

NEWSLETTER



Ph: 412-653-1555 • 650 Old Clairton Road, Pleasant Hills • April 2018

puto *American Legion • Post 712 • Pleasant Hills*



Greetings from the Commander

LEGION OFFICERS

Commander
FRANK CAPUTO

1st Vice Commander
DON SMOLEY

2nd Vice Commander
CRAIG KERN

Adjutant
THAD WEIDMANN

Finance Officer
BILL MARTINIS

Service Officer
LEE PHILLIPS

Chaplin
EDWARD HLAD

Judge Advocate
NICHOLAS
D. KRAWEC ESQ.

Sgt-At-Arms
BILL WEIKEL

I would like to wish a Happy Easter to everyone. The post held it's annual Easter egg hunt and pancake breakfast on Saturday March 24, it was attended by about 30 of our members children, thankfully the weather was not to bad. Thanks to Gary and his crew from the SAL for making the pancakes which were shaped like bunnies. Also thanks to Mary Ann and her ladies from the ALA for helping to organize everything and for supplying the candy and gifts for the children.

Just one more Friday for our Lenten fish fries, they are going very well. This year we are open at noon for either eat in or take out. Watch for more things to come in the near future.

God Bless America and God Bless Our Troops

Frank Caputo

Commander



Post 712 Website: alpost712pa.org

From the Desk of the Adjutant

Thad Weidmann

Our 'Lent at the Legion' went very well this year. We matched what we took in last year and were able to skip a month of drawing from our savings to keep the doors open. Thanks to all the Legion groups that pitched in with volunteering on scheduled days to assist with cleaning, setting up and accompanying customers to their tables and especially to those members that helped whether it was their group's day or not. Thanks also to our Soldiers Place kitchen crew for cooking excellent dishes, our ALA for providing those tasty deserts and our waitresses for providing prompt and friendly service. We were open twice as long this year from 12-8 PM, but we were able to handle the additional workload. We were also able to add many new members once they got a chance to see what we have to offer. That's the kind of team effort we need to keep our Post alive.

Thanks also to our ALA and SAL groups for providing a great kid's Pancake and Sausage Breakfast followed by our annual Easter Egg Hunt led by our new celebrity Easter Bunny!

Our Manager, Debbie, coordinated an amazing St Patrick's Day celebration with decorations, necklaces, green beer and DJ. Our Soldiers Place kitchen crew put out a great buffet. Many of our guests were dressed with St Patrick's Day attire and had a great time doing the line dances. This was one of the most profitable parties we have had in a long time and everyone joined in the fun and had a great time. Debbie has other special events scheduled in the coming months. Hopefully, we can continue to build on our member participation and new member additions to make our Post a 'Go To' place for a good time. Don Rottman donated a newsletter article showing how a Legion Post in California was able to accomplish that.

With our leagues and other groups winding down for the summer, we would like to ask these or any other groups that you may be a member of to consider using our Post for any parties your group may be planning. We have the upper dining room that can be closed off for small private parties, along with our social hall (with round tables to provide that banquet hall experience or traditional long tables) with 2 private entrances for up to 100 people. If you will be having alcoholic beverages, our LCB trained bartenders will provide prompt and friendly service. We can now also offer professional catering services from our Soldiers Place Restaurant. See Debbie (412-477-3934) to arrange a date that would be convenient for your party.

Finally, we hope the Riders have safe and fun rides this summer. As members of our Post, they are ambassadors representing our Legion. And, we appreciate whenever they can make our Post the final stop of their rides, it helps to support our Post. If we can provide assistance for any group like opening early or providing Post resources for an event, let Debbie know.

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Hollywood's Hottest Private Club: The American Legion

Younger veterans seized Post 43, lured a cool crowd; Art Deco bar, free parking

Taken from *THE VILLAGES DAILY SUN*

Article By Michael M. Phillips



HOLLYWOOD- Here are words not often seen together in a sentence: American Legion and cool.

The young guns who have seized control of American Legion Post 43 are trying to fuse them together in the minds of a new generation of combat veterans, re-branding their venerable Egyptian Revival building, with its underground Art Deco bar, as “the coolest private club in Hollywood.”

