping the Legion family carry out its mission for the veterans and community.

Our great SAL volunteers continue to support the goals and mission of SAL Squadron 5. Deklan Finley has helped with the breakfasts and steak night and Rick Brown has helped with the ALR breakfast. Sonny Spanos has been running poker on Sundays and pool on Saturdays. We truly appreciate your time and effort.

This month the Post will host the ALR breakfast on May 10<sup>th</sup>, the Mother's Day breakfast on May 11<sup>th</sup> and community breakfast on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Also, the Post will hold the Armed Forces Day hotdog feed on May 17<sup>th</sup>, Combat Fishing banquet on May 21<sup>st</sup>, and, of course, Memorial Day on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Please let us know if you can help with any of these activities.

We have reached our goal for the 2025 membership year. Thanks to everyone who joined this year or who renewed their membership. If you have not yet renewed, please consider doing so. Dues are \$35.00. You can renew online at [mySAL.org](http://mySAL.org), come to the Post to renew or mail in your \$35.00 to PO Box 3091. Remember, your membership helps us support the mission and goals of the Sons of American Legion and the Post 5 family.

Mike Mooter and Randy Kockritz attended the Department Convention April 23-26 at Post 15 in Palmer. We look forward to hearing their reports at the next meeting.

Our monthly meeting is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month and all Squadron 5 members are invited to attend.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at 907-224-5440. Thanks again for all your support of the Post 5 family and I look forward to seeing you all around the Post when possible.



**Honor and Remember**



## From the President's Desk...

By Deb VanTassel



Well I am hoping the old saying April Showers bring May flowers is true- I am certainly ready for the April Snow showers to go away and bring us some nice May weather that lets the flowers start to show up!

Auxiliary Membership is at 102%. However, if you have not renewed for the 2025 year please do so. The membership dues help support the ALA programs on a Unit, Department and National level. Renew Today!



May is always a busy month for the American Legion Family and this year will be no exception. The Auxiliary will start off the month by putting the Poppy Cans out around town. When you see these cans, please take a Poppy to honor

our Veterans and leave a donation which goes to help Veterans. All of the poppies are made by Veterans.

Next the Auxiliary is doing a fun fund raiser. **The Patriot Pet Photo Calendar** - This is open to all Post 5 family members and their furry friends (see full page flyer later in the newsletter), whether it is a dog, cat, duck, goat, turtle or what every Pet you have. Show us what you have!!!. You can submit up to 2 photos showing your Patriot Pet- each submission is \$5.00. The deadline for submitting photos is August 31, 2025. Once we get all the photos, we are going to make a 2026 calendar using those photos. We will guarantee to use 1 of your photo submissions and possibly both depending on how many photos get submitted. We will then take orders for the calendars and estimate the cost of the calendar with be around \$30.00

**BINGO!!** mark your Calendars for every Monday night.

Doors open at 6 PM and games start at 6:30 PM. It is a fun way to get out of the house for a few hours and again the proceeds go to the Auxiliary gaming fund which is used for scholarships, Santa parade and

to help community members who are in need of a little financial assistance. I would like to thank all the volunteers who give their time every week to make Bingo happen.



There are many opportunities to volunteer and help out this month. May 11<sup>th</sup> is Mother's Day breakfast. May 18<sup>th</sup> is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday breakfast and the Post is always appreciative



of the volunteers that come in and help out with the breakfast.



Just the night before we started our May calendar we had one of our many talented volunteers receive an award from Auxiliary Unit #5. Carol Souza has been a longtime Auxiliary member who always steps up to help where she can during our big events and shares her amazing artistic talent to support our Legion Family. She is one of our amazing volunteers and has been involved longer than many of us who are working now to get things done! Thanks Carol!!!

The weekend of May 16-17 is going to be a busy one. It is the **Mermaid Festival, Harbor Opening Weekend and Armed Forces Day, plus the ALR Blessing** of the motorcycles.

