



# Veterans Strengthening America

## Seward Post 5 Newsletter

January 2025  
Volume 22, Issue 01

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### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

By Clare Sullivan

Happy New Year!!! What a year it has been! 2024 was one that was busy but a lot of fun! The Seward Post 5 Family jumped right into the "swing of things" right at the start of the New Year, that is



after we recovered from Christmas and New Year celebrations. As our priority is to help many in our community and our veterans throughout the year, I especially want to thank all our amazing volunteers who took the time out of their busy lives to keep our post going in service to others.

It's amazing what we accomplish with nearly an *all-volunteer group* of folks that make such a difference in this town! We have some incredibly generous and talented people who help wherever they can.



We support our membership who keep the post fun and cheery and the amazing volunteers who show up for all our scheduled, and at times, spontaneous events. It is a great feeling to live in a place where people care for others and work to improve things for everyone. 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 chronicle and memorialize what we do. So, with that in mind, I would like to highlight some of our events in 2024.... We started out the beginning of 2024, of course, with a New Year's Eve Party, where we watched the fireworks from the back deck and enjoyed the "*Sanctuary of Sanity*" with fine food and drink.



Following that busy start, how can I not mention the fabulous meals provided on a nightly basis throughout the year, plus weekly **Bingo and Jewelry** making classes, Saturday night **Pool League** and **Sunday Texas Hold 'em Poker** and the

yummy **2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month Breakfasts** for our membership and the community.

Just as we started out 2024, we had a lot of fun while we rang in 2024 with good food and fun again on New Year's Eve with many in our Legion Family.... even with an eagle shaped salmon dip!!! How Alaskan is that???!?!?! 😊



Ok, onto January 2024... a short two weeks after the new year, we were deep in the **Polar Bear Jump Off Festival** which is always a great event in town, the post and for fundraising for the American Cancer Society. Who can resist Karaoke and Turkey Bowling?!? 😊😊🎉😊😊



We move down the calendar, ticking off the months by celebrating Saint Patrick's Day, Installation Dinner, American Legion Day, Flag Day, our annual ALR Bike Blessing, Armed Forces Day, Armed Forces Combat Fishing Tournament, Memorial Day, Silver Salmon Derby, Commander's Visitation and Dinner, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas! We'll have some photos from some of these events at the end of the newsletter. We had all of this before we got to our "busy" holiday season!!! 😊



As we started to get into the “ber” months we started in **September**. We celebrated **American Legion Day** and the **Early Bird Dinner** on the as well as **Constitution and Citizenship Day**, we 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** on Sept 20<sup>th</sup> as well as participating in the Community’s Suicide Awareness Day Event at the Branson Pavilion.



Seward Senior Center Dining Room

Just a few days later Unit #5 had a “Toys for Tots” fundraising auction to help raise funds for the arrival of Santa and the gift giving in December. And, in Seward style people came out to bid and compete for some amazing items for the holidays and to help the unit secure funds to buy the wonderful presents for our Seward kids!



**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 with costumes and goodies galore! And, of course, our Visitation Dinner with the Department Leadership. 🎃 🦇 🍬



We of course moved right into Thanksgiving with our community dinner. The volunteers were “on it” with cooking and decorating for this event! We delivered about 78 dinners to people who were unable to come out and fed 93 at the post. Good times and good food!!!!



As we started looking toward the cooler weather, we forged ahead in **November** we honored our Marines for the Marine Corps Birthday, and our veterans, on **Veterans Day** with a yummy dinner at the post and we were honored with a Veterans Day Ceremony at the Elementary School and the Senior Center! We even made it up to Seward Providence Mountain Haven and had wonderful time with all the veterans and their friends!



**December** brought lots of activities including getting ready for the holidays. We sent out **Operation Apple Pie** packages to our local servicemembers from the Seward and Moose Pass areas and the Auxiliary had their **Christmas with Santa, Mrs. Claus & the elves** on December 14<sup>th</sup> to run a Christmas Firetruck Parade and pass out lots of wonderful gifts for the children in town. It was a fun visit with Santa and the crew!



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 with your support and membership you have 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 to numerous local charities that benefit our veterans and our community. Just know your participation has allowed us to donate around \$90,000+ from all our organizations to our community. Anything you do, whether volunteering, playing "rippies," coming up for a meal or helping your neighbor, you are contributing to making our post and our town a better place - so thank you for all you do!!!

So.... If you're seeing this and you haven't renewed.... Your membership has expired! Uh oh... get your dues paid and help us reach our 100% goal! 😊



We also prepared, delivered around 93 meals and fed around 70 or so at the post for **Christmas Dinner**. Kudos to "the Crew!"

Inasmuch as it is 2025, 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 veteran support, child welfare and education, and community service here in Seward. It is also a great way to make friends and good connections with quality people who make this community a better place for all to live.



Our American Legion Family has been here for many years (105 years now!!!! 😊) and it has been a solid foundation as a service organization and a good community partner. We're excited to continue in our second century of service. So why don't you check us out and invite others, 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!"

