



JANUARY/FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

February 18, 2013

Today's topics:

- We're riding on high on our success in 2012
- 2013 starts with the delivery of **750** comfort scarves
- We received an enthusiastic response from vendors at **TNNA**
- Yarn donors are very generous
- Shelters are so grateful
- News about **Handmade's** fabulous volunteers
- Press coverage of **Handmade**
- Domestic violence in the news / support the Violence Against Women bill currently under discussion in the US House of Representatives
- **Handmade** in 2013

And now for the details:

With lots of hard work throughout the year and intense end-of-the-year scarfing, we reached our goal of distributing **12,000 comfort scarves** (total for the year) on December 6, 2012. This was a great achievement. We couldn't have reached it without the contributions of every volunteer, every scarfer, every donor, and every yarn company who participated in our project.

Schedule changes in our shipping to shelters

Building on the successes of 2012, we started 2013 many new ideas for improving our procedures. To save shipping dollars, we're going to try to send scarves to shelters on a quarterly, rather than a monthly, schedule. So, in January, **we delivered 750 comfort scarves to 17 shelters**. Because these 17 shelters request so many scarves, they will continue to receive them on a monthly basis. We will deliver to the rest of the shelters on a staggered quarterly basis; some will receive scarves February, May, September, and November. The rest will receive them March, June, September, and November. We hope this will work for the shelters and for Handmade.

Also as a money saving measure, we are trying to personally deliver, rather than ship by USPS or FedEx, scarves to local shelters, such as Rainbow Services, 1736 Family Crisis Center, Richstone Family Center, Casa Youth Shelter, Su Casa, Long Beach Rescue Mission, Lydia House, and WomenShelter Long Beach. Thanks to **Ann Nye, Doug Prince and Phil Borden** for driving our comfort scarves to these shelters.

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 Long Beach Convention Center. There, I took the opportunity to thank the many, many yarn companies who donated to Handmade in 2012, tell them what we had accomplished, and request support for our project in 2013. Most of the companies were well aware of Handmade and were very impressed by our achievement in 2012. Most promised support in 2013 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. I walked it back to the car and went back with another empty suitcase. **Jeff Denecke**, at **Knitting Fever** filled that one. **Laura Bryant** of **Prism Yarns** donated a small bag of yarns she uses in her classes. All in all, **TNNA** was a heady experience.

The generosity of yarn companies continues

Yarn companies continue to support our project. We received a huge box of yarn from **Susan Druding**, at **Crystal Palace Yarns**, our most constant donor. **Tymon Warda** of **Knitting Fever** sent two huge boxes totally 70+ pounds of yarn. 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 really appreciate our comfort scarves. Here are a few examples of the heartwarming words of appreciation from the several of them:

Tatiana Sere, **WomenShelter of Long Beach**, sent a hand-written note that included the following: "Last week one of our clients came in with her children. . . She was crying. The holidays are not easy. While she spoke with her counselor, I sat with her children and let them choose a scarf each. They were so excited. I wish you could have seen their faces! Beaming with joy and happiness. . . .The idea that someone hand made the scarves for them was unbelievable. I also gave their mother a scarf. . . she loved it! Thank you again for everything. You and your group are amazing, generous, and kind. We all cherish you!"

Caroline Reyna, Program Manager at **Family Assistance Program** in Victorville, sent an email: "Thank you from the bottom of my heart. The scarves that you and ladies make are so beautiful. You. . . amaze us with every new box. . . .We now have opened a runaway youth shelter . . . and have given some of the young girls the scarves. They fell in love with them and were very appreciative. We also gave some to ladies who were survivors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The ladies (who receive the scarves) cherish the comfort scarves because the scarf belongs to them."

Kathleen Harper, CEO of **DOVES** in Big Bear, wrote: "Thank you so much for your generous donation of ten beautifully made comfort scarves made especially for our shelter clients. Your thoughtfulness and kindness go a long way to brighten the lives of our clients. . . Your generosity . . . helps us eliminate family violence and sexual assault."

Debra Suh, Executive Director of **Center for the Pacific Asian Family**, hand wrote the following on the formal thank you letter she sent: Thank you for all the love and care you put into these comfort scarves for our survivors. We are so grateful to have your kind and generous support!"

Angelina Coe, Executive Director of **Shelter from the Storm** in Palm Desert, wrote: “I wanted to personally take this time to say Thank You and express my deepest and sincerest appreciation. . . So glad to receive the beautiful comfort scarves.”

Robin Sinclair, Executive Director of **Casa Youth Shelter** in Los Alamitos, wrote: “We send our most sincere gratitude for your charitable donation of 13 blankets, 25 scarves and 10 hats. Thank you may seem to be just two small words but they are sent to you with deep appreciation. . . Your kindness is making a very real difference in the lives of Casa’s kids.”

Carol Adelfoff, CEO and ED of **1736 Family Crisis Center**, sent us a formal note thanking us for providing them with 200 comfort scarves, a baby blanket, 5 hats, 3 pairs of slippers and 2 blankets which they used in their **Free Holiday Store** where their clients come to select gifts to give during the holidays. **Shelly Ross**, manager of the Free Holiday Store, sent the following email, while the women and children were “shopping”: **We are totally out of scarves** with one day to go yet with our Holiday Store. They were all a huge success!! Thank you so much!”

