



MARCH/APRIL NEWSLETTER

April 20, 2013

- We distributed just under 1,000 comfort scarves in March
- Handmade's fabulous scarfing teams deserve lots of praise and thanks
- Shipping is Handmade's biggest expense
- The positive response by shelters warms our hearts
- Yarn companies continue their generosity
- Domestic violence in the news
- News about Handmade's volunteers
- Our affiliated groups
- Donate to Handmade while shopping at Ralphs
- New patterns for comfort scarves made from scrap yarn
- **Mother's Day**, May 12, is just around the corner

And now for the details:

Thanks to all our kit makers, knitters, crocheters, winders, and wrappers we were able to distribute just under 1,000 comfort scarves in March. I expect we'll do the same in April. We plan to ship in time for Mother's Day parties at the shelters. Wow! How do we achieve such incredible goals?

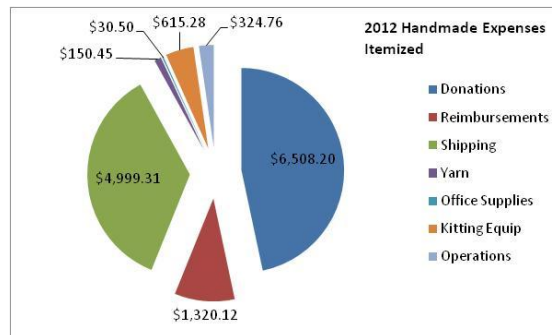
First, we have a fabulous group of scarfers. Local knitters and crocheters and those throughout the US contribute scarves to our cause. Hundreds of scarfers. They find out about Handmade through word of mouth, shopping at **Concepts in Yarn**, from notices on **Ravelry**, from posts on **Facebook**. They are dedicated participants. They love to knit/crochet. Many use kits we supply; many use their own stash. They donate their time, and many, who pay for shipping scarves or yarn to us, also donate money by paying for shipping. Except for the day after we ship, scarves are everywhere in my house. Scarves waiting to be acknowledged fill my front hall. Scarves waiting to be wrapped fill the dining room. Scarves waiting to be shipped fill the guest bed room.

We need a big team to process all these scarves. Our wrapping team is energetic and determined. It includes **Ann Nye, Chris Fung, Chris Needham, Evelyn Dow, Giuliana Torelli, Janet Schoenfeld, Kathy Allen, Linda Whitson, Mary Barton, Nancy English**, and **Paula Weiner**. They want to make sure abused women in shelters receive these mountains of scarves.

Kit makers (**Ann Nye, Janet Schoenfeld, Nancy English, Nannette Brill**, and **Paula Weiner**) are very busy since most of our scarfers prefer Magic Balls, that is, yarns that have been pre-measured, color coordinated, and then wound into a ball so all the scarf maker has to do is cast

on the yarn at one end of the ball, knit, and then cast off at the other end. Like magic. The finished product is a beautiful comfort scarf, with equal amounts of fun fur or other novelty yarn decorating both ends of the scarf. Kit making isn't hard. Really, you don't even have to know how to knit to participate. We always need more volunteers. Join us on Tuesday mornings.

The reason we need so many wrappers and kit makers is that we supply so many comfort scarves to so many shelters. We supply at least 57 shelters with comfort scarves. We ship to some every month; to most on a quarterly basis. We have cut our shipping costs significantly by sending scarves less frequently. Shipping still is our biggest (and just about our only) expense. As you can see from the pie chart created by **Ann Nye**, when you donate \$\$\$, almost all your money goes to defraying the cost of shipping kits to volunteers or shipping finished scarves to shelters.



At risk of sounding like a radio or TV station during one of their pledge drives, **I beg you to donate \$\$\$\$** to help us cover this huge cost. **\$5, \$10, \$25 or more. Anything.** A regular commitment would be wonderful. Several of Handmade's members contribute every month: **Annette** and **Alexander Maass** (from Germany), **Betty Watts** (from Lakewood), **Vicki** and **Warren Ringer** (from Woodland Hills). I will appreciate everything you donate and so will all the abused women who receive comfort scarves as a result of your generosity.

