



# Newsletters

OCTOBER 2011

## Today's topics:

- We delivered 1,000 comfort scarves this month
- We have almost 2,500 comfort scarves wrapped and ready for Holiday delivery
- Making another 2,500 + scarves by Christmas will be a lot of work by all of us. We can do it
- Handmade's dedicated volunteers are the greatest
- The generous contributions from yarn companies and individuals continue
- Shelters for abused women **APPRECIATE** receiving our comfort scarves
- Affiliates throughout the county are donating many scarves in their own areas
- October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**
- Handmade needs cash donations

## And now for the details:

In addition to our October delivery of 1,000 comfort scarves, we have at least another 2,000 scarves wrapped and ready for shipping in November. We plan to distribute them before Thanksgiving because every room in my house is filled with scarves and my entire family is coming for the holiday. They will need a place to sleep! Joking aside, I am very proud of all of us who are working so hard to achieve our goal of delivering 15,000 comfort scarves in 2011. Honestly, as much as I hoped for such a result, I thought it might be too big to achieve. But we've almost made it. No slacking off now. We're so close. Please keep scarfing. By the way, adding our October delivery of 1,000 to our YTD, we have now delivered 10,000 comfort scarves, the same as what we donated in all of 2010.

We had so many scarves to prepare, we held two wrapping parties in October. They were lots of fun. We went through a lot of ribbon and the enormous piles of brightly wrapped scarves looked very festive. I am sure they will have a strong, positive impact. **Anita Stevens, Ann Nye, Barbara Klein, Chris Needham, Cindy Blausey, Evelyn Dow, Kathy Allen, Marie Cortez, Mary Barton, Nancy English, Sharon McCann, and Yumi Wu** rolled and tied scarves at one or both of the parties until there were no more to roll. It was a huge job. Many thanks to you all.

Kit making has become a lot more streamlined due to more participants. **Barbara Klein** and **Mary Gravin** made them at first. Once we moved to our workshop (thanks to **Sheri Schrier**, founder of **Happy Hats**), **Linda Friege, Marie Cortez, Sharon McCann, and Yumi Wu** joined them. Now, as word spreads about how much fun kit making is, **Ann Nye** and **Nancy English** participate as well. They're making lots of kits, maybe almost enough to last through the end of the year. They have done a wonderful job. The scarves we knit from the kits they make are very beautiful.

Most of the participants in these two groups are members of our **Wednesday Evening Knitting Club**, sponsored by **June Grossberg**, owner of **Concepts in Yarn**. June has supported Handmade since its inception. Her sponsorship has helped Handmade to become the success it is today. The **Knitting Club** meets every Wednesday, for as much of 5-8 p.m. as the members want to attend. The group is very welcoming. June prominently displays a bin for kits that need to be knitted and another bin for finished scarves. If you're in the neighborhood, be sure to stop by. Her shop is a gold mine for really great yarn.

Our enthusiastic group of kit makers goes through miles of yarn every time they make kits. They make them as a group at least once a week, sometimes twice, and sometimes working at home as well. They couldn't make so many kits without the generosity of yarn companies. Donations in September were substantial and put us in good shape for making lots of scarves for the holidays. I thought we wouldn't receive any donations in October, but events proved me wrong. **Susan Druding**, **Crystal Palace Yarns**, sent a big box to the workshop (our first to arrive there!). Then much to my surprise, amazement, and delight, **Becky Moss**, **Skacel Collection**, sent 21 boxes (2,850 balls of yarn) of their Luana yarn. It is so soft and comes in such beautiful colors that it is perfect for making comfort scarves. An added benefit: the boxes the yarn arrived in are an excellent size for shipping our holiday scarves. Thank you, Susan and Becky. I think we've filled the workshop now, as well as my house.

**Westminster Fibers** also sent a box of yarn. Thank you Jessica! Again, much to my amazement, **Nandini Rajagopalan**, a member of the Handmade group on **Ravelry**, saw my request for fun fur. She found a good deal on it and donated 300 balls, 150 red and 150 blue. Incredible! Barbara says we'll be making a lot of patriotic scarves in 2012. We appreciate.

Every month, thank you letters pour in from the shelters to which we donate comfort scarves. We receive too many to mention them all, but here is a typical example. **Luciann Maulhardt**, Executive Director of **Casa Youth Shelter** in Los Alamitos CA, wrote: "Thanks for all you do for Casa's Kids. . . . Casa provides 235 or more kids with 2,500 days and nights of safe off the streets shelter in a family-like setting. . . On behalf of . . . OUR KIDS, we are sending you a great big "THANK YOU. . . We just couldn't do what we do without your wonderful help."

**Ann Nye** and I recently visited the **Downtown Women's Center** in Los Angeles. **Allison Bamberg**, Volunteer Associate, showed us around. We were very impressed by the new facility, which provides permanent housing to 71 women, as well as 200 + meals and 77 showers to other women who drop in to their facility on a daily basis. The building was bright and clean. Computers were available for the women to use for job hunting and resume writing. Allison told us the Center plans to give 275 rolling backpacks to its women for Christmas and hopes to have one of our scarves in each backpack. Of course, we will supply the scarves!

