



Legion Family steps up in times of need

By Brett Reistad, National Commander
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In a time of need, I am very proud of how our American Legion Family steps up and shows support to their fellow veterans, their families and community. Among the many times this happens, these efforts were recently seen during Hurricane Florence.

American Legion Post 34 in Rock Hill, S.C., created hurricane relief kits for the more than 370 soldiers of the 178th Combat Engineer Battalion of the South Carolina National Guard who were mobilized to provide hurricane relief efforts. The post asked for and received donations of canned and packaged food, bottled water, hygiene products and more. And during the hurricane, Post 34 stayed open to “let people know that if need be there was a place to go and people to help,” said Post 34 Commander Tommy Ayers. “As a post we would like everyone to know we are here for the community and, most importantly, our veterans.”

American Legion Post 24 in Blytheville, Ark., worked with the county schools to have students in elementary through high school write cards for Hurricane Florence victims. It’s a way to “give out good vibes and positive thoughts and let the victims know that we are still here for them. That we know what’s going on and just want to make them smile,” said Post 24 Commander Jason Petrous.

Petrous worked with a local Red Cross representative to get addresses to Red Cross shelters in the Carolinas to mail the cards to.

Post 167 in Hampstead, N.C., served as a command center for fire departments, EMTs and scuba divers. And in Shelby, N.C., home of the American Legion World Series, Post 82 members provided bottled water, cleaning supplies, pet food and other necessities donated by Cleveland County residents.

American Legion programs such as our National Emergency Fund (NEF) and Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) offer helping hands to eligible storm victims in need. Since Jan. 1, 2018, the NEF has provided more than \$166,000 in grants to Legion and Sons of The American Legion members, as well as posts, affected by a natural disaster. North Carolina Department Adjutant Randy Cash said Post 230 in Spring Lake, N.C., had been flooded out in Florence's aftermath.

NEF grants are made possible by donations to the fund. And of the TFA grants awarded last year, \$15,500 aided 68 children of 31 veterans who were affected by Hurricanes Irma, Harvey and Maria.

Through your donations to the NEF and TFA, those in need during difficult times are supported.

To donate, visit www.legion.org/donate.

Together, we as a Legion Family will get through difficult times.

We are Team 100.

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