“We have the cheapest drinks, the nicest people, the best looking bar,” says Post commander Fernando Rivero, a 42-year-old TV producer who engineered a bloodless coup that overthrew Post 34’s old guard.

“We have free parking, which is of tremendous value in Hollywood. There’s really no other place I want to go.”

The American Legion has an image problem. Though the group is immersed in good works, its name summons visions of crotchety vets nursing beers in linoleum-floored posts. An “old-timey funny-hat club,” in Mr. Rivero’s words.

At one California Legion convention, he was aghast the program mostly featured ads for hospices and cem-

eteries. He waved the booklet in frustration. “You realize your advertisers are branding you?” he said. “Welcome to the American Legion—Prepare to die.”

The organization also has a demographic problem. World War II and Korea vets are indeed dying at a rapid clip, with the Vietnam generation next in line. Despite constant war since the Sept. 11 attacks, the country’s veteran population is expected to fall to 13.6 million in two decades, from 20 million today, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Hollywood post, which opened in 1929, has in its new incarnation managed to prosper and attract vets for whom hip isn’t necessarily a prelude to replacement.

“I never thought in a million years that I’d be so into this,” says Second Vice Commander Jennifer Campbell, 35, a former Army truck driver turned personal trainer. “I’m as surprised as anybody.”

Down the road from the Hollywood Bowl, Post 43 has long ties to the entertainment industry. Clark Gable, Charlton Heston, and Rudy Vallee were members. In recent decades the Post business model provided ample money for good works, from patriotic oratory contests to projects to help veterans navigate the VA.



The legionnaires rent their parking lot during events at the Hollywood Bowl. Movie and TV producers film at the Post; a young Jim Kirk lost a fight in the Art Deco bar in the 2009 movie “Star Trek.”

But there was little effort to make the Post a social center.

“We appreciate the generation that came before us,” says Ms. Campbell. But we don’t want to hang out with 80-year-old men all night.”

To join, vets previously had to pay the \$33.50 annual fee with a check. “The only way to communicate with the office in 2011 other than phone was with a fax— it was like 1986 in there,” says Mr. Rivero, who served in Afghanistan.

Membership was limited to 500, partly out of concern there would

challenged the old guard in elections. “We thought we’d be run out of town,” recalls Mr. Rivero. The old guard was no match for the high-tech electoral prowess of the young guns, who used email and text messages to round up votes.

The cabaret room went silent when it was announced that Future 43 candidates had won enough seats to form a ruling junta with some sympathetic old timers.

Their first move was to set a goal of doubling the rolls to 1,000 but 2019 parking be damned. Suddenly, the bar—a classic speakeasy—opened more than one night a week. There were karaoke and comedy nights, running and shooting clubs.

In January, the new management put up a website allowing vets to join by clicking and paying dues by credit card. (Vets must email a form showing they served honorably during wartime.)

So far this year, more than 260 have signed up, compared with 19 inducted in 2011.

“At first I was referred to as the girl with purple hair,” says Danielle

Baker, a 35-year-old former Army chemical-warfare specialist with purple hair. “But I’m not the only girl [at Post 43] with purple hair.”

The younger vets pushed through a \$2 million project to convert the big meeting hall into a 482-seat digital movie theater where, after construction is complete next year, studios will be able to screen military-themed movies.

It’s going to make Grauman’s Chinese Theatre look like a second-rate place,” says Jimmy Weldon. Now 94, Mr. Weldon served in Gen. George Patton’s 3rd Army, helped liberate Buchenwald concentration camp and, later, performed the voice of Yakky Doodle duck in the Yogi Bear cartoons, a character that still creeps into his daily conversation. Mr. Weldon wraps up the monthly business meeting with the words, “Let us close with Irving Berlin’s ‘God Bless America.’”

Still, the young guns’ offensive has met with light resistance. Some older members worried about taking on debt for the renovation. Some feared for their free dinners. Mr. Weldon is unhapp-

POST 712
HOME ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS

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BOB STOODT

Vice President
FRANK CAPUTO

Secretary
ED HARMON

Treasurer
BILL WEIKEL

Board Members

DAVE BILSKI

ROB BUTELLI

BOB BRANCHEN

JOHN DILLON

NICK KRAWEC, ESQ.

py that not all meetings open with prayers: “This was a shock to us.”