The Post will be at the Harbor Masters Office serving up Hot Dogs, Potato salad and other great food. Again, another great opportunity to put on your volunteer hat and help out. Also on May 17, there will be a presentation at the Post about **Estate Planning**. Lots of good stuff happening that weekend!

The YMCA Combat Fishing is set for May 21<sup>st</sup>. This annual event is our way of saying Thank you to our enlisted Military personnel that are serving here in the state. The soldiers come down from JBER and even from Ft. Wainwright and Eielson up around Fairbanks. The fishing charter fleet in Seward donates a day of fishing for the soldiers to go out and catch some halibut and rockfish and many memorable stories If you are interested in helping with this great event please check with Mike at the Legion.



We end the month of May with the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Legion Cemetery. We will need volunteers on either Saturday or Sunday (depending on weather) to put the crosses and flags out on the

gravesites. Please check with the Post to see which day we are putting them out. On Memorial Day please come to the cemetery for the ceremony and then the Post will have food available.



## Significant Days in May

May 1<sup>st</sup> - [Silver Star Service Banner Day](#). A day and a time to recognize those who have been awarded The Silver Star Medal and remember the sacrifices of our wounded and ill veterans.

May 4<sup>th</sup> - [National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day](#). Fallen first responders are honored on this day. It is a tradition for uniformed firefighters, the families of the fallen, and thousands of others to gather in front of the Fallen Firefighters Memorial on this day.

May 8<sup>th</sup> - [VE Day](#) (Victory in Europe). A day which marks the anniversary of the Allies' victory in Europe during World War II on May 8, 1945. Germany unconditionally surrendered its military forces to the Allies.

May 9<sup>th</sup> - [Military Spouse Appreciation Day](#). On Military Spouse Appreciation Day, celebrated the Friday before Mother's Day. We honor the contributions and sacrifices made by military spouses.

May 11<sup>th</sup> - [Mother's Day](#) - come down to the Post for a great breakfast served up by the awesome Breakfast Crew to our honor mothers!

May 13<sup>th</sup> - [Children of Fallen Patriots Day](#). A day to honor the families our Fallen Heroes have left behind - especially their children. It's a reminder to the community that we have an obligation to support the families of our Fallen Patriots

May 15<sup>th</sup> - [Peace Officers Memorial Day](#). Peace Officers Memorial Day falls on May 15 each year to pay tribute to the brave local, state, and federal peace officers who have died or been disabled in the line of duty.

May 17<sup>th</sup> - [Armed Forces Day](#) - a day to pay special tribute to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

May 23<sup>rd</sup> - [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. It reminds Americans of the sacrifices made by our veterans while protecting our freedoms. Wear a poppy to honor those who have worn our nation's uniform.

May 27<sup>th</sup> - [Memorial Day](#) - 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.

As we're heading into the busier Summer Season, we will be slowing down some of our weekly activities that we do in the slower winter months. **Don't worry**, Unit #5 will still be doing Bingo every Monday Night with things beginning around 6:00pm. But since things at the "social area" really pick up in the summer, and a lot of our members who run our weekly winter activities have summer responsibilities as well, we just don't have the "bandwidth" to do it all. So, for at least the months of May and June, we will be putting "a pause" on our formal winter activities of pool league, poker and jewelry classes. However, if you're "game" to still do any of these, feel free to, but we won't have scheduled times to run these activities. An impromptu poker game is always fun, beading can be done in the meeting room, and the pool table is always open for you sharks! 🎲 🎮 🐟



Every year at the end of April, the American Legion, Department of Alaska has a convention where the American Legion Family gets together for annual business and to meet up with old friends and meet new ones. This year was the 106<sup>th</sup> Department Convention. That's a lot of years and many successful meetings and training of new Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons. This year was particularly noteworthy as 20 posts' delegates were able to attend and of those 20, 16 of those posts had delegates who not been to a convention before!

We had information on Code Talkers, Service Dogs, Quilts of Valor and we also had the opportunity to meet Benny Benson's grandson there too; which was a wonderful way to bring things around full circle with Post 5! And hopefully we will see more of him when he makes it down to Seward.

