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WELCOME

With thanks and praise to God, we present the year-end report of our congregation's signature ministry, Helmets of Hope, through which we provide essential household supplies to veterans who, with the help of VA housing grants, have moved off the streets and into housing of their own.

We believe these pages testify to the growth and expansion Helmets experienced in 2017 – from the geographical area served, to the number of supply items delivered.

Thank you for your interest in and support of Helmets of Hope.

HISTORY

In March 2015, we conducted our second annual collection of personal hygiene items (toothbrushes, razors, bar soap, etc) for the Quad City-area homeless veterans served by the VA's Homeless Veteran Outreach Center, then located in Rock Island. When we asked the VA about our expanding to community-wide hygiene item collections, they told us that while they had a more than adequate inventory of hygiene items, they didn't have basic household supplies for veterans who moved off the streets and into housing of their own with the VA's assistance.

By June 2015, our vision for an expanded ministry to veterans had formally changed from hygiene products to household supplies, and the focus of our efforts had moved from item collections to fund-raising, given our decision to purchase value-priced supplies from a single source so as to provide a common set of supplies to the vets we served.

We held three fundraisers in 2015, placed supply orders in October, then made our first supply delivery – to the Veterans Accessing Long-Term Opportunities & Resources program in Davenport (VALOR) – on December 5, 2015. By the end of that month, we had delivered 2,000 items between VALOR and the VA's Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC; formerly the Homeless Veterans Outreach Center).

In April 2016 we expanded to a third partner agency – an emergency housing program similar to VALOR, administered by the Salvation Army in Galesburg, Illinois – a partnership that expanded further in June 2017 when we began serving veterans in Peoria and surrounding counties through the Salvation Army.

[VISIT US ON THE WEB: www.fccem.org/helmets-of-hope]

By the end of 2017, in the history of the ministry we had...

- Made 53 supply deliveries – nearly 10,000 items used by our partners to help welcome nearly 260 veterans into their new homes, and to provide refill items to those vets and many others
- Raised money through eight fund-raising events, a request letter to American Legion, VFW, and Vietnam Veterans groups in the areas we serve, and a generous grant from the Illinois-Wisconsin region of our church's denomination, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

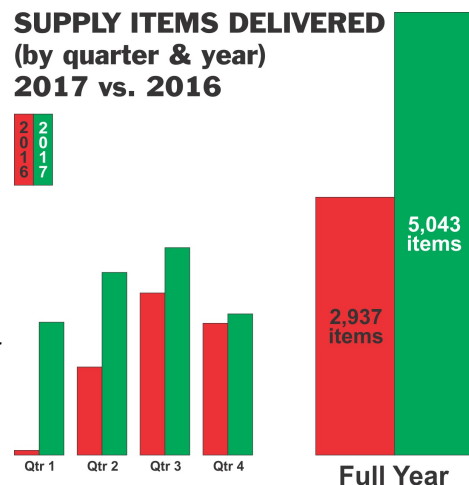
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017

- ✓ **June 2:** Made our first supply delivery for veterans in the Peoria area, raising to 32 the number of Illinois and Iowa counties we serve
- ✓ **September:** Outreach magazine, a national Christian journal that focuses on church growth, vitality, and service, published a profile of Helmets of Hope on its "Small Church America" page.
- ✓ **September 16:** Made the 50th supply delivery in Helmets history
- ✓ **November 11:** Appeared live for a half-hour segment of a local Christian radio station's Veteran's Day profile of community support services to veterans
- ✓ **Mid-November:** Received the first-ever thank you note from a veteran who had received supplies from Helmets. The note mattered to us, not because a vet said thanks – we don't seek or expect thanks – but because it was the first time we had heard from a vet whom one of our partners had served with supplies we provide.

2017 IN A CHART

By nearly every numerical indicator, 2017 was a year of growth for Helmets of Hope. We made more supply deliveries and served more veterans in more counties of Illinois and Iowa than we did in 2016.

Here's a graphical view of the ministry's growth in the total number of items we delivered in the two years.



FINANCES

- + For the year, **we spent \$5,884.33**, 85% of which purchased supply inventory, 8% paid for fund-raising event advertising, and 7% paid other costs, including our website presence and promotional items that we sold such as hats and t-shirts.
- + For the year, **we received \$5,075.48** through donations and the following actions:
 - ◆ **May 26:** A fund-raising letter to 187 American Legion, VFW, and Vietnam Veterans groups located in the counties Helmets of Hope serves
 - ◆ **Throughout the summer:** A raffle for a large screen TV
 - ◆ **June 24:** A motorcycle fun ride
 - ◆ **July 20-22:** A booth at the Rock Island County Fair
 - ◆ **September 16:** Another motorcycle fun ride, and our second annual craft-vendor fair
 - ◆ **Throughout the year:** The sale of Helmets-branded hats, pens, and t-shirts

LOOKING TO 2018

In the year ahead, we hope to build on the progress Helmets of Hope has made in its first two years of operation.

- ➔ We will improve our inventory management and resupply ordering processes, to ensure that we always have available the supplies our partner agencies request
- ➔ We will leverage the connections established in Peoria during 2017, with the intention of growing our contribution to that community's service to veterans
- ➔ We will pursue new and creative fund-raising methods to assure the ministry has ample financial support
- ➔ And we will consider options for expanding and diversifying the services we provide to veterans

FINAL WORDS

Thank you for reviewing our year-end report for 2017, which we hope has reported some portion of the ministry's purpose and potential. We will welcome and praise God for your prayerful and financial support. For more information, visit www.fccem.org/helmets-of-hope or contact us by phone (309.755.6552) or by email (hoh@fccem.org).

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