



POST 331 NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

SOUTH OMAHA MELTING POT POST #331

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Website: <https://southomahapost331.org>



COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

Greetings Legion Family!

I will start off by addressing the "elephant in the room": The DAV closing their lounge. The closing of the lounge, at this time, and until further notice, has not impacted the DAV allowing the Legion to continue to hold our burger nights, chicken bingo, and other Legion related events that we have had, and will have scheduled. This is a very unfortunate situation, but nothing that we have control of. The long-term future of the DAV building is still unknown. If anyone has questions, or would like to share opinions, I encourage you to call the Legion phone (402) 731-5185 rather than listen to and spread gossip and rumors. Also, this is a good time to remind everyone that the Transition Committee meets every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. at the DAV 4515 F Street and all members of the Post 331 Legion Family are welcome to join us. These meetings can sometimes also turn into a round table discussion of any topic that might come up.

On behalf of the Transition Committee, I will disclose that there is one building that we have found that is of interest, and a bid has been sent over with our realtors. We are hoping to share some good news in the near future.

We will be raffling off a Henry Golden Boy American Legion Tribute Edition .22 S/L/LR Model – H004SAL rifle, with the drawing scheduled for Saturday, June 6th, following the Flag Retirement Ceremony (more to come on that ceremony). Tickets are \$10.00 each and only 400 tickets will be sold. Proceeds will be used to support our Veteran's Programs and ceremonies that we have throughout the year. Contact a member of the E-Board if you would like to purchase tickets.

Elections will be here before we know it! Stan Petrulis and Jim Murphy are heading up the Nominating Committee. If you, or anyone you know, are interested in running for a position, contact Stan or Jim to get their name submitted. The Nominating Committee will report nominees at the April Legionnaire meeting and all nominees will need to be in attendance for that meeting.

There will be no Chicken Bingo in March, but the Auxiliary and Sons will be hosting their annual Ham It Up Bingo on March 29th. On March 5th, Tim Eriksen and crew will be serving up his delicious chicken fried steak dinner for \$12.00 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. In April, since he just can't get enough "kitchen time," Tim and crew will be making us some homemade lasagna on April 30th, also \$12.00 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

We will be conducting a "buddy check" session on Wednesday, March 18th, starting at noon if anyone would like to come down and help make some calls. Or, just come down and share some time with fellow Legion Family Members. Lunch will be provided.

The Children's Easter Party will be on Saturday, April 4th, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Bring all the kiddos and let's have some Easter joy!

For God and Country,
Lynn Bergman
Commander, Post 331

MADAME PRESIDENT'S BY-LINE

Greetings,

We have had a busy couple of months...On January 16-18th, 2026, it was my honor to represent ALA South Omaha Unit #331 at the ALA Mid-Year Conference & Convention in Norfolk, NE. On February 7th, Unit #331 was also well-represented at the District 8 Mid-Year Convention in Springfield, NE.

Have you sent in your membership renewals? **We appreciate YOU and your membership which makes a difference in our ALA mission of assisting Veterans and their families.** Nebraska is leading as #1 for Membership (New/Renewals) nationally! Nebraska was just under 85% of the goal as of the Mid-Year conference in January. Our Unit #331 membership goal is 100% by March 15th. Is your contact information current? If your mailing address, email address or phone number has changed, please let Pati Roth, Rhonda Ebert or myself know so that we can work together to ensure our Unit's member contact records are up-to-date.

ALA Girls State: Do you have a young lady that shows strong leadership abilities and is a High School Junior at Buena Vista, Omaha Bryan, Omaha South or Gross? Are they keenly interested in government and current events? Please have them visit with their guidance counselor at their respective school to inquire about Cornhusker Girls State. ALA Girls State is an amazing week of learning focused on responsible citizenship, leadership and the mission of the ALA.

Unit #331 Auxiliary Scholarship applications are available and due by March 31, 2026. If you need an application, please let Pati Roth or myself know and we will be happy to get one for you.

Ham It Up: Get your Bingo dobbers ready. Ham It Up is scheduled for Sunday, March 29th. Note: Chicken Bingo will not be held in March! Chicken Bingo will resume on April 8th, the second Wednesday of the month. Please call 402-731-5185 to make your reservations no later than Monday (April 6th) by 12:00 noon. As was done in January, you will pay for your Chicken BINGO dinners at the door.