It was great seeing all those new faces and helping where we could and working with our convention "veterans" to bring on the new folks and give them a understanding of what happens over the four days. Good Times!!!!

Post 15 did a great job with the convention and coordinated all the yummy meals, "inventory reduction," and entertainment; and the Department Staff did an outstanding job of keeping us all on schedule... well mostly. 😊 Trying to keep us all organized and in the right spot was like herding cats. 🐱 🐱 🐱 🐱

All our organizations got recognition for our past year's work, and we will be reporting back on those in our May meetings! Congrats Post 5, Unit #5, Squadron #5! Congrats too, to our new Department Officers - Valerie Rose as Department's Auxiliary Chaplain and yours truly as Department Chaplain!



## 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" & is still 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.*



The History & Poetry of  
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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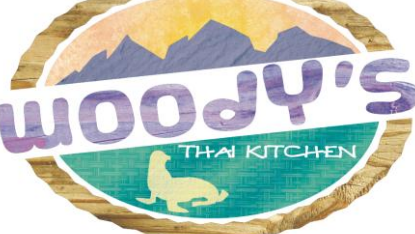
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# May 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				B, B, M&C 1	Steak Night 2	3
Month of the Military Caregiver	 ARMED FORCES DAY	National Military Appreciation Month		ALR Meeting 5:30 pm  Pioneers Igloo #9 Monthly Meeting		Pool League 7:00pm 
4	5	Mexican Martes 6	7	B, B, M&C 8	Steak Night 9	10
Luscious Leftovers Members' Poker 5:00 pm  National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm			VE Day SAL Meeting 7:00pm 	 Military Spouse Appreciation Day	ALR Breakfast 9-11am Pool League 7:00 pm 
11	12	Mexican Martes 13	14	B, B, M&C 15	Steak Night 16	17
Mothers' Day Breakfast 9am-11am  Luscious Leftovers Members' Poker 5:00 pm (season's last)	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm	Post Meeting 5:30 pm  Children of Fallen Patriots Day	Unit Meeting 6:00 pm 	Peace Officers Memorial Day 		ARMED FORCES DAY Harbor Opening Hotdog Feed in the Harbor 11-2 pm 
18	19	Mexican Martes 20	21	B, B, M&C 22	Steak Night 23	24
3rd Sunday of the Month Breakfast 9am-11am Luscious Leftovers LEFTOVERS 	Chili Dog Monday  Bingo 6:30 pm		Armed Services YMCA Combat Fishing Tournament 	Burgers, Bacon, Mac and Cheese 	National Poppy Day 	
25	26	Mexican Martes 27	28	B, B, M&C 29	Steak Night 30	31
Luscious Leftovers  LEFTOVERS!	memorial DAY Memorial Day Ceremony at Cemetery 11:30 am Lunch Served at Post following ceremony					

***Food Served Every Night at the Post***





**Seward High School**

# **AWARDS CEREMONY**

Join us for our annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony. We will celebrate students' achievements in Drama, Math, Science and Athletics.

**Wednesday  
May 14th**

**6 PM**

**SEWARD HIGH  
SCHOOL THEATRE**





Seward Auxiliary Unit 5 Fun Fund Raiser

# Patriot Pet Photo Calendar



## Rules:

1. Open to Post 5 Family Members only
2. Limit 2 photos per family \$5.00 submission fee per photo– at least 1 photo will be included on calendar (maybe both depending on number of submissions) Be creative– have fun with photos
3. Dogs, cats, birds, hamsters– let's see what you have- but it must show something patriotic
4. Deadline for submission August 31, 2025
5. Must be original photo- NO photoshop or AI generated photos please.
6. Submit photos to Debbie at [alaska99755@yahoo.com](mailto:alaska99755@yahoo.com) or provide on a SD card or thumb drive (media will be returned)
7. 2026 Calendars will be created and then can be purchased. Price estimated around \$30.00