



SPRING NEWSLETTER

2016

February 25, 2016

Today's topics:

- So far in 2016 we delivered **2,350** comfort scarves for abused women and **240** hats for their kids
- Handmade's dedicated volunteers are the greatest
- Generous contributions from yarn companies and individual donors make comfort scarves possible
- A domestic violence abuse survivor spoke to us about what our comfort scarf meant to her
- We built a yarn storage building
- **UPS** awarded Handmade a generous shipping grant
- **The Good Shepherd Shelter** hosted a Summit on DV: Practice and Safety in the Age of Technology

And now for the details:

We have been busy making kits, knitting and crocheting scarves, and wrapping scarves. I am very proud of all the work we have done and continue to do. In January and February, we shipped **2,350** comfort scarves for abused women and **240** hats for their children to **56 shelters throughout CA**. The two boxes of wrapped scarves below show how beautiful and colorful our shipments are.



The need for scarves has increased. Our kit makers, knitters, crocheters, wrappers, and all our other volunteers are really busy all the time. Our dedicated volunteers keep our project running smoothly! I want to thank them all.

We make a lot of Magic Balls (our kits). We provide at least 80 each week to **Concepts in Yarn**, 50 per month to the **Culver City Senior Center Knitters**, 25 per month to **Sister Mary**

at the **Presentation Learning Center**, and we send them to scarfers all over CA and throughout the US. Members of our excellent kit making team are: **Ann Nye, Evelyn Dow, Karen Holz, Linda Whitson, Nancy Christianson, Paula Weiner, Shumi Ryu** and **Therese Shaffer**. We make kits every Tuesday. Not everyone comes to every session, so we always need more kit makers. We'd love to have you join us if you're available.

Our dedicated wrapping team checks each scarf, makes sure it has a signed gift tag, and wraps it with a colorful curling ribbon. Attention to these details emphasizes to each recipient that we have given a scarf to her personally. Members of our wrapping team include: **Ann Nye, Betty Rodman, Carlyn Gore, Chris Fung, Chris Needham, Kathy Allen, Monica Van De Wouw, Sharon Long, Susan McLeod, Van Lam, and Shumi Ryu**. Thrilled by the huge piles of scarves, they keep wrapping and wrapping. They get the job done!

We have "wrapping parties" twice a month on Thursdays. Again, not every volunteer mentioned above attends every wrapping party. We always need more wrappers. We'd love to have you join the team.

We reward our hard work with lunch after most of the wrapping parties. We recently had a really great lunch and fun time at a Chinese New Year's themed lunch.



Other volunteers do a variety of important jobs. **Ann Nye** keeps our books and updates our website. **Karen Whitehead** posts on Facebook, to keep Handmade in front of the public. **Bea Abshear** adds fringe to scarves that arrive too short or too plain. Bea enhances scarves that arrive too short or without Fun Fur. We need every scarf! **Paula Weiner** cuts Fun Fur and other novelty yarn, which we put at the beginning and end of each Magic Ball. **Karen Holz** comes on Monday's to measure yarn that we will use to make Magic Balls. The list of Handmade's really great volunteers is a long one. If I omitted you or failed to mention the important job you do, please understand it wasn't intentional. Your contribution is important to our scarf and hat project. Let me know and I will make sure to include you in the next Newsletter.

We all recognize that we couldn't make kits or knit scarves without the generous support of yarn companies and generous individual donors who provide the yarn we use to make Magic Balls. In particular, I want to mention: **Berroco, Brown Sheep, Crystal Palace, Lion Brand, and Plymouth Yarns**. In addition, individual donors such as **Antoinette Fournier, Felecia McClendon, and Karen Ing**, keep the yarn flowing so kit making continues in an uninterrupted manner. Handmade is so lucky to have such great support for our scarf and hat projects.

Shannon Minor, a domestic violence survivor, spoke to our group at **Concepts in Yarn** on February 17. Her comments were moving and inspirational and reminded us why we make comfort scarves. She described her journey from her abusive relationship to her current abuse-

free life. She graduated from **Rainbow Services** 3 ½ years ago. She told us how she could talk there “about things she was too scared to talk about anywhere else.” Attending support groups, she wondered “if anyone outside of Rainbow knew what we were going through and if anyone cared.” “Then,” she said, “one day they brought in the scarves” that we had made and donated to Rainbow. “The scarves were beautiful . . . we appreciated this gift because it was beautiful and it was soft and it was comforting to hold. . . . Beyond that, the scarves were special to us because . . . someone had taken the time to create this gift with their hands. This gesture showed us that there were people outside . . . that knew about what we were going through and cared. . . . It was validating and reassuring to hold the scarf and see the little card attached, telling us that we mattered. . . . The scarves represented new things coming into our lives. . . . It was nice to receive something of meaning, especially after losing so much.” Wow. There wasn’t a dry eye in the room when Shannon was speaking to us.



