



AMERICAN LEGION POST 712

610 Old Clairton Road
Pleasant Hills, PA 15236
(412) 901-0327



December 1, 2022
Commander's report

In anticipation of the Christmas holiday, I am pleased and excited to announce that the future outlook for post 712 looks great!

Much has been accomplished since the revitalization meeting in December 2021. It has been a difficult struggle with many challenges but with a core group of dedicated volunteers including Terry Choate (Adjutant and Membership), George Lee (Financial Officer and Member-at-Large), Dave Masslon (2nd Vice and Assistant Adjutant), and Thad Weidmann (Technical Support and now Finance Officer and Assistant Adjutant), we are well on our way to making post 712 a vital member of the Pleasant Hills community, American Legion District 36 and the American Legion Department of Pennsylvania.

Thanks to many members and volunteers who have lent support and helped along the way including Lee Phillips (1st Vice), Susan Cook (Chaplain) and other members who were quick to respond to our requests for help. Special mention and thanks to the Post's ALA and many of its members who devoted considerable time and energy to revitalization activities. We could not have accomplished what we did without everyone's assistance.

So much has happened, it is difficult to describe everything, but some of the highlights are:

To start, in December 2021, we had a real disaster to deal with the Post had ceased operations due to covid and a lack of adequate funding to support operations.

Initial efforts focused on raising funds needed to reopen the Post and resume normal operations. It was determined that \$150,000 would be required to "give it a shot". This became an insurmountable task as we

used a “Go-Fund-Me” approach which generated a small fraction of what we needed. Grants, loans and donations were considered but to no avail.

Utility shut-off notices were received, the IRS cancelled our Non-Profit status for failure to file three years of back taxes, and we were receiving “Failure-To-Pay” dunning notices from many vendors we had done business with.

It was a bleak situation indeed!

As a last resort, we determined that the Post’s building represented a viable asset that, if sold, could provide funding to support revitalization efforts.

An attorney was hired, and several real estate agents were consulted to determine the building’s fair market value. Ultimately, two identical offers were received, one through an agent with an implicit commission and contingencies and a second with no agent (no commission) and no contingencies. The no contingencies offer was accepted, and a sales agreement was negotiated.

Polling of Post’s membership was conducted by the American Legion Department of Pennsylvania and a positive response to the sale option was received. The sales agreement was signed, and escrowed funds received.

Significant efforts were devoted over a three-month period preparing the building for transfer. Furnishings and TVs were sold to the new owner, American Legion memorabilia were retained and put into storage. Other items were either sold or donated to non-profit entities such as “OTA” (Operation Troop Appreciation) for the benefit of veterans. Broken and unusable items were trashed. Some items and legion memorabilia are in storage and plans are to retain selected items and to attempt to sell or donate others.

Some minor repair work including a new water shut-off valve was installed and the building was “broom-clean” and ready for transfer.

The sale closed on September 23, 2022.

It was a sad day to see a facility with such a storied past sold.

Proceeds from the sale have been used to clean-up the Post's outstanding debts and to hire a CPA to file applications with the IRS to recover the post's Non-Profit status. These applications have been filed and an IRS agent is expected to be assigned to process them. We will report when these are completed, and the Post's status renewed.

All the old Northwest Bank accounts have been closed and a new banking relationship has been set up with Key Bank in Pleasant Hills. Excess funds from the sale not needed for debt resolution or operations will be invested in government guaranteed CDs at Century Heritage Federal Credit Union on Regis Avenue near the Pleasant Hills Post Office.

Two small offices have been rented in a local commercial building at 610 Old Clairton Rd., appropriate insurance has been purchased, T-Mobile has been retained to provide internet and phone service for membership and general business activities. The estimated annual budget for current operations is \$12,000 to \$15,000 per year. Reserve funds with no unusual projects would support the existing operations for more than twenty years.

Post 712 will retain its American Legion Charter and function as a "virtual" or "paper" Post. Quite a few Posts in Western PA encountered similar difficulties and operate in "virtual" mode.

For 2023, Post 712 meetings will be held the third Tuesday of the month, 7 PM at VFW1810 on Route 51 in Brentwood. Post 712 members can join VFW 1810 as a social member with bar access. The ALA can hold planned events at 1810 for a nominal rental fee.

The Post offers special thanks to VFW 1810 for allowing us to conduct our meetings in their facility and to Dave Masslon who has coordinated scheduling our meetings at 1810.

Your Post officers and executive committee members are turning toward 2023 and beyond to continue the revitalization of the Post.

Some of our focus for the future is to increase membership, to have functions that the membership and our families can enjoy, and to conduct those activities that support our local, hospitalized, and homeless veteran population.

We see ourselves becoming more active in the Pleasant Hills community and strengthen our relationships with other community organizations.

We elicit your continuing support for Post 712 and your ideas are always welcome.

Please help us achieve our goals for the future by participating in any function of interest to you. We welcome you and hope that you will be an active member. Please try to attend the monthly meetings and visit our Website and Facebook page for information about post activities and events. Take a minute to update your contact information and tell us how best to keep in touch with you.

A little effort from each of us can make a big difference.

Have a wonderful holiday and God bless you and your family, all our veterans, and especially those veterans MIA or deceased.

Dave Halpern - Commander