Reading comments such as these reaffirms my commitment to **Handmade**’s mission. I never imagined that a comfort scarf would be so powerful in helping women overcome the negative effects of domestic violence, but as we see from what the directors tell us, our comfort scarves do just that. We have to keep on making the many, many comfort scarves we will need in 2013.

News from our affiliated groups

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

Ann Miller reports that the Pueblo CO branch of **Handmade** donated 107 comfort scarves in 2012. 43 went to the local YWCA and 64 went to Fremont Crisis Services in Canyon City, CO. In January, Ann gave 8 scarves to the YWCA. Lynn Vars, a volunteer from Green River WY recently joined Ann’s group so donations in CO are sure to increase. Keep us posted, Ann!

Renee Hoffman, leader of our Long Beach CA affiliate, delivered 20 scarves to **Interval House** in January. 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. Renee just lost her mom (who was in her 90s). Hugs to Renee from all of us.

Barb Kochuba, founder of the Pittsburgh PA branch of **Handmade**, has expanded her group considerably. She started donating 350 scarves to 2 shelters in 2010; in 2012 she provided 10 shelters in 8 PA counties with more than 3,700 comfort scarves and other handmade items. Congratulations, Barb.

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.

News about 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 make spreadsheets with 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.

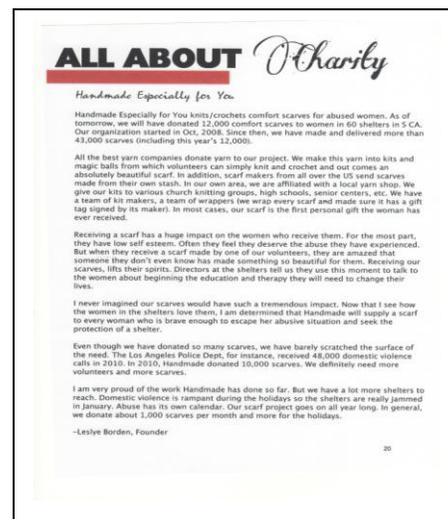
I'm sad to report that **Wendy Baumring**, one of our volunteers almost since **Handmade's** beginning, died suddenly in December. She lived alone. Apparently no one found her for several days. Wendy was a great crocheter. She developed several patterns for Handmade, some of which you can see on our website. We will miss her.

Several of our great volunteers have breast cancer. **Bea Abshear**, who adds fringe to those scarves that need decoration, had surgery and radiation and seems to be totally recovered. We hope we will be able to say the same for **Barbara Stach**, who just had surgery and soon will see her oncologist to find out about additional treatment. **Karen Ing** has had surgery and is going through intensive treatment. We send her our good wishes for a speedy and full recovery.

Ellenore McCampbell, one of our two 95 + year old participants underwent dental surgery just after Thanksgiving. She has just come back to our Wednesday evening knitting sessions at **Concepts in Yarn** so she's on the road to recovery.

Articles about Handmade

Handmade has appeared in the press on two occasions. **Creative Knitting Magazine** (print version) Spring 2013 issue featured **Handmade** in its Charity Spotlight section. **Crochet Savvy** (online version) December 2012 issue gave **Handmade** a double page spread (one page below).



Domestic Violence in the News

Even though **Handmade** has donated over 44,000 comfort scarves since its inception in October, 2008, domestic violence has not lessened. But it is an issue that is receiving more positive press

than it used to. For instance, a report published in the Annals of Internal Medicine recommended that women of childbearing age should undergo screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) during regular medical exams. The Center for Disease Control estimates that 31% of women experience IPV in their lives. Immediate health consequences include injury, death, STDs, unintended pregnancy, psychological distress, and premature birth so such screening is very important.

Support the Violence Against Women Act

We all hope Congress will renew and expand the Violence Against Women Act, first passed in 1994. Since then, it has been reauthorized twice. Last year, the reauthorization failed when Republican members of Congress refused to agree to cover immigrant and lesbian women. Due to the strength of women's votes in the 2012 presidential election, the bill has another chance for passage. The US Senate just passed (78-22) a new version of the reauthorization and has sent its bill to the House where most Democrats and some Republican members have said they would vote for it. Here's hoping.

Some members of **Handmade** have advised me that **Handmade** should not be "political." I feel we have to support the renewal of the Violence Against Women Act because not passing it could mean the increase of domestic violence. Our organization works to help women who have been abused. We do not want to see more domestic violence. Write to your Congressperson to tell him/her that you want this bill to be renewed.

Handmade in 2013

Finally, **Handmade's** goals for 2013. Of course, we want to make at least another 12,000 comfort scarves and distribute them to the 60 shelters in CA who have already received our scarves. To that end, what do we need?

- More volunteers to make scarves

- More volunteers to make kits

- More volunteers to wrap scarves

- More volunteers to ship scarves

- A volunteer coordinator

- A grant writer

- More \$\$\$\$ to cover the costs of shipping kits to volunteers and finished scarves to shelters

- A workshop and enough money to pay its rent and operating expenses

Where do you fit in? **Handmade** is a very inclusive organization. We make a place for everyone. 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 send a check, please send it 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

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www.handmadeespecially.org

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