



# HOPE-Net Happenings February/March 2021

www.hopenetministries.org

2020 will go down in history as one of the most difficult years in American history.

## Ramblings from Randy

From the pandemic to the social unrest during the summer, to a very contentious election, it seemed to keep everyone living on pins and needles. I'm so thankful that God is my Strong Tower, my Rock. If you are struggling, please reach out to Him, He is waiting.

Last year we found our stores closed, volunteers fearful, fundraising activities cancelled and programming suspended, it was enough to give an Executive Director a real headache!

But through it all we found God was faithful, we still got to help a lot of people, and all of our financial needs were met. Thank you, Jesus.

Now we enter a new year, still have the

pandemic with us, but we still have hope and a belief that God has already gone before us. He knows what is around the corner and will help us navigate through the stormy weather.

- As soon as we can get back inside the correctional facilities, we will restart our programming.
- We are still anticipating being able to hold our Broken 2 Beautiful Women's Conference on April 24.
- We will continue our Give Back Saturdays homeless outreach scheduled every other month starting in February.

We have some challenges and opportunities coming up later in the year where we will need His guidance and your support. Please keep us in your prayers.

*When you're fresh out of prison, and*

## Wheels of Love



*you don't have a car, license, job, clothing, or friends; this is where Hope-Net Ministries comes in.*

*We work to help meet some of those basic needs and transportation is a huge one. That is why we gave away 218 bicycles in 2020 to those who are trying to get back on their feet. Thank you to everyone who donated.*

## Sequel's News

### Wrapped up another Christmas Season and God was good to us.

Like all retail establishments, the Christmas season makes up a significant percentage of their yearly sales and profits. Sequels is not any different--thank you to everyone who donated and shopped!

Due to Covid-19, our stores were closed for several months back in the Spring. Once we reopened, we had to rebuild our volunteer base because most of our team

could not return because of the virus. This has restricted our hours of operation and has caused us to close on Saturdays.



Even though our sales were down 30% from 2019, by God's grace we still were able to pay all of the bills. However, this still left us quite short in our program operations. We continue to trust God and ask that He will continue to bless you as you support our work here in Council Bluffs.

We could not function without our volunteers and we always have room for one more—YOU?

**Please remember us when you do your Spring cleaning.**

## On the Inside—with Jean

One of the numerous negative affects of the pandemic is the closure to outsiders by the correctional facilities. Before Covid-19, Jean and her team were going inside on a weekly basis building relationships and



helping the women transition back into society.

It has been ten months since we have been able to conduct our programs at the facilities. This has

made it extremely difficult to connect and assist in their transition back into the community. We are still able to distribute bicycles and help with clothing vouchers from Sequels.

We have recently restarted the Wednesday night Winner's Circle meeting, hosted at First Baptist Church at Bayliss Park. This is a women's peer-driven support group intended to help women stay clean, sober, and out of trouble. Do you need some encouragement with your sobriety or would you like to support another? Join us at 5:50 each Wednesday.

Our Circles of Support family dinners are still suspended but there is an open meeting being streamed on our Facebook page that you can watch. The Sunday afternoon Faith & Recovery group is still suspended, waiting on the pandemic to subside.

On a final note, we regret to announce that Chaplain Sandra Hammes has moved down to Texas and is therefore no longer involved with Hope-Net. We will miss her greatly.