



American Legion Post 68

Post Membership Meeting Minutes – January 20th, 2022 Meeting held at Blossoms Restaurant, Leland, NC / Zoom

COMPILED BY: Daniel Dodge, Adjutant
APPROVED BY: John Hacker, Commander
Convened: 1802
Adjourned: 1920

Total Attendance: 37*
Officers and Staff: 13**
Members: 32***
Guests: 6 Zoom: 5

*Concurred

****Officers & Staff Absent:** Brian Danielson-Historian, Dale Todd-At large, Richard Fry-At Large

***Includes Officers AND newly signed members

Officers in Attendance: John Hacker-Commander, Dan Fortini-1st Vice Commander, Jamie Becker-2nd Vice Commander, Dan Dodge-Adjutant, Jim Zelenski-Finance Officer, Lane Adrian-Service Officer, Lou Tranzillo-Chaplain, Alan Simmons-Judge Advocate, John Marone-Logistics, Wilson Tart-Sergeant at Arms, Elliott Koppel-At Large, Rob Penwell-Membership, Eric Terashima-PAO Deb Kerr assisting at front membership table.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: Commander

Chaplin's Opening Prayer: Chaplin - Lou Tranzillo – Special prayer

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony: Sergeant at Arms – Wilson Tart

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble: All Members

CURRENT Business:

Approval of prior meeting minutes: Motion made/seconded and passed by unanimous vote of members present to approve meeting minutes of prior month's membership meeting as previously published and distributed.

Special Presentation to Post: Post 68 was honored by a special visit from Debbie and Gary Pyle of Brunswick Forest who made a generous donation to the Post in support of Veterans. Debbie makes candy and sweets for the Holiday season and dedicates her profits to a charitable cause. This year, the Pyle's decided to support veterans and were honored to be able to make donations to Post 68 and The North Carolina Patriot Guard Riders. Post 68 was presented with a check for \$292.50. Commander Hacker thanked the Pyle's and posed with them for a photograph. This donation will be used by Post 68 in support of their efforts to help local veterans.

Introduction of New Members and Guests: Rob Penwell-membership

Several guests this evening including our guest speaker and family: Solomon Smith, Debbie and Gary Pyle, and Todd Dillan US Navy – visiting our Post.

Guest Speaker: Our guest speaker of the evening was Solomon Smith – winner of this year’s Post 68 Oratorical contest. Solomon gave he speech on the Constitution and 7 articles. His speech focused on his own observations and understanding of the Constitution and how it applies to the 1st amendment, specifically free speech and the use of social media. He stressed that we must all form our own opinions and that we must all be respectful and responsible. Smith was thanked by Commander Hacker for his efforts. Smith will now compete in the District 9 Oratorical Contest to be held Saturday, Jan 29th in St James Post 543,

Membership Report: Dan Dodge

Membership metrics as of: December 21st, 2021 – End of year summary

CATEGORY	STATS	Branch	count	percent
Prior Months Membership:	233			
New Members	0	US Army	108	45.8%
Transfers IN:	3	US Air Force	50	21.2%
Transfers OUT:	0	US Navy	47	19.9%
Reinstatements:	0	US Marine Corps	23	9.7%
Resignations:	0	US Coast Guard	5	2.1%
Post Everlasting:	0			
Active Members:	236	Unknown Branch of Svc	3	1.3%

2021 Personnel Actions - Activity	
Action:	COUNT
New members:	13
Transfers in:	13
Transfers out:	2
Resignations:	3
Passed Away:	1

- As of 1 January, members not paid 2022 dues are in a GRACE period
- At the end of January, your membership will expire!
- As of the end of December, 61 have not paid 2022 dues
- We are 94% towards our Department membership renewal goal to have 100% or 196 members renewed by March 2022

Net of 30 new members in 2021

Financial Report: Jim Zelenski, Finance Officer

- Please turn in expenses as soon as possible
- Be sure to get approval from Commander, Finance Officer or Adjutant before incurring ANY expenses
- New budget year to start in January

Beginning Balance: \$14,948.91

Ending Balance: \$13,738.80

- Major expenses this month: Holiday party expense \$1200 plus \$440 for fish fry supplies
- Oratorical contest checks of \$500 & \$300 will be reported next month

OLD BUSINESS:

1. 2021 Year Wrap-up: Commander – Great year! Lots of community service, helping the community, students and schools. People are talking more about the Post saying they have seen or heard about some of the things we have been doing.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Post Elections: Dodge – This is the time of year we start working on elections of officers to be held in May. An election committee consisting of former officers and those members not running for office is being formed to fill the slate of candidates. Reminder that in 2020, the Post did not hold elections due to COVID outbreak and a directive from our Department Judge Advocate indicating that all officers would stay in place as appointed officers. Also, ANY Post member may run for any officer position. Please let the Commander or Adjutant know if you are interested.
2. Upcoming Events and Volunteer Support: Commander – We need you, our Post members to step up and help with events!

