



American Legion Post 68

Post Membership Meeting Minutes – SEPTEMBER 15th, 2022 Meeting held at Blossoms Restaurant, Leland, NC / Zoom

COMPILED BY: Daniel Dodge, Adjutant
APPROVED BY: John Hacker, Commander
Convened: 1800
Adjourned: 1930

Total Attendance: 43*
Officers and Staff: 11**
Members: 41***
Guests: 2 Zoom: 1

Note: Total number of members present DOES constitute a quorum. Eric Terashima running Zoom session.

*Concurred

****Officers & Staff Absent:** Rob Penwell, 2nd Vice, Lane Adrian-Service Officer, Alan Simmons-Judge Advocate, Elliott Koppel-At Large,

***Includes Officers AND newly signed members

Officers in Attendance: John Hacker-Commander, Dan Fortini-1st Vice, Dan Dodge-Adjutant, Jim Zelenski-Finance, Lou Tranzillo-Chaplain, Jamie Becker-Sergeant at Arms, John Marone-Logistics, Tony Schirillo-PAO, Eric Mens-Historian, Eddie Jenkins-Membership, Jim McAvoy-At Large (McAvoy at Town Board meeting)

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: Commander - 1800 hours

Chaplin's Opening Prayer: Chaplin - Lou Tranzillo - Pow/MIA and 911 focused

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony: Sergeant at Arms – Jamie Becker

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.

Introduction of New Members and Guests: Eddie Jenkins/John Hacker - membership

New Member: Matthew Bergan (via online National system) US Army

Guest Speaker: Mary Jo Schnepf of Blue Star Mothers (Southport, NC)

(No slide deck, spoke from Poster Boards)

BSM in Southport is a new organization, only a couple years old

- Originally, Mary Jo was totally unfamiliar with the Blue Star Mothers organization even though her son was deployed on active duty
- She found out about BSM via an article in Cape Fear Voices newspaper
- Her goal is to make sure veterans and their families are not lost or forgotten and are recognized
- She organized Care Package shipments to deployed troops and went to Post 543, St. James for help with funding and postage
- She is familiar with Veteran Suicide and thanked Commander Hacker for his presentation on Veteran Suicide Awareness that he put on for BSM. Mary Jo is having a benefit event this coming weekend in Southport with 3 bands composed of veterans who are donating their time
- BSM's has made a contribution to Honor Flights and is supporting veteran burial at sea programs
- She is also working out-reach programs to make the community aware of Blue Star Mothers program. Goal is reaching out, making the community aware and thanking veterans for their service when they come home
- Future plans for this BSM chapter include suicide prevention benefits, making lap blankets for the Ft Brag veterans home, participating in Wreaths Across America and Operation Gratitude
- Mary Jo indicated that Wreaths across America has a Mobile Education Exhibit. The exhibit helps express how grateful the Nation is to our veterans and special focus on Vietnam Veterans who never received such honors.

Commander Hacker Thanked Ms Schnepf with a Post 68 coffee mug.

OFFICIAL VISIT FROM MICHAEL FAGAN, DISTRICT 9 COMMANDER, Department of North Carolina:

- Commander Fagan started out by saying that visiting Post 68 was very easy and that he has been seeing Post 68 in the news
- He also thanked Blue Star Mothers for their support of veterans
- District 9 is the largest District in the State with 19 posts covering over 4000 square miles. He also has the largest travel budget due to the size of the District and number of Posts
- Post 68 will be receiving the Dogwood award for exceeding our membership goal of 50% renewals by September
- He is working on raising funds to support a District Oratorical contest – obtaining prize money for contestants
- The veteran service initiative being worked by service officers at St James and Post 68 has not been going so well. He is looking at suggesting resources to help outlying posts with no service officers.

Membership Report: Dan Dodge

During the month of August, there was no change in Post population or membership numbers. Current count is 233.

However, Post 68 has achieved 58% of our Department membership renewal goal and will be receiving the Dogwood award.

