



JOHN E. JACOBS

American Legion Post 68

Post Membership Meeting Minutes – JANUARY 19th, 2023
Meeting held at Blossoms Restaurant, Leland, NC (no zoom)

COMPILED BY: Daniel Dodge, Adjutant
APPROVED BY: John Hacker, Commander
Convened: 1803
Adjourned: 1925

Total Attendance: 55*
Officers and Staff: 15**
Members: 54***
Guests: 1

Note: Total number of members present DOES constitute a quorum.

*Concurred

****Officers & Staff Absent:** Elliott Koppel-At Large

***Includes Officers AND newly signed members

Officers in Attendance: John Hacker-Commander, Dan Fortini-1st Vice, Rob Penwell-2nd Vice, Dan Dodge-Adjutant, Jim Zelenski-Finance, Lou Tranzillo-Chaplain, Lane Adrian-Service Officer, Jamie Becker-Sergeant at Arms, Alan Simmons-Judge Advocate, John Marone-Logistics, Tony Schirillo-PAO, Eric Mens-Historian, John Marone-Logistics, Eddie Jenkins-Membership, Jim McAvoy-At Large, Bea Frost-At Large

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: Commander Hacker – 1803

Chaplain's Opening Prayer: Lou Tranzillo Chaplain

Our chaplain also read a thank you note from Wreaths Across America to the Post thanking us for our fund raising and wreath sales efforts. He also spoke on member Peter Caillaud, who passed away today. Caillaud was an Army Vietnam veteran with 8 years of service with the American Legion.

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

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble: All Members

CURRENT Business:

Approval of prior meeting minutes: Commander Hacker made a motion/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: Provided by Eddie Jenkins, Membership Chair and John Hacker, Commander.

We had several new and transfer members attend tonight's meeting along with one guest.

Burt Rosner – Transfer – USAF
Sheila Sandin – Transfer – USAF
Bill Knipper - New member – USA
Todd Willis – Transfer – USN
Brian Adamson – Transfer – USA
Jeffrey Crowden – Transfer – USA
Jeff Mendenhall – Guest – USN

Guest Speaker: None

Membership Report: Provided by Dan Dodge, Adjutant - For December 2022

- Our Post is 92% towards our Department membership goal. Increase of 11% over prior month
- 254 members currently assigned. Gain of 2, loss of 1 over past month
- December activity: 2 transfer in, 1 transfer out
- 190 members have renewed their 2023 dues or 75%

Financial Report: Provided by Jim Zelenski, Finance Officer

Beginning Balance: \$17,020.30 December 1st, 2022
Ending Balance: \$16,644.38 December 31st, 2022

Jim Zelenski also reported on the annual Financial audit/review performed by At Large Members Bea Frost and Jim McAvoy. Post financial records were found to be in order. The review team will be writing up their report with a few suggestions going forward.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commander Hacker was awarded the North Carolina Department Cardinal Award again this year for meeting our membership renewal goals. This certificate will be placed on the Post Website Virtual Bulletin Board page.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2023 Events Planning Calendar – Dodge/Hacker

The Post Executive Committee (PEC) has developed a planning calendar for the year for the purpose of creating an event schedule and to ensure there are not too many events happening in the same month. This schedule is available on the post website homepage per the graphic below. We will be planning out 3 months in advance. Post members are encouraged to frequently review the calendar and sign up to support Post events and activities.

2. Volunteer Signup website

Our new 2023 **POST EVENTS PLANNING CALENDAR** can be viewed [HERE](#). This is a full-year *planning* calendar for Post events. Events are NOT currently placed in order or in the week they will occur. They are placed by month so we can track what events we have happening by month and quarter over the course of the year.



With the announcement of our events planning calendar, we have begun populating our Post Google Calendar along with our volunteer signup system with upcoming events. Please go to our

<p><i>Events need Post members to step up and volunteer!</i></p> <p><i>** NEW EVENTS AVAILABLE **</i></p>	<p>Sign up for an Event HERE!</p>
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website home page and click on the Green button to bring up the volunteer system page. There you will find events we are currently looking for support on.

Title	Date of Event	Open Spots
John E. Jacobs American Legion Post #68 Blood Drive	February 17, 2023	14
NC Rice Fest	March 4, 2023	14
Flag Disposal	March 18, 2023	4

3. 2023 Budget Review – Jim Zelenski

In December, the PEC reviewed and approved the 2023 Post Financial Budget. Jim Zelenski provided several budget changes for 2023 that includes annual post membership dues increase of \$10.00 for the year 2024, effective 1 July 2023. A motion to approve the budget by membership was made by Past Post Commander Alan Simmons, Seconded by several members. Commander Hacker called for a show of hands vote. Budget was passed unanimously.

Member Scott Waro suggested forming an exploratory committee to examine the feasibility of hosting a Golf Scramble fundraiser event. Commander Hacker concurred; an initial planning meeting has been scheduled for January 24, 2024.

4. Veteran Benefits info (insurance/ER care) - Lane Adrian

Service Officer Lane Adrian briefed members on VA Life Insurance that is available to any veteran without a physical or medical exam. Lane provided handouts and additional information.

<https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/>

Lane also discussed a mental health program that became effective 15 January 2023 and is available to any veteran at no cost. For additional information, contact the Service Officer.

New Member Handbook - Dodge

Adjutant Dan Dodge discovered a new member handbook template on the websites of other American Legion Departments and customized the handbook for Post 68. This handbook will be added to info given to new Post members. Anyone can get a copy of the handbook by visiting our website. Go to <https://NCPost68.org> and click on Post Members Info in the left-hand menu area. You will be taken to a NEW page on our website with information and links for our membership.