OFFICER REPORTS:

- 1st Vice Commander: Dan Fortini: A welcome packet for new members is being developed. Dan discussed success of our latest blood drive (62 pints). Fish Fry coming up. Date is not set yet. Will need many volunteers to make it happen
- 2nd Vice Commander: Jamie Becker: Boiling Spring Lakes market will startup again March 5th. Please come and help out. We will be setting this up once a month.
- Service Officer Update: Lane Adrian – Lane gave a summary of major assistance provided to several veterans in 2021. We also partnered with other Posts for additional financial support of these vets.

Currently, Lane is working to assist 3 different veterans:

- House of a veteran in Boiling Spring Lakes burned down. Vet needs everything
 - 100% disabled veteran in Leland still suffering effects of hurricane Florence. Needs help with house.
 - Homeless veteran in Leland currently living under a tarp.
- Chaplain Update: Lou Tranzillo: Keep in contact with people to make sure they are ok
 - PAO Update: Eric Terashima –
 - Logistics Update: John Marone: Hats, Shirts, and Jackets are all available for sale
 - Sergeant at Arms: Wilson Tate: Keep in touch with people and be cognizant of Veteran suicide
 - Legion Riders Report: Lane Adrian – Riders had brief meeting and are working with Harley Davidson dealer to participate in fundraisers
 - Adjutant Update: Dan Dodge Demo of new website changes
 - Webmaster: Eric Terashima
 - At-Large Officer Updates: Dale Todd / Elliott Koppel / Richard Fry
 - Additional Officer Updates: Alan Simmons (Judge Advocate) – is a liaison for the Red Cross disaster services. Indicated 1 pint of blood donated helps 3 people. Alan does presentations to groups on Red Cross disaster services and personal safety protection. Contact him if your organization needs a speaker.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES: Check our website calendar for details and info!

Note: Due to time constraints, we did not review all events completed and upcoming. Additional known information has been added to this list of events.....

Completed Events in December:

1. **Members Only holiday party:** Dec 16th meeting – Commander
There were 65 members and guests in attendance. Everyone had a great time. Blossoms also did a great job with food and service. Zelenski and Simmons had fun with the raffle. (See photos on website)
2. **WAA wreath placement at Wilmington Cemetery** Dec 18th: Penwell
Several Post members participated in this event with Commander Hacker making a speech. This event brought in \$3000 in donations with only \$70 of expenses. Many thanks to all Post members who helped sell wreaths.

Current Month Events – January:

1. **Blood Drive:** Jan 7th – Fortini. Great success!
62 pints were collected. \$200 of Spa basket raffle tickets sold along with service hats. 10 post members helped with setup/tear down and running of the table.
2. **Elderhaus Visit:** Jan 7th- Hacker and Adrian met the chairman. More activity to follow
3. **Oratorical Contest:** Jan 8th: Todd Won by Solomon Smith who will go to District competition at Post 543. Post 68 donating \$500 along with Post 543 for winners
4. **Chamber of Commerce Trade Show:** Feb 26th - Commander
5. **Homeless survey:** Jan 27th Adrian / Tranzillo
6. **District Oratorical:** Jan 29th – Todd - To be held at Post 543, St James Community Center – 10am

Upcoming Events:

1. **Department Mid-Winter Conference:** Feb 17-19 in Raleigh
2. **Chamber of Commerce Business expo:** Feb 26th from 10am-2pm @ LCAC. Hacker
3. **BSL Market:** March 5th – Becker – Volunteers needed!
4. **District 9 meeting:** March 12th Hacker/Dodge
5. **Fish Fry:** March 19th – Fortini (will need assistance) Final date is still TBD. Much help will be needed
6. **Leland Sr Center:** April time frame – Adrian – info table to be setup
7. **Next Blood Drive:** May 13th – Fortini (will need assistance)
8. **Poppy Day:** May 27th, Lead?

MISC. ITEMS:

Commanders Comments:

Commander Hacker presented member Rob Penwell with a certificate of achievement for his work on the 2021 Wreaths Across America fundraiser.

The local chapter of Toastmasters has talked with Commander regarding an interview with our Oratorical winner and they would also like to work more with the Post on Oratorical giving tips and such.

Post 68 has joined the local Chamber of Commerce. The Commander went and gave a presentation on Post 68 and what we do. There will be a Chamber Trade show on 26 Feb that the Post will participate in

Member Comments:

Bob Page, representing the North Carolina Patriot Guard Riders announced that each year the NC PGR allocates funds for each of its Districts in the State to be used for donations to local non-profit or support organizations. Bob Page, as the Assistant State Captain for his SE District in the Dixie Region of North Carolina, presented a check to Post 68 in the amount of \$500 to be used in support of veterans and to support the Post 68 Legion Riders. Bob indicated that his area region was one the busiest in the State with a mission every 2.7 days last year.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Officers Meeting: February 10th 1pm via Zoom

Next Membership Meeting: February 17th @ 6pm – Guest speaker: Veteran Smiles presentation

Closing Ceremony and Chaplain's Closing Prayer:

Meeting Adjourned at: 1920 hours

50/50:

Prize was awarded to Alan Simmons. \$27 to Alan and \$26 to the Post

See additional documentation from meeting and this month as addendums to these minutes. Included are handouts from our guest speaker.