



Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to.

There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.

Deuteronomy 15:10-11

What an exciting and blessed year this has been for Hope in the Streets. We are long overdue in preparing this newsletter update, but rest assured we have been very busy carrying out our mission ... helping the poor and homeless in Kansas City.

First, and most importantly, we need to thank our volunteers. We hosted our first annual "kit assembly party" a couple weeks ago and we had 15 volunteers, for over 3 ½ hours, helping put together winter warmth kits, hygiene kits, and repacking over 250 donated backpack kits. We also have a growing group of core volunteers that are regular crew members of the weekly meal truck and also are helping with shopping for supplies, warmth kit and fresh start kit assembly, and the many aspects of managing our sponsored apartment.

What's that ... **a sponsored apartment** you say? Yep, that's a new expansion for Hope in the Streets this year. We have partnered with Hillcrest Transitional Housing, another local non-profit organization, to sponsor one of their transitional apartments. Individuals and families that find themselves in a homeless situation can be approved for the Hillcrest program and receive temporary housing while they work their way back to self sufficiency. Sponsoring the apartment has meant a complete "overhaul" of a 2 bedroom apartment (thank you to Sandy's Girl Scouts – Kristina, Stephanie, Lily, Kari, Meredith), from new windows, to a fresh coat of paint, to plumbing (thank you Bob Hamilton Plumbing!), to new furniture, to new appliances. We are also responsible for providing the initial food for each new resident that comes through as well as the complete cleaning of the apartment in between residents. Residents are guided through a structured 3 month program, including budget counseling, life skills and social living training. Sandy is even signed up as a registered and trained budget counselor so we can maintain regular weekly contact with the residents of our apartment as they complete the program. Hillcrest reports a 95% success rate, 5 years out, for all residents that complete the program.

Earlier this year the Salvation Army ran into budget cuts, like many other companies and organizations dealing with tough economic times, so Hope in the Streets stepped in and funded much of the food purchases needed to keep the Salvation Army Honk & Holler program alive. We also campaigned within the Salvation Army to help raise the visibility of the program and to help get the program's internal funding re-established. We provided the "bridge funding" for about half of the year until they found new sources of ongoing funding. Unfortunately for us, with their new funding also came new groups of volunteers to crew the Honk & Holler truck on Tuesdays. This created a bit of stress for us since Hope in the Streets has provided the dedicated and committed Tuesday crew for the last 3+ years. We didn't really want to give up our Tuesday night tradition, so we took this as a sign that God was nudging us to expand our efforts.

And so was born "**The Vittle Van**"! We couldn't be any more excited to announce the latest expansion to our efforts, which we are calling the Vittle Van. Since the Salvation Army was able to find other volunteers to take over the Tuesday night Honk & Holler program, Hope in the Streets is finally able to create a meal delivery program of our own and deliver meals on an evening that, until now, has not been covered in Kansas City. Bottom line, more homeless individuals are getting more food on more nights. We purchased a used Ford F250 Econoline extended van and are custom building the interior for carrying a crew, supplies, and delivering meals. We were able to leverage existing work relationships to get the interior work completed. We are also able to leverage relationships with several food vendors to prepare sandwich meals each Thursday at their material cost (i.e. no markup).

We would like to extend an extra special thanks to: Mid-America Contractors (van interior work), Olathe Line-X (van interior work), Signcraft (van exterior graphics), Tradebot and their employees (cash donations), Dennis Sneed

Ford (auto auction help), DOTS Office Supplies (quarterly donation of bottled water), Celebrity's Café (meal prep), Firehouse Subs (meal prep), Philly Time (meal prep), and Expressive Catering (meal prep). We are grateful to all those who have played a part in helping make the Vittle Van a reality, and as a result, have helped us help the homeless in Kansas City with a source of meals on Thursday evenings each and every week.

We received another blessing this summer as the Olathe Bible Church ran their annual vacation bible school program. Each of the kids in attendance that week was challenged with preparing one or more "backpacks" that included items for homeless individuals. The response was amazing, and **over 250 backpacks** were donated by the end of the program. Hope in the Streets passes these backpacks out to homeless individuals throughout the year as we deliver meals each week. We are grateful to Olathe Bible Church and the many kids who donated the backpacks.

Our annual **Winter Warmth Kit** program is underway again for the 6th year in a row. As mentioned above, we had our first ever kit assembly party where volunteers helped us put all the kits together, and we are now ready to start handing them out over the coming weeks. Just in time for the cold winter season. These kits provide essential "camp" items to help get the hardcore homeless through Kansas City's difficult winter conditions.

As you can see, through our various programs, Hope in the Streets is providing outreach services to Kansas City's homeless and extremely poor. We have a unique "individual" approach ensuring that only those who are truly in need receive benefits from our foundation. There is no administrative overhead in our program ... every penny of every dollar we receive goes directly to providing much needed benefits. There are no salaries being paid, no office supplies being purchased, no third party contracts, no marketing expenses, and no office space to lease. It's just us and our volunteers, and a desire to help those less fortunate.

If you would like to donate, please visit our website at <http://www.HopeInTheStreets.org> and click on the "Donations" link on the left side of the page.

To those who have donated so generously to our foundation, we and the homeless we serve are grateful. Since we are operating our foundation as a "Zero Overhead" program, our only way of attracting new donations is by word of mouth. If you like what we are doing and how we are doing it, please help spread the word. Feel free to forward this newsletter. Tell your friends, family, and co-workers about Hope in the Streets, and with God's grace we can continue to serve the poor and homeless here in Kansas City.

Sincerely,

The Hope in the Streets Family

Joe & Sandy Ratterman
Michael Sommers
Dawn Sprague
Ruth Lowther
David and Maggie Heeter
Sean, Stephanie, Kiele, and Chris Conner

