



JANUARY/FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

February 28, 2014

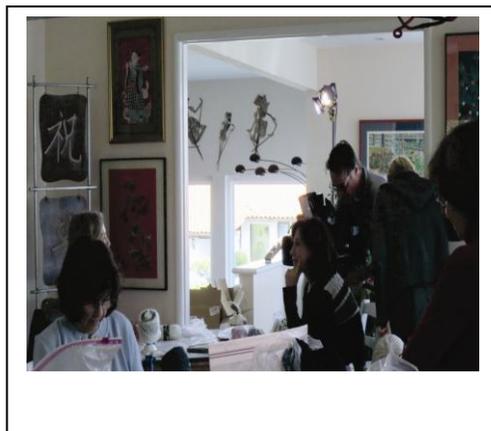
Today's topics:

- **Handmade** wins **KCET/Union Bank's Local Heroes** award
- We're riding on high on our success in 2013
- 2014 started with the delivery of more than **2,000** comfort scarves; 57,000 since Handmade began at the end of 2008
- Vendors at **TNNA LOVE Handmade**
- The TNNA Scrap Scarf
- Shelters are so grateful
- Handmade's fabulous volunteers
- **Handmade** in 2014

And now for the details:

KCET/Union Bank selected Handmade for its Local Heroes Award

This is very exciting. Both Rainbow Services and Richstone Family Center nominated Handmade for this prestigious award. At the end of January, KCET rep Paula Brynen called to notify me about the award and then on February 4 KCET sent a 5 person crew to video Handmade's production. Val Zavala, KCET's Vice President of News and Public Affairs and anchor of So-Cal Connected, handled the interviews.



Nine of Handmade's most dedicated volunteers participated and Rainbow Services sent Maria Hernandez, one of their case managers, to speak for the women who receive our scarves. Maria was eloquent. I think we all had to wipe our eyes while she spoke. KCET selected Handmade as one of two awardees for Women's History Month, starting March 1. You can see the video on KCET's website: http://www.kcet.org/socal/local_heroes/whm/local-hero-leslye-borden.html

The video will also run on KCET during prime time throughout the month of March. It is only a one-minute video, but it means a lot to Handmade. Never before have we had publicity like this. I hope it results in a space for our workshop!



We're riding on high on our success in 2013

With lots of hard work throughout the year, on November 21, 2013, we reached our goal of distributing **12,000 comfort scarves** (total for the year), and 55,000 scarves donated since we began at the end of 2008. What a great achievement! We couldn't have done this without the contributions of every volunteer, every scarfer, every donor, and every yarn company who participated in our project.

2014 starts with the deliveries of more than 2,000 comfort scarves

Because we finished 2013 shipping so early, we had plenty of scarves to deliver in January, when we delivered **1,165 comfort scarves to 46 shelters**. That was our first "quarter" in 2014. In February, we distributed almost **1,000 to 20 shelters**. This was our first "interim" shipping for 2014. March will be another "interim" and April will be another "quarter." April's shipping is especially important because we want to deliver 2,000 scarves for Mother's Day in May.

Positive response to Handmade at TNNA

Thanks to our sponsor, **June Grossberg**, owner of **Concepts in Yarn**, I was able to attend **The National Needle Arts Association** Trade Show at the San Diego Convention Center. There, I took the opportunity to thank the many, many yarn companies who donated to Handmade in 2013, to tell them what we had accomplished, and to request their support for our project in 2014. I gave them our "Handmade Heroes" certificates, which meant a lot to them. They displayed them prominently in their booths. They were very impressed by our achievement in 2013 and our overall distribution of over 55,000 comfort scarves since we started Handmade at the end of 2008. Most pledged support in 2014 and a few even donated on the spot. I returned at the end of show with several big suitcases in the trunk of my car. **Paul Meznarich** of **Plymouth Yarn** filled one suitcase. **Jeff Denecke**, from **Knitting Fever** filled another.

Response to the certificates was wonderful, but even more exciting was their response to our Scrap Scarf, which I am now calling the **TNNA Scarf**. Just by chance I wore my black, red, and white scrap scarf to the show. I explained to everyone that each of the 19 rows was a different yarn and each yarn probably came from a different donor. Wouldn't you know it. The yarn company reps searched my scarf for the yarns their company donated. And they found them. It was lots of fun.



