

‘It Was Really an Outstanding Transformation’

A VFW Post in Ohio applied for and received a grant from the Home Depot Foundation to help revitalize its old clubhouse

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Mark Little had been thinking about renovations for some time, but he hadn’t considered a Home Depot grant until a fellow VFW member from a different Post brought it up.

Little, commander at VFW Post 4736 in Greenfield, Ohio, took it upon himself to follow through with the suggestion last year by contacting his local Home Depot.

“It was out of curiosity, but I reached out and asked the manager how I would go about applying,” Little said. “They instructed me on how to apply for a grant through the Home Depot Foundation.”

The local Home Depot then sent a few staffers over to Post 4736, asking Little to describe the work needed in detail before measuring parts and coming up with an estimated cost for approval from the Home Depot Foundation.

Expecting a long wait, Little was surprised with the Foundation’s quick approval for a \$7,000 grant to help renovate the inside of Post 4736’s 5,000-square-foot clubhouse.

“It was hardly a wait at all,” Little said. “The grant didn’t include manpower, but we had about 18 volunteers between the local Home Depot and our Post members.”

The 18-man volunteer crew began by removing the old, tar-stained drop-ceiling and panel-hanging framework, as well as the air conditioning and heating ductwork and diffusers. They then set up a new drop-ceiling, framing materials and panels, adding fluorescent lighting throughout the clubhouse.

“And we only had to close the Post down for about a week,” Little said. “It was a very good

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job, considering even the ventilation and diffusers in the ceiling had to be torn out and replaced. That took a lot of work.”

What began on March 6 of last year concluded four days later when Post 4736, under Little’s leadership, reopened its doors to members on March 10.

For Little, welcoming Post members into the clubhouse following the project brought a sense of relief as he looked up and didn’t see the “nicotine-stained” ceiling that kept him up some nights.

“It was a really outstanding transformation,” Little said. “We have a brand new, clean and healthy clubhouse now. And that’s a testament to the hard work our Post and Home Depot volunteers put in. I’m deeply grateful to them for making this a reality.”

With the inside of the Post rejuvenated, Little has since set his sights on the outside.

This year, Post 4736 was approved for a 50/50 grant in partnership with Greenfield’s Facade Improvement Program, which sets out to revitalize its historic downtown area.

“This project will help us renew the front of our building with a new structure, windows, paint and signage,” Little said. “When opportunities like these are presented, we must take advantage to maximize our building and facilities for our members for years to come.”

The project, according to Little, is slated for completion at the end of this year.

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