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***For Immediate Release...******Corrections News*****June 17, 2013****Department donates to tornado-torn Moore**

Just two days before the second anniversary of the Joplin tornado, Moore, Okla., was hit hard by an EF5 twister that left 17 miles of destruction in its path. Just as the Missouri Department of Corrections (DOC) staff and offenders did after the Joplin devastation, the DOC again stepped up after Oklahoma's disaster on May 20 to send donations to those in need. Vans packed full of Restorative Justice donations made three trips to Miami, Okla., where the Oklahoma Department of Corrections accepted the items to disburse as needed. A myriad of items such as toys, school supplies, blankets, pillows, quilts, hats, jewelry, cool ties for recovery workers and stress pillows were all handcrafted from donated raw materials by offenders in the Restorative Justice program.

Restorative Justice offers a way for offenders to start repairing the harm they have caused to their communities by giving back through various activities for others.

DOC Director George Lombardi said the department's staff was quick to respond with donations to the affected area. He added that donating is also beneficial for the inmates.

"This is an opportunity to not only assist the children and families of Moore but also to help offenders learn compassion and altruism – qualities often missing in their psyche and necessary to learn to be humane and human," Lombardi said.

Not only were items such as 270 quilts, 1,574 cool ties, 90 teddy bears and 1,390 stress pillows brought to Oklahoma, but some cash donations were raised as well.

Probation and Parole's District 9 in Joplin partnered with Backyard Burgers to hold a fundraiser at the district office on May 31. The event raised nearly \$1,200 through food and T-shirt sales from an area all too familiar with loss from a tornado. The funds will be distributed to families who work for the Oklahoma DOC and lost homes in the tornado.

The alternative court officers of Probation and Parole's District 27 in Jefferson City held a donation drive where staff and offenders contributed items to deliver toward a local church's Oklahoma Disaster Relief Donation Drive.

Women's Eastern Reception Diagnostic & Correctional Center's staff also held a donation drive and collected non-perishable food items, monetary donations, bottled water and baby supplies to bring to churches and shelters in the affected area.

The institutions that contributed with Restorative Justice items included: Algoa Correctional Center, Boonville Correctional Center, Chillicothe Correctional Center, Crossroads Correctional Center, Eastern Reception Diagnostic & Correctional Center, Farmington Correctional Center, Fulton Reception & Diagnostic Center, Jefferson City Correctional Center, Moberly Correctional Center, Northeast Correctional Center, Ozark Correctional Center, South Central Correctional Center, Southeast Correctional Center, Tipton Correctional Center, Women's Eastern Reception Diagnostic & Correctional Center, and Western Reception Diagnostic and Correctional Center.

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