

# NEWSLETTER



Ph: 412-653-1555

• 650 Old Clairton Road, Pleasant Hills, PA 15236 •

March 2016

## American Legion • Post 712 • Pleasant Hills



### POST OFFICERS

Commander  
RICHARD J. WOJNAR

Sr. Vice Commander  
AL DI LEMBO

Jr. Vice Commander  
DON ROTTMAN

Adjutant  
LINDA WOJNAR

Finance Officer  
BILL MARTINIS

Service Officer  
FRANK CAPUTO

Chaplin  
EDWARD HIAD

Judge Advocate  
BOB HARTUNG

Sgt-At-Arms  
RALPH CASCIELLO

Sgt-At-Arms  
STAN TUMAS



### Commander's Call

Exciting news! Let me begin this commander's call with just two words: unbelievable and fantastic! Unbelievable because of the response we have received over the first ever – **Lent-At-the-Legion** from our club members, the community, employees and especially from our volunteers. The public has, without a doubt, shown their support for our veterans by their overwhelming responses by eating-in and by ordering take-outs. We began our journey on Ash Wednesday and for the past few Fridays since then, the results have been nothing but "unbelievable". We have sold out on every occasion no matter how much food we prepared. This past Friday was actually something to see. People were seated at every available table. Extra tables were brought in and there were still folks waiting to be seated! The parking lot was filled with cars, some of them were doubled parked at times and the bar seated two people deep! The take-out orders were steady for hours. We had one and sometimes two volunteers signing people in and manning the phones for take-out orders. During the dinner hour we were absolutely crushed with the take-out orders - just "unbelievable"!



Now comes the word Fantastic! The word "fantastic" referred to our unwavering volunteers who pitched in wherever they were needed. I know it's an old military saying "never volunteer" but our members know when to step up to the plate and give their all to make things work. I just hope I can express to them the pride I had for them for the work they did. Their customer service skills were imbedded in everything they did. This project would never have gotten off the ground without them. Many volunteers came in early to set up the tables. Other volunteers seated and comforted our patrons as they entered the Legion to make them feel at home. Volunteers were able to multitask doing several different jobs at the same time such as: taking orders, delivering drinks, delivering food, cleaning tables, washing mounds of dishes (although many dishes looked ready to be put back in

*continued on page 6*

# American Legion • Post 712 • Pleasant Hills

## MARCH 2016



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday



CORPORATION  
OFFICERS

President  
RUSS WILSON

VicPresident  
DAVE PETERSON

Secretary  
JOHN DILLON

Treasurer  
ROB BUTELLI

Board Members  
DAVE KRILL  
BUZ HANDSHUE  
RICHARD J. WOJNAR

LES BRANCHEN  
DON ROTTMAN

Web Master  
THAD WEIDMANN

Newsletter Design  
DONNA ROTTMAN

<p><b>HAPPY HOUR</b> <i>Monday thru Thursday</i> <b>from 4:00 - 7:00</b> <b>Buckets of Beer</b> <b>4 for \$7.50</b> <b>(Domestics Only)</b></p>	<p><b>FREE POOL &amp; JUKE BOX</b> Every Saturday &amp; Sunday Except When There is Entertainment.  \$1.00 Drafts During Pens</p>	<p> <b>1</b> Bowling PENS 7:30  • <b>RIDERS MEETING</b> 7:00</p>
<p>PENS - 5:00 <b>6</b>  <b>FREE POOL</b> </p>	<p><b>HAPY HOUR</b> <b>7</b> 4:00 - 7:00 <b>BUCKETS OF BEER</b> <b>SPECIAL</b>  • <b>LEGION MEETING</b> 7:00</p>	<p>PENS - 7:30 <b>8</b>   <b>Happy Hour</b> Mon.- Fri. 4:00 - 7:00 <b>Bucket Special</b></p>
<p>PENS 12:30 <b>13</b>  <b>DISTRICT MEETING</b>  <b>SAL HOAGIE SALE</b></p>	<p><b>14</b>  <b>Happy Hour</b> Mon.- Fri. 4:00 - 7:00 <b>Buckets of Beer</b>  • <b>POST MEETING</b> 7:00</p>	<p>PENS - 7:00 <b>15</b>    <b>BOWLING</b></p>
<p>PENS - 6:00 <b>20</b> Draft Beer  FREE Pool &amp; Juke Box </p>	<p>Happy Hour 4 - 7 <b>21</b>   Buckets of Beer \$7.50 <b>Monday thru Thursday</b></p>	<p><b>22</b>   <b>4:00 - 7:00</b> <b>Bucket Special</b></p>
<p>PENS 7:30 <b>27</b> Happy Easter  FREE Pool &amp; Juke Box  </p>	<p>Happy Hour 4 - 7 <b>28</b>   <b>Monday thru Thursday</b>  • <b>ALA MEETING</b> 7:00</p>	<p>Happy Hour 4 - 7 <b>29</b>   Buckets of Beer \$7.50 <b>Monday thru Thursday</b></p>