And, to end the month we make it back to the beginning of this summary! We had a fabulous **New Year's Eve** get together with our membership! We had a good crowd as we rang in the end of an, oh so rewarding end of 2024 and our Post's 105<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

Thanks all for all you do!!!

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



## Polar Bear Jump-Off Festival Schedule



# JAN 17-19, 2025

## FRI

**STEAK NIGHT 4p**  
 \$25 per person; open to the public  
 American Legion | 402 Fifth Ave

**AUCTION FUNDRAISER 6p - 9:30p**  
 Auction Fundraiser benefitting Kenai Peninsula Children with Cancer  
 Tony's Bar: registration begins at 6pm; auction begins at 7pm | 135 Fourth Ave

**DJ HANK DANCE PARTY 9:30p**  
 Tony's Bar | 135 Fourth Ave

**SEWARD POLAR BEAR JUMP HISTORICAL DISPLAY 9a-6p**  
 Seward Community Library | 9a - 6p | 239 Sixth Ave

## SAT

**JUMPER CHECK IN & POLAR BEAR REVIEW 8a - 11p**  
 Breeze Inn Hotel | 303 N Harbor St

**SEWARD CITY TOURS SHUTTLE 10a-5p**  
 Route: Harbor360 Hotel, Harbormaster, American Legion,  
 Kawabe Park, Tony's Bar, Alaska SeaLife Center, K.M. Rae  
 Building for Awards Ceremony

**FESTIVAL PARADE 11:30a - 12p**  
 Starts at the Alaska SeaLife Center (301 Railway Ave)  
 parking lot, ends at Seward Small Boat harbor

**THE JUMP! 12:30p - 1:30p**  
 Small Boat Harbor adjacent to Fourth Ave  
 Don't forget to warm up in the Seward Saunas after you jump!

**PARKS & REC POLAR CARNIVAL 1p-4p**  
 AVTEC Gym | 519 4th Ave

**FROZEN HAIR & NAILS PARTY 2p-6p**  
 Visit Frozen Cactus Salon for glitter, hair tinsel, nails & snacks  
 227 Fourth Ave

**AWARDS CEREMONY 3p - 4p**  
 K.M Rae Building | 125 Third Ave

**STEAK NIGHT 4p - 7p    KARAOKE CONTEST 8p - CLOSE**  
 \$25 per person; open to the public  
 American Legion | 402 Fifth Ave

**SEWARD POLAR BEAR JUMP HISTORICAL DISPLAY 9a-5p**  
 Seward Community Library | 9a - 5p | 239 Sixth Ave

## SUN

**LUMINARY MOMENT 8:45a**  
 Honor and celebrate those who have battled cancer | Branson Pavilion,  
 an hour before sunrise | Fundraiser for Kids with Cancer Grant  
 Program | Info: vlambert89@gmail.com



## Adjutant & Vice Report...

By Mike Calhoon



Hello from the Second Vice and Adjutant,

Here we are, at the end of another successful year at American Legion Post 5. Hope everyone had an awesome holiday season, and you are ready to roll into 2025 with optimism and energy.

I want to thank everyone for a great year, and I look forward to another one in 2025.

As usual for me, I will not try to name all the great volunteers we have because I will inevitably forget some. Our great volunteers are who made accomplishing everything we did this last year possible. The volunteer bar staff are awesome. The kitchen and cooking volunteers are amazing. Everyone that volunteered for functions, building maintenance, events held in and outside of the Post. You are all part of the reason we can do so much for our veterans and the community of Seward.

Heartfelt   
**THANKS**  
**TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!**

This month, we will be hosting the **ALR breakfast on January 11th, the Polar Bear Jump on January 17-18th, and the community breakfast on January 19th.** Let us know if you would like to help with any of these activities.

We will have a new gun raffle this month so get ready to win a nice Christmas gift. Will let you all know when tickets go on sale.

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](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.

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 had a great holiday season. 2024 was a busy year and 2025 will be just as busy so we need to gear up and get ready to go back to work.

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 January 11<sup>th</sup>, Polare Bear Jump on January 17-18<sup>th</sup>, community breakfast on January 19<sup>th</sup>, and whatever else may come up.

The 2025 membership year is well under way. 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.

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.



# From the President's Desk...

By Debbie VanTassel

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Welcome to 2025. I hope it is a joyous and prosperous year for everyone.

Looking back on 2024 it was a very successful year for the Unit 5 Auxiliary. We put in hundreds of hours volunteering in various programs and projects to benefit Veterans, Active-Duty Military, the Community and Children and Youth.

Our last big project of the year was the Toys for Tots Firetruck parade with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Mother Nature was on her best behavior and gave us a beautiful sunny and fairly warm day for the parade. This is the first year that we had so many people come down for the parade, we actually had to make 2 loops with the fire trucks. After the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus greeted and presented gifts to about 90 children.