6. Formation of Post 68 Auxiliary – Hacker

Post 68 is exploring creating an Auxiliary unit. Topic tabled for this evening

7. PEC Voting: The Post PEC voted on the following items during the January meeting

Approval of 2023 events planning calendar – Discussed earlier

Approval of 2023 budget Discussed earlier

Approval for member dues increase – Past Commander Dale Todd discussed NC

Department dues increase that went into effect 1 January but Post 68 decided not to increase dues at that time. However, Post 68 will increase dues by \$10 effective with the 2024 membership year. The Post has not increased dues since our inception and the Department has not increased dues for many years.

8. Starting Election planning

Traditionally, Post 68 begins planning for our upcoming elections in May by forming an elections committee early in the year. We will table this until February. Any Post member may self-nominate for any PEC position.

OFFICER REPORTS:

1st Vice Commander: Dan Fortini – Talked about pinning ceremonies for veterans at end of life to honor them for their service. Dan would like to form a committee to help support this type of program – going to visit veterans. Next month's speaker will discuss this topic. Dan would also like to get into more mentoring for our newer members.

2nd Vice Commander: Rob Penwell: Rob talked about our Post Org Chart which is available on our website. Also asked members to sign up for and lead events.

Service Officer: Lane Adrian: Local veteran we have been working with over the past year, repairing his home from storm damage was assigned by Purple Heart Homes, Post 543 St James and MOAA. PHH will be scheduling a future event and we will invite WWAY to attend. Any Post member may attend too.

Chaplain: Lou Tranzillo: Spoke about the Legion along with Patriot Guard Riders giving honors to deceased veterans and the processes to follow upon the death of a service member. Services to veteran families are not automatic.

Lou also talked about Poppy Day in May. We are planning 3 to 4 locations for collecting donations. More information to follow

Adjutant: Dan Dodge: Talked about new events being added to volunteer signup website along with several changes that have been made to our main website to include:

- Additional resource links on home page
- Link for our new Post Member Info page and Member Handbook
- Link for our 2023 planning calendar
- Sponsors moved to their own page
- Added new menu links:
 - Post Members Info
 - American Legion News
 - Sponsors
 - Post Info | Membership Dues Info

Dodge also thanked Walter Fair who has been helping maintain the website for the past year. Walter is stepping down. Any member who would like to participate and help maintain our website – please contact Dan Dodge – adjutant@ncpost68.org

Logistics Officer: John Marone: Has Post hats and shirts available for purchase.

Historian: Eric Mens: Talked about an upcoming event, the North Carolina Rice Festival, to be held 4 March. Post 68 members will be volunteering and supporting this event. Eric needs about 20 Post members to step up and volunteer. This event is on our volunteer signup webpage.

Public Affairs Officer: Tony Schirillo: Talked about how WWAY has been supporting the Post by publishing and promoting us along with allowing the Post to use the WWAY building for blood drives. Tony asked that when you see Post events and articles on Facebook that you LIKE and SHARE these posts. This helps get the word out about Post 68's activities. Also, if you see any articles online related to Post 68, please comment on them too.

Legion Riders: Lane Adrian: Post 68 Legion Riders did have a meeting tonight and have 2 new members

Member-At-Large: Jim McAvoy: Talked about our upcoming first blood drive of the year on Feb 17th. Volunteers are needed for the morning shift and wants to streamline volunteer activities. Future blood drives will be held in May, September and December.

McAvoy and Frost: Performed financial audit/review with Post Finance Officer Jim Zelenski for about 5 hours. A detailed written report will be furnished to the Commander.

Membership: Eddie Jenkins: Asked if all members present knew who John E. Jacobs was and why we named our Post after him. Eddie provided a brief recap of John E. Jacobs.

Oratorical Contest: Dale Todd, Oratorical Lead, talked about the Post's recent contest at North Brunswick High School. We had 2 contestants with the winner going onto the District 9 competition the following weekend at St James Post 543. Our contestant came in 2nd to a Senior who had been doing Oratorical for several years. Close contest! WWAY had good coverage of an article the Post published.

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

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

DECEMBER: (recap)

- WAA wreath placement: Dec 17th – Very Successful!
- BLOOD DRIVE. Dec 9th – 40 pints collected, great volunteer turnout!

JANUARY:

- Oratorical Jan 7th – We had 2 contestants. Our winner went onto the District 9 Oratorical Contest at Post 543 St James and took 2nd place. See photos on Post website

FEBRUARY:

- North Brunswick Chamber of Commerce EXPO: Feb 25th, Commander Hacker
- Blood Drive #1 – Feb 17th, Jim McAvoy
- Dept of NC Mid-Winter Conference: Feb 17th

MISC. ITEMS:

Member Comments: Bob Page, representing Patriot Guard Riders presented a donation to Post 68 to help support veterans. The donation was a check for \$250 which will be used to directly to support veteran needs. A letter from the North Carolina PGR treasurer was read:

“American Legion Post 68: The Patriot Guard of NC would like to donate this \$250 to you for your dedication to our veterans and especially for your extensive suicide hot line program. Thank you again for everything you do.” Sincerely, Paula Schronce, NCPG State Treasurer

NEXT MEETING:

Next Officers Meeting: February 9th via Zoom

Next Membership Meeting: February 16th@ 6pm – Speaker will be discussing veteran end of life pinning program

Closing and Chaplain's Prayer:

50/50: Total pot was \$144.00. Won by member Kobe Kelley, \$72.00. Post Netted \$72.00.

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