

OPERATION CHILLOUT- PA

Volume 2, Issue 1

Winter 2016



OPERATION CHILLOUT is an all-volunteer not for profit coalition founded in 2000, dedicated to ending the crisis of homelessness by :

Promoting awareness of the multi-faceted nature of homelessness, **Advocating** for sustainable solutions and programs serving the needs of the poor, addicted, abused, and homeless, **Organizing** for peace and economic justice to address systemic inequities challenging impoverished communities, **Engaging** direct compassionate action, including the collection, distribution, of basic survival supplies to homeless people and agencies that provide for their care. **We Believe** in the inherent worth of every homeless man, woman and child and provide emergency supplies and survival gear to the most vulnerable members of our communities wherever we find them.

Each Winter we collect and distribute backpacks filled with warm clothing and basic survival gear to homeless people in NJ and PA.

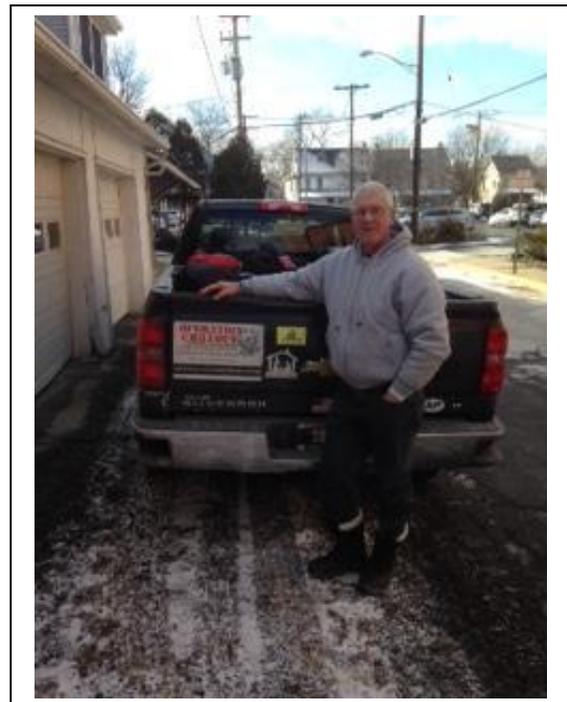
In the Summer we collect and distribute cases of bottled water, **new** tee-shirts, baseball caps, sunglasses and sunscreen to help keep away the dangers of heat and damage to the skin from the sun.

Our mobile **VETERANS RAPID RESPONSE TEAM** provides immediate outreach for Homeless Veterans to assess and respond to their needs.

We are a **501 c 3 not for Profit Organization.**
All donations are tax deductible.

2015 – 2016 Winter Campaign.

This year, Operation Chillout is breaking all kinds of records with respect to our Winter Campaign. So far this year we have distributed over 800 backpacks and we are not done yet. We anticipate that we will break the 1,000 mark before the end of the campaign. Here in PA we distributed 47 backpacks to the Street2feet day center in Stroudsburg, 50 backpacks to Safe Harbor in Easton, and an additional 20 backpacks to an encampment along some abandon railroad tracks also in Easton PA. We would also like to Thank Bill & Linda Hovath for helping to put some of our back packs together, Steve Larson Tim & Donna of Stroudsburg for helping to distribute backpacks and to the Reeders United Methodist Church Youth Group for providing over 50 backpacks to Operation Chillout.



Operation Chillout participated in the semi-annual Point in Time Count.

On January 27th, Operation Chillout participated in the semi-annual Point in Time Homeless Count. We led one team into the wooded areas of Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg. We came across to encampments, one under the Rt 80 bridge, and one behind the Salvation Army in East Stroudsburg. Both encampments appeared to be active but due to the recent snowstorm, there did not seem to be any recent activity. The one encampment had 3 tents of which one was collapsed due to the storm. The PIT count started at 6:30 in the morning and continued until the next morning. Many other groups, agencies & volunteers participated in the count. The next count will take place in August.



Veterans Trust Fund Grant.

Operation Chillout has applied for the Veterans Trust Fund Grant from the State of Pennsylvania. If we are successful in obtaining this grant, we plan to expand into Lucern & Lehigh Valley Counties. We have the support of the Monrore County Commissioners, Rosemary Brown, American Legion Post 903, The Monroe County Veterans Joint Honor Guard & Vietnam Veterans Post 678.