Monthly Auxiliary meetings are resuming on the **second Monday** of each month at **6:00 p.m.** We invite you to join us to share your ideas and talents with our mission work helping our Veterans and their families.

Auxiliary Hamburger Nights are scheduled for the 3rd Monday of the month from 5:00-7:00 p.m. We need volunteers to help out the kitchen crew. Please contact betty_lowe@yahoo.com if you are interested in assisting with future Auxiliary Hamburger Nights.

Dates to Remember:

- March 9th & April 13th – Monthly Meetings at 6:00 p.m.
- March 11th – NO Chicken Bingo
- March 16th & April 20th – Auxiliary Hamburger Night
- March 18th – Buddy Check
- March 29th – Ham It Up Bingo
- March 31st – Auxiliary Unit #331 Scholarship Applications Due
- April 4th – Children's Easter Party
- April 8th – April Chicken Bingo

April Prayer Vigil (*date/time to be determined*) – Please watch for more details

Yours in Service,
Betty Lowe

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION COMMENTS

Sons of the American Legion,

As we draw closer to the end of our organization's year, we have a few things on the table for the next couple of months. While still early, it is time to start considering nominations for our new board. While the current board has done a fantastic job, we do have some vacancies and new blood on the board is always welcome. Also, I would not blame anyone whatsoever who needs a break for a bit. That said, it's still a few months off.

The DAV situation that I am sure you are all acutely aware of is still in flux. I do live in North Omaha and get asked routinely what is going on with that. I have heard several different rumors and am trying not to give them air. Unless something is 100% confirmed, the rumors don't help anyone. For that reason I have given people as direct information as I can without speculation. That is the best policy in my opinion at this time. I would encourage others to do so if asked as well. However, that is just my suggestion. Do as you will. I would never want someone to think I'm trying to instruct their speech. As for the DAV, Commander Pat has graciously allowed us to continue to hold our meetings and our kitchen nights at this time. I encourage all to patronize the kitchen nights and attend meetings.

To this end, at the request of the Legion and with the Sons in full agreement, we are officially moving our meetings to the Auxiliary food nights--third Monday of the month. Like the Legion meeting nights help us on our nights, we wish to help the Auxiliary in the same fashion. We definitely have seen a decline and want to make sure we are doing everything we can to support each other.

At the printing of this newsletter, we should have already finished drafting our updated by-laws and notices should be on the way shortly. We very badly need these to be updated so I encourage as many as possible to come to the meeting as indicated in the notice with the proper 30 day notice. We took a loss on every membership processed this year due to national/detachment increases. We have not increased dues in many years. We need these amended by-laws to correct this. While we are a non-profit and should not be aiming to profit off of our memberships, taking a loss perpetually is untenable. The better fiscal decisions we make, the more funds we have to support veterans and their families which is our whole reason for existing. I am a firm believer that even though a non-profit, the better financial decisions we can make the better. While according to our by-laws, this newsletter is sufficient notification for by-law changes, we do understand that many do not get the newsletter. For that reason, we are opting to do a separate notification. It is at an expense for the S.A.L. but we decided it is worth it to make sure no one is in the dark on these issues.

I did have a meeting recently with Commander Lynn Bergman and Auxiliary President Betty Lowe to coordinate our future plans. We are working with the VA Chapel to coordinate a Prayer Vigil. Details are still being worked on but we are looking at April. Please keep an eye out for that. We are additionally planning another Buddy Check. It would be great to have everyone possible involved from all three organizations. The primary goal is to check on those we have not heard from in a while and let them know they are still crucial parts of our community so the more participation, the better. We are planning to have a Children's Easter Party on Saturday, April 4th, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. or as children's attention spans allow. Our usual Ham It Up Bingo will be Sunday, March 29th.

Please bear in mind that with the uncertainty we are having with our building availability, some things may change or are not yet scheduled. I would encourage everyone to communicate as much as possible so everyone is notified of any changes. Additionally, we are planning a Christmas in July event to send care packages to active duty service members overseas but we are still developing that so it is probably more important for a future newsletter. Additionally, by the printing of this, we will either be or be in the process of accepting scholarship applications. We only had one last year and we certainly would like to contribute to future generations as much as possible. Please reach out to myself or other officers for updates.

