



American Legion Post 68

Virtual Meeting via ZOOM

Meeting Minutes – January 21st, 2021 at 1800 hours

COMPILED BY: Daniel Dodge, Adjutant
APPROVED BY: John Hacker, Commander
Convened: 1800
Adjourned: 2000

Total Attendance: 21*
Officers and Staff: 11**
Members: 9***
Guests: 1

*Concurred

****Officers & Staff Absent:** Bill Smith-Sergeant at Arms, Brian Danielson-Historian, Herb Moore-Membership, Elliott Koppel – Members @ large

***Existing plus new members

Officers & Staff in Attendance: John Hacker-Commander, Jim Zelenski-Finance Officer, Dan Dodge-Adjutant, Dan Fortini-1st Vice Commander, Jamie Becker-2nd Vice Commander, Lane Adrian-Service Officer, Lou Tranzillo-Chaplain, Richard Fry-PAO, Alan Simmons-Judge Advocate, John Marone-Logistics, Dale Todd-At Large

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Call to Order: **Commander**

Chaplain's Opening Prayer: **Chaplain**

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony: **Sergeant at Arms**

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble: **All**

Current Business:

Approval of prior meeting minutes: Motion made, seconded and passed by vote of membership present to approve meeting minutes of prior month's membership meeting as published.

Guest Speakers: Our first guest speaker for the evening – Tierian "Randy" Cash – Department of NC Adjutant.
Introduction by Dan Dodge

Adjutant Cash shared a couple of slides with the membership and discussed several current topics:

1. The upcoming Mid-Winter virtual Department conference.
2. National Conference: No decision as of yet. Possibly in August
3. Dept of NC annual Conference: Unknown if this event will be held
4. Department Programs:
 - a. Oratorical: The Dept Oratorical contest will be held in Shelby, NC in March
 - b. Boys State: Possible virtual event
 - c. Girls State: Will be a virtual event
 - d. Legion Baseball: Unknown at this time
5. Insurance requirements: Resolution 35 passed in the Fall of 2020 indicates Posts need to add certificates naming National and the Department on their policies
6. Mission Blue Assistance: A program setup to offer grants to Posts. Posts need not have a building to qualify.
7. Suicide Awareness: The Department is setting up a Suicide Awareness Committee. Commander Hacker will serve.
8. Legion College: Will be moved to two sessions – In November and December
9. Dept Staff: There is a new Media Coordinator

10. NC Veterans Council: Helps organize all veteran organizations across the State. They will be meeting next week to sponsor a suicide prevention committee.

Our 2nd guest speaker was Madilyn Smith from North Brunswick High School who was the winner of this years Post 68 Oratorical Contest. Madilyn gave her speech on the Constitution via a video that was played during this meeting.

Dale Todd, Post68 Oratorical chair along with several members offered constructive feedback on the speech that Dale will provide to the contestant. The District 9 Oratorical Contest is to be held this coming Saturday at St James Post. Only 2 Posts in the District are participating: 534 and 68.

Introduction of New Members and Guests: Dan Fortini-1st Vice

- Several members introduced themselves as this was their first Post meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Raising of Post Dues:** Commander Hacker – There will be NO raising of Post dues this year.

Guidance received from the NC Department Finance Commission indicated expenses were reevaluated and it was determined there was not a need for a Department allocation increase.

2. **Event Planning Committee:** 2nd Vice – Jamie Becker

Jamie is establishing an events committee and has requested participation by Post members via an email blast sent out to all members. (Note enclosed attached to these minutes). 3 members have already stepped up to assist. Jamie will be holding a kickoff meeting for the Committee shortly.