I don't have any photos of me at TNNA, but here I am wearing the **TNNA Scarf**. This photo was taken by KCET photographer **Ed Krieger**. The boxes and bags in the background are filled with scarves ready for February shipping. All in all, TNNA was a heady experience.

TNNA Scrap Scarf

I thought the **TNNA Scarf** was such a good idea that I entered it into the Interweave **Share the Love Knitting Design** contest. I don't know if it won, but it did get over 900 "likes". The photo below shows 4 different versions, based on color. The trick to making an interesting scarf is to mix weights and textures of yarn. Use the heaviest yarn for the cast on and cast off rows. The full pattern is on our website: <http://www.handmadeespecially.org>

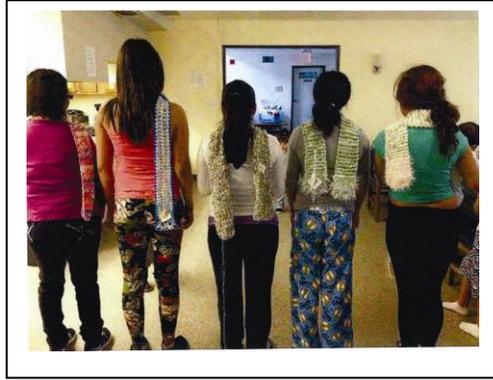


The generosity of yarn companies continues

Yarn companies continue to support our project. We received a huge box (49 pounds!) of yarn from **Susan Druding**, at **Crystal Palace Yarns**. **Jeff Denecke** of **Knitting Fever** sent two huge boxes totaling 64+ pounds of yarn (and this huge amount doesn't include what I picked up at TNNA). **Laura Bryant**, from **Prism Yarns**, donated 7 pounds. So did **Jack Blumenthal** of **Lion Brand**. We so appreciate the generosity of these companies. We couldn't make our comfort scarves without their contributions.

Shelters for abused women LOVE our comfort scarves

The shelters value our comfort scarves. Their words of appreciation are very heartwarming to us. **Jody Winger**, from **YWCA WINGS**, in Covina, says it all: "Thank you. We love the scarves!" And she included the photo below, showing recipients wearing their scarves. We rarely see recipients wearing our scarves so this photo is very special!



News from our affiliated groups

Our affiliated groups have been very busy. Congratulations to all of them for continuing our scarf project.

Amanda Roberts, organizer of **Butterfly K**, our affiliate in England, tells us her group continues to knit scarves for women in “refuge accommodation” and is now branching out to work with children in schools. What a great idea!

Ann Miller reports that the Pueblo CO branch of **Handmade** donated 4 comfort scarves, 2 lapghans for kids, and 3 baby blankets in January. Keep up the good work, Ann!

Barb Kochuba, founder of the Pittsburgh PA branch of **Handmade**, has expanded her group considerably. She has already notified her group of deadlines for no more winter scarves and the need for spring-weight scarves. She donates to 10 shelters in the south-western corner of PA.

Marg Grieve, leader of our affiliate in BC Canada, reports: “It has been absolutely crazy around here. . . . We are still bringing love and warmth to those in need. . . . I am proud to be a part of helping those less fortunate and am sending thanks to you for your encouragement to start up in the first place.”

Renee Hoffman, leader of our Long Beach CA affiliate, delivered 20 scarves to **Interval House** in January and another 20 in February. Renee’s commitment has been outstanding. She works with members of the Slipt Stitchers Knitting Guild of El Segundo to make sure she delivers 20 scarves every month.

Vicki Ringer, organizer of the San Fernando Valley affiliate, donates 20 comfort scarves every month to **Haven Hills** in Canoga Park. She contributes more than scarves; she has encouraged her church to adopt this shelter. Members of her church donate turkeys at Thanksgiving and gift cards at Christmas.