And so will directors at our numerous shelters. They send us many letters of appreciation. We cannot let them down by cutting back on the number of shelters we serve, an alternative we considered to reduce shipping costs before we decided instead to deliver scarves on a quarterly rather than a monthly basis. The following excerpts are typical of what directors say about the value of our comfort scarves at their shelters.

Destani Hernandez, Women and Family Program Assistant at **Coachella Valley Rescue Mission** writes: The joy and encouragement that you gave the clients at our facility is priceless.

Bonnie Campbell, Executive Director of **Domestic Violence Solutions for Santa Barbara County** writes: Your gift of 25 comfort scarves gives women and children a promise to fulfill a dream of a home and life without violence, and an end to the intergenerational cycle of violence.

Kathleen Harper, CEO at **DOVES** in Big Bear, tells us: Your generous donation of the beautiful scarves are a special treat for our new clients. Your thoughtfulness and kindness go a long way to brighten their lives.

Lisa Watson, CEO at **Downtown Women's Center**, says: You have made a difference in the lives of the growing number of women who depend on DWC for support. We are grateful for your generosity.

Caroline Reyna, Program Manager at **Family Assistance Program** in Victorville, writes: Thank you and your organization for the beautiful handmade scarves. Our agency works with

women who have been in human trafficking and slave trade situations. These women are now in shelter trying to get their lives together. We gave them the scarves that your lovely organization made for us. The ladies were so grateful and admired the beauty in them. . . We hope for your continued support.

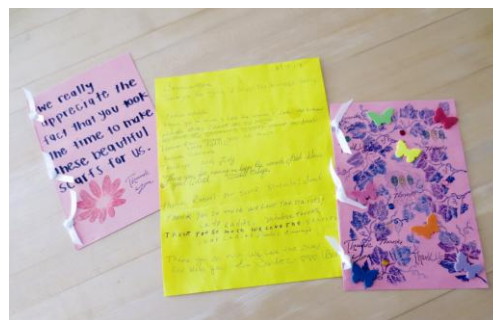
Teresa Trinidad, Program Manager at **Haven House** in Pasadena, explains: Thank you and everyone associated with Handmade Especially for You for your generous donation of 25 handmade scarves. Your commitment to helping victims of domestic violence and their children is sincerely appreciated.

Mario Galeano, Volunteer Program Supervisor at **Long Beach Rescue Mission** and **Lydia House**, tells us: Your generous gifts, time and effort that are put into making the scarves, are greatly appreciated by our residents. . . . Thank you for taking the time to create these beautiful handmade scarves.

Angelina Coe, Executive Director at **Shelter from the Storm** in the Coachella Valley, tells us: We appreciate your partnering with us to change lives one family at a time. I am so glad SFTS receives these lovely scarves from you.

Kathy Strong, Director of Contracts at **WTLC** in Fullerton, writes: Your generous donation (of 20 comfort scarves) touched the hearts of all of us in the organization and has a huge impact on our ability to help victims of domestic violence/human trafficking and their children. You have helped us save lives and thank you for that.

Yes, the comments are similar, but I never get tired of reading them. Each month, I am so glad to know that our comfort scarves are still doing their job. I am sorry only that there is such an endless line of women and children who need them and that it costs so much to get the scarves to the shelters. Of course, we receive many more letters of appreciation than the ones I excerpted above. Here are two more, from **Casa Youth Shelter** in Long Beach and **Center for Family Solutions** in El Centro which include notes from the women themselves.