For a long time, we have been discussing renting a space for a workshop and storage facility for Handmade. Before the end of last year, at one of our great lunches, we reviewed the pros and cons of having a workshop and made the decision that a separate work space was not really for Handmade. Yes, we need the space to store yarn and finished scarves, but No, we don’t want to keep to a work schedule, regular business hours, or the pressure of coming up with the rent check every month. Instead, Handmade’s volunteers suggested we build a shed (at Handmade’s expense) and store yarn and finished scarves in it. Happily, the shed is complete and almost full. My husband can park his car in our garage without having to avoid Handmade’s boxes. He even has space to work on his own projects. Thanks everyone at Handmade who proposed, voted for and supported this suggestion. It has made a big difference at our house.



Last year, **UPS** selected Handmade as one the charities it featured in its “**Wishes Delivered**” campaign. **T-3**, an Austin TX ad agency, interviewed Handmade and recommended us to **UPS**. Once **UPS** approved us, they made a video to show how Handmade delivers wishes. **UPS** donated **\$10,000** worth of shipping to Handmade (which we didn’t know until a **UPS** man

delivered the notice to us during the filming). **Dokument Films**, a Santa Monica production company, did the actual filming. Their 15 person team came to my house and filmed us at work—making kits, wrapping scarves, packing boxes. Ultimately, the video was on Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, and Linked In. If you haven't seen it already, you can still see it on You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2ott_FlsFY. We had great fun at the filming of the video. The photos below show the sound crew at work (they turned my garage into sound central) and the filming of the announcement of the grant. Many thanks to **Brian Pember** at **UPS**; Allyson Mays, Aaron Cacali, and Jill Runyon at **T-3**; and David Serota and Maren Domzalski at **Dokument Films**.



Handmade received a lot of publicity after the airing of the video. **PV Peninsula News** (Dec. 31, 2015) and **The Daily Breeze** (Jan. 4, 2016) ran articles about our work and UPS's donation. These led to more donations. It was a great start of the year for Handmade. My head is still spinning. It was all so very exciting.



UPS's shipping grant to Handmade also had a positive impact on the community. It allowed us to send our scarves to shelters in Northern California. We added 5 new shelters in our gigantic holiday shipping. And, in January, we read in the LA Times about **Door of Hope**, a transitional apartment complex for women and children who are homeless as a result of domestic violence, called them to find out their needs, and then shipped 200 scarves and 200 hats. **UPS** paid that shipping too.

Last October, the **Good Shepherd Shelter** hosted the second **Summit on Domestic Violence , Safety in the Age of Technology**. The event was interesting and gave us a lot to think about afterwards. One of the speakers argued that every woman should carry a cell phone so she can call 911 in the case of domestic violence; another speaker told how her company was developing an app so cell phone users could actually dial 911, but the app wasn't available at the time of the conference. A third speaker warned of the use of cell phones by women in shelters because their abusers could locate them through the GPS systems embedded in the phones. It certainly made me want to turn off the GPS on my phone! You can see the entire conference by going to the **Good Shepherd Shelter's** website. Here's the link to the conference: <http://www.goodshepherdshelter.org/dv-summit/>

Shannon's talk made us think about the many victims who experience abuse on a daily basis, those who seek the protection of a shelter, and those who don't. We heard how important receiving a comfort scarf was to her and other women in her support groups, and we were very impressed that she still has her scarf, 4 years after she received it. We understand that receiving a comfort scarf is an important **START** to overcoming the negative effects of abuse. 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."

So here's the pitch. We need **YOU**. We need you to make scarves, enough scarves so we can supply all the shelters in CA with the comfort scarves they have requested. We supply 56 shelters, but there are still many shelters who receive nothing from us. We have the yarn, we can pay for the shipping, we just need volunteers like **YOU** to make the scarves.

If you want to donate scarves, yarn or \$\$\$, please mail them 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 Borden, Founder

Handmade Especially for You

501(c)3 EIN: 26-3529292

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 go toward helping abused women, paying for shipping scarves to shelters, etc.