As mentioned earlier, by making wise financial decisions we are able to support what we should be doing as an organization. While awards are not the principal reason for doing so, we have been recognized with a Children First Gift Club Award from the Child Well Being Foundation for contributions we have made from 2024-2025. This is the reason why we do what we do and fund raise.

This Sons of the American Legion Squadron went from being fairly dormant to winning awards in just a few years. Our membership, great boards back to back, and our prior leadership that set us up to keep carrying the torch and get this accomplished. I look forward to what the future holds for our Squadron and hold all in high regard. It's a team effort and I am sure we have many more exciting things to come.

Best,
Hunter C. Brooks
Sons of the American Legion Squadron 331 Commander

ADJUTANT'S CORNER

NO ARTICLE SUBMITTED

HONOR GUARD

Military Honors were performed at the funerals of veterans listed below:

01-09-26	Donald Bogatz	01-21-26	Howard Frazier
01-10-26	Edward Hruschy	01-30-26	Robert Mixon Sr.
01-12-26	Michael Vitlite	02-09-26	James Jackson Sr.
01-13-26	John Kelly	02-12-26	Richard Latke
01-19-26	Garnick Sutter	02-12-26	Richard Lampe

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Post 331 Honor Guard Members:

Tim Svoboda, Captain	Dick Olson, Lieutenant
Lynn Bergman	Mark Lowe
Mark Dreier	David Miller
Jill Druskis	Greg Miller
Perry Ebmeier	Richard Murcek
John Gulizia	Jim Murphy
George Hallman	Stan Petrulis
Terry Jones	

Respectfully Yours,
Timothy J. Svoboda, Captain
Post 331 Honor Guard

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

At the time of drafting this article on February 10th, our Melting Pot Post has 278 paid members for the 2026 membership year. This reflects 90% of our established 2026 membership goal of 307. We are especially pleased to welcome brand new Legionnaire Pat Wilwerding as a member of South Omaha Melting Pot Post 331. Pat is a U.S. Army veteran of the Gulf War era. Welcome Pat, we are

so happy to have you as a Legionnaire of the 331 Family! And "Bravo Zulu" (a U.S. Navy term meaning "well done") to Commander Lynn for bringing Pat into our ranks.

To those who have not yet renewed their American Legion membership for 2026, please note that your membership with The American Legion is currently considered suspended. But all is not lost! With payment of your 2026 dues, we can get you reinstated and privileges reactivated. Post 331 dues for the 2026 membership year are \$55. You may mail your dues to 3513 Monroe St, Omaha NE 68107, or you may also pay by going online to www.legion.org and clicking on the "Renew" button at the upper right. We want you to be a continued Legion member of our 331 Legion Family! Join Post 331 in being a collective voice who advocates for veterans and military service members to the Nebraska State Legislature and on Capitol Hill, who are role models to youth and fellow Americans, and who exemplify the values that we stand for as a nation and as veterans. Should you have any questions regarding membership, please do not hesitate to call the South Omaha Post 331 phone number at 402-731-5185.

Thank you to all of our Legionnaires for your proud service to our nation and for your continued service to community, state, and nation through your membership with American Legion South Omaha Melting Pot Post 331.

Jill Druskis
First Vice Commander

ATTENTION ALL LEGION FAMILY POST 331 VOLUNTEERS

We will be holding a Volunteer Appreciation lunch in May 2026. Every event, whether it be the weekly hamburger nights, the Children's Christmas Party, Halloween Party, Veterans Day Ceremony, etc., would not be possible if it weren't for our volunteers; you truly are the backbone of our success! Our Post would not be able to do the events that we do without our volunteers. If you have volunteered for any of the Legion Family events from July 1, 2025 to current, please call the Legion phone (402) 731-5185 or get in touch with me (402) 917-6213 and get your name on the list. We need to know two things: your name and if you prefer to have lunch on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. As we gather names and preferences, more information will follow!

