

# From the Heart

## *What we do and why we do it*

### **A bit about us:**

*From the Heart* is a community-based volunteer organization that shares hope, joy and comfort by creating and distributing hand-stitched items that improve the physical and emotional well-being of individuals who are sick or in need. Our organization was conceived in the Spring of 2001 when a small group of women began meeting on a regular basis at Starbucks Coffee Shop to knit together, share patterns and then donate their hand-stitched items to the community. As a result of the positive response from our volunteers and the continued need in our community, *From the Heart* was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in July of 2005.

We currently have more than 1,000 members, primarily from the State of Virginia with a smaller number from surrounding states. In addition to helping the sick, our volunteers – who are often elderly and alone themselves – gain a tremendous amount of satisfaction from this creative work.

Our dedicated volunteers contribute their time, hearts and skills by knitting, crocheting and sewing blankets, hats, scarves, socks, mittens and quilts. Their efforts provide warm and gentle head coverings for cancer patients who have lost their hair; blankets to warm chemotherapy patients during their chilling treatments; hand-made outfits for premature babies in neonatal and intensive care units; burial outfits to ease the pain of parents whose baby never came home with their families; and sleeping bags, mittens and hats for the homeless to provide warmth on cold nights.

Since our groups humble beginning in 2001, we have contributed over 250,000 hand-made items to organizations including, but not limited to;

Chemo hats, blankets, underarm pillows, shawls, and drain-tube bags to 3 locations of VCU/MCV's Massey Cancer center, Virginia Cancer Center, St Francis Hospital, Johnston Willis' Hawthorne House, Lynchburg Hematology and Oncology, Chippenham Hospital, McGuire's Veteran Center, Mary Washington Regional Cancer Center, Mary Washington Hospice, Southside Regional Cancer Treatment Center, John Randolph Hospital (Hopewell), Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, The Chemo/Hepa Clinic in Fredericksburg and The Kidney Foundation

Twin size blankets to VCU/MCV Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, blankets, hats and bears with hand-stitched outfits to VCU/MCV's Burn Unit children, as well as to A.S.K, for whom we also make Christmas stockings

Baby blankets, hats, sweaters and booties to NICU and regular newborn nurseries at VCU/MCV, Johnston Willis, St Francis hospitals, to The Pregnancy Resource Center, Tri-City Crisis Pregnancy Center, Birthright, Public Health Departments of King George and Caroline Counties as well as Henrico Doctors Hospital through the March of Dimes. We supply burial gowns and pouches for some of these locations as well

We stitch comfort breathing blankets for the critically ill at VCU/MCV and Mary Washington Hospice and Home Health

Wheel chair blankets, shawls, lap robes, hats, socks, slippers, catheter bag covers, wheelchair/walker totes, bibs and even teddy bears to Hospice and Palliative Care for Bon Secours, Hospice of Virginia (in-home and hospital programs), Hospice at VCU/MCV, Compassionate Care Hospice in Chesapeake, Lucy Corr Health Care Center, McGuire Veteran's Home, and AARP in Petersburg

Teddy bears wearing hand-stitched outfits and soft hand-created toys go to pediatric emergency rooms, children's clinics and oncology areas at VCU/MCV, to police, rescue and drug enforcement units, Child Savers, and the Mary Washington Sleep and Wake Disorder Center

Warm hats, blankets, scarves, mittens and sleeping bags are sent to Friends of the Homeless, Mercy House (abused and 're-uniting' women), YWCA Women and Children's Shelter, our local public school systems (Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, Cumberland, Powhatan, King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Caroline and Richmond City and Fredericksburg City Public School systems)

Warm woolen hats, sweaters, socks, toys and blankets are sent to the Christmas Mothers in most of the surrounding counties (including Chesterfield, Cumberland, Caroline, Sussex, and Richmond City) and distributed through Meals on Wheel, the Hopewell Food Pantry, Sussex County Social Services, homeless shelters in Richmond and Fredericksburg, the Rappahannock Area Aging on Aging, and the Dinwiddie Christmas Store

The needs of our animal friends are provided for through the Richmond Animal Care and Control and St. Francis Animal Hospital

We also make and distribute items as we are called upon for any need or emergency wherein our talents can be of comfort (for example following national tragedies, earthquakes, etc.)

#### **How you can help:**

Volunteer and become a member! There are no membership requirements other than a caring heart! For information on meeting dates and locations visit our website at <http://www.fromtheheartstitchers.org>

Donate materials! Since *From the Heart* is strictly non-profit, we have no income to buy materials and must rely on the generosity of others for yarn, crochet hooks and knitting needles.

Come to our location at 1114 Westbriar Drive, Richmond, VA 23238. Spend a couple of hours helping prepare finished items for delivery and pick up supplies for your next project. We are open from 10am until 2pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Please note that From the Heart does not sell either yarn or finished items. We meet at this location to knit, crochet, prepare our items for delivery, etc. We would love for you to come and take a tour of our facility.

Monetary donations: As we do often get asked, monetary donations are accepted to help off-set our operating expenses and yarn purchases. Since we are a 501©3 organization under the Internal Revenue Service, your donations are tax deductible.

Thanks to those of you who already support *From the Heart* whether it's by volunteering or donating materials. If you'd like to get involved or learn more about *From the Heart*, please contact Lois Moore at 804-305-4971 or [loisfth@me.com](mailto:loisfth@me.com) or visit our website at <http://www.fromtheheartstitchers.org>



***Other organizations supply blankets and hats.***

***From the Heart also provides happiness and a sense of purpose to the fiber artists who knit and stitch!***