Thank you to all the volunteers who made the day a huge success and made it go so smoothly. Special thank you to Seward Volunteer Fire Department and Bear Creek Volunteer Fire Department. We would not be able to do this project without their support. Also, thank you to Susie and Randy, Amelia and Riley for being Mr. and Mrs. Claus and their Santa Helper elves. The left over snacks were donated to Seward Elementary school to provide snacks to students who often are not able to bring their own.



Speaking of donations, at the end of every year the Auxiliary makes donations to community programs. These funds are generated from the weekly Bingo games, Pull tabs, auctions and raffles that the Auxiliary does throughout the year. This year we made donations to SVFD, BCVFD, LPVFD, SVAC, Seward Senior Center to

provide meals to Veterans, SOS Pets, Seward Ministerial, FOAST and Fisher House. Again, huge thank you to the volunteers that put in so many hours and give so much to make the Auxiliary programs such a success.

The Post was beautifully decorated to celebrate the Christmas and New Year Season. Thank you to the Post for making it such a warm and welcoming meeting place for members especially our Veterans and their families. As is the annual tradition, the Post hosted a great Christmas day dinner with turkey, ham and all the trimmings. Again, thank you to the volunteers who make this happen every year.

Looking forward into 2025, January will be busy with Polar Bear jump off activities on January 17 and 18. There will be lots of activities and fun to be had during this weekend event.

**Bingo** will be in full swing in 2025. Come on down to the Post every Monday night. Doors open at 6 PM and games start at 630 PM.



Third Sunday breakfast will finish off the Polar Bear weekend. Come down to the Post for a hearty breakfast meal from 9-11.

Remember if you have not paid 2025 dues.... It is time!!!! The 2024 card is no longer valid as of January 1, 2025. So, get those renewals in.

At the January Auxiliary meeting, we will designate a committee to nominate officers for the 2025 year with elections being held in March. If you are interested in being an officer, please let a current officer know. This is your chance to help determine the projects and programs that the Auxiliary will work on during the upcoming year. It is important to have new people get involved and share their ideas and energy to make the Auxiliary successful.

Happy New Year to Everyone!!!

*For God and Country*

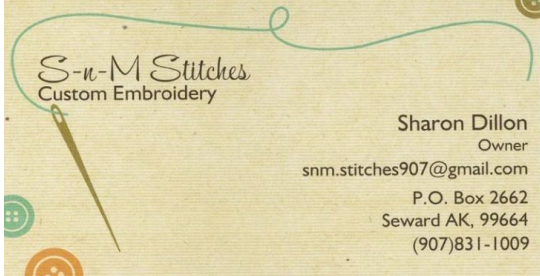


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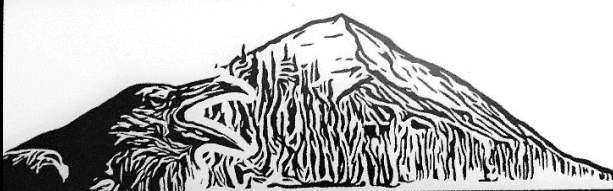
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Sam Clemons Jewelry Artist/Owner



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Sharon Dillon  
Owner  
snm.stitches907@gmail.com  
P.O. Box 2662  
Seward AK, 99664  
(907)831-1009



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Alaskan Arts, Gifts and Espresso  
228 Fourth Ave  
rantingravenak@gmail.com



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907.224.2600

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# Fond Memories in 2024



2024 INSTALLATION DINNER



EAGLE SCOUTS



\* SAINT PATRICK'S DAY



\* COMMANDER'S VISITATION



4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY



\* FLAG DAY CEREMONY



\* MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY



TSUNAMI BOWL BREAKFAST



\* MEMORIAL DAY FIRING DETAIL



\* COMBAT FISHING TOURNAY FEED




**January 2025**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		New Year's Eve 31	1	B, B, M&C 2 Pioneers of AK Igloo #9 meeting 6:30 pm 	Steak Night 3 	4 Pool League 
5  Luscious Leftovers LETOVERS Poker 5:00 pm	6 Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	7 Mexican Martes 	8 Auxiliary Meeting 6pm  Jewelry Class 6:00pm	9 B, B, M&C SAL Meeting 7pm 	10 Steak Night 	11 Pool League  ALR Breakfast
12 Luscious Leftovers TEAM LEFTOVERS Poker 5:00 pm	13 Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	14 Mexican Martes Post Meeting 5:30pm 	15 Jewelry Class 6:00 pm 	16 B, B, M&C 	17 Steak Night 17 Steaks Again!! 18 Polar Bear Jump-Off   Karoke Friday and Saturday	
19 Community Breakfast  Luscious Leftovers Poker 5:00 pm	20 BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	21 Mexican Martes 	22 Jewelry Class 6:00 pm 	23 B, B, M&C 	24 Steak Night 	25 Pool League 
26 Luscious Leftovers  Poker 5:00 pm	27 Chili Dogs BINGO!!!! 6:30PM 	28 Mexican Martes 	29 Jewelry Class 6:00 pm 	30 B, B, M&C 	31 Steak Night 	

**FOOD EVERY NIGHT AT THE POST!!!**

**JANUARY**