Check us out... see what's new every day!

Web site: [alpost712pa.org](http://alpost712pa.org)

# American Legion • Post 712 • Pleasant Hills



## MARCH 2016

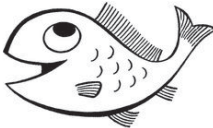
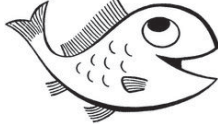
TRY OUR FRIDAY FISH FRY  
TAKE OUT 412-653-1555

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

 <p><b>2</b> BINGO 7:00 DIFFERENT FOOD SPECIAL EVERY WEEK HAM BBQ</p>	<p>PENS - 7:00 CORN HOLE <b>3</b></p> 	<p>FISH FRY <b>4</b> TAKE OUT AVAILABLE LENT MENU ONLY 4 - 8</p> 	<p><b>5</b> Wine Glass Painting Wine Special</p>
 <p><b>9</b> LASAGNA ROLL-UPS</p> 	<p><b>10</b> Happy Hour Mon.- Fri. 4:00 - 7:00 Buckets of Beer</p>	<p>PENS - 7:00 FISH FRY <b>12</b> TAKE OUT AVAILABLE LENT MENU ONLY 4 - 8</p> 	<p><b>13</b> St. Patrick's Day Ham &amp; Cabbage OPEN TO PUBLIC 3:00 - 7:00 D.J. NO SMOKING EVENT</p> 
 <p><b>16</b> Kielbasa &amp; Kraut</p>	<p>PENS - 7:00 <b>17</b> NO CORN HOLE RICK SACCONE NO SMOKING EVENT ST. PATRICK'S DAY GREEN BEER</p>	<p>FISH FRY <b>18</b> TAKE OUT AVAILABLE LENT MENU ONLY 4 - 8</p> 	<p>PENS 1:00 <b>19</b> FREE JUKE BOX 4:00 - Close</p> 
 <p><b>23</b> MEATBALL SUBS</p> 	<p>PENS 7:00 <b>24</b> CORN HOLE</p> 	<p>GOOD FRIDAY <b>25</b> LENT MENU ONLY 4 - 8</p> 	<p>PENS 2:00 <b>26</b> Children's Easter Egg Hunt &amp; Pancake Breakfast 8:00 - Entertainment: Cher Impersonater &amp; D.J. OPEN TO PUBLIC</p> 
 <p><b>30</b> Salad Bar &amp; Loaded Baked Potatoes</p>	<p>PENS - 7:00 <b>31</b> Happy Hour 4 - 7 Monday thru Thursday • SAL MEETING 7:00</p> 	<p>Notes: Up coming events . . . APRIL 3 - PIRATE OPENER - HOT DOGS, NACHOS and \$1.00 DRAFTS APRIL 20 - SAL BBQ APRIL 30 - THE JADES</p>	

