

Bloomington Post 550

Monday, December 11, 2023, Minutes

- Meeting called to order by Post Commander Dan Welch.
- Colors presented, prayer offered. The POW flag was placed on an empty chair. Pledge and Preamble recited.
- Guests:
 - Lee Tallakson of St Louis Park American Legion Post 282. He came to discuss Minnesota Boys State with us and thanked us for the past support and encouraged our continued support. Boys State is the second week of June for \$330 per participant. Girls are welcomed for Girls State, and he thanked Post 550 for its support of Girls State. People with high school juniors who are interested in attending either Girls State or Boys State, please contact Warren Christopherson at 972-873-9952.
 - Richfield American Legion Post 435 Commander Andy Keller, Controller Diane Miller, Adjutant Mark Barthel and spokesman Elwyn Tinklenberg.
- Roll call of officers: 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander excused.
- Printed copies of the October minutes distributed. Mead moved, Mellin seconded, and the minutes were approved.
- Commander: Dan Welch told us about the many cards and letters received thanking Post 550 for the financial support we provide to them, and more letters and cards thanking the Bloomington Honor Guard for the many funerals for veterans and other official ceremonies performed.
- Adjutant: Warren Christopherson reported the need for a blood drive representative to head up a quarterly or semi-annual blood drive at the Bloomington Veterans Center. If interested, contact Christopherson.
- Anyone interested in organizing a bowling team to participate in the Minnesota State American Legion Family Bowling Tournament, contact Christopherson for details and applications. There are team, single, and doubles events. The tournament is in April at Sundance Lanes in Dayton. Assistance is requested from a Post 550 Member who is willing to contact the Bloomington High School counselors and principals to present scholarship opportunities for students who are legal descendants of an American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary members. Other restrictions (listed on the application) must be brought to their attention that apply to each scholarship. Christopherson has the applications.
- Chaplain: Jim Mead offered a prayer for William Hagstrom, 89, Army veteran and past commander of VFW Post 1296, plus past commander of the Bloomington Honor Guard, and for Glenn A. Pettit, 103, Army-Air Force Veteran WW2.
- Commander Dan Welch appointed Blaine Beste the new Financial Officer. He replaces Jerome Narragon, who died Oct. 30. Beste will continue as 1st Vice Commander for the Legion year.
- Membership: Jim Mead reported membership for 2024 is at 273. This is 84 percent of the 325 the department has set as our goal. Post 550 set a self-goal of 400 for 2024.
- Gambling Manager: Tim Engstrom provided the gambling report for November.
- The Post 550 Gambling Committee recommended approval of \$11,750 for the following to be paid in December:

- Kennedy Boys Baseball: \$1,400
- BKAF: \$10,000 in two payments of \$5,000, one December, one January
- Veteran housing security: \$1,350
- Richfield Post 435: \$4,000 (pending further research)

Note: No Gambling Committee meeting in January.

A motion was made by Mead and seconded by Mellin to approve donations. Motion carried. Former Post 550 Commander Rick Warren wanted to be noted as opposed to the donation to Post 435. Two others also voted against it.

- Gun Safety: The next course is planned for April 2024. Gun Safety questions contact Ken Lundgren 612-812-0854.
- Legion Riders: No Report
- Sons of the American Legion reported 30 paid members for 2024.
- Unfinished Business:

- New forms of games could be introduced at the Sports Page called "video races." He hopes to find an organization to run them Tuesday nights. He plans to explore with BKAF leaders what happens on Bingo Night at the Muddy Cow in Shakopee.

- New Business:

- Post 435 members explained their post's need for assistance with utility debt. They said they also were in touch with Apple Valley Post 1776.

- Dues will increase at the national and department levels. The adjutant will find out about the district level. This will be discussed further next month.

- Prayer was offered.
- POW flag was recovered.
- Colors retired.
- The meeting was adjourned.

— Adjutant Warren Christopherson