It is imperative that we get more members to renew their dues for 2023. We still have many members who still need to renew their dues for the upcoming year. Please make every effort to get them sent in or paid at the October meeting!

We did have 2 new transfers come into the Post and 1 new member joining this evening.

Financial Report: Jim Zelenski, Finance Officer

Beginning Balance: \$14,429.26 August 1st, 2022

Ending Balance: \$12,596.21 August 31st, 2022

Jim talked about membership dues and that if ALL members who are behind on dues payments renewed, the Post would receive at least another \$2000 in funds.

We netted about \$440 at the Leland Under the Lights Car show.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. EVENTS:

- a. Fish Fry Ticket Sales: Need to push ticket sales to support the Fish Fry. Chamber of Commerce just purchased 10 tickets. Commander asked members to just try to do a single event. Pick one and spend just a few hours supporting the event and the Post
- b. New Events in Volunteer System; Adjutant Dodge has added all known events to the Volunteer Signup System including VEAC

NEW BUSINESS:

1. PEC Changes: One of our At-Large members has resigned. (Marty Keck) Post member Bea Frost has stepped up to take over this open position. A motion was made by Adjutant Dodge to accept Bea Frost as a member-at-large to be appointed to serve out the remainder of Keck's term. Motion was seconded. Commander asked for a show of hands vote by members present. Vote was unanimous. Frost will serve as an appointed Member at Large with term ending 20 June 2023.
2. Colon Furr Nursing Scholarship: Patty Kelley headed up an initiative to find a candidate and submit their application for the Colon Furr memorial Nursing Scholarship competition sponsored by Department of NC Legion Riders. This will be the first time Post 68 has submitted an application for this award. A team consisting of Kelley, Fortini and Dodge interviewed the candidate at Brunswick Community College. This is a strong candidate with a solid drive to succeed, support her family and provide the best possible care to her patients. The scholarship will be awarded during the Department's Fall Convention in October.
3. Post 68 Annual Service Awards: _Awarded to members with 20 or more years of service (at 5 year intervals)

Edward Wojton – 50 years
Gordon Armiger – 25 years
Glenn Kye – 25 years
Herb Moore – 25 years – Present for award
Joe Frost – 20 years – Present for award
Leonard Kiausas – 20 years
Gerald Rogers – 20 years – Present for award

4. Post 68 Challenge Coins: New Challenge Coins have been procured for the Post. These coins will sell for \$5 each and is a fundraiser for the Post. Could net us about \$2000.



OFFICER REPORTS:

- 1st Vice Commander: Dan Fortini - Fish fry tickets and volunteering! We need you! Blood drive report in EVENTS. Flag collection postponed due to issues with venue at Brunswick Forest. Moved to Founders Park – Town of Leland. Volunteers needed!
- 2nd Vice Commander: Rob Penwell: not present
- Service Officer Update: Lane Adrian – not present
- Chaplain Update: Lou Tranzillo: no report
- PAO Update: Tony Schirillo: no report
- Logistics Update: John Marone - We are taking orders for JACKETS! Call John ASAP if you want one so he can get the order in! Also, Veterans Day parade is still on schedule for November
- Sergeant at Arms: Jamie Becker: BSL for September went well but it was a small turnout due to weather and competing events. Unfortunately, she had no support in the afternoon. However they did take in \$251. She thanked those who helped out. There will be NO BSL for October due to timing.

Becker also spoke about the Magnolia Greens flag raising. She represented the Color Guard at that event.

We have upcoming events at Piggly Wiggly where we will be having a booth setup to sell hats, tickets and gain membership. Sep 29th and Oct 7th. Watch our EVENTS SCHEDULE for these events and signup info.

- Legion Riders Report: Lane Adrian – Riders not present
- Adjutant Update: Dan Dodge: Final Planning folders from our August meeting speaker were available tonight for pickup. Dodge still has a few more if anyone wants one. Membership Membership! Please pay your dues!

Also, our website has been upgraded to the latest release level by our website vendor. This version allows for much more space webpages, a better menu and a photo slider across the top of the page where we will post pictures of our events.

