



JOHN E. JACOBS LEGION POST 68 LELAND
MEDIA RELEASE

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Submitted by:

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RECENT HAPPENINGS AT LEGION POST 68



Membership, Outreach, and Participation (MOP) – That’s what the incoming Post 68 Commander wants members to appreciate and practice during his tenure. At its May 21, 2026, membership meeting, the John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68 elected Thomas M. Powers (Tom) as its Commander for the coming year. Powers is among the youngest Commanders installed since the Post was rechartered in 2012. His installation ceremony on July 9, 2026, will underscore Post 68’s commitment to meeting the needs of area veterans and their families head-on. Commander-Elect Powers stated that his goals for his tenure include ensuring that each Legion member can actively participate in community service to support the American Legion’s Four Pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. To learn more about Commander-Elect Tom Powers, visit <https://www.powersadminsvcs.com/about-me>.

Buddy Checks. Led by 1st Vice Commander Jim McAvoy, a team of Post 68 Legionnaires, including Lou Tranzillo, Jo Ann Britt, Ed Grinnel, Gary Bryskiewicz, Frank Pain, and Margo Chestnut, recently completed Post 68’s first Buddy Checks of the year. The effort resulted in contact with more than 200 Post members. Buddy Checks are a nationally recognized American Legion process in which team members check in with other Legionnaires, whether in person, by e-mail, phone, or text. The intent is to reach out to veterans, assess their needs, and determine whether they require assistance with health care, food, rent, or transportation. Veterans needing such assistance are directed to the appropriate resource and provided with follow-up. The recently completed Buddy Checks were well

received by the veterans contacted. The next Buddy Check is scheduled for the week of Veterans Day.

TenCrows Studio Recording. After attending the funeral of a close friend who died by suicide, Post 68 member Scott Wargo thought long and hard about how to honor his friend through song. A longtime Legion member and retired Army Apache helicopter pilot, Scott understood that Post 68's development of a Suicide Awareness and Prevention program, led by John Hacker, has made Post 68 a leader in the NC Department's implementation of an effective statewide Be The One program. In the end, the words and chords he put into a song dovetail effectively and effortlessly with the American Legion's Be The One veteran suicide awareness and prevention program.

The Post 68 Be The One team uses a two-pronged approach to implement Be The One, focusing first on education to make conversations about veteran suicide more open and second on connecting individuals with critical resources to support prevention, using a wallet-sized plastic resource guide provided to First Responders, Law Enforcement, and charity-based community organizations.

With Scott playing acoustic guitar and backed by vocals from Post 68 member Kobe Kelley and longtime Post supporter Bex Helton, his song "Be The One" made its public debut at the Post 68 membership meeting in March. After several unsuccessful attempts to find a local recording studio, the trio, along with John Hacker and Public Affairs Officer Eric Mens, recently traveled to the Jacksonville area to record a professional video and audio for "Be The One." John had previously negotiated the recording contract with TenCrow Studios—a service-disabled veteran-owned and operated studio in Midway Park. The project was made possible by grants and donations to the Post 68 Be The One program.

The inaugural performance of the "Be The One" song, held in March, is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtavL4WmGQE>. The professional recording by TenCrow Studios should be available by the end of June. To learn more about TenCrow Studios, visit their website at <https://tencrowstudios.com/#>. To learn more about Post 68's "Be The One Program" or to donate to the program, visit <https://www.ncpost68.org/be-the-one>.

Pictured below: Scott Wargo, composer and guitarist, and vocalists Kobe Kelley and Bex Helton.





Pictured above (left to right) – Mike McCoy, owner TenCrow Studios; Kobe Kelley; Bex Helton; Scott Wargo; Eric Mens; Shawn Jones, Studio Recording Technician; and John Hacker.

To learn more about Leland's John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68—who we are and what we do for veterans and the community—visit: <https://www.ncpost68.org>. Membership meetings are held in the banquet room at Blossoms Restaurant (1800 Tommie Jacobs Drive, Leland) on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Dinner is an informal gathering for members, starting between 4:30 pm and 5:00 pm; the official meeting begins at 6:00 pm. After the meeting, members socialize over drinks in the Blossoms bar area. Everyone is welcome: members, visitors, guests, and spouses. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 16.