

NEWS RELEASE

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Backus American Legion Post #368 Annual Charitable Gaming Report

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BACKUS LEGION and WILLARD'S SALOON GAMING PARTNERSHIP SETS A NEW ANNUAL DONATION HIGH FOR A THIRD CALANDER YEAR IN ROW, TOPING \$100,000.00

Backus, MN. The Backus American Legion Charitable Gaming Partnership with longtime affiliate Willard's Saloon have welcomed another entity to our Partnership. Effective January 1st, 2022, Rendezvous Brewing in Hackensack joined the Legion and Willards in our charitable gaming operations to provide even greater success.

Last year we were excited to report we broke \$1 million in donations in our program's history, while also setting a program high of \$95,392 donated for the year. In calendar year 2021 we once again set a donation high, donating \$112,944, of which, 97% of all donations were in the Backus, Pine River, and Hackensack area. Last year we also paid out winners to the total of \$4,196,992.92. The main beneficiaries of our successful program were the area food shelves, fire departments, Pine River-Backus (PRB) school, and community festivals.

Outside of charitable donations, the State of Minnesota was once again the largest beneficiary of charitable gambling in the PRB area, collecting \$214,579 in 2021 taxes from our partnership. Federal taxes in 2021 totaled \$9,055.

Among the highlights were \$30,000 to the PRB school for band equipment, scholarships, and playground equipment. \$10,000 to the Cass County Fair, \$15,000 to area food shelves, and \$24,000 to the Backus and Pine River Fire Departments. The remaining 3% of donations that were distributed outside of our immediate area were provided to the American Legion's primary purpose projects such as veteran homes, Veterans Administration (VA) care patient funds, and homeless veteran projects.

The Backus American Legion and our partners at Willard's Saloon and Rendezvous Brewing would like to thank the community for continuing to support our charitable gaming operations. The continued public support and interest in our charitable gaming operations have made extremely positive impacts. Because of your support, the Backus American Legion Charitable Gambling Partnership leads charities throughout the northern Brainerd Lakes area, and ranks 203rd out of 1,170 organizations in Minnesota according to the State's fiscal year report.

The Backus Legion, Willard's, and Rendezvous will continue to provide well-run and entertaining forms of charitable gaming in our area. This year we introduced some changes and incentives to our bingo programs by adding new and more ways to win. A change in odds to the table wheel and different pull tab game options are just a few of the enhancements coming this year.

According to the State Gambling Control Board fiscal report, the State has seen growth across the board in the industry. Last fiscal years statewide increase of 13.2% in sales was the sixth year in a row that sales have increased across Minnesota. As popular as electronic pull tabs and bingo are in the state, paper pull tabs still account for 93% of sales across the state.

Rachel Jenner, the Executive Director of Allied Charities, added "Minnesota charitable gambling had a successful year in 2021 with revenue exceeding \$452 million dollars. These charitable organizations also successfully reduced their average allowable expenses to 46% of revenue - the lowest amount in almost 20 years. The efforts of charitable gambling allow these organizations to support their missions across Minnesota while also employing thousands of workers. Donations exceeded \$83

million in 2021. In the next legislative session, Allied Charities of MN will be advocating for a revised tax structure to reduce the \$125 million dollars paid annually to the state. Minnesota currently has a seven-billion-dollar surplus in the state's budget. If ever there was a “right” time to reduce our tax rates, the time is now. We want to take these funds and donate to the communities where they can have the biggest impact to those in need.”

The Backus American Legion, Willard’s Saloon, and Rendezvous Brewing express our sincere appreciation to everyone that supports our mission. It is your contributions that enable these amazing charitable contributions to our communities, and continuance of our charitable gaming mission. Thank you for your support.

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