As you must realize, Handmade wouldn't be able to make comfort scarves if we didn't have yarn. The generosity of our yarn donors is the first requirement for making comfort scarves. Happily, we have received lots of yarn donations in March and April. Major yarn companies, including **Berroco, Brown Sheep, Crystal Palace, Feza Yarns, Mountain Colors, Trendsetter Yarns, and Universal Yarn**, made very generous donations.

However impressed you are by the long list of donors, don't ever think we don't need more yarn. We need a constant supply and we **never have enough**. Thank you, thank you, thank you to all our yarn donors. You make comfort scarves a reality.

The media reports domestic violence more often than it used to. In the past, abuse, rape, human trafficking, etc. were "secrets" that people knew about but didn't discuss. Just since the start of

Handmade at the end of 2008 we have been reading about abuse more often, not because it happens more often, but because outrage against it is more socially acceptable. Since our last newsletter, we have read about cases of rape in India that have caused huge public outcry. **Oscar Pistorius**, the South African double amputee runner who used carbon-fiber legs to compete in the 2012 London Olympics, was accused of premeditated murder in the fatal shooting of his girlfriend, **Reeva Steenkamp**. The case hasn't been heard yet, but **Joy Coetzee**, head of **The Ruth Mailbag Group**, our South African affiliate, shared her indignation over the incident:

Domestic violence in South Africa is a huge problem. 15,609 murders and 64,500 reported rapes in 2011-12 suggest massive levels of violence in South African homes. . . . Pistorius' innocence or guilt will be decided in court and likely not for years. But Steenkamp's death has already invigorated a South African campaign against the country's epidemic violence against women. Accident or murder, her death has forever erased the tacit assumption that gun violence and violence against women is largely a black problem.

On a more positive note, on March 1, 2013 the US Congress finally passed the **Violence Against Women Act** (erroneously named as far as I am concerned. It should be called "the **Against Violence Toward Women Act**"). It took Congress over 18 months to renew this act, but now it's law again. Whew!

Lots has occurred in Handmade's world. **Paula Weiner** caught her leg on her purse strap while exiting her car and broke her leg. Luckily for her, my husband has recovered from his broken right leg and broken left foot, so we could lend her our wheelchair. Paula is recovering nicely. And it looks like she won't need surgery. Hooray.

Ellenore McCampbell died on April 13, just one day after her 95th birthday. She was an inspiration to all of us. She was feisty, determined, and independent. She lived in her own home until the very last. She attended our Wednesday evening knitting sessions until about a month before she died. She loved the conversation and the coffee. We will miss her.

Vicki Ringer, head of our San Fernando Valley affiliate, experienced the tragic death of her 18-year old grandson. He was riding an ATV in unfamiliar territory. He took a wrong turn and ended up on the highway where he was killed. Our hearts go out to Vicki.

Handmade has several affiliated groups throughout the US and the world. What does it mean to be an affiliate? An affiliated group donates handmade comfort scarves to shelters for abused women in their own community in the same way as we donate them in our community. For the most part, affiliates find their own sponsors, solicit their own donations, and recruit their own volunteers. On the rare occasion that we receive a huge yarn donation, one so big that it is more than we can handle, we offer to share some of it with our affiliates, but they donate the cost of shipping as would any one to whom we send yarn. Affiliates do not take advantage of our status as a 501(c)3; if they want or need such an exemption, they apply for it themselves. The advantage of being an affiliate is that we share our experience with them, help them get started, tell them what works for us, share patterns, etc. When we first started Handmade, people all over the US wanted to establish affiliated groups. Many of these no longer exist, but there still are about 10 active groups. In fact, the San Fernando Valley group, headed by **Vicki Ringer**, donates 20 scarves each month to **Haven House** in Canoga Park; the Long Beach group, headed by **Renee Hoffman**, donates 20 scarves each month to **Interval House**; our North San Diego affiliate, headed by **Susan Van Winkle**, donates to a shelter in Oceanside and another in Escondido. **Ann Miller**, in Pueblo CO donates to two shelters in her area. **Barb Kochuba**

covers 8 shelters in southwestern PA. **Joy Coetzee** specifies August as the month when she focuses on donating to shelters for abused women; her group makes items for babies and new mothers. The point is Handmade believes in donating comfort scarves to abused women, wherever the abused women are. We support everyone who wants to do the same, whether they ship scarves directly to us or to shelters in their own areas.