VFW POST 2704 NEWS

Post Calendar:

Mar 10 – 7:00 p.m., 2704 Auxiliary Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
Mar 12-13 – Recruiting at Offutt AFB
Mar 25 – 7:00 p.m., Post Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
Mar 26 – 6:15 p.m., ENVH Bingo, 12505 Harrison Tull Rd, Bellevue (about 40th & Capehart Rd)
Apr 8 – 7:00 p.m., 2704 Auxiliary Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
Apr 11 – 8:30-11:30 a.m., Village Inn, Fort Crook Road, Post Membership Drive. Post provides breakfast.
Apr 12 – 2:00 p.m., District 10 Mtg, Post 2503, 8904 Military Ave
Apr 16-17 – Recruiting at Offutt AFB
Apr 22 – 7:00 p.m., Post Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
Apr 23 – 6:15 p.m., ENVH Bingo, 12505 Harrison Tull Rd, Bellevue (about 40th & Capehart Rd)

Membership: This year's goal set by National VFW is 101% and we are currently at 99.31% and only need 15 more to qualify for All American Post! If your card expires after July 1, 2025 but before July 1, 2026, you are an UNPAID member, please help us by paying your dues now! You will still get 12 months of additional paid membership, but it helps us immensely by knowing how many more we need to recruit yet this year. You can pay your dues online at www.vfw.org, call me to meet with you (your home or other place of your choosing) to pick them up, or mail your dues (\$40) to me (8510 Monroe St, Ralston, NE 68127). **Checks should be made**

payable to VFW Post 2704. VFW Nebraska and our Post are both offering \$50 life incentives! That's \$100 off the price of a life membership! This is a really big deal – as an example, if you are Under 30, the outright cost of a life membership is \$425. You could have a life membership for only \$335 instead of \$410, 31-40, \$410-100=\$310; 41-50, \$375-100=\$275; 51-60, \$335-100=\$235; 61-70, \$290-100=\$190; 71-80, \$225-100=\$125; 81 & up, \$170-100=\$70. If interested, please contact me as the money for life incentives will go fast!

Community Activities: We continue to lead bingo at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home in Bellevue each month. We have a member, Mary Carlson, who works tirelessly on Blue & Gold Star Memorials, Quilts of Valor and more! We also have a member, Jim Carmona, who volunteers as a classroom mentor!

Farewells: Life Members: Edward Barnes, Clifford Gosch, Joseph Orosco, Anthony Ray, Robert Ringo, Umberto Sanzo, Jack Wolfe and David Humpal (I attended his funeral).

Members New to the Post: Alan Carmicheal, Jeremy Pettis, Reginald Weatherbee

Auxiliary: Our Auxiliary can always use more members too. Spouses, children and step children (16 or older), siblings, parents and grandparents of our members or other veterans who qualify for the VFW are eligible and encouraged to join. Help us help our community by contacting me for more information.

Larry M. Gerlt 8510 Monroe St (402) 618-2731
QM, Post 2704 Ralston, NE 68127 larry.gerlt@gmail.com

POST 331 OFFICERS 2025-2026

Legion Post 331:

Commander	Lynn Bergman
1st Vice Cmdr (Membership)	Jill Druskis
2nd Vice Cmdr (Children & Youth)	Richard Klinger
3rd Vice Cmdr (Building & Grounds)	Vacant
Adjutant	Mark Dreier
Finance Officer	Terry Jones
Chaplain	Frank Durham
Sergeant-at-Arms	Bill McCollum

Executive Board

Gary Roth	Chuck Gilmore	Tim Svoboda
Past Commander		Mark Dreier

Auxiliary Unit 331:

President	Betty Lowe	
Vice President	Vacant	
Secretary	Rhonda Ebert	
Treasurer	Pati Roth	
Historian	Vacant	
Chaplain	Carol Lewis	
Sergeant-at-Arms	Vacant	
<u>Executive Board</u>		
Debbie Dreier	Betty Lowe	Beverly Hofsheier
Past President		Becky Saathoff

S.A.L. Squadron 331:

Commander	Hunter Brooks
1st Vice Commander	Larry Druskis
2nd Vice Commander	Rich Kellison
3rd Vice Commander	Vacant
Adjutant	Alan Kalskett
Finance Officer	John Bowhay
Historian	Ron Osborn
Chaplain	Vacant
Sergeant-At-Arms	Pat Zymola
Past Commander	Alan Kalskett