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## ALA OFFICERS

President  
MARY ANN MARUNICH

1st Vice President  
DONNA McCRUMB

2nd Vice President  
VICKY GOLDEN

Secretary  
LEIGH ANNE CASTANET

Treasurer  
ANNE GIOVANNITTI

Chaplain  
BARBARA TERIHAY

Sgt-At-Arms  
ROSE BREEN

Sgt-At-Arms  
DONNA ROTTMAN

Sgt-At-Arms  
PAT O'TOOLE

## Auxiliary Corner,

Thank you to all of the members of the ALA that attended our county meeting. Our state president, Carol Harrison was happy to see a good attendance. We will celebrate St. Patrick's Day on Saturday, March 12th from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. ham and cabbage will be served at \$8.00 a plate. We will also have dessert at a small charge. The post will be open to the public and there will be no smoking. Please tell all your friends and relatives and come to support us as all proceeds benefit veterans. Our trip to Southwestern Veterans Center will be on March 24th. We leave the post at 6:00 p.m. and return around 9:00 p.m. A sign-up sheet will be at the bar so please come and join us as the vets enjoy seeing everyone. The Children's Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, March 26th at 11:00 a.m. We will be serving pancakes to the children ten and under. There will be a charge for those over ten. We will be filling the eggs and bags on Tuesday March 22nd and we can use your help.

God Bless and Protect our Troops

Mary Ann Marunich  
ALA President

Next  
Meeting  
March 28

## Sons of the Legion,

Once again we are having a **Hoagie Sale**. It is on a different day, but I hope you can support the SAL as always. The Hoagie Sale will be on Sunday, March 13th. Price is \$8.00 or 3 for \$22.00. Choice of Italian or Turkey. Pick up will start at 4:00pm and it is **PRESALE ONLY**. The order form (envelope) will be at the bar. Complete with money and place in the bucket by the front door. Thank you in advance. **Last day to order will be March 10th.**

You will see the board for **feeding 5 families for Easter Dinner**. We will need all items in by **March 23rd** so we can deliver to the families by the 24th. This board always fills up fast and we are grateful for that.

The **Easter Bunny** is coming to the Legion on March 26th and we partnered up with the ALA to have a pancake breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt.

### **Pancake & Sausage Breakfast starts at 9AM**

(free to children under 10 years of age – 11 and older including adults – \$3.00)

Easter Egg Hunt - 11AM

Upcoming Events:

**All you can eat Pork Chop and Chicken dinner April 2nd**

\$8.95 – Eat in only

Donations are needed for comfort items for our veterans.

Box is located inside the front door.

Thank you,  
Commander of the SONS  
Gary Hartman



## SAL OFFICERS

Commander  
GARY HARTMAN

Sr. Vice Commander  
DON W. GOULDER

Jr. Vice Commander  
DON J. GOULDER

Adjutant  
JAMES CHRISTOFEL

Finance Officer  
RICHARD HARTMAN

Chaplin  
AL DANKO

Sgt-At-Arms  
TIMOTHY MOWRY

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President  
JOHN DILLON

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Vice President  
BILL ALLAN

Secretary  
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Sr. Road Captain  
DAN OELER

Road Captain  
STEVE HORVATH

Road Captain  
DAVE PETERSON

Road Captain  
DAN TILLERY

Sr. Sergeant-at-Arms  
TOM BODNER

Sergeant-at-Arms  
ED HARMON

Treasurer  
MIKE DUDENUS

Assistant Treasurer  
BILL WEIKEL

Adjutant  
LLOYD RAY

Chaplain  
MARK SMITH

## **American Legion Riders,**

*Salutations American Legion Family. Ask yourself, what have you done to support Veterans and our Post this month?*

*Thank you and well done to the Riders who attended the Wreath Removal Ceremony at the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies on Saturday, February 6th. These Riders helped police the Remembrance Wreaths that were placed on the graves of our Veterans prior to the holidays. The efforts of these Riders and their commitment to honoring our Veterans is sincerely appreciated: Thomas Bodner, John Caligiure, Jim Christofel, Ed Harmon, Larry Knotts, Lloyd Ray, Dave Saunier, Ed Schmidt, Mark Smith, Stan Weaver and Paul Weinheimer. Your efforts humble us all.*

