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ANNUAL
REPORT





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MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

2018 was an amazing year for Backing the Blue Line. Our organization experienced growth in every facet - from membership to volunteer hours, donations to request for assistance. The word is getting out about who we are and what we do!

For the first time ever, we hosted a **sold out** Blue Line Ball (thank you!) that raised a record amount of money to put back in to Minnesota law enforcement officers and their families. In 2018, we've delivered more baskets, offered more support, connected more officers and families to resources, and built more friendships within the law enforcement community. It is an honor to be called to support the blue line and the support we've been shown - and are therefore able to give - is nothing short of amazing.

Backing the Blue Line is 100% volunteer and donation driven. We are so thankful for the ability to continue our mission through the work our members, volunteers, supporters, and donors and we look forward to serving in a larger capacity in 2019!

Sincerely,

Backing the Blue Line Board of Directors



ABOUT US

Backing the Blue Line is a Minnesota founded 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the honor and support of Minnesota law enforcement officers and their families during times of crisis through a specialized network of resources. While supporting the Minnesota law enforcement community, our all-female membership shares the bond that comes with being the significant other of an officer, and we come together to celebrate that unique lifestyle



OUR MISSION

Backing the Blue Line unites the power of members and generosity of donors to honor and support Minnesota Law Enforcement officers, wives and families; we mobilize to provide services, labor and assistance during times of illness or work-related incidents.

OUR VISION

To expand our reach to all Minnesota counties by increasing our supporters, volunteers and means to assist. We want our interactions to drive a high standard for how law enforcement officers and their families are treated during times of crisis and need.

YEAR IN REVIEW

2018 showed growth in our organization in every single way possible - from the number of members who joined us to the expanded reach we had across the state.

Through our social media marketing, website, and blog, as well as increased presence at events around Minnesota, 2018 was a year to make ourselves known. It wasn't so long ago we had to explain to the law enforcement community and its supporters who we are and what we do. Now, more often than not, people recognize Backing the Blue Line and the support we give to law enforcement officers.

Our Family Support committee continued to work hard to fulfill the many requests they received for baskets and other shows of support to officers and their families. As always, we posted pictures of those baskets on our social media accounts after they were sent out.

With growth comes change. In 2018, we added members of leadership and created new sub-chair positions within existing committees. More hands doing specific tasks helps our organization to run more efficiently.

OUR LEADERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Brooke LeClaire
President



