



## ***OCTOBER NEWSLETTER***

October 1, 2014

Today's topics:

- We delivered just **OVER 1,550** comfort scarves in September and have another almost 1,000 ready for October shipping
- We need 3,000 more scarves for delivery by the end of the year
- Handmade's dedicated volunteers are the greatest
- Generous contributions from yarn companies make comfort scarves possible
- Shelters for abused women **APPRECIATE** receiving our comfort scarves
- Affiliates throughout the county are donating many scarves in their own areas
- **The Magic Knot**
- We have two vertical scrap scarf patterns for our crocheting volunteers
- October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**
- Handmade needs donations

And now for the details:

In September, we shipped just over 1,550 comfort scarves to 50+ shelters. Packing all those boxes was a lot of work, but luckily, we did the shipping on two different days to spread the stress. It was so much easier on all of us, that we're considering continuing this plan. Thanks to our dedicated teams of shippers and wrappers (**Alisa and Alexandra Hoy-Prince, Ann Nye, Carlyn Gore, Chris Fung, Chris Needham, Evelyn Dow, Janet Schoenfeld, Karen Whitehead, Linda Whitson, Mary Barton, Nancy English, Satoko Igawa, and Sharon Long**) we got the job done!

We're almost ready for October's shipping. We have the needed scarves packed in boxes ready to ship. We still have plenty to wrap. We need 3,000 more (than what we have already) scarves in time to ship for Holiday parties at the shelters. I am confident we will achieve our goal of getting comfort scarves to every shelter for abused women in S CA from San Diego to San Luis Obispo because our dedicated volunteers always come through for the women at the shelters.

If you have scarves you plan to mail to Handmade, please do so as soon as possible. Give us plenty of time to process them; that is, we make sure every scarf has a signed gift tag and we wrap each one with a colorful ribbon. We want every recipient to feel she has received a **PERSONAL** gift, meant just for her. We'd love to have your scarves before November 10, but of course, we will take them afterwards since we have to start collecting scarves for 2015 deliveries just as soon as we're done with 2014. Abuse doesn't have a calendar. It is ongoing. So is our scarf project.

Handmade's volunteers are the greatest. No matter what—shipping, wrapping, kit making—they do what needs to be done. We mentioned shippers and wrappers above, but we want to add our kit makers, **Ann Nye, Evelyn Dow, Janet Schoenfeld, Linda Whitson, Nancy English, Paula Weiner, Satoko Igawa, and Therese Shafer**. We always need more kit makers. There is a huge demand for our “magic balls.” We provide about 50 each week to **Concepts in Yarn**, 50 per month to the **Culver City Senior Center Knitters**, and 25 per month to **Sister Jane** at the **Presentation Learning Center**. In addition, we send them to scarfers all over CA and even to FL, GA, HI, PA, TX, and NV. Handmade appreciates every participant. Thank you all so much.

I'd like to mention several volunteers whose contributions don't fall into either of the above categories. **Ann Nye** and **Lori Jeskey** constantly fine tune the Handmade website. They post the newsletters, new patterns, fund raising activities, etc. Thanks to them, our website looks great! **Karen Whitehead** has taken over posting on Facebook. Since she started about a month ago, Handmade's presence on Facebook has improved noticeably. We have more “friends” and more “likes.” She's doing a good job of spreading the word about Handmade. **Bea Abshear** is our fringe lady. About 40% of the scarves Handmade distributes to shelters come from scarfers who use their own yarn. Sometimes, they do not use fun fur or other novelty yarn to individualize their scarves. So Bea does that for them by adding fringe. Sometimes scarves come in too short so Bea adds fringe to lengthen them. Bea has an excellent eye for color. When she adds fringe, she picks up on all the colors in the scarf. Thank you so much, Bea.

Our enthusiastic kit makers go through miles of yarn every time they make kits. They can do this thanks to the generosity of yarn companies. Donations since our last Newsletter were substantial and put us in good shape for making the scarves we need for Holiday deliveries. Thanks in particular to **Crystal Palace** and **Knitting Fever**. The yarns they sent were fabulous. **Betty Watts**, one of Handmade's dedicated volunteers, found a bargain on yarn. Because she has knit so many scarves, she knew just what Handmade needed and sent several boxes. We started using them in our kits as soon as they arrived. Thanks to all yarn donors!

Every month, we receive very moving thank you letters from directors at the shelters to which we donate comfort scarves. These keep us scarfing! Here are snippets from a few of them.

**Marsha Marcoe**, Associate Executive Director of **DVS** of Santa Barbara County, tells us: “Your gift of comfort scarves represents the promise of a home life free of violence. . . Your support. . . enables families . . . to live without the threat of violence from an abusive relationship.”

