

# NEW MEMBER HANDBOOK

John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68

Leland, NC

21 August 2023/V1.2



“Veterans Serving Veterans”

# Contents

Our Post-Commander’s Welcome Message.....	2
Our Post Meetings.....	2
Social Media .....	3
Post 68 - A Short History.....	3
Post 68 dues: .....	3
Legion Uniform .....	4
Uniform for Legion Meetings and Events.....	4
Why wear your Legion Uniform in public? .....	4
• Volunteers are Super!.....	5
Our Post Family .....	6
American Legion Riders (ALR) .....	6
Our Post Programs: .....	6
American Legion’s Four Pillars of Service Programs .....	7
Training.....	8
Member Orientation: .....	8
Basic Training:.....	8
Legion Publications:.....	8
Legion College: .....	8
Post Governance .....	9
Executive Committee: .....	9
Vision of Success:.....	9
Key Goals: .....	9
Mission Statement: .....	9
Constitution & By-Laws: .....	9
Post 68 Leadership .....	10
Summary Post Leader Duties .....	10
Post Operating Committees .....	14
Committee Descriptions.....	14
No Partisan Politics:.....	15
Our Post #68 meets at:.....	15
The Preamble: .....	16
Member Information – MyLegion.org.....	17

## OUR POST-COMMANDER'S WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome and Congratulations on your membership in Post 68 and in The American Legion. You are now one of the 4.2 million members in our Legion family! We hope your involvement will be a rewarding experience.

Working together, as patriotic Americans our Legion Family, from The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and our American Legion Riders, are all serving America.

The American Legion is the nation's largest, most influential, effective and dependable veterans service organization. Since our very first meeting in Paris, France in 1919, The American Legion still has a vision for a Strong America which includes four pillars of service: Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. The American Legion is a powerful force in our nation.

To the extent you are able, we hope you find ways to contribute to the proud future of our Post. Our Post's future will be defined in our service to our veterans, their families, our local communities, state and our great Nation. The future of our Post will be stronger and more rewarding because of your involvement.

As you become more involved in our Post, you may have questions about our Post. Just bring your questions to a Post officer, we will do our best to help you. We are devoted to "Mutual Helpfulness."



## Our Post Meetings

**PEC Board Meetings:** Second Thursdays @ 1 p.m.

**Member Meetings:** Third Thursdays @ 6 p.m. @ Blossoms Restaurant and Zoom. We often have guest speakers at our meetings talking on an informative topic of interest to our membership.

**Social:** Before and after each member meeting @ Blossoms Restaurant. Many members have something to eat at Blossoms before meetings and participate in a beverage at Blossoms bar afterwards.



## Social Media

Yes we have a website! <https://NCPost68.org>

Our Post 68 website is an easy-to-use resource where you can find information about the Post and the American Legion. We place current news articles there. We keep our calendar current. You can sign up to volunteer at an event and there are several links to important web resources and documents along with informational links for veteran resources. We maintain our meeting minutes, a link to pay your dues and a page for our Veteran Suicide Awareness program.

We also have a Facebook page: American Legion Post 68 Leland, NC

<https://www.facebook.com/legion.lelandpost.9>

And we maintain a YouTube page with monthly video messages from our Commander: <https://www.youtube.com/@Post68LelandNC>



## Post 68 - A Short History

American legion Post 68 in Leland was founded in 1973 but reorganized in 2014 and has since attracted over 200 members. In 2019, Post 68 changed it's name to John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68 in honor of John Jacobs, Jr. who was the only Leland resident killed during Vietnam. *Pictured from left are Cmdr. Jim Zelenski, Post Life member Bill Carshaw, First Vice Cmdr. Alan Simmons and public relations chairman Lane Adrian.*



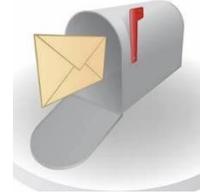
## Post 68 dues:

Post 68 dues are set annually. Renewal of membership opens the 1<sup>st</sup> of July every year with memberships being considered past-due after 31 December.

We recommend you pay your dues online using a link from our Post website.

[Renew your Dues](#)

Dues may also be paid in-person at Post meetings or by mailing your check to: American Legion Post 68 PO Box 521 Leland, NC 28451. Your ID card would be mailed to you.