Heather Haider
Vice President



Carine Steffens
Treasurer



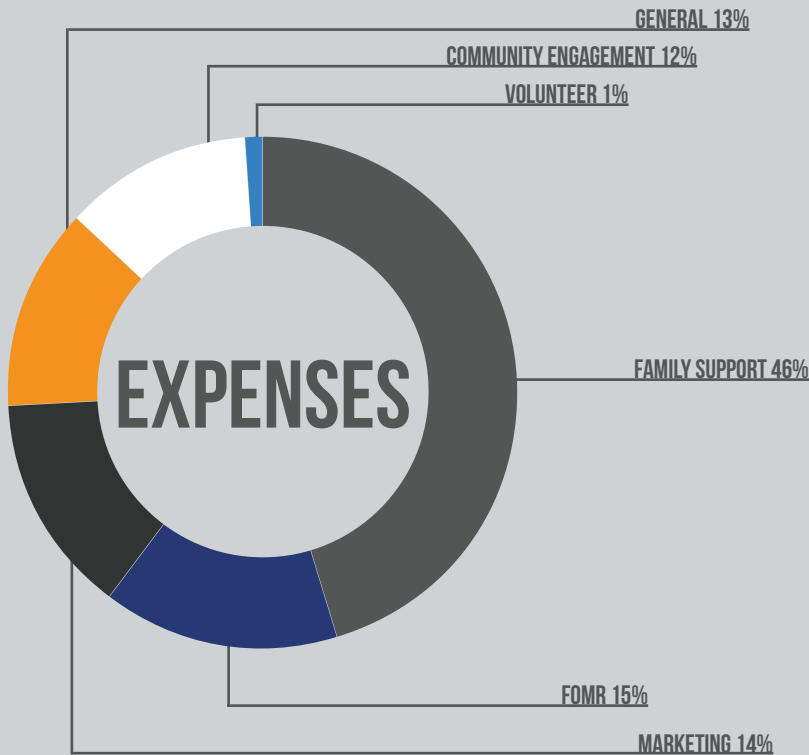
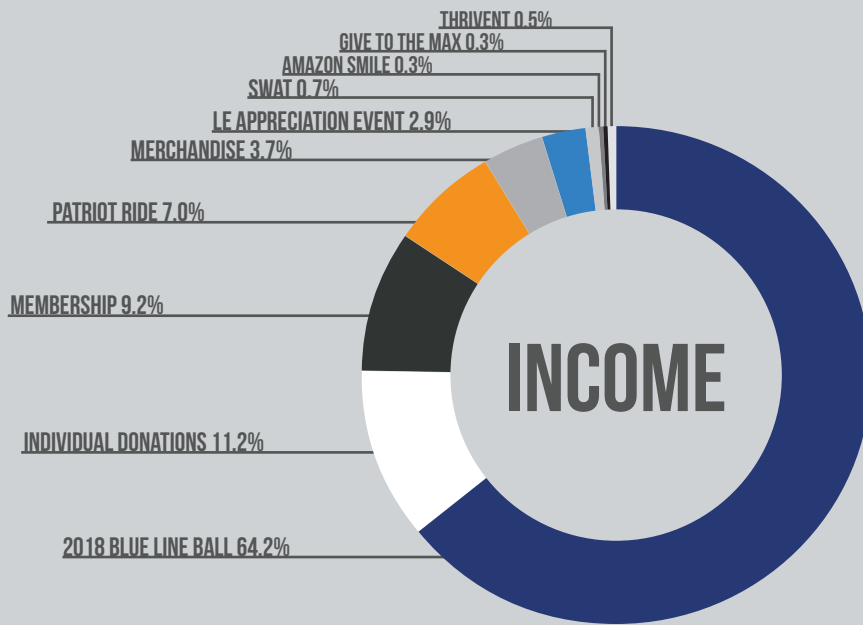
Meghann Reese
Secretary

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Jennifer Whiteford	Founder
Alecia Hooper	Member Engagement Chair
Amy Dingmann	Marketing Chair
Ashlei Martin	Membership Chair
Christine Fitch	Community Engagement Sub-Chair
Jamie Cramble	Marketing Editor Sub-Chair
Jeni McKenna	Family Support Co-Chair
Karen Buckhouse	Membership Benefits Sub-Chair
Kati Kahnau	Marketing Events Sub-Chair
Madi Bromberg	Merchandise Sub-Chair
Mel Holshouser	Memorial Rose Co-Chair
Mel Koenen	Community Engagement Grants Sub-Chair
Melissa Stolp	Family Support Co-Chair
Natalie Dewey	Community Engagement Chair
Nicole Read	Email Marketing Sub-Chair
Rebecca Pelton	Social Events Chair
Shannon Peterson	Memorial Rose Chair

2018 BALL CHAIRS

Regina Dean	Ball Chair
Gena Hatton	Donations Sub-Chair
Erin Long	Donations Sub-Chair
Alana Yang	Donations Sub-Chair
Emily Peterson	Sponsorship Sub-Chair
Kris Benysek	Sponsorship Sub-Chair
Amy Dingmann	Marketing Sub-Chair
Chris Johnson	Marketing Sub-Chair
Abby Johnson	Program & Volunteers Sub-Chair



2018 OPERATING BUDGET

PROJECTED EARNINGS	\$77,300.00
ACTUAL EARNINGS	\$183,156.01

ABOVE BUDGET EARNINGS	\$105,856.01
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PROJECTED EXPENSES	\$52,181.54
ACTUAL EXPENSES	\$42,588.66

BELOW BUDGET EARNINGS	\$9,329.53
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FINANCIAL REPORT

MEMBERSHIP

PAID MEMBERS

2018 | 699

2017 | 449

2016 | 306

2015 | 88

Backing the Blue Line recognizes both a member role and a supporter role for our organization. Members and supporters must be in a long-term committed relationship, or married to a law enforcement officer who is employed within the state of Minnesota. A supporter does not hold any member benefits but is allowed to seek support via our private Facebook Forum. Over the several years, we have continued to watch our membership numbers climb - and 2018 was no exception.

