

For God and Country Seward Post 5 Newsletter

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E-mail: sewardpost5@gmail.com

americanlegionpost5@qci.net

website: <http://www.americanlegionpost5.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/americanlegionpostfive.sewardalaska

Phone: (907) 224-5440



COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan



Well, we've had an excellent start to 2025! Some great crowds and teams for the Polar Bear Jump-Off Festival and it was a great way to start the year, and as always our Post 5 Family stepped up and made things happen! Thank you for all your support of the post and with all the Polar Bear events at the Post and around town! 🤗

As we move into February we will remain busy with our regular activities including complementary nightly meals and weekly activities (Bingo, Pool League, Jewelry Class) all supported by our amazing volunteer bartenders who make a lively and welcoming place in our "Social Area!" Thank You for all you do "behind the plank" as well as supporting our American Legion programs! 🍷👍

Here we are in February, we stand ready to support where we can with food and any other help our veterans and their families need in these days of high prices that are found everywhere and still growing!!! 🙄🙄🙄

We have more things in the hopper but I'll let the the 2nd Vice give more details in his section. Also, make sure you take a look at the calendar for nightly activities and the yummy meals.

February is **Americanism** Month. Many may wonder what that means and essentially it is the month that we focus on one of "The Four Pillars" that make up the American Legion. In 1919, The American Legion was founded on four pillars: **Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth**. Each pillar encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's veterans, its servicemembers, their families, the youth of America and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives each year.



At the national level and at varying levels at the posts, Americanism encompasses many of the following programs:

- Flag Education
- Immigration & Citizenship
- Voter Registration and Participation
- Scouting
- Scholarship Programs (Legacy, Oratorical, etc.)
- Boys State and Boys Nation
- American Legion Baseball
- Junior Shooting Programs

As you can see there is a lot to the American Legion, what it does and can do to be a vital part of a community; these programs are under only one pillar, there is so much more when you examine the other pillars and what is done in the community, state and nation. Visit legion.org and find out more.

February brings the "first call for officers" for the Post and Auxiliary; the Sons will have their "second call." All positions are up for consideration in all our organizations.



If you like what we are doing (or not) and want to get involved, this is a great way to do that. As you may already know we help many in our community and throughout the state by funding scholarships, supporting community events, helping those in need, honoring our patriotic holidays, and generally running an organization that positively impacts many in this community.

You may think it takes a lot of time, but not really. The way posts are organized, the "division of labor" isn't overwhelming for one officer or position. We all pull together to make things successful. We are thrilled at whatever you are willing to do to help.

Our decisions about our all activities are made at our Post, Auxiliary and Sons meetings. You can help guide what we do by coming in and offering your input, your "2 cents," and ideas. With this in mind, and in order to participate you need to be a current member, so drag out your card from your wallet and if it doesn't say 2025 - you need to renew (hint, hint 🤔), besides we got great chow every night just for your "dining pleasure." 🍴

Con't on pg 4

The History of the Four Chaplains



On **Feb. 3, 1943**, the United States Army Transport Dorchester - a converted luxury liner - was crossing the North Atlantic, transporting more than 900 troops to an American base in Greenland. Aboard the ship were four chaplains of different faiths: Reverend George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reverend Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic).

Around 12:55 a.m., a German U-boat fired a torpedo that struck Dorchester's starboard side, below the water line and near the engine room. The explosion instantly killed 100 men and knocked out power and radio communication with Dorchester's three escort ships. Within 20 minutes, the transport sank and more than 670 men died.

As soldiers rushed to lifeboats, the four chaplains spread out, comforting the wounded, and directing others to safety. One survivor, Private William Bednar, later said, "I could hear men crying, pleading, praying. I could also hear the chaplains' preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going."

Another survivor, John Ladd, watched the chaplains distribute life jackets, and when they ran out, they removed theirs and gave them to four young men. "It was the finest thing I have seen, or hope to see, this side of heaven," he recalled. As Dorchester sank, the chaplains were seen linked arm in arm, praying.

Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington were posthumously awarded the **Distinguished Service Cross** and the **Purple Heart**, and in 1948, **Congress declared Feb. 3 to be [Four Chaplains Day](#)**. Please also visit the [Four Chaplains](#) website as well for more information.



Because of the Medal of Honor's strict requirements of heroism under fire, Congress authorized a one-time **Chaplain's Medal for Heroism** on July 14, 1960. The award was presented to the chaplains' next of kin Jan. 18, 1961.

On Feb. 3, 1951, President Truman dedicated a chapel in the chaplains' honor at Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia. When the building was sold, the chapel fell into disrepair, and the foundation overseeing the chapel moved it to the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in 2001. The chapel was repaired in 2004 and given the name Chapel of the Four Chaplains.

In 2006, at The American Legion's 88th National Convention in Salt Lake City, the National Executive Committee passed a resolution that supported awarding the Chaplain Medal of Honor to Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington. In 1998, a US Senate resolution was passed to recognize the 55th anniversary of the incident making Four Chaplains Day official.



The Chaplain's Medal for Heroism is a decoration of the United States Congress which was authorized by an act of Congress on July 14, 1960. Known as the **Chaplain's Medal of Honor** and the **Four Chaplains' Medal**, the decoration commemorates the actions of the Four Chaplains who gave their lives in the line of duty on February 3, 1943. The medal was designed by Thomas Hudson Jones (1892-1969) of the United States Army Institute of Heraldry. It was presented posthumously to their next of kin by Secretary of the Army Wilber M. Brucker at Ft. Myer, Virginia on January 18, 1961.



2nd Vice & Adjutant Report...

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice and Adjutant.

Hope everyone has been dealing with the winter that has finally arrived. Looks like the cold snap is over for now. Stay warm and stay safe.

Huge thank you to all the great volunteers who helped during **Polar Bear** and all the other activities throughout the month of January. You are all amazing and we could not do everything we do without our great helpers

WE LOVE
OUR VOLUNTEERS

This month, we will be hosting the **ALR breakfast** on February 8th, the **Super Bowl party** on February 9th, the **community breakfast** on February 16th. We will also be supporting the **Tsunami Bowl** on Feb 27 - Mar 2. Let us know if you would like to help with any of these activities.

We are selling tickets for a **new gun raffle** with the drawing after the Super Bowl game. **It is a S&W model 629 44mag with a 4" barrel. Tickets are \$20.00 with only 120 to be sold.**

Although it is quieting at the Post, 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.

The 2025 membership year is well underway. To renew for 2025, you can go to 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.

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



Greetings from the SAL First Vice Commander.

Hope everyone has been surviving the cold and windy weather. Looks like warmer times on the horizon.

I want to thank everyone for your continued support of our Legion Family here at Post 5 during 2024. 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 really stepped up to support the goals and mission of SAL Squadron 5. I will not try to name everyone who gave their time, effort, and money to the organization this year as I will surely forget some. Just know how much we appreciate your time.

This month the Post will host the ALR breakfast on February 8th, the Super Bowl party on February 9th, community breakfast on February 16th, and support of the Tsunami Bowl on Feb 27- March 2.

The 2025 membership year is well under way. Dues are \$35.00. You can renew online at 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.

Our monthly meeting is held on the 2nd Thursday of the month and all Squadron 5 members are invited to attend. Nominations for new officers begin this month, so if you have an interest, please attend the monthly meeting.



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.



From the President's Desk

By Debbie VanTassel



Welcome to February! At least the daylight hours are getting longer but not necessarily warmer but a sure sign that summer and warmer weather will eventually get here. Hope everyone is having a great winter and staying warm.

As we enter February, a couple of reminders. First, if you have not paid your 2025 dues, please do so as the 2024 cards are no longer valid. Membership dues are an important aspect of funding the unit, the department and national programs that are the heart and soul of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Bingo is ongoing every Monday night. The doors open at 6 PM and games start at 6:30 PM. Please try to arrive in a timely manner so that games can start on time. Thank you to the volunteers that help every week to make certain Bingo is available every Monday. It is a great way to get out of the house and have some fun during these long winter evenings.

