



HR0307

LRB102 18495 ECR 26653 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives would like to congratulate Highland VFW Post 5694 on its 75th Anniversary; and

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WHEREAS, Highland VFW Post 5694 was established on February 24, 1946, and its Auxiliary was founded on July 28, 1946; and

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WHEREAS, Highland VFW Post 5694 originated when the local World War I veterans returned home; once World War II started, most of the membership returned to service, and with few members remaining, the Post lost its charter due to lack of participation; and

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WHEREAS, When World War II ended, the returning members needed a place to gather and to talk about their experiences; they decided to meet at a place called Bucket's Tavern; this location became the meeting place of a group of young men interested in forming a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Highland; and

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WHEREAS, The necessary steps were then taken to form Highland VFW Post 5694; the first recorded meeting of the Post was held at the Highland Public School gymnasium on February

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1 24, 1946; and

2 WHEREAS, Highland VFW Post 5694 was instituted with  
3 approximately 200 members on the charter; this was a group of  
4 energetic young men who wasted no time starting fundraising  
5 projects, which included dances being held at the Lindendale  
6 Park ballroom; and

7 WHEREAS, In early 1948, negotiations were started to  
8 purchase property consisting of a building, a lake, and  
9 approximately four acres; the final purchase was completed in  
10 August of 1948, and a new organization named Oversea's  
11 Veterans of Highland, Inc. was formed; Highland VFW Post 5694  
12 served as the parent organization with all Post members  
13 automatically becoming corporate members; and

14 WHEREAS, On March 10, 1951, a major disaster struck when a  
15 defective chimney caused a fire that completely destroyed  
16 Highland VFW Post 5694's building; a rebuild plan was then put  
17 into place, and the membership responded in excellent fashion  
18 with physical labor; the community did likewise with donations  
19 of money and materials; in September of the same year, the  
20 rebuild was complete, and a grand reopening was held; and

21 WHEREAS, Between 1951 and 1967, there were quite a few new  
22 additions to Highland VFW Post 5694 after the rebuild; a

1 monument was purchased for the comrades who lost their lives  
2 in World War II; a 105 Howitzer Artillery weapon was added, and  
3 an additional 14 acres of land were added towards the  
4 development of a park; additions were added inside the Post  
5 building as well, with the installation of six bowling alley  
6 lanes; one final addition came in the form of a jet plane that  
7 was mounted outside as a dedication to the memory of those  
8 comrades who lost their lives in the Korean War; and

9 WHEREAS, Highland VFW Post 5694 has always placed a  
10 special emphasis on community service, hosting annual  
11 Christmas programs, Easter egg hunts, and trips to Major  
12 League Baseball games in St. Louis; and

13 WHEREAS, Other contributions to the community have  
14 included donations to furnish a room at the local hospital,  
15 building baseball fields for boys of the community to use, and  
16 providing special lighting equipment for the Highland Fire  
17 Department Emergency truck; smaller donations were also made,  
18 which included donating flags for schools and churches and  
19 Christmas baskets for the needy; and

20 WHEREAS, There has never been a year that Highland VFW  
21 Post 5694 has not donated to national organizations such as  
22 the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, March of Dimes,  
23 United Cerebral Palsy, Cancer Fund, and many more worthy

1 causes; and

2 WHEREAS, Highland VFW Post 5694 had peak membership in the  
3 early 1970s, including hitting a high of 510 members during  
4 the years 1973 and 1974; sadly, many members have passed away,  
5 and the current membership stands at 250; and

6 WHEREAS, In 2020, the Highland VFW Post 5694 experienced  
7 significant setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, in  
8 March of 2021, fish fries with limited attendance were  
9 resumed, and the members look forward to coming back strong as  
10 more restrictions are being lifted; and

11 WHEREAS, The purpose of the VFW shall be fraternal,  
12 patriotic, historical and educational, to preserve and  
13 strengthen comradeship among its members, to assist worthy  
14 comrades, to perpetuate the memory and history of the dead and  
15 assist their widows and orphans, to maintain true allegiance  
16 to the Government of the United States of America and fidelity  
17 to its Constitution and laws, to foster patriotism, to  
18 maintain and extend the institutions of American Freedom and  
19 to preserve and defend the United States from all its enemies;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Over the last 75 years, the Highland VFW Post  
22 5694 has endeavored to uphold these principles and pledges to

1 continue to do so as well as push forward for community  
2 service; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
4 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
5 we congratulate the Highland Veterans of Foreign Wars Post  
6 5694 on their 75th anniversary and thank them for their  
7 service to the community and the country; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
9 presented to Highland VFW Post 5694 as a symbol of our esteem  
10 and respect.