**Lisa Watson**, Chief Executive Officer of the **Downtown (LA) Women's Center**, writes: “We are grateful for your generosity! With the support of friends like you, The Center is able to provide necessary services and a safe place for homeless and low-income women on Skid Row.”

**Sara Berdine**, Executive Director at **Haven Hills** in Canoga Park, explains: “Your support is vital to our efforts to help families break the cycle of violence. (It) allows us . . . to assist victims of domestic violence and break the cycle of violence that negatively impacts their lives.”

**Dro Abrahamian**, Fund Development Director at **Interface Children & Family Services** in Camarillo, tells us: “Thank you for the caring gift . . . Your support is critical to our ability to offer children, families, and communities an opportunity to heal from the serious life challenges that threaten to overwhelm them.”

**Angelina Coe**, Executive Director at **Shelter from the Storm** in Palm Desert, tells us: “Thank you for your generous donation. . . . Your contribution will assist us with providing greatly

needed services to the women and children fleeing domestic violence. . . I wanted personally to thank you. Words cannot articulate how wonderful it was to receive these items.”

**Ana Interiano**, Director of **WINGS** (YWCA) of San Gabriel Valley, writes: “Last year WINGS helped 843 women and children safely escape their abusers. . . . We appreciate the dedication and generosity of in-kind donors (such as Handmade) who contribute to the women and children who turn to our shelter in the most difficult time of their lives.”

At the end of October in 2008, when I first brought 30 comfort scarves to **Rainbow Services**, I had no idea that comfort scarves would be so important in the healing of abused women. Every time I read letters from the shelters, I renew my personal dedication to making comfort scarves and donating them to abused women in the hope that someday soon these women will feel worthy of a happy life, free from domestic violence.

Our affiliates (independent groups organized in their own areas who donate to shelters in their own areas) are also busy. **Ann Miller**, coordinator of Handmade’s affiliate in Pueblo CO, continues to donate scarves and baby blankets to the **YWCA Crisis Center** there.

**Barbara Kochuba**, in Pittsburgh PA, continues moving ahead full steam. She asked her group to make scarves in the colors of local football teams. For October, which is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**, she has been collecting purple purses to distribute to 11 shelters in Southwestern PA. Go Barb!

**Marg Grieves**, leader of our affiliate in Balfour, British Columbia, tells me: “**GIVINGHANDS** is still going strong. More and more needs in the area all the time as you can understand.” She recently added a hostel in Calgary to her list of clients. She has added making hats and mittens to her group’s repertoire.

**Renee Hoffman**, dedicated leader of Handmade’s Long Beach group (whose members are the **Slipt Stitchers** of the **El Segundo Knitting Guild**), continues to donate 20 scarves each month to **Interval House**.

**Susan Van Winkle**, head of Handmade’s North County (San Diego) group is also going strong. She and her group donate to **Rachel’s House** and **Hidden Valley**. They do a great job.

**Vicki Ringer**, leader of Handmade’s San Fernando Valley affiliate, donates 20 scarves and some baby blankets (whenever she can get them) to **Haven Hills** in Canoga Park.

About a year ago, **Therese Shafer** showed us a new technique she learned to join two pieces of yarn. Once we tried it, we all loved it. We call it the “**Magic Knot**.” It really is “magic” because after you make it, you don’t have to weave in ends, everyone’s most hated finishing job. If you don’t know how to make the “**Magic Knot**,” here is a link to a video that shows you how to do it: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj\\_-V5XVPcs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj_-V5XVPcs) Once you learn how to make the **Magic Knot**, you will love it. It makes changing/adding yarn so easy!

The **Magic Knot** has been especially helpful to those who like to make scrap scarves, where we really knit yarn scraps to make scarves. The pieces would need weaving in but we use the **Magic Knot** instead. In the past, we had a pattern for only knitted *horizontal* scrap scarves. Now we have two crochet *vertical* patterns. **Joanne Garlick** introduced one successful pattern. Every time she changed yarn, she tied the ends on the outside of the scarf. The result was a kind of decorative fringe on one wide side of the scarf. **Nancy English** used the “**Magic Knot**” when she changed yarns so she didn’t have to spend a lot of time weaving in ends. She preferred a

smooth edge, and fringe at both ends. She applied the technique not only to Joanne's afghan scarf, but to a pattern for a peephole chevron as well.