Even some supporters find the rebranding a bit jarring. “I’ve never used the word ‘cool’ in my life,” says Les Probst, 84, who patrolled Korea’s demilitarized zone. “I don’t know what ‘cool’ means.”

Resistance, however, has melted away before the undisputed recruiting success of the post-9/11 legionnaires. Says Max Thayer, a 71-year-old Vietnam-era Army medic: “It has been like a blood transfusion.”



Sons of the Legion,

We had a nice turn out for breakfast with the Easter bunny. The children enjoyed themselves.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Bus trip to Nemocoln Casino on Sunday, May 6th. Bus will leave the legion at noon and will head back with bus load of money at 6:00 pm. Beer and soft drinks and snacks will be provided. Hope to see you there.

Don't forget about Hoagie sale in May. They will be made fresh at the legion on May 20th. Look for the order forms at the bar.

Thank you,

Gary C. Hartman

Commander of the Sons

SAL OFFICERS

Commander
GARY HARTMAN

Sr. Vice Commander
DON W. GOULDER

Jr. Vice Commander
DON J. GOULDER

Adjutant
MIKE HAVERTY

Finance Officer
RICHARD HARTMAN

Chaplin
AL DANKO



Auxiliary Corner,

The Veterans were so happy to see us on Thursday. Our usual attendees were there. Chuck and Anne Giovanneti, Barb Terihay, Carolyn Armitage and myself. Thanks for the care you give of yourself. Too bad we can't get more people to visit with them.

Thanks to all the ladies that have been helping with the fish fry and especially to those that donated baked goods.

A special thanks to our club manager Debbie. She gave us permission to have the bake sale and St. Patrick's Day Basket of Cheer both were a huge success. Let's all visit the Post and help in keeping it going.

Thanks also to Dee and Joe and all their help. They have treated our ALA great. Stop by and try the great food and keep coming back. Rose Ann has been extremely good to the ALA she donates baked goods and gifts for our Veterans.

The soup cook off is April 14th try to attend. If you would like to enter a soup, see Donna McCrumb. It is a good treat at \$5.00 includes bread and a salad.

God Bless and Protect Our Troops.

Mary Ann Marunich

ALA President

ALA OFFICERS

President
MARY ANN MARUNICH

1st Vice President
DONNA McCRUMB

2nd Vice President
VICKY GOLDEN

Secretary
MARGARET PHILLIPS

Treasurer
ANNE GIOVANNITTI

Chaplain
BARBARA TERIHAY

Sgt-At-Arms
ROSE BREEN

Sgt-At-Arms
DONNA ROTTMAN

Sgt-At-Arms
PAT O'TOOLE



American Legion Riders,

G'Day Legionnaires:

Riding Season is upon us. Definition of a fanatic: Spend \$25,000 on a motorcycle in Pittsburgh that you only get to ride 4 months a year. No worries though, with Mother Nature's cooperation we will maximize our Riding Time. Note-worthy in the Riders schedule for this upcoming season is that the Riders are going to Gettysburg during June 22 – 25 to visit the historic town and tour the battlefield. Hotel rooms are very limited. Talk to **Top** if you are interested. During July 13 – 16 the Riders are heading out to Geneva-on-the-Lake for another long weekend get-a-way. **Senior VP Ken Lancaster**, of Lancaster's Riders, is the POC for this excursion and rooms are still available. **Adjutant Lloyd Ray** is planning a mammoth week-long trip to ride the Dragon's Tail in North Carolina during June. See Lloyd for details. Then on Saturday, August 4th the Riders will conduct our Annual Benefit Ride. This year's ride will be to Laurel Hill State Park and return to Post 712 for great food, American Auctions, raffles and a good time. Benefit Ride proceeds will support local Veterans in need through the Post 712 Veteran's Fund and through our partners at the Veterans Place on Washington Boulevard. In addition to the overnight rides, the Riders will make daylong excursions to various locations throughout the season and for those lucky enough to be retired the day-time outings while the rest of the world is at work are always fun.