*Congratulations to Bob Stefanic who was voted-in as a Rider during the February meeting. Bob served in the USMC. It's great to have you on-board Marine!*

*In these challenging times, we must understand the continued existence of Post 712 is not to be taken for granted - It must be earned by a strong membership stepping up to support the Post when called upon. As I prepare this article the launch of the Lenten Fish Fry has been a success. Many efforts led to this success; foremost among these are the insight of Post Commander Rich Wojnar and the great work of Post employee's. However, it also takes your efforts which, may be as simple as being a patron of Post events – and bring your family and friends; or volunteering to work at the Post to support these special events. Ideally you can do a little of both! Let's all recognize the great work of our Riders who volunteered their time and efforts to support the first week of the Fish Fry and ensure a successful launch: Bill and Donna Allan, Tom and Chris Bodner; John Caligiure, Ed Harmon, Tom Matthews and Dave Saunier. Well Done Riders and Thank You for your, Leadership by Example!*

*The March meeting of the Riders will be 1900 hours, Tuesday, March 1st. All members and perspective members are encouraged to attend. Those interested in joining should call John Dillon, 412-606-8812 for more information.*

*Hooah,  
Top*

Next Meeting  
**Tuesday, March 1**  
1900 hours

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*Commander's Call* continued from page 1 . . .

the cupboard because the food was so delicious), welcoming and completing paperwork for new prospective members, and also taking out the trash - just "fantastic"! How in the world do I ever thank them to the degree owed to them? Working all night with extremely positive attitudes, never expecting or receiving any monetary compensation, never complaining about what needs to be done - but just plain old "stepping up and doing what was needed to be accomplished that time - and all for the betterment of your Legion. If you have not yet volunteered at one of the past Friday Lent-at-the-Legion dinners, please set aside some time to join us.

I was asked to speak at a Pleasant Hills Boro Planning Meeting to share our new vision for Post 712, which I was extremely excited to do so. The Boro of Pleasant Hills played an integral part in our success with this event. I want to thank all of those members who attended that meeting and for sharing our Lent-at-the-Legion Event with folks with whom they network. They posted our Lent-at-the-Legion event on their social media outlets and passed the word around to their departments as well. The results were clearly visible. I witnessed many representatives of their departments coming in to collect their take-out orders.

The fish fries were not the only success over the past few Fridays. We signed up several new members and transfers from other Posts and several more veterans and social members stated that they will send in their application along with a check. These events are a perfect venue to show off our facility. I urge all administrative officers and personnel of our Post to utilize this venue as a means to conduct their own membership drives and to show why our Post is different from other Posts - a Post that is of value to them. I do not strong-arm potential members to join, but I do take time to find out if our patrons would like to join an organization that is on the move and whether they would be interested in joining our team.

Another loyal partner and member of our Legion is Harry Anton, Owner of the Jefferson Hills Lawn Center. Harry is gracious enough to take whatever equipment we request out of his inventory for consignment in order that we could conduct various raffles to benefit our Post. When interested in any type of lawn-related items or

equipment, please support Jefferson Hills Lawn Center in order to reciprocate our appreciation.

While we are in the closing days of February, we are just getting started regarding 2016. Look for our advertisement in the 2016 KDKA Fish Fry Guide online, Facebook, WPXI Fish Fry, South Hills Round Up, March Messenger Newspaper, our website under Events, and at the Old Clairton Road signage at the entry to the Legion.

Thank you also extends to our volunteers who placed flyers in various work places. We have a wealth of exciting events in the works with most of them being "the first ever" for our Legion. We are willing to explore all ideas put forth. We need YOUR ideas. We also need to raise funds to keep our Post viable.

As I have always stated, I don't mind striking out, but at least let me swing! In the future, and with your help, we WILL continue to hit home runs!

As always we support our troops.

