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## Hoosier Heroes Appreciation Day

*A Day to Show Thanks to Our Veterans, Military & First Responders*  
Saturday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2023, White River State Park

**Date:** April 23, 2023

**From:** Don Hawkins, President, Veterans Support Council, Inc. (VSC)  
President, Hoosier Heroes Appreciation Day, Inc. (HHAD)  
Co-Chair, Mayors' Advisory Council for Veterans (MACV)

**Subject:** **Proposal for Indiana's first combined Veterans, Military & First Responders Appreciation Day Event**

**Place:** White River State Park because of its existing facilities and central location. Plus, it will be an excellent opportunity to spotlight Indiana's great new facility in Downtown Indy.

**Event Date:** Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September in 2023 – I would like to see the fourth Saturday of each September made an Official Day for our Hoosier Heroes Appreciation Event.

**Times:** Vendors/Exhibitors will be open from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM – Program starts at 11:00 AM – Lunch 1:00 PM – Ballgame 6:00 PM

**Hoosier Heroes:** **Our event is for our Hoosier Heroes (HH)** – Veterans, Military, Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters, Hospitals & EMS groups and their families will be our Special Guests. Our goal is to obtain enough Sponsors for the event that most of the events for our **HH** will be FREE or at least offer big discounts on food, Zoo & Indians Game.

**General Public:** Our event will be open to the general public and just like the Indiana State Fair, **non-HH** will pay for their own lunch, entrance to the Indy Zoo, and Indianapolis Indians Game but there Will be plenty of additional FREE activities, including the Car Show, Vendors/Exhibitors, and entertainment for the kids and adults (Bands).

### **Dear Supporters of our Veterans, Military & First Responders:**

Hello, my name is Don Hawkins, and I am the President of Veterans Support Council, Inc. (VSC). Our group has promoted the Mayors' Veterans Appreciation Day event for nine (9) years in a row that started in 2011. MACV-VSC did not have an event in 2020-2022 because of the COVID-19 virus. **Beginning 2023, we have changed the event's name to "Hoosier Heroes Appreciation Day" (HHAD). In addition to our Veterans and active Military, we will also include recognition, acknowledgment, and appreciation for our valued First Responders.**

This email aims to inform you and your organization of our below proposal. This email is just a fact-finding proposal to determine who is interested or not in working with VSC-HHAD on this project. We are also looking forward to your suggestions or comments on our proposal.

HHAD is open to combining/sharing the day with other related events if they change their schedules to our date and time. Instead of putting all these events together from scratch, we would try to get existing shows and events to change their booking dates to our event date if possible.

This Hoosier Heroes Appreciation Day (HHAD) event will celebrate all of Indiana's Veterans, Military, and First Responders, such as Law Enforcement, Firefighters, Hospitals & EMS personnel. We believe the men and women who work for these organizations are the true Heroes in our Hoosier State. They should be acknowledged and celebrated annually to let them know we appreciate them.

**Why a Veterans, Military, and First Responders Appreciation Day is Important:**

1. It is time to remind us of their sacrifices to their country, community, and their families.
2. It gives us a day to acknowledge their commitment to our nation, our communities and bask in their pride & heroism.
3. Most of our Veterans, Military, and First Responders face high risks virtually every time they step out of the comfort of their own homes and are likely some of America's most dangerous careers.
4. Veterans, Military, and our First responders put other lives ahead of their own. **HHAD** is a day they can share the joy with their teammates and take a day to feel appreciated along with their families who also make sacrifices in support of their hero.
5. **And last, but not least, I believe it's the least we can do to show them the respect and appreciation they deserve.**

There's not much we can do to pay back these men and women who risk it all for us — nor do they expect it. Still, honoring them by showing our appreciation on this day is an honest and meaningful gesture to those who serve.

This project will take an enormous effort, with several groups working together to recognize and support our Hoosier Heroes and their families. With all the resources within the Indianapolis area, it should be no problem if we want to show our Hoosier Heroes our support and appreciation.

**Proposed Events for the Day:** A list of our proposed events is attached to this letter.

We have incorporated "Hoosier Heroes Appreciation Day, Inc." (HHAD) as a non-profit Indiana Corporation. It is 100% owned by Veterans Support Council, Inc. (VSC), the organization responsible for raising the monies for the Mayors' Veterans Appreciation Day event for the last five (5) years. VSC has been an IRS 501 (c)(3), Public Charity, since 2016 so all your Donations, Sponsorships, etc. are tax deductible.

We have also secured the web addresses [www.HoosierHeroesAppreciationDay.com](http://www.HoosierHeroesAppreciationDay.com) and [www.HoosierHeroes.net](http://www.HoosierHeroes.net). They are currently being pointed to a page on VSC's website. As this project develops, we will post any of HHAD's new information on that website.

This event will be open to the public, but they will have to pay for the evening concert, food, and the Zoo.

If you want to work with us on this event as a volunteer, vendor, sponsor, employer, or participant, etc., visit <https://www.veterans.ooo/sign-up> and start signing up to reserve your space.

We will appreciate hearing from you soon to continue making and assigning event plans. Please call me at 317-632-0500 or email me at [Hawkins@Veterans.ooo](mailto:Hawkins@Veterans.ooo) with any ideas or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Don Hawkins  
President of VSC & HHAD