The biggest trick to making either scarf is using the same weight yarn throughout the scarf. Joanne and Nancy both used worsted weight yarn (number 4 weight). If you don't have enough worsted scraps, you can create your own by using two yarns at once, like one sport weight (#3) and one baby weight (#1). If you use different weight yarns in the same scarf without adjusting for the different weights, the edges of your scarf won't be even. Unlike the knitted version, which is horizontal, the crocheted version is vertical so keeping the edges even is important!

Finally, October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**. For the most part, conversations about domestic violence occur in hushed tones behind the scenes, but recent cases like Ray Rice's attack on his fiancé, now wife, Janay and how the NFL treated that particular event, have brought the discussion into the open. We see the discussion as the lead story on the TV evening news, not hidden away in a small column on the back pages of the newspaper.

**Domestic Violence Awareness Month** makes us think about victims who experience abuse on a daily basis, victims like Janay. The **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence** collected data which shows how widespread and damaging domestic violence is for our entire community. Here are some of their findings:

One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime

About 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year

85% of domestic violence victims are women; 25% to 45% are battered during pregnancy. Domestic violence during pregnancy is the biggest cause of birth defects

Women age 15-44 are at greatest risk

Most cases of domestic violence are never reported to the police

Boys who witness domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners when they become adults

The cost of intimate partner violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year; \$4.1 billion is for medical and mental health services

About 20% of the people who experience intimate partner violence obtain civil protection orders; 50% of these orders are violated

There are 1,500 shelters for abused women in the US (compared to 3,800 animal shelters. In this instance, animals receive more protection than women)

Domestic violence occurs among people of all races, ages, socio-economic classes, religious affiliations, occupations, and educational backgrounds

Handmade makes and distributes comfort scarves as our way of alleviating the terrible effects of abuse. However, the 12,000 scarves we deliver each year cannot combat these statistics or cure the harm done to the women and children who experience abuse. As you can see from reading the letters from shelter directors, comfort scarves are a **START** to overcoming the negative effects of abuse. Comfort scarves help a woman feel important and valuable. Even if for just a moment, receiving a comfort scarf raises a woman's self-esteem. The feelings a woman experiences when she receives a comfort scarf make her receptive to beginning the therapy and education that will help her change her life. We who make comfort scarves have a big responsibility to keep making them, to continue helping abused women break out of the mental state that allows them to think abuse is OK or even "normal."

To do this, we need you. We need you to make scarves, enough scarves so we can supply all the shelters in S CA with the comfort scarves they have requested.

We also need your financial support. We need \$\$\$ to cover the cost of shipping scarves to the shelters. And we really need a work shop. When we get one, we will need to pay for rent, utilities, and other overhead. That will be a big step for Handmade and we need your ongoing support to make it possible.

You can contribute several ways. Of course, you can go directly to the Handmade website: [www.handmadeespecially.org](http://www.handmadeespecially.org) where you will find a link to **PayPal**. You can make your donation directly that way. Handmade receives it immediately.

Another way to donate is by shopping at **Ralphs** (or other Kroger stores). This doesn't cost you anything, since **Ralphs** makes the donation based on a percentage of what you spend. We receive checks from **Ralphs** quarterly, depending on the amount our supporters spend there. To participate, all you have to do is join the **Ralphs Community Contribution Program**. Again, the link is on our website. Print out the letter. When you shop, show it to the cashier. The cashier will link the letter with your **Ralphs** card so whenever you shop you will also be donating to Handmade. **Ralphs** asks you to renew the connection every September. What could be easier, grocery shopping and supporting Handmade at the same time.

Amazon offers a similar program: **AmazonSmile**. Again, all the details are on our website. We've just started with Amazon so we haven't received much from them yet, but I hope that many of us will shop there for holiday gifts so that the money will start coming our way in January 2015.

You can also raise money for Handmade by asking your employer for matching funds. Some companies, such as **AT&T**, **Toyota**, **United Health Care**, and **Verizon** encourage their employees to contribute to charities by offering matching funds. In some cases, they "match" scarf making, not only \$\$\$\$. Check it out. Handmade has benefitted several times from these companies.

Finally, if you want to donate actual \$\$\$\$, you can mail a check to the address below.

If you want to donate scarves or yarn, please mail to:

Handmade Especially for You c/o Leslye Borden

30065 Grandpoint Lane

Rancho Palos Verdes CA 90275

Thanks for supporting Handmade Especially for You. I appreciate, and so do all the abused women who receive our comfort scarves.

Leslye Borden, Founder

Handmade Especially for You

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Handmade Especially for You is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit charity, so your donation is tax-deductible. We provide appropriate receipts for all donations. 100% of cash donations goes toward helping abused women, paying for shipping scarves to shelters, etc.