



MAY NEWSLETTER

May 31, 2011

Today's topics:

- With the help of many volunteers, we delivered just under 2,000 comfort scarves in April and just over 1000 in May
- We now supply shelters in Ventura and Riverside counties; 43 shelters in all
- Shelters love our comfort scarves
- Yarn companies continue generously supporting Handmade
- Individual donors contribute a lot
- Macy's Community Shopping Day
- Our affiliates continue doing well
- Welcome to the Culver City Senior Center's knitting group
- Still looking for a site where we can coordinate all our activities under one roof
- One year anniversary of my surgery; I have recovered
- Remember, there is too much domestic violence and too few comfort scarves

And now for the details:

In April, we just about met our goal of delivering 2,000 comfort scarves in time for Mother's Day.

We were only 70 scarves short, but no shelter complained. All of you worked so hard to achieve this goal. Boxes arrived on my doorstep every day. It was incredible. I guess I was a bit disappointed that we didn't make it all the way to 2,000, but we really outdid ourselves in May by donating 1,025 scarves. So now I feel much better.

We couldn't have done this without the crucial help of many volunteers, and not just our wonderful scarf and kit makers. It took us almost

4 weeks to prepare the scarves for Mother's Day. On the final day of that huge effort, three of us – **Enid Malm, Evelyn Dow** and I – worked until 6 p.m. to get everything ready. From that we could see we needed to increase our wrapping parties to twice a month, which we have done. It's twice as much fun, not just twice as much work.

This month's volunteers included: **Barbara Klein, Chris Needham, Enid Malm, Kathy Allen, Linda Friege, Marie Cortez, Mary Gravlin, Myra Kumagae, Nancy English, Sharon McCann, Teresa Copley, and Yumi Wu.** It's hard to imagine what it will take to get

all the scarves ready for Christmas, but we know we will have to plan ahead. Wrapping this many scarves takes tremendous care and effort. Thanks to all of you – yarn donors, kit makers, knitters/crocheters, wrappers, schleppers, and shippers -- who participated. You are a dedicated group of volunteers. Handmade certainly would not be where it is today without each and every one of you.

Also in April, we added 6 new shelters to our growing list of those receiving comfort scarves.

They are: Domestic Violence Shelters in Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria, East Los Angeles Women's Center, Peace Over Violence, and WINGS (YWCA) Covina.

In May, because we had so many scarves available (some arrived too late for Mother's Day), we added 7 more.

They are: Casas Shelter, Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, Coalition to End Family Violence, Corona Norco Rescue Mission, Genesis Center, Interface Children & Family Services, and Valley Restart.

Now I just have to hope that our volume of incoming scarves will keep up with the number of shelters we want to supply. Keep scarfing. Please!

Shelters love our scarves.

Here are a few excerpts from the pile of thank you letters I receive from them. **Kitty Glass**, Community Outreach Coordinator at Family Violence Project, writes:

"I walked into my office today and was welcomed by another box of your beautiful handiwork. Thank you so very much and the women will be thrilled as always. Since we have so many folks in and out of our shelters along with our counseling center clients, your beautiful offerings are enjoyed by so many. . . "

Marti DeLaO, Director of Fund Development at **Interface Children & Family Services**, writes:

"Thank you so much for your gift of 15 comfort scarves . . . The scarves are lovely. Your support makes a real difference."

Heather Masterton, Director of Development, at **Peace Over Violence**, writes: *"We are honored that you chose our agency to be a recipient of such beautiful and time intensive individual creations. Two women who each received a scarf had this to share:*

"Wow! I really appreciate this gift. It's nice to know that someone out there cares."

"Thank you for this scarf. I can tell that a lot of time and craftsmanship went into making it. This really makes my day!"

One of the clients at **St. Clare's Home** sent a hand printed card:

"Thank you so very much for sending the scarves. They are beautiful. We truly appreciate you all for making these for us. This is an amazing gift."

Annette Kosker, Volunteer Coordinator at **YWCA of Glendale**, writes:

"Thank you for your recent donation of hand knit scarves. . . . The work you do brings such joy and warmth to those you touch. It is due to collaboration with generous people like you that we can continue to operate. . . . Domestic Violence Project – empowering women who are victims of domestic violence to move forward and start their lives anew."

Appreciations such as these keep us going. We are thrilled that our work continues to be so meaningful for its recipients.

Our yarn donors have been very generous.

Crystal Palace Yarns, **Knitting Fever**, **Coats & Clark**, and **Skacell Knitting** all sent huge cases of yarn in April. What would we do without them! In addition, we received yarn from **Brown Sheep** and **Cheryl Oberle Designs**. **Denise Interchangeable Needles** and **Skacell** sent circular needles so we can make horizontal scarves that use up our scraps. However, that was in April. We made 3,000 scarves using these donations. Right now, we're pretty wiped out of yarn. We need more donations. We're like the "Hungry Caterpillar." We always need more. Without yarn, we cannot make scarves.

