



## **Le Center American Legion Post 108**

### **Annual Post #108 Impact and Event Statement**

For over 100 years, American Legion Post #108 has been the cornerstone of the Le Center community supporting Veterans and Youth in our community with a multitude of programs. We are the central gathering point for Le Center and beyond. Community members come together to celebrate baptisms, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, cultural events, and class reunions. They have gathered to donate blood for those in need, for community meetings, school functions, and Christmas parties. Over 40 young ladies from the area have been crowned Miss Shamrock during the annual St. Patrick's weekend celebration. Veterans, family, and friends have come to toast departed comrades and loved ones who have passed on.

Our American Legion family - Post, Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) members, along with our dedicated volunteers regularly contribute their time, talents, and financial resources to positively impact the programs we support within the Four Pillars of the Legion: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.

We are committed to serving Le Center and the surrounding communities and look forward to our future together. Last year, our Le Center Post #108 Legion Family donated over \$30,000 to a wide variety of programs. Here are a few examples:

#### **Veteran Support**

**Memorial Day:** Our Legion family leads our community in remembering the men and women who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces, particularly those who died in battle, or as a result of wounds sustained in battle. The purpose of Memorial Day is to memorialize the veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

**Veteran's Day:** Veterans Day, officially observed on November 11<sup>th</sup>, is the day set aside to thank and honor ALL who served in the United States Armed Forces—in both wartime or peacetime. This is a very special day for Post's members and their families who have sacrificed so much in service to our county.

**Veterans Breakfast:** Annually on a Sunday near Veterans Day, the SAL puts offers a terrific breakfast free of charge for all area Veterans. Typically, over 200 meals are served to Veterans and their friends and families.

**Pheasants for Vets Dinner:** Since 1941, prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, Minnesotans have been providing a pheasant dinner with all the trimmings to Veterans in Minnesota Veterans Hospitals, Veterans Homes, and state-run facilities. In the past, this program consisted of pheasant hunters who donated part of their hunting harvest for this meal. More recently, the pheasants are purchased and prepared by the facility food services, and the Legion donates funds for this dinner.

**Veterans on the Lake Resort:** We understand the importance of retreats and we donate financial support to Veterans on the Lake, located on Lake Ely. It provides a barrier-free setting for a memorable outdoor recreation experience for disabled Veterans, Veterans, their families, friends, and supporters.

**Care Packages:** When service members are deployed overseas, they often require care and comfort items during their deployment. Once a year or more, our Legion send care packages to them.

**The American Legion National Emergency Fund:** Unfortunately, disasters happen to our Veterans and their Post homes each year throughout our country. We are fortunate that we can contribute to this important fund each year, typically more than \$1000.

**Veterans Van Fundraiser:** Each year our Legion Post normally donates \$1000 to the Le Sueur County Veterans Van Fund that brings our local Veterans to the VA Medical Center for care.

**Visit Veterans in Nursing Home:** Although we are striving visit more frequently, we do reach out and visit with our local Veterans who are in area nursing homes.

**Veteran Organizations:** Our Legion family is proud to provide financial support to other Veterans organizations such as the Vietnam Veterans Last Man Club and Hometown Heroes.

**Active Duty Service Member Letters:** Recently, a letter writing campaign was initiated to our area citizens who are currently on active duty or deployed Guards and Reserves. This effort is being done to simply touch base and let them know we care and are thinking of them.

**Military Funeral Honor Guard:** The Le Center Area Honor Guard, consisting of both American Legion Post 108 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1803, provides full military honors for our community Veterans. This is the most important role our Posts provide for our fallen comrades and their survivors.

### **Youth Support**

**Legion Baseball:** Recently re-established, together with Lonsdale and Montgomery, our Legion is proud to sponsor our local youth as they get off the couch and get outdoors to play baseball with area teams.

**Kid's Bingo:** Thanks to our Son's of the American Legion (SAL) Squadron kids come each year for a fun afternoon of to learn about Americanism, Patriotism and Veterans and then win some cool prizes at Bingo.

**St. Patrick's Scholarships:** For almost a half of a century, our Legion has hosted and also donated generously for scholarships for the St. Patrick's Day Royalty.

**Legionville:** Each year, 6<sup>th</sup> graders get the opportunity to attend a weeklong Safety Patrol Program at Legionville, where they learn safety at school and bus crossings, and other safety courses like CPR, first aid and internet safety. It is a great fun filled week with team building and leadership skills and we are proud to sponsor children from our community each year. Additionally, we routinely donate funds to help with maintenance and repairs of the Legionville facility.

**Boys & Girls State:** This is a summer leadership and citizenship National American Legion program for high school juniors, which focus on exploring civics, American government, and our political system. Our Post and Auxiliary sponsor kids each year to attend this program, and they are always happy that they did!

**Oratorical Contest:** The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Since 1938, the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, focusing on the history of our nation's laws, civics, and public speaking. We are pleased to help nurture the younger generation and encourage participation with cash prizes.

**Coloring Contests:** Each year, our Auxiliary holds a patriotic coloring contest for the local elementary students. It is a lot of fun and great lesson in patriotism for our youth and so much fun to see their creative works of art.

**Trap Shoot:** In support of our local youth, their schools and our Constitution's 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, we provide funds for area kids to participate in school district trap shoot teams, including Le Sueur Henderson and Tri City United. School districts typically provide zero financial support for these programs.

**Supporting our Schools:** We routinely support a variety of programs, clubs, and organizations like the FFA, Robotics Teams, graduation gowns for Kindergarteners, etc.

### **Community Support**

**Bass Fishing Tournament:** Annually each Spring, the SAL sponsors a Bass Fishing Contest on the German Jefferson Lakes chain, which is well attended by local fishing enthusiasts, with big cash prizes. Proceeds go to help our Legion, Veterans, and local community.

**Red Cross Blood Drive:** We are please to provide our facility, free of charge, to the American Red Cross so that our community can conveniently donate blood on a routine basis.

**BBQ Cookoff:** Annually each Summer, the SAL sponsors a local BBQ Cook-Off for the adults and the youth in our community. Big trophies and bragging rights are awarded, and the funds raised helps our local Veterans and Community.

**Community Parades:** The Legion Post 108 and VFW Post 1803 Color Guard participates in many parades and events each year in Le Center and surrounding communities.

**Toys for Tots Collection:** For over 75 years, the Marines Corps have collected and distributed toys for less fortunate children at Christmas. We are proud to help in this endeavor by being a drop of location and through our members donating toys, to help bring the joy of Christmas and send a message of hope to our areas less fortunate children.

**Fundraiser Host:** Several times throughout the year, our facility is the host for families, schools, and organizations to help raise funds for a tragedy, a unique cause or a community need. Additionally, the Le Center Lions, Le Sueur County Posse, Le Center St. Pats, American Red Cross, Pioneer Power, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, etc use our facility for their meetings and fundraising events.

**A special thank you to our Post #108 members (Post, Auxiliary and SAL), our dedicated staff, volunteers, supporters, and patrons who make all that we do for Veterans, youth, and our community possible!**