



**American Legion  
John P. Eaton Post 746  
8 River Rd.  
Corning, NY 14830  
(607) 654-7735**



## **COVID-19 Shutdown Commander's Update**

April 27, 2020

Dear Post #746 Membership,

As we enter our eighth week of business shutdown, I wanted to take a moment to update everyone on our current status. Even though we are not open for business, there are still extensive activities going on behind the scenes to address our situation and be best positioned to re-open:

- Treasurer Gerry McDonald has been in regularly to keep our bills paid, working with the bank to file applications for Pay Protection Program (PPP) and Small Business Administration (SBA) loans / grants. The PPP and SBA applications have been in for weeks and we are waiting for funds to come in through Corning Federal Credit Union (CFCU). Kudos to Gerry for being the man behind the curtain keeping our organization financially upright.
- This shut down came at a time when we could best withstand it financially, the last quarter of 2019 and first quarter of 2020 were solid financial quarters in the black. We are able to survive until reopening even though revenue has halted; luckily due to many costs have dropped off as well. In addition, CFCU automatically waived our May, June, and July mortgage payments.
- I have been checking in with our employees and, with the exception of two who are still working, all who qualified have successfully filed for unemployment. All jobs will be available for our employees who were on the payroll at the time of shutdown. We still do not have clear direction from the bank on the PPP program so when funds are received, and we have the guidelines on how to implement, we will work with employees on continued pay.
- Bob Perkins is our cleaning / maintenance company and he has been stopping in periodically to do checks on the building for security and maintenance. Which is a good thing as items have come up that need addressing even though we are not in operation. Thanks, Bob.
- Val has volunteered to come in and spent hours cleaning the bar and taking physical inventory of all products that we have on hand. She missed the Post and was bored, so we found a way!
- The Bar Operations Assessment Team (BOAT Committee) Chaired by Rick Stirpe had an initial orientation on the new Point of Sale (POS) program and learned what its capabilities are. We were only using a portion of the system's capability and Rick will be the Inventory Manager and is taking the time during shutdown to load all the inventory into the POS. This will be an ongoing position to maintain our inventory control for accuracy and Strategic Sourcing. The BOAT Committee has learned a lot about what we need to work on to optimize inventory



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control, purchasing practices, and streamlining product selection. Thanks to Rick for taking the lead of this Committee, it will be the main project of our cost reductions efforts in 2020.

- With the ongoing shutdown of meat processing plants due to the pandemic, this will cause a supply chain interruption in the nation's meat availability. The farmers will not be breeding new livestock as the existing stock are not moving to the processing plants and they will need to continue to be fed without being replaced. Even when the processing plants come back online, it is projected that there will be a gap in replacement stock that will have a ripple-effect in our meat availability in the foreseeable future. What does this have to do with the Corning American Legion, you may ask? Our community outreach partnering with Stierly Farms earlier in the year for the February meat raffle has provided us an inside option of forward-purchasing beef that will be available in the fall. The Post Officers have unanimously voted to pre-purchase ½ beef, which will be ~300 pounds available at the beginning of November. We have done this to secure food for our membership where, in the event that the projected interruption occurs, we will have a supply of meat to sell to our membership at close to cost. In the event that an interruption does not occur, then we will hold an epic meat raffle this fall! This is our Leadership being forward looking for the benefit of our membership during this uncertain time.
- Jason Brown has reached out to the Red Cross and is coordinating to hold a blood drive at the Post, tentatively scheduled for May 20<sup>th</sup> (whether we are open for lounge business or not). Details on signing up for reservations and PPE procedure to follow.
- The Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) Committee has set up closed-to-the-public stress management web meetings for those Veterans and Legion members having difficulty dealing with the pandemic complications. Please see the flyer on our Facebook page and website, this is a dedicated service for our membership and you can sign on independently.
- Gerry McDonald has followed up on the flood reclamation and Project Managed filing the insurance claims. Thanks to his efforts, the extensive remediation only cost our deduction fee and the funds have been received and deposited. An unforeseen positive effect is that we got new carpeting! Thanks to members Shane Donahue and Buddy Cutler for prioritizing their company's workload to remediate the flood in only weeks from the occurrence.
- Marty Wheaton and John Cunningham took the first couple weeks of shutdown to do extensive maintenance on the gaming machines and to empty years of used tickets out of the shed. The sheds are now organized where we only keep the required one year's worth of used games on hand for audit. A positive side effect of this was that we also evaluated and switched shredding suppliers that should save ~\$750 per year in disposal costs.
- One of our members, Paul Simonson, approached me with a proposal to utilize his landscaping company for our grounds maintenance at ½ the cost of the existing provider in exchange for storing his lawn equipment trailer in the overflow lot for the season. His company has provided



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proper insurance coverage and this should be a ~\$650 savings for the season. Thanks for stepping up and providing service at a cost savings to the Post!

