



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

October 4, 2013

Today's topics:

- We delivered just OVER **1,100** 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
- The horizontal scrap scarf is a big hit with our knitting volunteers
- Generous contributions from yarn companies 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 donations

And now for the details:

At the beginning of September, we shipped just over 1,100 comfort scarves to 50+ shelters. It was a hectic scene, packing all those boxes. Luckily, we wrapped a lot of the scarves during the summer, so all we had to do was fill the boxes.



It was very heartwarming to see all the boxes stacked up awaiting pick up by FedEx.

Here's how we did it. While one group of volunteers packed the boxes, another group continued wrapping scarves. Thanks to our dedicated teams of shippers and wrappers (**Alisa Hoy-Prince, Ann Nye, Chris Fung, Chris Needham, Evelyn Dow, Janet Schoenfeld, Kathy Allen, Linda Whitson, Mary Barton, Nancy English, Paula Weiner, and Therese Shafer**) we did September shipping and are almost ready for October. We have lots and lots of wrapped scarves in **Evelyn's** storeroom, **Linda's** basement and my guest room. And still there are plenty to wrap. I expect that at our next scheduled wrapping party (October 10) we'll find that we are pretty well set for Holiday shipping, especially if you keep sending scarves at the current rate.

We still need to receive about 3,000 more (than what we have already) scarves in time to ship for Holiday parties at the shelters, but I feel we will achieve our goal—getting comfort scarves to every shelter for abused women in S CA from San Diego to San Luis.

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. 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 15, but of course, we will take them afterwards as well since we have to start collecting scarves for 2014 deliveries just as soon as we're done with 2013. 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 get the jobs done. We mentioned shippers and wrappers above, but we want to add our kit makers, **Ann Nye, Evelyn Dow, Janet Schoenfeld, Nancy English, Nanette Brill, and Paula Weiner**. We always need more kit makers. Recently, **Linda Whitson** and **Lynda Kennedy** joined us for kit making on Tuesdays. We make so many magic ball kits because there is such a huge demand for them. 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.

In our last Newsletter, we shared info on making horizontal scrap scarves. They have been very popular. Here are a few tricks we've learned since then. You need about 23 yards of a 4- or 5-ply yarn to use for casting on and off. Then you need 13-17 pieces of yarn that are around 7 yards long. The scarf comes out great when you use a lot of different textures and weights of yarns, as well as different fiber contents.



The only problem for some of our volunteers has been casting on the 150 stitches to start. I like the cable cast on (www.ehow.com/video_4429587_cable-cast-knitting-stitches.html) because it looks so much like the cast off row. It gives a lot of balance to the scarf and helps stop the scarf from curving due to casting on and casting off with different tensions. **Vivian Brown**, leader of the **Culver City Senior Center Knitters** solved the problem for her group by doing the cast on herself and then passing the scarf around the room so each lady could knit one row. A lot of friendship goes in to those scarves! Making these kits is very time consuming but it does use up a lot of scraps. We're thinking of providing a 7-yard template to those of you who want it so you can make your own kits using your own mountains of scraps, which I know you all have. If you would like such a template, I'd be glad to send one.

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 delivery. Thanks in particular to **Brown Sheep, Crystal Palace, Knitting Fever, Skacel, and Trendsetter Yarns**. The yarns they sent were fabulous. We received lots of mohair, ruffle and novelty yarns. We started using them as soon as they arrived. The scarves they make are incredible. These

donations have inspired us to try making different comfort scarves. For instance, **Trendsetter** donated lots of yarn that makes twirly, ruffly scarves.



We combined a soft variegated yarn from **Crystal Palace** with the mohair from **Knitting Fever** to make a **Fan Stitch** scarf. **Madeleine**, a member of the Handmade group on **Ravelry**, suggested the pattern, which turns out to have been written by **Susan Druding** of **Crystal Palace Yarns**. Small world! We're glad to share yarn and patterns. All you have to do is ask for them.

Every month, thank you letters pour in from the shelters to which we donate comfort scarves. Here are snippets from a few of them.

Linda Davies, Executive Director of **DVC** of Santa Clarita Valley, tells us: "The ladies in our Center love receiving your beautiful scarves. . . On behalf of the recipients of your generous donation, please accept our sincere thank you."

Karen Wenrich, Director of Development at **Haven Hills** in Canoga Park, writes: "I wish you could have seen the faces of the women in our shelters and counseling clinic when they received the scarves and baby blankets you so generously donated. They were so fabulous! . . . When they leave the shelter . . . the women always say "*you saved my life*". But we know that they did it themselves. . . we only gave them the tools. . . Thank you again for helping us provide these vital tools. . ."