Rapid Response Team:

The Rapid Response team has been quite busy during December and January. The Most difficult case we had was a Kuwait War Veteran. He was living in East Orange NJ, he was expected to be evicted on December 15th, along with his dog Moose. This Vet was working for the East Orange VA as a housekeeper, but due to medical issues, he was out on medical leave for about 3 months, falling behind in his rent. The Vet was able to get a stay of eviction until January 15th. In the mean time the Vet had no income and we were providing resources & funding with respect to food and everyday necessities. About a week before the deadline for eviction, Valor Clinic, here in PA, contacted me and indicated they had an opening. I contacted the Vet, getting up at 4:30 in the morning in order to pick him up and be at the Valor Clinic by 9am. Fortunately the Valor Clinic accepted the Vet and is presently at the old Jonas Hotel with his dog moose. We thank Valor for saving this Vet, otherwise he would be out on the street as few programs will accept a Vet with a pet.

Other Rescues:

We helped an agency near Newark airport place a 85 year old Korean war vet and his wife in a hotel as he and his wife lost their apartment. The agency was making arrangements to get the Vet back in his apartment.

We assisted another Korean War Veteran in Roxbury NJ as his son threw him out of the apartment, was picked up by police d placed in a motel. We helped with the motel for about a week as other agencies got involved.

We helped a female Army / Navy veteran who was homeless with the winter storm approaching. We placed her in a motel for several days while the VA and other agencies were contacted. The VA managed to get her into a program at the Lyons VA Domilicary.

These are just a few of the many Veterans we have rescued during the winter so far. We have spent a considerable amount of funding for these rescues and will need to ramp up our fundraising efforts when the weather begins to turn.

Stroudsburg Wells Fargo Community Partners Award.

On October 28th, Operation Chillout attended a breakfast at the Mohegan Sun Casino as we were the recipient of the Wells Fargo Community Partners award for the Stroudsburg area. Each branch of Wells Fargo in Northeast Pennsylvania chooses a well deserving charity to recognize. In addition to the award, Operation Chillout received a check for \$1000. Thank you Wells Fargo for the recognition.



Fund Raiser at Petrizzo's Italian Restaurant.

On Saturday, October 31st, Halloween Night, Operation Chillout had a fund raiser at Petrizzo's Italian Restaurant in Bushkill PA. Petrizzo's is of course known as the Center of the Universe so only good things can happen there.

We were entertained by the Rob Taylor band, had give a way's and lots of fun. We made a lot of new friends and had a great time, raising a \$1000 to boot.

We would like to thank Rob & Sue for helping to arrange this event and of course John Petrizzo for hosting the event. We hope to do it again this year.



Veterans Day Parade

This year Operation Chillout participated in the Stroudsburg's Veteran Day Parade. At the conclusion of the parade in Dansbury Park, there was a Veteran's Day ceremony conducted by the Monroe County Joint Veteran's Honor Guard. I was asked to play TAPS on a electronic bugle during the ceremony which was a privilege & honor.



Easton Encampment Backpack Delivery

As mentioned earlier in this Newsletter, we delivered backpacks to an encampment in Easton PA alongside some abandon railroad tracks. We became aware of this encampment after delivering backpacks to Safe Harbor in Easton. The encampment consisted of several tents, all very neat and orderly. We dropped the backpacks at a safe area and after about 20 minutes, about 20 individuals came out and collected the backpacks. One individual was actually carrying a sidearm which we learned later was the person in charge of security.



2015 Year at a Glance

Marking our 15th year serving the most in need, no borders - no boundaries

More volunteers than ever signing on



More winter backpacks than ever delivered
30,000 bottles of life saving water distributed
Weekly Rapid Response Team rescue missions for homeless veterans



Thank you for your support!

OPERATION CHILLOUT HOMELESS VETERANS OUTREACH



TO REPORT A HOMELESS VETERAN:

National The Call Center for Homeless Veterans

1-877-424-3838

Supportive Services to Veteran Families

1-855-483-8466

Interested in helping OPERATION CHILLOUT please call

908-509-1462

Rapid Response Team

609-619-0861

OPERATION CHILLOUT

Operation Chillout is a 501 c 3 Not for Profit

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