We encourage all our supporters to become paid members. Each member is required to pay \$30 on an annual basis. By joining, they are eligible for insurance, vendor, merchandise, realty services, etc. that far exceed the \$30 membership price. All of our discounts can be found on our "Members Only" portion of the website - which members are provided with a code as part of their new membership registration packet. As part of becoming a paid member they are also eligible to serve on any of our committees and volunteer for rose prep/hand-out in the unfortunate even of an officer funeral.

SUPPORTERS

2018 | 2,373

2017 | 1,951

2016 | 1,236

2015 | DATA UNAVAILABLE





MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS & DISCOUNTS



Paid members have the opportunity to receive discounts on membership events

BtBL partners with local businesses to provide discounts to paid members



Paid members get a great discount on merchandise from our online store!

Paid members are eligible for BtBL leadership and committee opportunities

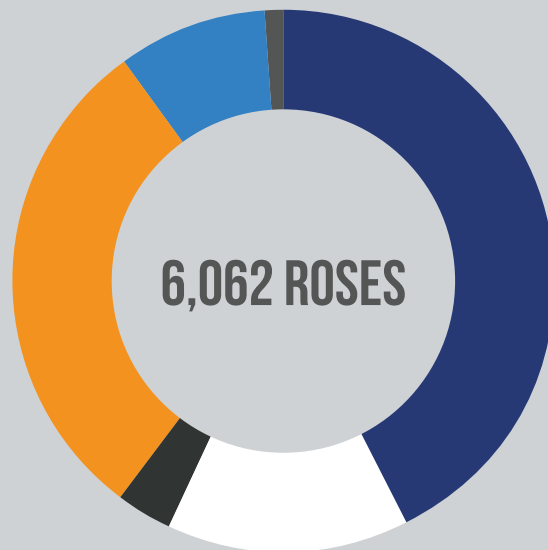


In 2018 we added **38** new law enforcement friendly businesses who offer our paid members a discount. We are continuously looking for future business partners

FALLEN OFFICER MEMORIAL ROSE

Backing the Blue Line provides support in the form of the blue roses or cards to Minnesota Law Enforcement Officers and/or their families in the event of an officer or K9 death, and on the End of Watch (EOW) anniversaries. The Fallen Officer Memorial Rose Committee within Backing the Blue Line also provides roses for the Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) Annual Dinner and Blue Light Vigil for survivors.

2018 MEMORIAL ROSE DISTRIBUTIONS



- NON-LINE OF DUTY DEATHS
- K9 DEATHS
- LINE OF DUTY DEATH END OF WATCH ANNIVERSARIES
- LINE OF DUTY DEATH FUNERALS
- NON-LINE OF DUTY DEATH FUNERALS
- CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS EVENT



NEVER FORGOTTEN

OFFICER JOSEPH GOMM
STILLWATER CORRECTIONS
END OF WATCH | JUNE 18, 2018

OFFICER JOSEPH PARISE
MN DEPT OF CORRECTIONS
END OF WATCH | SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

OFFICER KYLE QUITTSCHREIBER
MARSHALL COUNTRY PD
END OF WATCH | AUGUST 24, 2018

OFFICER CHELSIE GRUNDHAUSER
ST. PAUL PD
END OF WATCH | DECEMBER 7, 2018

FAMILY

NOT SO BLUE CHRISTMAS



In 2018, the Not So Blue Christmas recipient was the family of a Hennepin County Sgt. They had their second set of twins turning their family of 6 into a family of 8. The twins came early and spent a few months in the NICU. With medical bills and the need for a new vehicle to safely hold all of their children along with the physical help mom needed while they found their new normal as dad went to work, Backing the Blue Line was happy to help.

Multiple members within Backing the Blue Line spent countless hours helping to fill the family's care calendar October through December. They helped out with childcare for their 6 kids, housework and meals.