Marti DeLaO, Director of Fund Development at **Interface Children & Family Services** in Camarillo, tells us: "I would like to express our deepest thanks . . . for your recent donation of handmade scarves. Generous gifts from donors like you provide the support needed to continue our mission (of) strengthening children, families, and communities in our region."

Jennifer Adams, Executive Director at **North County Women's Shelter** in Paso Robles, explains: "We look forward to extending our services and empowering even more victims of intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Thank you for your generosity and commitment to our cause."

Ben Schirmer, Executive Director at **Rainbow Services** in San Pedro (the very first shelter to which we donated comfort scarves way back in October 2008), continues to appreciate comfort scarves: "Thank you very much for your generous donation (which) helps women and children recovering from lives of trauma. . . The support of their community brings a sense of belonging and aids the healing of our clients."

Rev. Andy Bales from **Union Rescue Mission** in downtown Los Angeles, expresses his gratitude: "The Union Rescue Mission wishes to express our heartfelt and sincere gratitude to you for your support. . . in demonstrating to our guests that you care for the souls of others."

Linda Rogers, Executive Director at **Valley Restart** in Hemet, tells us: "Please accept our sincere thanks for your generous donation of handmade 'comfort scarves.' . . We appreciate your kindness and charity. It is so thoughtful of you to remember those in need."

Marianne Kennedy, Executive Director of **Women's Shelter Program** of San Luis Obispo, writes: Thank you so much for your recent donation of ten comfort scarves. Your support helps sustain our efforts to eliminate the effects of domestic violence in our community."

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 are very active. **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 20 scarves to **Haven Hills**. She needed some baby blankets, so if any of you have an extra please send it. I will make sure it gets to Vicki. **Susan VanWinkle**, leader of Handmade's San Diego CA affiliate, delivered 50 comfort scarves to **Rachel's House** in San Diego.

Lois Anderson, organizer of our affiliate in Madison, WI, reminded me she's finishing up her 4th year with Handmade. She says she supplies three shelters with scarves on a continuous basis. . . "In the past three years, I have distributed over 500 scarves." Good work, Lois. Looks like you're off to great start for your 4th year.

Marg Grieves, leader of our affiliate in Balfour, British Columbia, and I recently have shared a few emails. She says: "Yes, **GIVINGHANDS** is still going strong. More and more needs in the area all the time as you can understand." So glad her group is still active!

Finally, **Barbara Kochuba**, in Pittsburgh PA, continues moving ahead full steam. In September, 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 comfort scarves to distribute to her 11 shelters in Southwestern PA. Go Barb!

Yes, October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**. Historically, conversations about domestic violence have been in the background, but as women are becoming braver, we hear about it more frequently. For instance, a recent case of rape in Meerut, India caused widespread debate over the treatment of women. The incident led to weeks of public protest. As a result, the adult perpetrators may be sentenced to death and the teen participant will spend three years in juvenile detention. This is a big change from previous punishment of rapists in India.

More locally, so many women made formal sexual harassment complaints against **Bob Filner**, now former mayor of San Diego, that he had to resign, despite trying to wait out the storm.

Los Angeles County Supervisors **Knabe** and **Ridley-Thomas** came out strongly against human trafficking. According to **Steve Lopez**, columnist for the **Los Angeles Times**, sex trafficking is big business in Los Angeles County and hundreds of underage girls are lured or forced into service. Several of the shelters to which we send our comfort scarves provide safe haven for the few of these girls who are lucky enough to escape. The Supervisors feel "this is simply intolerable" and plan to introduce motions calling for "a crackdown on johns, making solicitation of a minor a felony rather than a misdemeanor, raising the fine from \$1,000 to \$10,000, seizing property if necessary to pay the fine, and making the names of the johns public." Hope these measures work, but, as you all know from reading Handmade's Newsletters over the years, violence against women hasn't decreased.

These instances, and the discussions they have caused, increase our awareness of domestic violence and violence against women. Although domestic violence goes on all year, naming one month as **Domestic Violence Awareness Month** makes us think about victims throughout the

world who experience this every day. The **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**, which started in 1981, connects advocates for battered women from all across our country. They have collected data which shows how widespread and damaging domestic violence is for our entire community. I have listed some of their finding below.

- 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 small contribution to try to alleviate the effects of abuse. However, even the 12,000 of them we deliver each year cannot combat these statistics or cure the harm done to the women and children who experience abuse. But comfort scarves are a **START** to overcoming its effects. 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 that we 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 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 just received our first check from **Ralphs**. It was very exciting. All you need 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.

A third way to raise money for Handmade is to ask 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

www.handmadeespecially.org

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.

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