Handmade’s fabulous volunteers

I always emphasize how great **Handmade**’s volunteers are. They work tirelessly to make sure **Handmade** has a comfort scarf to donate to every woman who needs one. Some knit/crochet comfort scarves. Some wind skeins of yarn into balls so others can make kits. Some make kits. Some make scarves and make kits. Some make kits and scarves as well as gift wrap scarves. Some do the shipping. Some keep track of the expenses. Some manage the website. All are dedicated to helping abused women recover from domestic violence. They are a wonderful group of people and I feel lucky to know them and work with them. Most do more than one job so I want to mention them as a group: **Alise Hoy-Prince, Ann Nye, Bea Absher, Chris Fung, Chris Needham, Evelyn Dow, Janet Schoenberg, Judith Solomon, Kathy Allen, Linda Whitson, Lori Jeskey, Nancy English, Nannette Brill, Paula Weiner, and Therese Shafer.**

This month I want to focus on several other Handmade volunteers and what participating in Handmade means to them.

Tara Hale sent a very moving email: “I just want to say thank you for all you do. I was in an abusive relationship for 6 years and I wish I had someone to help me get out sooner. Now I am married to a wonderful man who loves and respects me. It makes me happy that there is a charity out there to help women get out of an abusive relationship.”

Trinh Nguyen, a student at University of Notre Dame, enclosed the following note with a comfort scarf she made: “Months after I first saw the ‘**Help from Home**’ site, I finally finished my first scarf. I hope that the woman who receives this scarf will know that she is an amazing, talented, beautiful woman. She deserves the best, and I hope that she will have many happy and wonderful days in her life.”

Lonna Webster has been a long time participant in Handmade. Recently, she has begun promoting Handmade everywhere she goes. She has organized “**Bonita Friends of Handmade**.” They are not an affiliate, since we send them kits. Affiliates supply their own yarn. Recently, she was knitting a comfort scarf in the San Diego airport and “got many compliments and questions about the scarf. I gave out your information to a woman that was looking for a project . . . hope she contacts you.”

Recently **Joanne Garlick** shipped a box containing 63 comfort scarves to Handmade but it got lost somewhere along the way. Joanne was devastated. So was I. 63 scarves are a lot to lose. UPS wouldn’t accept responsibility for the loss, and of course Joanne hadn’t insured the box. But she took her complaint to Office Depot, who actually received the box for shipping by UPS, explained the value of comfort scarves to abused women, and received a generous settlement, which she divided between buying more yarn for herself and donating directly to Handmade! Joanne says “Comfort scarves are a wonderful way to say we care to those who have had abusive situations. I am glad that I can help. Just wish that there wasn’t domestic violence in order for us to share love.”

Handmade in 2014

Finally, what are **Handmade**’s goals for 2014? Of course, we want to make at least another 12,000 comfort scarves and distribute them to the shelters in Southern CA. To that end, what do we need?

A workshop, where we can receive yarn and scarves, make kits, ship kits and finished scarves

Enough money to pay rent and operating expenses for this workshop

And we’re trying our hardest to achieve this. We have been working **Kristie Allen**, our volunteer grant-writer-in-training, to apply for several grants. The **FedEx Small Business Grant** contest was our first big hope, but it turned out that winning required participating in a popularity contest through Facebook, and many of Handmade’s participants don’t do Facebook. We learned a lot from trying for this grant, and will apply what we learned to future applications. We have sent in proposals to **Union Bank** and **TJMax**, and are still waiting to hear the results. If you have any suggestions, we’d appreciate them.

In addition to a workshop, here’s my wish list. In 2014, I’d like:

More volunteers to make scarves

More volunteers to make kits

More volunteers to wrap scarves

More volunteers to ship scarves

A volunteer coordinator

Where do you fit in? **Handmade** is a very inclusive organization. We make a place for everyone. Tell us what you want to do and we'll fit you in. Welcome aboard!

Encourage your friends to make scarves. Edit your stash and donate what you will never again use for your own projects. If you see a potential workspace, let me know. If you think of way for Handmade to raise money, organize the effort.

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

Handmade Especially for You c/o Leslye Borden

30065 Grandpoint Lane

Rancho Palos Verdes CA 90275

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

Thanks in advance (yes, we will send a formal receipt for your records),

Leslye Borden, Founder

Handmade Especially for You

www.handmadeespecially.org

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