Individuals have contributed as well.

Some people hand me a box of plastic bags every time they see me. Others buy Fun Fur and other

novelty yarn any time they see it. Some of the kit makers purchase yarn they need to make perfect kits. Many do not tell me what they have donated but I know these anonymous and other contributions occur all the time and I appreciate them, even if I cannot thank you all personally in this Newsletter.

Macy's Community Shopping Day:

On May 14, we participated in **Macy's Community Shopping Day**. This was our first experience with such an event and I think it was pretty successful for us. We sold discount tickets to our friends and family (\$10 each). These tickets allowed the purchaser to shop at **Macy's** and receive discounts on what they bought. **Handmade** could keep 100% of the \$10 fee. We sold almost 130 tickets so we earned \$1,300. I think we spent most of this on shipping scarves to our 43 shelters. But it was great to have this money so we could do so. **Macy's** is having another such event in September. This time the tickets will be only \$5, but they can be used at every Macy's, so I hope we will participate again.

Our affiliates continue doing well.

- **Renee Hoffman** donated 20 comfort scarves to **Interval House** in Long Beach CA
- **Vicki Ringer** donated 20 comfort scarves to **Haven Hills** in Canoga Park CA
- **Tammy Peters** donated 8 comfort scarves to **Services to Abused Families** in Culpeper VA
- **Barb Kochuba's** group, Comfort Scarves, has expanded its reach from Pittsburgh to all of Southeastern PA.

I am always thrilled to receive scarves from people around the country. When I receive them from Germany, England, Scotland, Singapore, etc., as I do from time to time, I am really excited. This month I receive a box of 26 scarves from Carmen Giovanna in Costa Rica. I was very impressed. Thank you, Carmen.

We have several other very prolific scarf donors who never get mentioned because they are local. Emma, who lives near Barbara and Mary, sometimes knits as many as 30 scarves per

week. Joanne Garlick, in Sunnyvale, crochets huge numbers of scarves. So does Janet Deininger. And Elizabeth O'Connell. We depend on you to keep scarfing. We're so glad you're dedicated to our cause.

Welcome to the Culver City Senior Center's knitting group

Happily for Handmade, we have another source of scarf makers. Women in the knitting class at the Culver City Senior Center make 60 or so scarves each month. Vivian Brown leads the group. Sometimes her class is so popular that she runs out of places for everyone to sit.

So far we have many irons in the fire as far as finding space for a workshop, but no space. Everyone we talk to is very supportive, but despite the fact that there are empty spaces all over, no one yet has come forward to donate one to Handmade. We have received some lovely letters of refusal, however. So please keep your eyes open. If you see a space, hear of a space, know a generous landlord, please make contact on behalf of Handmade and advise me so I can follow up asap. We really need a space. It is so inconvenient for us to have our yarn divided between 4 homes. And to have some of the kits at one house and some at another. We have done well so far using this method, but as we need more and more kits and scarves, we need to become more efficient. Here's hoping we get our break this month.

I have just celebrated the one year anniversary of my big surgery.

And I am happy to report after zillions of medical tests that the doctors can't find any place on my aorta where there might be another dissection. That is a big relief. And although I am pretty much back to normal as far as capacity for work, I still have to rest when I overdo, like when we shipped 2,000 comfort scarves. As you have seen from this Newsletter, Handmade has lots of volunteers, so I do not overdo too often.

Finally, as I have said many times, we should be crying that there is such demand for our comfort scarves, not cheering that we are making and delivering so many. I wish that statistics showed a lessening in the demand, but domestic violence is

increasing. In Annette Kosker's thank you letter, she wrote: *"Unfortunately, the need for our Domestic Violence Service increases every year."* Incredible, isn't it. It seems there is too much domestic violence and too few scarves, no matter how many we make. That doesn't mean our work is fruitless; it just means that every scarf we contribute is important, that we need to keep on making comfort scarves.

I am thrilled with **Handmade's** progress and success. As a reminder, here's how I ended last year's May Newsletter: "At the end of 2008, we delivered 300 comfort scarves to 3 shelters. By the end of 2009, we delivered 6,500 comfort scarves to 22 shelters. Now (May, 2010) we're working toward distributing more than 10,000 comfort scarves to well more than 25 shelters."

Looking forward from May 2011, I expect we'll make and distribute at least 15,000 scarves in 2011. So we've come a long way. We couldn't have done it without each and every one of you. You make it all possible. Thanks so much.

Remember, 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

If you want to donate \$\$\$\$, please send a check to the above address or use the following link to donate through [PayPal](#).

Thanks in advance.

Leslye

www.handmadeespecially.org

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