



POST 331 NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

SOUTH OMAHA MELTING POT POST #331

VOLUME 54, NO. 5, SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2026

Website: <https://southomahapost331.org>



COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

I would like to begin with an apology. In the last newsletter, I listed Terri Durham as the 2nd Vice Commander. Terri actually holds the position of 3rd Vice Commander, Building and Grounds. 1st and 2nd Vice Commander positions are currently vacant.

We will get the elephant in the room out of the way.....As of the writing of this article, the sale of the DAV building to the American Legion is on hold. However, the Transition Committee is back in full force and on the hunt. DAV Chapter 2 Commander Gamblin has given the Legion approval to continue to hold our burger nights, chicken bingo and all other events at the DAV until a final decision has been made. I encourage everyone to continue to come out and support your Post for all upcoming events. We are a strong Legion Family and you have proved that by your continued support over the past two years.

July and August were rather quiet for us, taking the summer off for family vacations, or simply spending time in the cool air conditioning. Well, it is time to hit the ground running!

For God and Country,
Lynn Bergman
Commander, Post 331

DATES TO NOTE FOR SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

(aside from the regular burger nights and meetings)

To sign up for any of these events, contact the Post via phone or email

September 9th – Chicken Bingo, Dinner, 5:00-6:00 p.m.; Bingo starts at 6:00 p.m.; reservations must be made by Monday, September 7th.

September 14 – POW/MIA Ceremony, 4:30 p.m.

September 20 – Legion Family Outing; Storm Chaser Game; 1:05 p.m. first pitch, tailgate at noon; reservations must be made by September 16th

October 14th – Chicken Bingo, Dinner, 5:00-6:00 p.m.; Bingo starts at 6:00 p.m.; reservations must be made by Monday, October 12th.

October 21st – Early Bird Dinner; Social Hour, 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Dinner served at 5:30 p.m.; reservations must be made by Monday, October 19th.

October 24th – Cribbage Tournament – \$10 entry fee; Tournament starts at 12:00 (noon)

October 25th – Children's Halloween Party, 12 noon

MADAME PRESIDENT'S BY-LINE

Greetings, ALA Unit 331!

Thank Y-O-U to all who have outreached to volunteer with our upcoming 3Q2026 and 4Q2026 activities advocating for our veterans, educating our citizens, mentoring youth, and promoting patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security. It truly is a team effort and I am deeply grateful for each one of you for sharing your ideas, time and talents working on our projects supporting our Veterans and their families.

Debbie Dreier and I honorably represented ALA (South Omaha) Unit 331 as "Delegates" at the ALA Department of Nebraska 104th Annual 2026 Department Convention held in Columbus, NE on June 25-28th, 2026. It was a wonderful event. The Convention was filled with many network opportunities with representatives, from not only other NE Units, but opportunities to engage in conversing with our National President/Pam Ray, National Education Chair, National Girls Nation, NEC and NW Division Children and Youth, NW Division Leadership, NW Division National Security, Department Officers and Chairs, Past Department Presidents, District Presidents and Department Chairs.

****Did you know that a portion of your membership helps with...ALA (South Omaha) 331 plans with continuing in bringing back more programs from our Unit's past such as Back to School Backpack drives, Hat and Mitten Tree, OVAMC Gift Shop, participate with Post 331 Legion Family Youth and Children Flag Education programs, and mentoring and providing support of our future Junior Members along with continuing to help us with the many programs that we have already reinstituted during 2026, which include *Americanism, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Children and Youth, Community Service, Constitution and Bylaws, County Government, Education-Cornhusker Girls State/Girls Nation, Legislative, Membership, Music, National Security, Poppy, Public Relations, Service to Veterans, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Veteran Facilities, Omaha VA Medical Center, Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home, The Fisher House, Easter Seals, etc.*** In order to continue achieving our mission, we are asking for your help through renewal of your membership dues along with promotion of the good works being accomplished by your ALA (South Omaha) Unit 331. One of our Unit goals is that we are striving to achieve is a 100% membership renewal rating by November 1st, 2026 and continue to grow our Unit's current membership by 25% for 2027. We know this is a big goal to attain, but we believe we can do it with your support!!

Our next Monthly Auxiliary Meeting is scheduled for September 14th, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the DAV, 4515 F Street. We are pleased to continue seeing an increase in the number of members attending our monthly meetings which are being held on the 2nd Monday of each month as well as excited about the increased incoming calls to sign-up to donate time to help out with various projects benefiting our Veterans. We welcome you to come join us to share your ideas and talents with our mission of helping our Veterans and their families.