3. Membership Report: Adjutant, Dan Dodge

CATEGORY	STATS
Prior Months Membership:	209
New Members	1
Transfers IN:	2
Transfers OUT:	1
Reinstatements:	0
Resignations:	0
Post Everlasting:	1
Active Members:	210

Membership renewed %	76%
Membership not renewed %	24%
Progress Dept Goal %	105%

4. **Oratorical Contest Results:** Dale Todd: Post 68 held it’s annual Oratorical contest Jan 9th, 2021 at Blossoms Restaurant. Two contestants from North Brunswick High School participated. Many precautions were taken due to COVID-19 concerns. First place went to Madilyn Smith, a sophomore. Second place was awarded to Kaitlyn Shields a sophomore and JROTC Cadet. Both contestants delivered an original eight-to-ten-minute prepared oration on aspects of the U.S. Constitution, with emphasis on the duties and obligations of American citizens with Ms. Smith focusing on the Bill of Rights and Ms. Shields focusing specifically on the First Amendment’s Free Speech clause. Each also delivered a 3-to-5-minute extemporaneous discourse on the assigned topic of Article III, Section 1 regarding the establishment of the Supreme Court. The Post presented Smith with a first-place check for \$500 and Shields with a 2nd place check for \$300. Both contestants received a medal and certificate. Smith will go onto the District 9 contest Jan 23rd.

5. **Department Youth Programs Update:** Dale Todd
 - Girls State will be virtual with a fee of \$75/student
 - Boys State status is still unknown
 - NBHS JROTC Rifle team will begin competing in virtual contests this year. (no travel costs)
 - We are still expecting an awards ceremony of some sort at the end of the school year for presenting the Jacobs Scholarship along with Military and Scholastic Excellence awards.

6. **Financial Report:** Jim Zelenski, Finance Officer

TRANSACTION TYPE	DATE	TRANSACTION DESCRIPTION	DEBIT	X	CREDIT	BALANCE
	30-Nov-20					8,674.13
DEBIT	1-Dec-20	American Legion Internet Payment for membership. (2 x \$27.50 = \$55.00)	55.00			8,619.13
DEBIT	2-Dec-20	Check #1148 payable to William Krzyk, VetHats for 20 Veteran Face Masks, Invoice #LA032-2020	82.90			8,536.23
DEPOSIT	4-Dec-20	\$90.00 from Face Mask sales			90.00	8,626.23
DEPOSIT	4-Dec-20	\$417.50 total - membership renewals (2 renewals x \$40.00 = \$80.00 and 27 x \$12.50 = \$337.50)			417.50	9,043.73
DEPOSIT	4-Dec-20	\$655.00 from Wreaths Across America			655.00	9,698.73
DEBIT	20-Nov-20	Reinbursement to John Hacker purchase of Sledge Hammer for Post Check #1145	20.27			9,678.46
DEBIT	8-Dec-20	Internet Payment 1 member	27.50			9,650.96
DEBIT	10-Dec-20	Check #1149 payable to Lane Adrian for \$54.04 for Veteran Turkey Dinner to local Veteran	54.04			9,596.92
DEBIT	18-Dec-20	Check #1150 to WARM	500.00			9,096.92
DEBIT	24-Nov-20	Check #1147 Wreaths Across America \$120.00	120.00			Did not clear yet
DEBIT	15-Dec-20	Internet Payment 1 member	27.50			9,069.42
DEBIT	21-Dec-20	Internet Payment 5 members	137.50			8,931.92
DEPOSIT	30-Dec-20	Total deposit of \$1,741.67. Wreaths across America check for \$1461.67 and 7 member renewals \$280.00			1741.67	10,673.59
Ending Balance		As of 31 Dec 20				10,673.59

Note: Finance Officer to look into Mission Blue Award criteria with funds to be put towards our storage trailer

Jim Zelenski has received another 100 Veteran Masks. Anyone who wants to pick some up to resell should contact Jim directly at: afblueberet7494@gmail.com

Jim also thanked Rob Penwell for his work on Wreaths Across America project which brought in over \$2000 in donations to the Post.



NEW BUSINESS:

1. Passing of member Richard Agnitsch on November 27th. Prayer by Chaplain
2. Event planning for 2021 has started. Members are asked to submit events they would like to see Post participate in or hold. Please forward requests to Adjutant or Jamie Becker.
3. Member at Large resignation: Mike Conners.
Please note: Mike also helped with Post website. If anyone is interested in helping to support website please Commander or Adjutant. Thanks to Eric Terashima for stepping up to help with website maintenance.
4. Change in PEC meeting to 4th Thursday of the month: Commander Hacker – This change will allow our PAO to get press releases based upon PEC decisions out in a more timely manner.