The Riders will conduct a gun raffle to be drawn on May 19th; Armed Forces Day. The Riders are donating \$1,000 of the proceeds to the Post 712 Veterans Fund. It is important that all groups within Post 712 give back to the Post to ensure the Post remains an active and vibrant place for Veterans and Patriots to meet, greet and enjoy life. The Riders have partnered with our friends at The Gun Rack to conduct this raffle. Tickets are \$20 each and only 250 tickets will be sold; meaning each ticket has four numbers. The number plays on the first 7 PM evening drawing of the PA Pick 3 Lottery. The lucky winner will receive a Springfield Armory Saint Edge 5.56 mm rifle AND your choice of a Glock 17, 19 or 26 Gen5 pistol in 9mm. This really is a great raffle and tickets are going quick. See a Rider for more information and tickets. Special thanks to **Senior Road Captain Dan Oeler, Secretary Susan Dillon and Treasurer Beverly Weikel** who do the heavy lifting to run these gun raffles!

DESERT STORM VETERANS:

On April 24, 2006, Pennsylvania House Bill 1820 was signed into law as Act 29 of 2006. This Bill established the Persian Gulf Conflict Veterans Benefit Act awarding a grant of \$500 to every Veteran who served in the Persian Gulf War. On Nov. 7, 2006, Pennsylvania voters gave overwhelming approval to a ballot question to fund the program. The bond issue created a fund for the payment of compensation to, or on behalf of, eligible current and former members of the United States Armed Forces, a reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or the Pennsylvania National Guard. On Oct. 30, 2015 ACT 29 was amended through the enactment of Act 50 extending the application period to Aug. 31, 2018. If you or someone you know has not yet received their grant do it quickly as time is running out. More information is available on-line by researching the Persian Gulf Bonus Program on the webpage of the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; www.dmv.pa.gov/ or contact Top and he'll help you out.

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ALL VETERANS: The VA has resumed on-line applications for the new VA ID cards. If you are a Veteran and do not have a VA ID Card you should obtain one to be able to prove your Veteran Status without having to carry around a DD Form 214. The card is accepted by retailers who offer discounts to Veterans. You can obtain more information and sign up for your card at www.vets.gov.

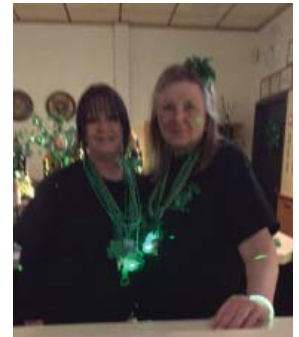
... And speaking of the all-important DD Form 214, if you do not have a copy of your DD Form 214, or if you are a family member of a Veteran who needs a DD 214, you really should take the time to obtain this critically important document. The DD 214 verifies services a Veteran and a Veteran's family are eligible to receive. To obtain a copy of your DD 214 you can visit the National Archives website at www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records and complete the request on-line. If you do not want to complete the request on-line you can also mail or fax a SF Form 180 to the National Archives. Further instructions are on the webpage.

One of the first, large rides of the year is occurring on Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 19, 2018; Operation VET NOW Fallen Heroes Run and Run to Erase 21; sponsored by Z&M Harley Davidson. This year's run is dedicated to TSgt John Chappy Chapman and all the Western PA Service Members we lost in Afghanistan. Cost is reasonable, riders \$20 and passengers \$5; with vendors, food trucks, live music and raffles. The ride starts and finishes at Z&M Harley Davidson, kickstands up at 0900 hours. I know a group of Post 712 Riders will be attending so make sure the bikes are ready to go and get ready to ride.

You can check us out on our Facebook page, *American Legion Riders Post 712*. **The next Riders meeting is at 1900 hours, Tuesday, April 3rd, 2018.** See you there.

Charlie Mike,

Top



**Thank You
Debbie
for all you do.**



SOLDIERS PLACE

KITCHEN SCHEDULE

MARCH 2018

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---------------|---------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| | CLOSED | | | KITCHEN OPEN 12-8 | | |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| KITCHEN OPEN 12 TO 8 | CLOSED | | | KITCHEN OPEN 12-8 | | |
| | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | | CLOSED | | | KITCHEN OPEN 12-8 | |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| | CLOSED | | | KITCHEN OPEN 12-8 | | |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |
| | CLOSED | | | | | |