Richard J. Wojnar  
Commander

**American Legion Post 712 PICNIC**  
**AUGUST 20, 2016**  
**Look for details in the Newsletters**

# American Legion • Post 712 • Pleasant Hills

Join us for Lent-at-the-Legion



4-8 PM

No Smoking

Eat-in or

Take-out

Call 412-653-1555

**ATTENTION: PLEASE JOIN US** at the American Legion POST 712 OPEN to the Public **March 17, 2016**

No Smoking Event - 7:00 PM **Representative Dr. Saccone** will be speaking to your American Legion on the subject of God in our Government and Veteran's Issues.

Rep. Saccone is a retired officer of the United States Air Force (USAF) where he served in various positions as a detachment commander and chief of counterintelligence for the USAF in the national capital of Seoul, South Korea. After retiring he stayed in South Korea as TV news anchor on an English language news station and appeared on the popular PBS show "Full Circle" with Michael Palin.

He worked abroad in business before delving into international diplomacy as a representative to the nuclear power plant project in North Korea. As the only American living in North Korea at the time, he gained valuable diplomatic experience working and successfully negotiating with North Koreans, resulting in two books about that enigmatic country, including "Negotiating with North Korea," and "Living with the Enemy: Inside North Korea."

When the war in Iraq began, Dr. Saccone decided to take his turn offering his years of interrogation and counterintelligence experience. Assigned to the U.S. Army as a civilian, he served in Baghdad and in the hotspot of Mosul, as a Senior Counterintelligence Agent identifying, capturing and interrogating insurgents.

He has traveled to 73 countries and authored seven books on North and South Korea, a book on Iraq and his ninth book "God in our Government" traces our oddly heritage from before the founding until now. He enjoyed Fulbright summer scholarships to Egypt and Africa and has written numerous articles concerning international politics, business and culture, appearing in top newspapers in the U.S. and abroad such as USA Today, the Baltimore Sun and the Korea Times.

**CPR Classes are filling up fast . . .**

Call 412-616-1834

Next class . . . **March 9, 2016**

to be held at the Legion Post 712.

...

Class Date: March 9, 2016 Time: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Cost: \$10 Per Person

Class Size: Minimum 6 - Maximum 12

call 412-616-1834 or sign up at the bar

## TAPS



With Honor and Gratitude We Remember . . .

**Harry G. Thieret**  
(Korean War Era)

**Al M. Eyrolles**  
(Korean War Era)

May you Rest in Peace my Friends.



## **OUR HEROES . . .**

### **Remembering**

### **Operation Desert Storm -- from a Navy Reservist's Perspective**

**Nicholas D. Krawec, Esq.**

This year, 2016, marks the 25th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm, and I have seen a number of reminders of that fact. Those reminders have included transcripts of interviews with General Colin Powell remembering Desert Storm, various recollections of the late General Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf, and even reminders from my employer, acknowledging the anniversary of my being plucked out of civilian life in early January 1991, shortly after the Christmas holidays, for a government paid trip to the Middle East, specifically the Persian Gulf. I was in the U.S. Naval Reserve at the time, an officer in Naval Embarked Advisory Team Detachment 105 (yeah, that's right, NEAT....what's the Navy without acronyms?) Our unit mission was to serve aboard civilian Maritime Prepositioned Ships (MPS), to provide these vessels secure naval telecommunications capability with accompanying U.S. Navy warships once these MPS vessels joined up with a Naval Amphibious Task Group. Given the expected nature of the conflict (desert warfare), I was reasonably confident that the Navy Reserve (except for perhaps some SeaBee and cargo handling units) would not be mobilized, and that's what I told everyone who asked me if I thought I would be mobilized. Boy, was I wrong about that! But I was thinking that way in 1990 – 1991 because the Reserve forces had not been mobilized in any significant numbers since World War II, and at that time I believe we were still experiencing the benefits of the naval buildup during the Reagan years.

