

‘Just Good Works’

Connecticut Post is vibrant in community

Jan 21, 2019

VFW Post 1467 in Old Lyme, Conn., has the motto: “No bar, no building; just Good Works!”

According to past Post commander Ed Shyloski, when the Post was chartered in 1993, its members met in the Old Lyme Senior Center and agreed there was no reason for a Post home or bar.

Instead, they decided to put their efforts and funds into serving Old Lyme and surrounding communities.

“As normal practice every year,” Shyloski said, “we have sent thousands of dollars to the West Haven VA Hospital, Rocky Hill State VA Hospital Program, West Haven VA Blind Center, Fisher House for West Haven and the Giant Steps Art and Music Therapy Program at West Haven VA Hospital.”

Five years ago, an anonymous veteran donated \$10,000 to the Post, saying everything he has done in his life was because of his experiences in the military.

That donation started the Post’s Vets-In-Need Outreach program. Shyloski said the Post advertised the program in local newspapers to spread the word that the Post was ready to help.

“Now social workers in most all of southeast Connecticut know to call us when there is a veteran or their immediate family member in need,” Shyloski said. “We are a one-time hit show that tries to stave off circumstances of despair with a little help.”

Some of the circumstances include replacing a furnace, paying for gas, rent, food, utilities, wheelchair ramp installation and school lunch payments for veterans’ children.

Shyloski said the Post has even donated vehicles. In one instance, he worked with All Pro Automotive and received “huge” discounts on the vehicles.

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Since 2012, the Post – which has less than 100 members – has donated nearly \$27,000 to more than 60 individuals in need.

“We do believe the Lyme-Old Lyme Post is a model for new Posts that want to really have a mindful mission and purpose and even for declining Posts that are determined to survive,” Shyloski said.

This article was featured in the January/February 2019 issue of VFW Checkpoint. If you're a Post, District or Department Commander and aren't receiving the Checkpoint e-newsletter, please contact the VFW magazine at magazine@vfw.org.