OFFICER REPORTS:

1st Vice Commander: Dan Fortini: Will be putting out an email asking for volunteers to help support 4 upcoming events: Flag Collection, Flag Retirement, Fish Fry and Blood Drive

2nd Vice Commander: Jamie Becker: Post 68 is on the list to participate in BSL community events

Service Officer Update: Lane Adrian: Limited involvement with Leland Sr Center due to COVID. As previously reported, the Post has worked with WARM to get 3 wheelchair ramps built for local veterans and/or their widows along with home repairs, A turkey dinner was provided to one local vet. The Post also presented a donation check for \$500 to WARM. Lane and Lou will be participating in the annual homeless survey.

Chaplain Update: Lou Tranzillo

Legion Riders Report: Lane Adrian: Riders have been dormant due to COVID-19. Per Bob Page, many members have participated with Patriot Riders in multiple missions providing "final mission" escorts for departed fellow veterans.

Adjutant Update: Dan Dodge

Additional Officer Updates:

PAO: Richard Fry: We have had very good publicity coverage in local media for our events

CURRENT ACTIVITIES:

Completed events: November/December 2020:

1. Belk holiday sales (previously reported)
2. Veterans Day observance (previously reported)
3. Wreaths Across America: Rob Penwell – Over \$2000 of donations and a head start on next year
4. Boiling Springs Lakes Artists Fair: Jamie/John – The Post will continue to participate

January Events:

1. Oratorical Contest: Jan 9th – Dale Todd
2. District Oratorical Contest: Jan 23rd – Dale Todd

Upcoming Events:

1. Flag Collection Event: April 24th - Dan Fortini
2. Flag Retirement Ceremony: June 12th - Dan Fortini
3. Fish Fry: March 27th: Lane Adrian/Dan Fortini – Price will be \$10 each. John Cook will handle all cooking and food logistics. Rain date will be April 10th
4. Blood Drive: Dan Fortini: Planning for Memorial Day weekend and 9/11 weekend

Note: We will start doing food donation collections at all of our events!

MISC. ITEMS:

Commanders Comments: Commander thanked everyone and indicated the Post has a lot going on despite COVID restrictions.

Member Comments:

- Roger Weigold mentioned that 2021 is the 60th year anniversary of the Battleship NC being docked in Wilmington. There will be multiple celebrations throughout the year. There will US flag raisings on weekends – A good opportunity for the Post to become involved.
- Alan Simmons indicated there is discussion on having the Legion volunteer for Red Cross blood drives. More to follow....

Meeting Wrap-up:

Guest Speaker for November meeting: Ron Henderson on the current status of the USS North Carolina

Next Officers Meeting: 1pm Jan 28th via ZOOM

Next Membership Meeting: 6pm Feb 18th via ZOOM

Closing Ceremony and Chaplain's Closing Prayer: **Commander Hacker**

Adjourned at: 18000 hours

Note from Jamie Becker, Post 68 2nd Vice Commander regarding Events Committee:

To All Post Members,

As 2nd Vice Cdr, I am forming an Events Committee that would help create, plan and execute some successful community support events, as well as Post fund raising activities for this year. I invite anyone interested in thinking outside the box and getting involved with this committee, to feel free to contact me at: jbecker2@ec.rr.com.

As we start this new year, we are hopeful that the current COVID situation will soon be under control. Until then, we must still abide by the guidance set forth by the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This makes us unsure how and when we can accomplish our goals of community support, as well as our fund-raising venues. We are still restricted from the normal calendar of events that we have done in the past. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and I know we can make this a successful year.

Respectfully,

Jamie Becker
2nd Vice Commander, Post 68

Attendance at the 21 January 2021 membership meeting:

Lane Adrian	Warren Beard
Jamie Becker	John Carter
Margaret Chestnut	Dan Dodge
Dan Fortini	Richard Fry
John Hacker	John Marone
Alan Simmons	Eric Terashima
Dale Todd	Lou Tranzillo
Roy Valiant	Roger Weigold
Thomas Wills	Jim Zelenski

Guest Speaker: Randy Cash