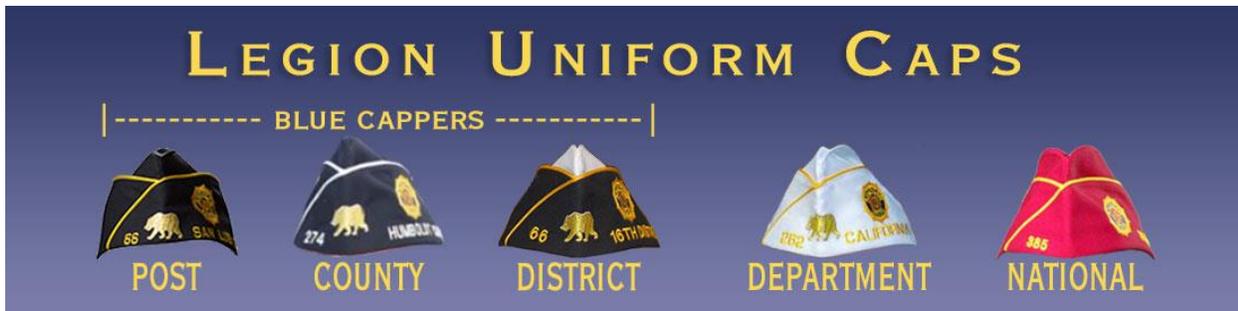
**Legion Uniform** What is the official uniform of The American Legion? *"A Legionnaire is in uniform if wearing an official American Legion Cap."*

### Uniform for Legion Meetings and Events

Please wear your Legion uniform in public when participating in Post events. Wearing the Legion uniform keeps us in the public eyes (literally). Being seen in The American Legion uniform cap is a very important element in our public relations and marketing efforts. We also have clothing for sale At meetings. Your “uniform” consists of a Post 68 Legion polo shirt, a Legion garrison cap, and khaki slacks or shorts. Garrison caps may be purchased from Flag & Emblem Sales: [https://emblem.legion.org/uniform\\_caps/legion.asp](https://emblem.legion.org/uniform_caps/legion.asp)



**Why wear your Legion Uniform in public?** Legionnaires like us, seen in uniform doing the good work of The American Legion creates a



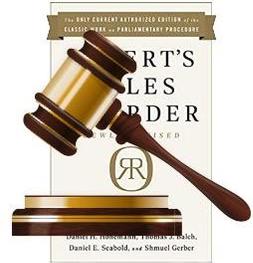
positive image. This helps our community "see" The American Legion as an organization they want to support. It is a very important element of our public relations and marketing efforts.

There is no benefit to Legionnaires being invisible to the public as we do the good work of the Legion, so please expose yourself to the community as proud members of The American Legion, wear your uniform cap.

## Legion Language and Protocols

New Legionnaires often find the following information helpful:

- **Meeting Conduct.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, governs the conduct of Post meetings
- **Ceremony Dignity.** The ceremonial services of The American Legion are conducted with the solemnity befitting the dignity of this organization.
- **Gavel.** A chair's gavel is a symbol of authority & ensures orderly meetings.
  1. **One** tap is a message to the members to be seated following the opening ceremony, the completion of a business item, or follows the announcement of adjournment.
  2. **Two** taps of the gavel call the meeting to order.
  3. **Three** taps of the gavel are the signal for members to stand in unison on the third tap.
  4. **A series of sharp taps** is used to restore order at a meeting.
- **Silent Tribute.** Legionnaires standing in silent tribute in memory of departed comrades during meetings or ceremonies will face the U.S. Flag with Legion cap or handheld over their heart.
- **Addressing Officers.** In addressing an officer of The American Legion, use the title of the officer and then his/her name. When addressing the Commander, stand and salute.
- **Volunteers are Super!**  
***Your Volunteer Time Has Value:***  
Volunteer time is now estimated to be worth over \$24 per hour!  
Legionnaire volunteer time is even more valuable. We are a Legion of super volunteers!



## OUR POST FAMILY

The other organizations at that are part of the Legion Family include:

### American Legion Auxilliary (ALA)

(TBD) A unit of the Post run and managed by member and veteran spouses. Post 68 is currently exploring the possibility of forming an Auxiliary chapter.



### American Legion Riders (ALR)

The American Legion Riders (ALR) are Legionnaires, who are also motorcycle enthusiasts. They all belong to the Legion, the Legion Auxiliary or the Sons of the American Legion. Legion Riders are well known for their charitable work.



