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# NEWS RELEASE

## Extreme Couponing

*Helping homeless Veterans, one coupon at a time.*

Extreme couponers are the epitome of the bargain shopper. They don't shop; they strategize. It's a unique skill, a gift, a calling. And for a few local women, it's the key to helping spread some holiday cheer to local homeless Veterans.

"We call it our coupon-high, it's amazing to see how much stuff you can get for practically nothing by couponing," says Jamie Zewe, extreme couponer and Assistant Chief of Behavioral Health at the Erie VA Medical Center. "It's our way of giving back to Veterans."

It all started in October when two experienced extreme couponers, who also happened to be Erie VA Medical Center staff members, got together and decided to use their unique skill set to supply Veterans enrolled in the Homeless Veterans Program at the Erie VA with a few goodies for the holiday season. Veterans in this program live on a fixed income making it difficult for them to purchase essential care products. As the news of this idea spread throughout the medical center coupons for personal care products started piling in.

A team of six ladies led the efforts. Every Friday at noon, these ladies meet to strategize for the upcoming deals. The group purchased more than \$1,000 worth of personal care items – toothpaste, mouthwash, makeup, razors, shaving cream, shampoo, body wash, etc. – for Veterans and their families.

"No Veteran should ever be homeless, that is a commitment Erie VA staff take to heart," says Zewe. "The campaign allowed staff the opportunity to make a contribution and provide these necessary items to our most deserving Veterans in a fun and unique way."

The extreme couponing team also collected expired coupons to send to military families who are able to use coupons six months after they expire. They sent more than \$10,000 worth of expired coupons to families.

Driven by a mission to serve Veterans, this team of extreme couponers is already making plans for next year in efforts to give these Veterans a sense of home for the holidays.

Visit [www.erie.va.gov/homeless](http://www.erie.va.gov/homeless) for more information about the Homeless Veterans Program provided by the Erie VA Medical Center.

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