At our monthly meeting on February 12th, we will have the first call for officer nominations for the 2025 year. If you are interested in serving as an officer, please let the current officers know of your interest. It would be great to have some additional members share their ideas and experience to guide the Unit through the new year.



We have received the call to the annual convention that will be held in Palmer in late April. If you are interested in attending department convention, please let us know so that we can complete the registration and other information that needs to be sent to Department.

The Post will be hosting a Super Bowl watch party on February 9th. The Post will open early so members can watch the game, and enjoy some great snacks. As always, the Post will have many opportunities for members to volunteer. The second and third Sunday breakfasts will be on February 9th and 16th. Check with Mike to find out when volunteers are needed.

Important days in February:

February 3rd is 4 Chaplains Day. This day is the anniversary of the sinking of the Army transport vessel *Dorchester* during World War II and the courageous acts of four Army Chaplains that were onboard. The Four Chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Lt. Clark V. Poling, and Lt. John P. Washington. On February 3rd, 1943, the *Dorchester* was hit by a torpedo from a German U-boat in the Labrador Sea off the coast of Greenland and quickly sank. As the ship was sinking, the Four Chaplains guided men to the lifeboats and handed out life jackets. Many survivors reported that the Chaplains gave away their own life jackets and were on the deck praying hand in hand as the boat sank. The Four Chaplains were awarded the Purple Heart and Distinguished Service Cross posthumously. Also, a Special Medal of Heroism was authorized by Congress and awarded by President Eisenhower in 1961.

February 4th- the USO Birthday

February 9-15- National Salute to Veteran Patients

February 14- Happy Valentines Day

February 17- Presidents Day

February 19- Coast Guard Reserve Birthday.

Hope everyone has a warm and safe February.



Commander's Comment's Con't from pg 1

The 40th Anniversary of the Polar Bear Jump Off Festival occurred on the weekend of 17-19 of January 2025 and the Post was in the middle of it with food, fun and fundraising. We even had a few of our members do the jump! It was cold but all persevered with activities inside and out of the post! From the parade and jump to the Karaoke Contest, and of course some great food all was provided for those in attendance. We enjoyed all the fun and fundraising in support of this great cause to beat cancer with the American Cancer Society.

The entire town rallies every year with some fun events to support the American Cancer Society and the fund for the Kids with Cancer on the Kenai, and it shows with the amazing fundraising they have done over the many years. The notable part of this is that it was started by Unit 5 Auxiliary member Marilyn Sutherland way back "in the day." She is referred to as **Polar Bear Marilyn**, although many of the newbies don't remember the beginnings. That's okay, they're still getting it done!!!

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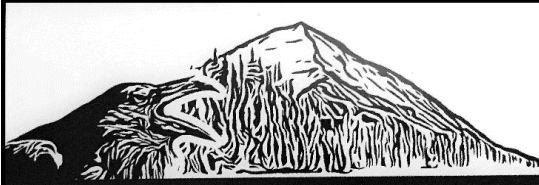
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February 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Americanism Month 			HAPPY Presidents DAY 			Pool League 
2	Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM Four Chaplains Day 	3 Mexican Martes 	4 Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm 	5 B, B, M&C Igloo #9 Meeting 6:30 pm 	6 Steak Night 	7 Pool League  ALR Pancake Breakfast!
9	Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	10 Mexican Martes Post Meeting 5:30pm 	11 Auxiliary Meeting 6pm  Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm	12 B, B, M&C SAL Meeting 7pm 	13 Steak Night Valentines Day 	14 Pool League 
16	Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	17 Mexican Martes 	18 Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm 	19 B, B, M&C MACARONI AND CHEESE 	20 Steak Night 	21 Pool League 
23	Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	24 Mexican Martes 	25 Jewelry Class with Carol Souza 6:00 pm 	26 B, B, M&C 	27 Steak Night 	28 



Food Served Every Night at the Post!