New groups and people are contributing scarves to Handmade. **Kathy Allen** is a volunteer reading teacher at the **Presentation Learning Center** in Los Angeles. She learned that the attendees knit items for charity so she asked for 25 kits to take there. **Sister Jane Bonar**, leader of the Center, is very happy with our kits and we are happy with the beautiful job her group does making them into comfort scarves. Here they are with some of their finished scarves.



Word of our comfort scarf project continues to spread. **Erika Collins**, from Sydney Australia, found us on **Facebook** and immediately sent 3 scarves. **Christine Werth**, Human Resources Rep of the Hays KS branch of **N.E.W. Company**, requested kits for their company-wide volunteer week. Her group finished the kits in a week's time and she returned the scarves to me the next week. That was fast! She says she will ask for more kits next year because making comfort scarves was so popular this year.

**Renee Hoffman**, leader of our Long Beach CA group, donated 20 scarves to **Interval House**. **Vicki Ringer**, leader of our San Fernando Valley CA group, delivered scarves to **Haven Hills**. **Susan Van Winkle**, organizer of our North County, San Diego CA affiliate, reports they donated 66 scarves to **Rachel's Women's Center**.

**Dr. Laura Guertin**, founder of the Delaware County PA affiliate, told me her group delivered 100 scarves to the **Domestic Violence Center** of Chester County PA. She says that brings her YTD to 300 and that she has more new knitters and crocheters and hopes to see a lot more scarves coming in.

**Barbara Kochuba**, in Pittsburgh PA, continues moving ahead full steam. She now has a website for Comfort Scarves, her group, and continues to distribute at least 80 scarves each month to shelters in Southwestern PA.

I hope you remember that last month I met Bonnie Jacobs, who comes from NJ, in Los Angeles where she was attending the dedication of a stained glass window she made for the Hollywood United Methodist Church. She showed a photo of it to my husband and me when we were having brunch. I loved the theme of the window (It takes a village) and her workmanship impressed me. When I excused myself to go to the ladies' room, my husband conspired with Bonnie. He sent her a photo of his hand making the sign language sign for "I love you" and she made a small stained glass picture of that. She shipped it to arrive just in time for my birthday. I was thrilled. We hung it in a window where the morning sun comes in. It is really beautiful!



Finally, October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**. Domestic violence is not usually a topic of conversation, but I have seen articles about it, heard news reports on radio and TV, this month more than any other time. First of all, there was the incident in Topeka KS where the City Council voted to de-criminalize domestic violence because they could not afford to enforce the law (they experienced a 10% cut to their budget). They even released from jail 18 suspected abusers awaiting trial. Reportage went on for several days until the Shawnee County DA was

forced, by public outcry, to reverse his decision to pass on such prosecutions from his office to the City's. The idea that the DA and the City Council both treated prosecution of domestic violence offenses as something that could be played with in a political fight goes to illustrate just how little political clout abused women have. Was domestic violence "legal" in Topeka? What happened to the women when the 18 abusers were set free?

Here are a few domestic violence facts gathered by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

- 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
- 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; there are 3,800 animal shelters
- Domestic violence occurs among people of all races, ages, socio-economic classes, religious affiliations, occupations, and educational backgrounds
- In 2010, the LAPD received 48,042 domestic violence-related calls and reported 20,467 domestic violence-related crimes.

Comfort scarves, even 15,000 of them, cannot combat these statistics or cure the harm done by abuse to the women and children who experience it. But comfort scarves are a START to overcoming the effects of domestic violence. Comfort scarves help a woman feel remembered, 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 open 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 "normal".

To do this, **we need you**. We need you to make scarves for the women, enough scarves so that we reach our 15,000 goal this year.

We also need your financial support. Contribute \$10, \$25, \$50, or even more. The cost for making comfort scarves is low. All Handmade's participants are volunteers. **We have no employees. We pay no salaries.** All the yarn we use has been donated by yarn companies or by individuals. We have ongoing daily expenses such as paper, toner, boxes, packing tape, etc. but **SHIPPING is our biggest expense**. It takes almost \$500 each month to send kits to volunteers and scarves to our shelters. In November and December, this will be higher because we will be sending out 2,500 scarves (not our usual 1,000) each month. Double your donation by asking your company to match it. **Cynthia Newkirk**, one of our supporters almost since Handmade

started, works for **Verizon Wireless**. When she donated, she asked Verizon to match her donation and they did. That doubled the impact of her contribution.

Handmade Especially for You is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit charity, so any donation you make will be tax-deductible. We provide appropriate receipts for all donations. 100% of your donation goes toward helping abused women.

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 \$\$\$\$ , which we need to pay for the huge holiday shipping bill we anticipate, you can mail a check to the above address, or contribute via **PayPal** (on our [Donations](#) page).

Thanks for supporting Handmade Especially for You. I appreciate, and so do all the abused women.

Leslye