During our diapers/wipes drive for the family, who has two sets of twins in diapers, we were able to collect 26 boxes of wipes and over 43 boxes of diapers ranging in size from newborn to size 6. Over Thanksgiving, we dropped off some boots for the kids and various gift cards donated by Backing the Blue Line members and their families. Saturday before Christmas, we dropped off a brand new TV for the family that we bought with the funds that were raised along with a movie basket, a gift for each child, some hair service gift cards donated by a salon and a customized Backing the Blue Line Not So Blue Christmas ornament. We were also able to give them a check for over \$7,600 that we raised by bagging groceries at the Rochester Cub Foods, hosting a Schwan's fundraiser, partnering with Wild Bill's for a fundraiser that they hosted, and hosting a fundraiser of our own.

Then on Christmas Eve night after the kids went to bed, we dropped off over 45 gifts that were bought by members and the public off of an Amazon wish list we created and a few donations we solicited. The gifts were placed under their Christmas tree from "Santa".

SUPPORT

CHRISTMAS IN JUNE

This year's recipient was a single dad of two boys that lost his job after an extended time off work from an injury. To raise money for him, we went to Cub Foods in Elk River and bagged groceries for a weekend. We were able to raise over \$2,200. We had members either donate or contact businesses to donate gift cards for groceries and gas. Two other members each donated a new bike for both of his sons.

MEAL TRAINS

Another way we support our officers is to do a meal train when they are in need. By us doing this, it removes some of the stress so they can focus on taking care of their family. In 2018, we did 5 meal trains

FAMILY SUPPORT YEAR END TOTALS

- 6 LINE OF DUTY DEATHS
- 7 LINE OF DUTY CRITICAL INJURY BASKETS
- 77 LINE OF DUTY NON-CRITICAL INJURY BASKETS
- 104 OFFICER OFF DUTY INJURY/ILLNESS SUPPORT
- 55 OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING SUPPORT
- 2 INJURED K9 OFFICER ON-DUTY SUPPORT
- 4 UNEXPECTED NON-LINE OF DUTY DEATH SUPPORT
- 4 HOSPICE/DEATH OF LEO CHILD SUPPORT
- 8 PTSD BASKET
- 11 MEDICALL RETIRED SUPPORT
- 27 BTBL MEMBER/CHILD INJURY/ILLNESS SUPPORT
- 460 CARDS OF SUPPORT
- 114 NO FURTHER ACTION
- 31 OTHER (PHYSICAL LABOR, EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, ETC)
- 5 MEAL TRAINS
- 1 FUNDRAISERS

2018 BLUE LINE BALL

With 826 attendees and over **\$117,000** profit - compared to \$56,000 raised in 2017 - it's safe to say our 2018 Blue Line Ball was an amazing success! Tickets for the event - held at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis - sold out in just over 50 hours. Guests enjoyed a plated meal with dessert, while hearing words from Tyler "The Donut Boy" and Mike the Cop. Attendees tried their luck at raffles and games, took photos with both our formal photographer and our fun photo-booth, bid on silent auction items and danced the night away!



CODE 9 PROJECT

In October, Backing the Blue Line partnered with the Minnesota Fraternal Order of Police to bring Code 9 training to Minnesota for the first time. With raving reviews, we were able to serve roughly fifty officers and their families with life changing training that promotes self-care, wellness, mental health care, healthy habits, and positive relationships. Family members were able to attend a workshop separate from their officers, where they learned about the stresses of the job, the body's chemical reaction to stress, and how to best support their loved ones especially during times of crisis.