Reminder! Auxiliary Hamburger Nights are scheduled for the 3rd Monday of the month from 5:00-7:00 p.m. We welcome additional volunteers to join us by giving a few hours of your time to help out our kitchen crew to establish a monthly rotation. Contact betty_lowe@yahoo.com if you are interested in signing up to work at a future Auxiliary Hamburger Night.

Watch for more detailed updates from your Legion Family (S.A.L. and Auxiliary)...Plans are well underway for the upcoming Feather Party to be held in November. Please let S.A.L. Commander John Bowhay and me know if you are interested in helping or donating new items for door prizes. This is one of our largest events every year and we welcome your generous donations through promoting and attending this fun-filled event. Thank YOU!

Dates to Remember:

September 14th and October 12th – Monthly Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
September 21st and October 19th – Auxiliary Hamburger Night (5:00-7:00 p.m.)

Yours in Service,
Betty Lowe
Auxiliary President Unit 331

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION COMMENTS

Sons of the American Legion,

I would like to thank our outgoing Commander, Hunter Brooks, for his leadership and dedication over the past several years. As I step into this role, I look forward to continuing to work alongside our S.A.L. members to strengthen membership and support our organization. I am also eager to collaborate with Commander Lynn and Madame President Betty Lowe to make this a successful and productive year.

We are still awaiting a decision from the DAV regarding the building. In the meantime, our by-laws have been updated, and annual membership dues have increased to \$35 for regular members and \$20 for dual and junior members.

S.A.L. Hamburger Night is held on the first Monday of each month and we typically offer a special menu item. Our August 3rd Hamburger Night featured bacon cheeseburgers with lettuce, tomato, and onion, served with fries. It was a great success and we sold out!

Our monthly S.A.L. meeting is held on the third Monday of each month, and all S.A.L. members are encouraged to attend. This is also Auxiliary Hamburger Night, so come hungry, enjoy a great meal, and join us for the meeting.

I would like you to welcome our new 2026-2027 Post 331 S.A.L. officers and introduce yourself if you don't know them.

Commander	John Bowhay
1st Vice Commander	Hunter Brooks
2nd Vice Commander	Roger Mlady
3rd Vice Commander	Gary Roth
Adjutant	Alan Kalskett
Finance Officer	Richard Kellison
Chaplain	Roger Kielion
Historian	Vacant
Sergeant-At-Arms	Pat Zymola
Past Commander	Hunter Brooks

God Bless America and all of our service members.

John Bowhay
S.A.L. Commander

ADJUTANT'S CORNER

Greetings to All!

It's been a while since I've written so I want to start with a shout out to all my Legion Family who sent me love in their prayers during my medical scare. I am a firm believer that prayers really work. Bravo Zulu to all.

DAV building. I know it's been an On Again/Off Again situation and as of the date of this article, we are still in a holding pattern with no hard date on a decision from the DAV's leadership. With that in mind, I have resurrected the Transition Committee who will continue the search for our Forever Post.

The National Convention was held a couple of weeks ago, so I suspect we'll get all the gossip in the September Department Newsletter. That should be a good read.

Membership: Early Bird Renewals are important. Post 331 membership goals need to be at 50% to be recognized by Department, 331 is sitting at about 42%. I know all of us SOBs can do it, so please get your renewals sent in ASAP.

Down range we have a couple of events scheduled. Labor Day is approaching fast, the E-Board will be looking into whether to do anything other than relax and watch Football or 90 Day Fiancé. Next, October is a fun one for the Kids with our Haunted House. Our same committee, who coordinated our 250th Anniversary show, has agreed to step up to the plate and coordinate this event too. Date TBD.

For God and Country,
Mark Dreier
Post 331 Adjutant

HONOR GUARD

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

06-24-26	Richard Klinger	07-16-26	Cohen Copde
06-30-26	James Farrar	07-24-26	John Wortrit
07-07-26	Paul Willis	07-31-26	Rich Lempi
07-14-26	James Hawthorne	08-06-26	Kevin Higginbot

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Post 331 Honor Guard Members:

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

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

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

At the beginning of the 2026-2027 membership year, our Post showed 271 active members. The goal for the upcoming year is set at 275. This can only be achieved by 1) our active members renewing their membership and 2) recruiting new members. Recruitment is reliant on our current members bringing in friends and family members as new Legionnaires. As I have talked to many individuals over the past years, I find it interesting how many people have no idea what the American Legion does or what it stands for. We need to ensure that, while trying to recruit new members, they understand that the American Legion is the nation's largest veteran's

service organization, dedicated to supporting veterans, service members, and youth, through advocacy, community programs and patriotic service. When recruiting, tell your story, why you joined, the benefits that you have, and explain to them that by being a member of the American Legion they have a voice in Congress. Let's make it a personal goal for our Post to reach 100% of our goal this year. Does anyone know when was the last time this goal was achieved? LET'S DO THIS!!!

