



4/23/2014

2014 ALRA Directors Report

I was elected as ALR State Director on 24 March at the beginning of the 49th Alaska Department Convention. It was the first Alaska Department Convention that included participation with ALRA. To say I was a bit shocked would be making a vast understatement, but being an interesting challenge I accepted. It was clear from the convention meeting that as Director I would have two distinct goals for my agenda. First too boost Chapter participation in events planned for the ALRA. Secondly start an ALR Chapter at one of the Anchorage Post.

To those Goals I turned my attention and wrote a letter addressing all the ALR Chapters in the Department encouraging their attendance and discussing the ability to host a ALRA event also hinged on chapter participation in other ALRA events. This had been decided at the convention meeting. I rode to visit Chapter 20 attend a chapter meeting and discuss the event from the ALR Convention meeting. I was a little disappointed that more members rode there from Chapters 5 and 18 than showed up for the Chapter 20 meeting.

On the topic of starting a Chapter in our state's largest populated area which also is home to the most number of American Legion Post. I have had a lot of help. Todd Hardwick and Loren Estrada of Chapter 35 have traveled the areas and talked about the Riders and garnered interest in starting Chapters in Anchorage and at Post 15 in Palmer. A policy was developed where if we could get members of Anchorage's American Legion Post interested we would sign them up at Post 35 or 5 as they choose and when enough members were enrolled to start a Anchorage Chapter I would go to Anchorage hold a meeting elect officers and then present the prospective Chapter to the appropriate Post for approval. Eric Walters is the first ALR member from the Anchorage area he is a SAL member from Post 28 and very interest in beginning a Chapter at Post 28. I have also had discussions with Erik Dufford the SAL Commander at Post 28 and he has several members of the Post and SAL interested. We just need to find the time in both our schedules to put our heads together garner the membership and get it done. It is my hope that we get this done sooner than later.

We do have another Chapter in the Department of Alaska. Don Capers and Don Ridl along with two other Riders began a Chapter at Post 16 in Homer. It was a great pleasure to be invited there to conduct their installation ceremony. Post 16 was a generous host making myself and my family as comfortable as we would have been at our own Post. The most surprising thing I discovered in Homer was that Don Ridl can cook as he prepared a very good Pepper Steak dish for the Potluck Dinner at the Installation Ceremony.

The Memorial Day 2013 saw me riding to Trappers Creek for the weekend to attend the ceremonies at the Alaska War Memorial located at Beyer's Lake. To say that the gathering was

awesome as the weather was perfect and the camaraderie outstanding. Senator Lisa Murkowski was in attendance and made an impassioned speech on how many have forgotten the sacrifices made for the freedoms we enjoy and how we who do remember should work to bring those sacrifices to the attention of the many who see Memorial Day as another day off of work and not as a day of remembrance.

June brought me to Post 30 for the 1st annual ALRA ROMP; once again we had outstanding weather and fellowship with fellow Legion Riders. We rode to Delta for a picnic and there was plenty of Ice Cream along with lots of informal discussion on status of the American Legion Riders. The ride to Chatanika was challenging and fun the owners of the lodge there pulled out all the stops a feeds us with a awesome lunch. We also worked in some fundraising for the ALR and Legacy Run. The Riders made decision to donate 500.00 from the ALRA to the Legacy Run. Post 30 was great host and I found myself wishing I could extend my stay but that was more than compensated for by the ride back along the Richardson Highway with the riders of Post 35 that ride was the highlight of my summer and way too much fun.

Lisa Williamson has done an outstanding job of rejuvenating the ALRA Website, which is complete with links to other National and Department pages along with areas for input from yours truly. She has also exceeded our expectations of her by starting a ALRA Facebook page. I would encourage everyone to take a look at these web pages and although I may be a bit biased I am sure you will agree the ALRA page looks better than or Department page. But don't take my word for it please go to alaskalegionriders.org and judge for yourself.

Attended the Fall Conference held at Post 1 by Department and as usual I learned more about the business of the American Legion. This was also the first time I spoke at a Department function and I admit to being more than a little nervous but the reception was warm and I didn't put anyone to sleep so I guess it went OK.

I also contacted John Moffit, the Western Region Representative to the National American Legion Riders Executive Committee. He was excited to have a contact in Alaska and flooded my e-mail with information. We now know about a Western Regional ROMP which takes place the week before our own ROMP. And have a direct line for Rider information at National without having to wait for the National Website to be updated.

As my first Statewide Legion office my year as Director for the Alaska Legion Riders was a humbling and learning experience. I need to thank Lisa Williamson who besides being a fountain of knowledge was my most ardent defender. Don Ridl, Clare Sullivan, Mike Calhoun, Don and Marilyn Sutherland, Vicki Kosman and Ron Travis for the words of encouragement, advice and support, they along with other mentioned made this responsibility much easier to shoulder.

Respectfully Submitted
For God and Country

Robert D Dunno Jr.