**Meeting:** Third Thursdays @ 5:00 p.m. @ Blossoms

### Sons of the American Legion (SAL)

Currently, Post 68 does not have a Sons chapter



## Our Post Programs:

Post 68 supports many initiatives for Veteran support along with supporting Youth and JROTC at North Brunswick High School along with youth at several other local schools.



## AMERICAN LEGION’S FOUR PILLARS OF SERVICE PROGRAMS

In 1919, The American Legion was founded on four pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation’s Veterans, its service members, their families, the youth of America and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives each year.



Our organization’s positions and programs are guided by resolutions passed by American Legion National Convention delegates, and committee and commission members who represent nearly 2 million wartime veterans and their families. These programs, and the men and women who take the time to perform them, are what allow The American Legion to make a difference locally, and on the state and national levels. It’s who we are and what we do. Examples of such programs we support in our Post are as follows:

<b>Pillar I - VETERAN AFFAIRS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Access to VA health care</li><li>- Opportunities for Veterans</li><li>- Final respects services</li><li>- Veteran support and resources</li></ul>	<b>Pillar II - NATIONAL SECURITY:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Law enforcement/EMS/Fire fighter of the year</li><li>- Blood drives</li><li>- Support for Troops</li></ul>
<b>Pillar III - AMERICANISM:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Support for Scouting</li><li>- Oratorical Contests</li><li>- Boys/Girls State</li><li>- Flag Education</li><li>- JROTC &amp; Junior shooting sports</li></ul>	<b>Pillar IV - CHILDREN &amp; YOUTH:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Scholarships</li><li>- Filling needs in schools</li></ul>

## TRAINING

Effective training is important to the success of our Legion. Quality training improves our ability to succeed by improving member involvement and operational performance. Training also helps teach organizational values and identify future post leaders. Conversely, the lack of effective training can lead to losing our focus on success and can limit our operational performance.



Many who accept leadership roles in The American Legion are self-motivated by a desire to serve others and seek out training because they want to become stronger, better-informed leaders.

**Member Orientation:** Review of this Member Handbook with new members is a good introduction to The American Legion that will help many Legionnaires better understand the good work our Legion does for our veterans, their families and our community

**Basic Training:** The American Legion's official training program for officers, members, Legion College applicants and those who simply want to expand their knowledge of the nation's largest veterans service organization.  
(<https://www.legion.org/alei>)



**Legion Publications:** The American Legion publications can be an excellent training resource for those who are self-motivated.  
(<https://www.legion.org/publications>)

**Legion College:** There two versions of The American Legion College that North Carolina Legion Family members can attend. The North Carolina American Legion College is conducted in North Carolina and staffed by a well-qualified and enthusiastic staff from throughout North Carolina. The National American Legion College is held annually in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The mission of *The American Legion College* is to teach the values of The American Legion; develop leaders within The American Legion Family; and encourage new ideas to help move the Department forward in the future. The curriculum centers on instruction by facilitators, comprised of graduates of the National American Legion College and other qualified instructors from the department and national.



## POST GOVERNANCE

Our Post By-Laws state, *“The administration, governance and management of this Post is entrusted to the Executive Committee.”* Good post governance is an essential duty of post leaders and it includes a variety of elements. It is realized in our long-term post success.



### Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee members consist of all elected and appointed officers of the Post. As of this writing, there are 16 members in this group.

### Vision of Success:

“Our Post excels in service to fellow veterans, their families, and our community, while consistently operating as a model of quality post operations.”

### Key Goals:

- Sustained membership growth
- Financial solvency and stability
- Excellent leadership development
- Successful programs, and
- Quality service to veterans, their families and community



### Mission Statement:

“Our Post exists to support fellow veterans, their families, and our community.”

### Constitution & By-Laws:

The Constitution & By-Laws are two of the most important documents in our post operation. They define the complete responsibilities of all Post officers and they are available from the post Adjutant.



## Post 68 Leadership

Post Leadership in The American Legion and in our Post is provided by Legionnaires, like you, who volunteer to serve. Post leaders are fundamentally responsible for the success of our Post. They serve in many different leadership roles as committee members, chairmen and Post officers. Our Post leaders provide honorable and noteworthy service to our veterans, their families and the communities we serve.



Many believe leadership is not something you are born with and it cannot be awarded or appointed. True leadership for many, is something learned and earned through the hard work of service to others. Well-developed leadership skills are key tools in developing good leaders. Legion leaders must have stellar character and transparent integrity.