- Webmaster: Walter Fair:
- At-Large Officer Updates: Koppel, McAvoy, Frost: Jim McAvoy came into meeting after attending Town of Leland board meeting which he discussed with members.
- Judge Advocate: Alan Simmons: not present
- Historian: Eric Mens: Please send him any photos with captions of Post events
- Membership: Eddie Jenkins: Get those dues in!

Dale Todd: VEAC and ORATORICAL updates:

- Oratorical contest will be January 7th and will be held at North Brunswick High School. We will need a few members there to help out – 8 to 10. Check the Events System for signup info We also need judges
- VEAC will again be at Post 10 in Wilmington. This event is on our Signup system for you to volunteer.

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

Prior Month: AUGUST EVENTS:

- Blue Star Mothers meeting: Aug 17th presentation – Suicide Awareness – Hacker Went very well!
- Leland Car Show: Zelenski Aug 20th – Quite successful, especially having the Post had out free water
- Jacobs drive-by: Aug 27th Very well received by family
- Blue Star Mothers – Cape Fear Jetport – Presentation – Aug 25th Suicide Awareness – WELL RECEIVED!

******* PLEASE USE OUR NEW POST VOLUNTEER EVENT SIGNUP SYSTEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE EVENTS *******

SEPTEMBER 2022 EVENTS

- BSL: Sep 3rd - Went well except for not having support in the afternoon. No BSL in October

- Marine Corps League: Presentation – Hacker – very well received and future VEAC signups
- Blood Drive: Sep 9th – Fortini – Another VERY successful event!
 - o 54 donations = 58 units
 - o \$300 in receipts
 - o Red Cross is loving Post 68!
- Founders Day: Sep 10th – Very bad weather but we did it anyway!. Post 68 was there!
- Riders Hot Dog fundraiser: Sep 24th (Adrian) Wilmington Harley
- Red Cross at Camp Lejeune, Marine Retirees”: Sep 25th - Hacker – Suicide Awareness

OCTOBER 2022 EVENTS

- Flag Collection: Oct 8th – Fortini – Change of venue! Founders Park, Leland!
 - Fish Fry: Oct 15th – Zelenski and Simmons
 - Trunk or Treat: Oct 15th – Lead is Zelenski
- >>>> PLEASE BRING CANDY FOR TRUCK OR TREAT!**

NOV/DEC 2022 EVENTS

- Veterans Day Parade: Nov 12th - Marone
- VEAC: Nov 17-19 Adrian and Todd
- Pasta Dinner: Nov 17th: In leu of Nov meeting – THIS IS A FUNDRAISER - Zelenski
- December meeting: Dec 15th
- WAA wreath placement: Dec 17th

MISC. ITEMS:

Commanders Comments:

- Commander asked members to at least attend and participate in 1 single event
- Commander and Post member Walter Fair attended UNCW salute to veterans event today in Wilmington
- Commander attended meeting with FOCUS Broadband who gave the Post a \$1000 grant to support the Suicide Awareness program. Thanks to Finance Officer Jim Zelenski, he was able to give FOCUS a detailed accounting of how the grant funds were spent. Something they do not often get. Commander will be submitting another request for a \$500 grant.
- Commander thanked members who have been stepping up and supporting the Post and the Suicide Awareness program

Member Comments:

- Member Sherman Thompson asked about our next Buddy Check. Fortini indicated he was working on putting it together and will be before Christmas holiday.

- Lou Tranzillo talked about the importance of fundraising at our events and how the funds are needed to support local veterans and youth. The key to these events is YOU the members coming out to support the events. He thanked Joe and Bea Frost for their work on Founders Day.

NEXT MEETING:

Next Officers Meeting: October 13th, 1pm via Zoom

Next Membership Meeting: October 20th @ 6pm – Our guest speaker is TBD

Closing and Chaplain's Prayer:

50/50: Won by Judy Buongiorne who received \$43 with \$42 to the Post.

See additional documentation from this meeting and this month as addendums to these minutes.