Janet Schoenfeld, always on the lookout for ways to help Handmade, heard about **Ralph's Community Contribution Program**. She checked it out, filled out all the papers, and we just received notice that Handmade has been included in the program. Here's how it works. When you shop at **Ralph's**, use your Ralph's customer rewards card or alternate ID (your phone number). Give the cashier **Handmade's ID number 94175** or print out the Ralph's letter with the appropriate barcode (soon to be on our website). 72 hours after the cashier enters the number, a percent of your purchases will be credited to Handmade every time you shop at Ralph's and use your rewards card. Here's hoping lots of you shop at Ralph's! It seems like an easy way to raise \$\$\$, especially since it doesn't cost you anything except the extra time it takes to give the cashier the info. Thanks in advance for contributing to Handmade through this program. And thank you Janet for setting this up for Handmade!

We've been amassing huge amounts of yarn scraps. I've tried to figure out ways to use them. A few years ago I tried to make Magic Balls using these scraps, but it was too time consuming. I still want to use the yarn to make comfort scarves and now I have a few suggestions. **Ann Nye** knitted a scarf where she changed yarn every other row. She didn't weave in the ends, but let them hang loose as a decorative touch. I love her scarf. It is so colorful.



I tried making one myself, but I changed yarn more randomly. What I ended up liking best is changing yarn so the ends hang on one side of the scarf for one section, and on the other side for the next section. I chose scraps from color sorted bags of yarn so my scarves were all shades of blue or shades of purple, rather than lots of different colors in one scarf, like Ann's. I like both versions. I selected yarns so that dark and light colors were next to each other, rather than two darks or two lights and I switched textures as often as possible. Sometimes I used ribbon, sometimes terry, sometimes worsted. I kept the edges even by how I combined yarns. I knitted some sections with three thin yarns; some with one thick and one thin. Sometimes I knitted with just one thick piece of yarn.



In any case, I love these scrap scarves. I think they look very cheerful and they make me feel that I have used the yarn donated to us so generously to the greatest degree possible. I'm sure

you have lots of scraps in your stash. Try one of these scarves or come up with your own version. They're really fun to make.

Finally, **Mother's Day** is just around the corner, on May 12. We want to deliver a huge number of scarves for this special occasion. As I mentioned above, we supply some shelters every month; we supply most quarterly, but all the shelters want our comfort scarves for **Mother's Day**. You read the notes (above) from the shelter directors. You know they want the scarves for their women. They appreciate what we do. So we need a big push to get enough scarves for **Mother's Day**. We may even need to have two shipping days. If we don't have enough by April 26, we'll send more early in May.

Every time I look back at where **Handmade** started in October, 2008 and see how far we've come, I'm floored. I know we couldn't have achieved all this without all of you. We had a lot of other support along the way-- **June Grossberg**, the owner of **Concepts in Yarn** where our core group meets every Wednesday evening, all the yarn donors, all the cash donors, everyone. Your dedication and support are phenomenal and I think about what you do for Handmade all the time. Thank you so much.

Keep your eyes open looking for a space to set up a workshop. Our kit making, wrapping and shipping operations would be much more efficient if we had such a space.

If you want to donate yarn or scarves, please send your contributions to:

Handmade Especially for You c/o Leslye Borden

30065 Grandpoint Lane

Rancho Palos Verdes CA 90275

If you want to donate cash, please send a check to the above address or donate through **PayPal**. You can access **PayPal** on our website: www.handmadeespecially.org

Thanks in advance. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Leslye

www.handmadeespecially.org

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