In addition to being committed to the success of our post, leaders must give an adequate commitment of time, sufficient personal energy and must communicate effectively, to give our posts strong roots in the communities where we serve our veterans.

## Summary Post Leader Duties

Our Post Constitution and By-Laws are the ultimate reference on the duties of our post leader. The following descriptions are intended as a generic overview of what many consider key responsibilities of post leaders.

The post Commander, Finance Officer and Adjutant, are “required” officers in the annual Certification of *Eligibility of American Legion Post Officers*. This is one of the mandatory reports we must submit annually, to maintain our charter.

**Post Commander** (Elected) "First among equals." is a good way to look at the relationship of the Post Commander to other post members. The Commander ensures the post's vision of success is completed and keeps the post family together in the process. The Post Commander traditionally serves as the President of the Board of Directors for incorporated posts. The Post Commander is also the voice of the post, within the post and at meetings beyond the post. Post Commanders also work with and through other leaders to



complete the post business, as they cultivate and guide them for future leadership roles.

**Finance Officer** (Elected) Much of the Post Finance Officer's work is defined and determined by standard accounting practices and the needs of the post. The Post Finance Officer is the person of integrity that helps develop a post budget and administers the post book of accounts. Finance Officers also advise post leaders on the formulating and administering of financial policies, including the annual Post budget.



**Adjutant** (Appointed) Whether seen as a Post 'First Sergeant' or a Continuity Officer, the Adjutant's role is critical in the long-term success of our post. Adjutants are responsible for keeping official records of our post business, minutes of meetings and many key administrative compliance duties.



**First Vice-Commander** (Elected) The American Legion "Officer's Guide" states this about the First Vice Commander, "In the majority of posts, a first and second vice commander are elected, with membership the primary concern of the first vice commander." In too many posts, the First Vice Commander serves as a Membership Committee of one. A post, even a small post, should have a true Membership Committee to help with recruitment, transfers from administrative posts, member renewals, member retention and with ensuring the post routinely has personal (by phone or in person) contact, with every member of the post. A Membership Committee of two (or more), is far more effective than the committee of just one.



**Second Vice-Commander** (Elected) In our Post the Second Vice Commander is the designated liaison to other veteran organizations, coordinates new member orientation and shall oversee Post morale to include entertainment and special programs, and other duties as directed by the Post.



**Sgt-at-Arms** (Elected) shall preserve order at all meetings, ensures members are properly greeted at the door, makes new members welcome, and oversees flag etiquette/disposal, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Post. This office is commonly the first of four steps to becoming Post Commander.



**Parliamentarian:** (appointed) is a new position (as of 2023). This officer is an expert on Post policies and procedures, our Constitution and ByLaws and parliamentary procedures but does not require the officer to be an attorney



**Service Officer** (appointed) serves as a link between the Veteran or dependent and appropriate resources. He/She assists our Veterans and their dependents in receiving earned benefits. He/She also attends, when available, Department Service Officer Training.



**Chaplain** (elected) is the spiritual leader. He/She is an integral part of all American Legion ceremonies, especially the installation of officers; the initiation of new members; the dedication of halls and monuments; the oversight of funeral services and other rituals that are standard throughout the organization. Our Post meetings begin and end with invocations provided by our Chaplain. He/She also maintains a Post “prayer list” to which members may add names to enlist faith and prayers for others in need.



**Historian** (elected) There should be close cooperation between the post adjutant and the historian. The former works with records on matters of current interest, the latter on matters of historical interest. The post historian should also keep in touch with the department historian and be prompt in answering inquiries. An annual report should be made to the department historian prior to the department convention.



**At-Large Members** (elected) Assigned duties by Commander as needed



**Logistics Officer** (appointed) – Manages Post property and clothing sales and Post trailer



**Public Relations Officer** (appointed) – Promotes the Post in local media and social media by publishing stories of Post events.