- Funds have been earmarked to purchase the overflow parking lot from the current investors of JPE Properties and we are waiting for the paperwork formality to be processed with them so we can purchase the lot as part of the Memorial Club property.
- Rick Stirpe, Diane Cunningham, and Marty Wheaton were the three officials who drew the rifle raffle in March as planned in a small socially distanced event at the Post. Winners are posted on Facebook and the website, and all prizes have been awarded. Thanks to the SAL for chairing this fundraiser, it netted us over \$3,400 profit towards our 4 Pillars and operating costs.
- Tom Barto has kept in touch from Florida and has been maintaining our Facebook and SAL activities in conjunction with Buddy Cutler onsite. He is planning to return in May, safe travels, Tom!
- Dick Naylor, David Huber, and Mike Cunningham have completed the Post Nomination Committee activities and have submitted recommendations for the 2020-2021 year. National has issued an executive order suspending Officer voting for all Legion organizations, including the SAL and AUX; stating that all existing 2019-2020 Officers are to remain in office for the 2020-2021 term. Happily, this does not adversely affect our organization as significant changes were not expected for this term. For the Post, I will be appointing Russell Miller as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander and David Huber as Sergeant-at-Arms for the remaining term as these positions were vacant and they have volunteered to assume the positions. Finally, the light at the end of my Commander tunnel is no longer an oncoming train as Russ will be mirroring in the 1<sup>st</sup> VC position with the intent to assume Commander in 2021. Thank you, Russ!!!
  - Note, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander position is still vacant and I ask anyone who is willing to serve in this capacity to step up. Whether from Legion, AUX, or SAL, if someone is willing to support this position, I will appoint the responsibilities to a Committee Chairman, which is compliant with our by-laws and thinking out of the box.
- The April monthly Post meeting was held virtually thanks to Russ Miller facilitating it, and we needed to continue to approve expenditures per by-laws. Thank you to everyone who was able to support this format to continue operations.
- Russ Miller is also chairing this year's Memorial Day grave flag replacement and ceremony keeping tabs on PAUSE requirements to be in compliance. Hopefully we can find a way to safely coordinate volunteer organizations to remotely support our cemeteries and we will be able to hold a properly social distanced ceremony at the monument.
- Prior to shutdown we had come to an agreement with a small family owned Limited Liability Company to lease the kitchen three days a week to provide food for outside services as well as for members in the lounge (including starting up Friday fish fries again!). We were not in a



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position to begin take out fish fries due to the timing of the shutdown, but it was evaluated and at least attempted. It was disappointing to have to put this plan on hold as a result of the shutdown, and I'm hopeful that the opportunity will still be viable when we re-open.

While we are all personally isolating and social distancing during the Governor's PAUSE executive orders and our Post has been shut down, this team of volunteers have been significantly working to support our Post and best position us when we are able to open for business again. I want to personally thank everyone who has our Post in their hearts, and I apologize if I missed anyone's contributions.

I ask that we all take responsibility to safely and properly follow any Government guidelines when we are able to open again. I expect that when we do open that there will be restrictions in place with possibly masks, social distancing, maximum occupancy restrictions, and health restrictions. If you are ill, please do not bring it into our Post. I expect (and hope) that when we do open that there will be a lot of members who do wish to come back, please respect everyone's ability to get their share of time in our Post. If we are at capacity for people allowed and you've had your share of time, please rotate out and allow other members to get theirs.

We're all in this together, and our members have banded together individually to best position us to keep financially healthy, support our membership and community, and prepare for opening up again.

Please let me know if anyone needs our assistance. Stay safe out there. Semper Paratus!

For God and Country,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Jensen", written over a horizontal line.

Greg Jensen, Commander

Commander@CorningAmericanLegion.com