EVENT COORDINATOR

I am very excited to announce that we are forming what is currently being coined as the "Event Committee." Janelle McMillan, a member of our Auxiliary Unit has accepted the position of Chairperson for this committee. Janelle has been a member of our Auxiliary Unit for three years, and some of you may know her from her bartending days when the DAV lounge was open. She is a young, motivated individual with fun ideas and lots of energy. This committee will take on the task of planning and arranging all of our Legion events, such as the Children's Christmas party, Halloween party, Flag Education, Veteran's Day Ceremony, etc. If you are interested in being a member of the committee to help Janelle in her new role, please call the Legion phone and we will get you connected with Janelle.

The first meeting of the Event Committee will be held on Monday, September 14th at 5:00 p.m.

VFW POST 2704 NEWS

Post Calendar:

Sept 8 – 7:00 p.m., 2704 Auxiliary Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
 Sept 12 – 8:30-11:30 a.m., Village Inn, Fort Crook Rd, Post Membership Drive. Post provides breakfast.
 Sept 17, 18 – 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Recruiting, Offutt AFB Main BX
 Sept 23 – 7:00 p.m., Post Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
 Sept 24 – 6:15-7:30 p.m., ENVH Bingo, 12505 Harrison Tull Rd, Bellevue (about 40th & Capehart Rd)
 Oct 3 – 8:30-11:30 a.m., Village Inn, Fort Crook Rd, Post Membership Drive. Post provides breakfast.
 Oct 11, 12 – State Commander and Auxiliary President Homecoming, Valentine
 Oct 13 – 7:00 p.m., 2704 Auxiliary Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
 Oct 15, 16 – 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Recruiting, Offutt AFB Main BX
 Oct 16-18 – Big Ten Conference, Kalamazoo, Michigan
 Oct 18 – 2:00 p.m., Post 2543, District 10 Meeting, 510 1st Ave, Plattsmouth
 Oct 28 – 7:00 p.m., Post Meeting, DAV, 4515 F St
 Oct 29 – 6:15-7:30 p.m., ENVH Bingo, 12505 Harrison Tull Rd, Bellevue (about 40th & Capehart Rd)

Membership: This year's goal set by National VFW is 104%. As we are currently at 89.43%, we need 58 more members to pay their dues! Each of you is very important to us! If your card expires before July 1, 2027, you are an UNPAID member. Please help us with our State and National Legislative lobbying 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 for Department to achieve All American as well. 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 \$325 instead of \$425 if under 31; 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 is often goes pretty fast! Need an easy payment plan? Call me about our 12-month payment plan for life membership – no interest and no carrying charges!

Community Activities: We continue to lead Bingo at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home in Bellevue each month. This past month we had 39 attendees!

July Meeting: Made donation to 50 Mile March who are building a campus near the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home. Proceeding with invite to ENVH residents qualified to join the VFW. Two Post members thanked the Post membership for the support they have received from us.

Farewell: Michael Brock

Members New to the Post: Matt Eller, Patty Harrison, David Hobbs, Bill Hudson, Harry Sherwood

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 **2026-2027**

Legion Post 331:

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

Executive Board

Mark Lowe	Gary Roth	Chuck Gilmore
Past Commander		Mark Dreier

Auxiliary Unit 331:

President	Betty Lowe
Vice President	Janelle McMillan
Secretary	Rhonda Ebert
Treasurer	Pati Roth
Chaplain	Carol Lewis~Mary Martinez
Historian	Vacant
Sergeant-at-Arms	Vacant

Executive Board

Debbie Dreier	Beverly Hofsheier	Shirley Livingston
Lila Maroncini	Dawnette Schmidt	
Past President		Becky Saathoff

S.A.L. Squadron 331:

Commander	John Bowhay
1st Vice Commander	Hunter Brooks
2nd Vice Commander	Roger Mlady
3rd Vice Commander	Gary Roth
Adjutant	Alan Kalskett
Finance Officer	Richard Kellison
Chaplain	Richard Kielion
Historian	Vacant
Sergeant-At-Arms	Pat Zymola
Past Commander	Hunter Brooks