**Membership** (appointed): Assists with duties related to membership, dues, and meetings.



**Committee Chairs** (appointed) oversee various areas our Post is involved with regard to the Four Pillars of the American Legion. Special Committees may be formed to address certain community or state interests of the Post as directed by the Commander and Executive Committee.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED TO MAKE CONTACT WITH A POST OFFICER, PLEASE REFER TO THE POST’S WEBSITE OR CONTACT THE POST ADJUTANT: [ADJUTANT@NCPOST68.ORG](mailto:ADJUTANT@NCPOST68.ORG)**

**Filling of Vacancies in Post Leadership** On an annual basis, elections are held for the “elected” positions (generally nominations in April, elections in May, assumption of office in June). The elected Commander, in concert with the elected officers, makes appointments of other key officers to serve on the Executive and other Committees

## Post Operating Committees

Through work on committees, our members provide the hard work needed for our post's success as they plan, organize, communicate and implement our post programs.



The Post Operating Committees are critical to increasing active membership. Committees within our Post create a forum for members to pursue personal interests. They allow for the strengths and dedication of our members to shine. Post members, like you, serving on committees can grow as productive post members and leaders. Committee work also functions as a very important training ground to develop the leadership skills and knowledge of the Legion, that future Post leaders will need to succeed.

To help advise the Commander and Executive Committee the Post may establish and define the work of Post committees. With the consent of the Commander, each committee chairperson selects at least two other members to serve on each committee and they will serve for an indefinite term at the discretion of the chairperson.

## Committee Descriptions

**Membership Committee** - has charge of all matters pertaining to membership eligibility, growth, acceptance, retention, and renewals. Guidance is provided by the First Vice Commander.



**Executive Committee** - the administration, governance and management of our Post is entrusted to the Executive Committee. The number of Executive Committee Members-at-large, vary from post to post. They are often seen as advocates for the general membership, assist post officers in directing post business, and act as post representatives in the absence of post officers.

**Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) Committee** - is responsible for bringing to the attention of members and their dependents the rights and benefits granted them by law. They shall assist veterans in the pursuance of claims and in obtaining other veteran's rights and benefits; to visit comrades who are sick or disabled; to visit and comfort members of their families when sick or bereaved.



**Finance and Ways & Means Committees** - work together to supervise the financial duties of the Post, prepare the annual budget and advise the Executive Committee on financial matters. They also develop fund-raising projects. Once approved they are responsible for the project's completion and success.



**Public Relations (PR) Committee** – promotes Post programs and social activities to members and local community. Also, responsible for post newsletter, fliers and all Post online communication tools



**Americanism Committee** – promotes programs related to Americanism including our annual Oratorical contest

**No Partisan Politics:** According to Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion, “The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.”

**NO LEGION CAPS WORN**



**AT POLITICAL EVENTS!**

The National Charter, approved by Congress, also stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical\* which has been interpreted by the National Judge Advocate as “nonpartisan” in modern lingo. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is prohibited from contributing, helping or endorsing a candidate. However, a member, as a private citizen, and not representing the organization, can employ whatever legal and ethical means to advance his or her candidate.



## **Our Post #68 meets at:**

***Blossoms Restaurant Magnolia Greens  
1800 Tommy Jacobs Dr,  
Leland, North Carolina***

Email: [NCPost68@gmail.com](mailto:NCPost68@gmail.com) Website: <https://NCPost68.org>

Phone: (910) 408-2229



**THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
VETERANS • DEFENSE • AMERICANISM • YOUTH

**THE PREAMBLE:**

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and goodwill on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

The Preamble is printed on the back of your membership card.

## Member Information – MyLegion.org

Accurate and up-to-date member information is important for any organization. We are very fortunate in The American Legion that **every member** can take an active role in keeping their information accurate and up-to-date, using the myLegion.org members-only web portal.



This requires a Member Account be established in Legion.org. To establish the member account, visit the home page of The American Legion web site ([legion.org](http://legion.org)) and click on the REGISTER link at the very top of the home page. Then you can go to your personal Member Account in MyLegion.org, to update your information, view your benefits or print a copy of your membership card. In addition to updating your personal profile information you can also:

- Subscribe to electronic newsletters
- View past editions of the Legion Magazine
- Make donations in the "Giving Made Easy" option
- Find out about special offers available to Legionnaires, and
- Select dues renewal options



In the dues Renewal Options, we highly recommend the automatic payment



## Our Post Handbook was designed and produced by:

Post 68 Adjutant Daniel Dodge using templates developed by:

- The Department of North Carolina
- The Department of California
- The American Legion National Headquarters

If you have ANY QUESTIONS or need assistance or, have any suggestions for improving this document, please contact the Post Adjutant directly: [Adjutant@ncpost68.org](mailto:Adjutant@ncpost68.org)