PATRIOT RIDE

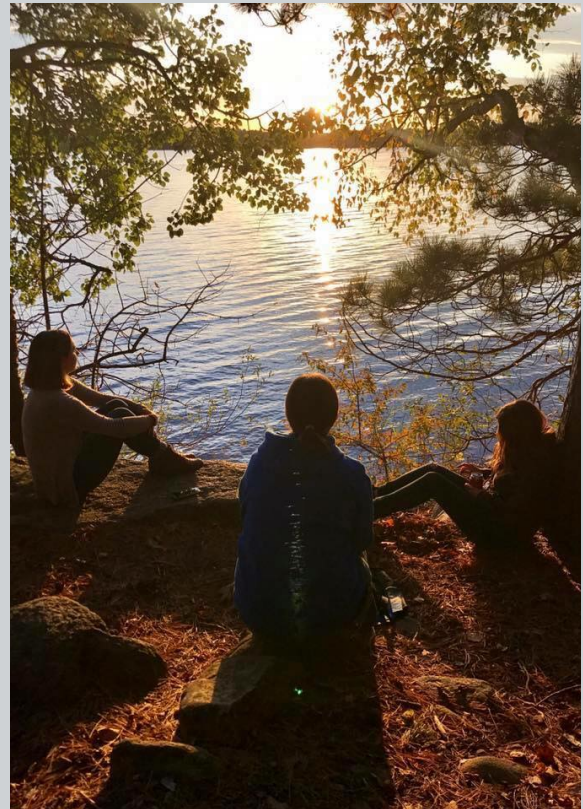
Backing the Blue Line was once again selected as one of the beneficiaries of the Dennis Kirk Patriot Ride. Despite the extreme heat, there were roughly 5,500 bikes in attendance. Anoka County Sherrif, James Stuart was the keynote speaker, and the Blaine Police Department put on an exciting K9 demonstration for those in attendance. Backing the Blue Line provided several volunteers, and we were honored to receive \$17,000.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS

SWAT (SWEETS, WINE & TRAINING)

Late September 2018, 100 women gathered in Audubon Center of the North Woods for a weekend of learning, laughing and connecting with fellow law enforcement significant others from all across Minnesota. During our time together, we learned more about each other and what it means to truly back the blue line. The theme was **Sisterhood**.

Personal development and relationship building activities throughout the weekend included: a high ropes course, canoeing, walking, and string art. Together as a group, we learned about situational awareness, the effects of chronic stress on the body and brain, and had pampering through Doterra, Mary Kay and Arbonne. We finished off our Saturday learning from a veteran wife. Sunday morning, those that were interested took part in a church service and ended the weekend with brunch together.



A PLACE FOR WYATT

Backing the Blue Line was honored to assist in the fundraising of "The 7221 Hideout". With the generosity of our supports, Backing the Blue Line was able to send a check for nearly \$2,400. In addition, we were able to connect the project's volunteers with Dakota County Lumber, who graciously donated most of the supplies needed! We hope you enjoy your fort, Wyatt!

LE APPRECIATION EVENT

The Law Enforcement Appreciation event is to honor and support our heroes. 2018 offered K9 demonstrations, food trucks, face painting, live music, a silent auction, a photobooth, and more family fun activities. Dusk brought a candlelight vigil, honoring the fallen.

2018 BALL | \$117,587.93

PATRIOT RIDE | \$12,780.65

LE APPRECIATION EVENT | \$5,369.39

SWAT | \$1,301.54

LOOKING FORWARD

As Backing the Blue Line continues to grow, it's exciting to see the expansion to what we can offer the law enforcement community.

Backing the Blue Line is hosting its first ever relationship retreat for law enforcement couples in March 2019. We are excited to show our commitment to healthy law enforcement relationships/marriages!

A new venue has been chosen for our annual member retreat (SWAT) for 2019. Because of increased space at this venue, we will have the ability for more members to attend this very popular weekend of sweets, wine, and training with fellow law enforcement wives and significant others.

We look forward to what 2019 has in store for Backing the Blue Line and hope you will join us for the journey.

THANK YOU

MEMBERS

Thank you for helping to make Backing the Blue Line what it is. We need the hands and hearts of our volunteers - including the over 30 of you serving in a leadership capacity - to carry out the work that we are asked to do as an organization. Your dedication to Backing the Blue Line is seen and appreciated!

SUPPORTERS

We are so thankful for your positive interaction on social media, your attendance at events, and your kind messages of encouragement. In a time when being an officer is more challenging than ever, you are helping us to make a difference in the lives of Minnesota law enforcement officers and their families.

DONORS

Backing the Blue Line often hears *"thank you for what you do"*, but it is through the generosity of our donors that we are able to fulfill the requests that are asked of us. Your generosity is astounding and we are forever grateful for the incredible support and stability you've provided us to continue our mission.



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