So I was among the fortunate few Reservists to have been mobilized in support of a major military operation in nearly 50 years. "Lucky me," I thought. But upon reflection, it was an important growing experience in my life (even though I was in my mid to late 30's at the time), as I was placed in charge of a group of men who primarily had been civilians, unexpectedly removed from their comfortable routine, and unexpectedly taken away from family and friends for who knew how long. But we quickly bonded in a way that only those who have served (and those who are reading this) can understand and appreciate.

That bonding served us well as we arrived in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), boarded our assigned vessel, the MPS ship Motor Vessel 1LT Alex Bonnyman (named for a WWII Marine, who fought in the Pacific, and was awarded the Medal of Honor). Waiting for our arrival aboard Bonnyman, in addition to the civilian crew, were an active duty Marine Corps logistics unit, a Navy Reserve cargo handling unit, and a Navy Reserve amphibious SeaBee unit. My own Reserve unit previously had annual training stints aboard other MPS ships, so the surroundings, though different from Navy ships, were not unfamiliar to us. However, we did notice one addition to our assigned ship when we arrived aboard that we didn't observe aboard the MPS ships on which we had performed our annual training duty..... three 50 caliber machine gun mounts, one forward, one to port and one to starboard. Next to the mount I saw as I came aboard the ship, I noticed a makeshift sign next to the mount (handwritten by a creative Marine or sailor) which read "USMC CIWS" (the latter acronym



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standing for “close in weapon system”).

Initially our orders were to proceed through the Strait of Hormuz, exit the Gulf, rendezvous with the approaching amphibious task group in the Arabian Sea and re-enter the Gulf in company with the task group. However, those orders changed, and we were to return to the UAE, and rendezvous with the task force after it entered the Gulf. This is when it got a bit interesting for us. Some members of my unit were topside, installing our communications antennas and connecting our communications equipment, when the Marines onboard, carrying their weapons, began taking positions along the starboard side of the ship. The gunnery sergeant in charge of the Marine unit, politely and professionally, asked me to suspend our equipment installation efforts and take my unit back inside the skin of the ship. So I, with two of my sailors, climbed down the nearest ladder, and I undogged the nearest door and led my men inside.....a fan room! (Okay, so I didn't remember the layout of the ship as well as I thought I had). From the confines of that fan room I heard the sound of a single shot and nothing else. After the passage of a few more minutes, we



*Feb., 1991 at Al Jubail, Saudia Arabia*

emerged from the “protection” of the fan room, and everything seemed back to normal.

So I headed to the pilothouse where I saw the Gunny briefing the ship's captain on what had occurred. I learned from that briefing that several small boats had been approaching our ship from the direction of Iran. An attempt was made fire warning shots from the starboard 50 caliber mount.....but it had, well, let's just say malfunctioned! One of the Marines then fired a warning shot with his M-16, which caused the small boats to scatter and exit the area (leaving me reasonably certain that these were not suicide bombers). But that's not the end of the story.

The following day, the Gunny approached me and with a chuckle in his voice and informed me that the makeshift sign “USMC CIWS” next to the

starboard 50 caliber mount, had been altered overnight. Someone had used a marker, and “elaborated” on the “CIWS” part of the sign, so that it now read “Crap It Won't Shoot!” He said he thought it was funny, but some of his more junior Marines were less than amused, and suspected some sailors had a hand in it. So I dutifully inquired with the members of my unit at morning muster if any of them knew who “edited” the Marines' sign. After the initial snickers subsided, nobody in my unit took credit for the creative change. However, I can't speak to the guilt or innocence of the cargo handlers or Phib CB's. But as our time in the Gulf went on, whatever bad feelings resulted from the unsolicited creativity with the Marines' sign, had passed. By the time the Gulf War ended, the sailors and Marines aboard Bonnyman, active and reserve, from different parts of the country, and different backgrounds and walks of life, had bonded in the face of adversity, despite a bit of a rough beginning. That is probably the most cherished memory I have of my experience in Operation Desert Storm on this 25th anniversary of that conflict.

Nicholas D. Krawec, Esq.