

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 and crochet together, share patterns and then donate their hand-crafted 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©3 non-profit organization in July of 2005. We currently have more than 1,700 members, primarily from the Commonwealth of Virginia with a smaller number from surrounding states. In addition to helping the those in need, our volunteers 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; a variety of items including blankets to warm chemotherapy and dialysis 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 group's humble beginning in 2001, as of late 2020, we have contributed over 425,000 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, Chippenham Hospital, McGuire's Veterans Center, Southside Regional Cancer Treatment Center, Regional Memorial (Mechanicsville), John Randolph Hospital (Hopewell), Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, Hematology-Oncology Associates of Fredericksburg, Surgical Associates of Fredericksburg, Fresenius Kidney Care in Fredericksburg, King George, Stafford & Spotsylvania, the Kidney Foundation, Children's Hospital of Richmond, Henrico Doctors' Hospital, Riverside Doctors' Hospital, and Crossover Ministries.
- ✚ Twin size blankets to VCU/MCV Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, blankets, hats, and bears with hand-stitched outfits to VCU/MCV's Burn Unit for children.
- ✚ Baby blankets, hats, sweaters and booties to NICU and regular newborn nurseries at VCU/MCV, Johnston Willis, St Francis Hospitals, The Pregnancy Resource Center, Tri-City Crisis Pregnancy Center, Henrico Doctors' Hospital, Southside Central Hospital,—St. Matthews (Fredericksburg), Southside Regional Medical Center (Petersburg), Pregnancy Crisis Center in Farmville, Birthright of Fredericksburg, Public Health Departments of Chesterfield, Spotsylvania, King George and Caroline Counties, and the City of Fredericksburg, Hope House of Fredericksburg, Rappahannock Area Community Services Board, Healthy Families Rappahannock Area, Urban Baby Beginnings (Richmond), RVA Light, Capital Area Health Network (CAHN – Richmond), Welborne Food Pantry, and Health Brigade Free Clinic. We also supply burial gowns and pouches, in addition to burial cradles, for still-born babies, at some of these locations.
- ✚ We stitch comfort breathing blankets for the critically ill at VCU/MCV. We supply small flannel hearts and crocheted octopuses for use in comforting infants at the NICU in MCV in Richmond, St. Francis Hospital in Midlothian, Southside Regional in Petersburg, Mary Washington Hospital at Fredericksburg, and Regional Memorial Hospitals in Mechanicsville.
- ✚ Teddy bears wearing hand-made 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, James City County Police Department, Avalon Women and Children's Shelter, Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania County Child Protective Services, Spotsylvania County Social Services Dept., and Mary Washington Hospital Ambulatory Center.
- ✚ Wheelchair blankets, shawls, lap robes, hats, socks, slippers, catheter bag covers, wheelchair/walker totes, bibs, and teddy bears to Ascend Hospice in Richmond, Hospice and Palliative Care for Bon Secours, Hospice of Virginia (in-home and hospital programs), Hospice at VCU/MCV, Compassionate Care Hospice in Chesapeake, McGuire Veteran's Hospital, and AARP in Petersburg, Patriots Colony Convalescence Center and Springhouse in Williamsburg, Heritage Hall Rehab Center, Capital Caring of Richmond, and Woodland Retirement Center.
- ✚ Warm hats, blankets, scarves, mittens and sleeping bags are sent to The Hopewell Warming Shelter, Friends of the Homeless, Mercy House (abused and 're-uniting' women), YWCA Women and Children's Shelter, and CARES, (Crisis Assistance Response Emergency Shelter) in Petersburg, Hope House of Fredericksburg and Commonwealth EMS.

- ✚ Hats, scarves, toys, blankets, are sent to our local public-school systems (Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, Cumberland, Powhatan, King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Caroline and Richmond City, Prince Edward School System, and Fredericksburg City Public School systems), The Giving Tree at James Monroe High School – Fredericksburg, Interfaith Community Council – School Dressing Days and Sussex Social Services, Fredericksburg Veterans Community Based Outpatient Clinic, and Williamsburg-James City County Head Start.
- ✚ 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, Dinwiddie, and also Richmond City and Farmville) and distributed through Operation Christmas Child, Meals on Wheels, Communities in Schools, Vessels of Mercy, RVA Light, the Hopewell Food Pantry, Sussex County Social Services, homeless shelters in Richmond and Fredericksburg, the Rappahannock Area Agency on Aging, SERVE (Stafford Emergency Relief Through Volunteer Efforts), SECA – Spotsylvania Emergency Concern Association, Birthright of Fredericksburg, Public Health Departments of Chesterfield, Spotsylvania, King George and Caroline Counties and the City of Fredericksburg Rappahannock Area Community Services Board, Healthy Families Rappahannock Area, the Dinwiddie Christmas Store, Charles City Public Schools, Corinth Baptist Church, New Kent, Ellie's Hats, and Nichols Baptist Church, which shares items with the homeless.
- ✚ The needs of our animal friends are met by providing warm cozies for their crates through Richmond Animal Care and Control, Prevent a Litter, Richmond, the Fredericksburg SPCA, and Smitty's Cat Rescue Shelter in Chester.
- ✚ Lap blankets, shawls, book totes, dignity bibs, walker/wheelchair totes, twiddle muffs/mats/ cuffs, fiddle aprons/mats/squares, and other soothing items to The Magnolias, Assisted Living in Chesterfield, Falls Run Nursing and Rehabilitation, Fredericksburg Health & Rehab: Nursing Home, Fredericksburg Health & Rehab: Assisted Living, Capital Caring of Fredericksburg, Poet's Walk, Paramount Senior Living, Hughes Home, The Culpepper, Dogwood Village, Greenfield Senior Living of Spotsylvania, Commonwealth Senior Living, The Village at Gordon House, Louisa Rehabilitation Center, English Meadows of Louisa, Spring Arbor Assisted Living, Cardinal Village, HeartField's in Fredericksburg, and Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU – Children's Therapy Center: Fredericksburg. Many of these items are also given to Capital Caring (Richmond) which, in turn, passes them along to Memory Care Facilities in the Richmond area.
- ✚ 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, COVID-19 pandemic, etc.). We work in concert with various groups (including Remote Area Medical) to provide needed items in the Appalachian region.

How you can help:

- ✚ Volunteer and become a member! There are no membership requirements or fees, other than a caring heart!
- ✚ 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. 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(c)(3) organization under the Internal Revenue Service, all donations are tax deductible. None of our members take a salary and our administrative costs are minimal. We are listed as a member on Smile.amazon.com as "From the Heart, Midlothian, VA".
- ✚ 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 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.

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. Visit From the Heart on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FromtheHeartStitchers>, or at our website at <http://www.fromtheheartstitchers.org>, where you will also find information on our meeting dates and locations.

Other organizations supply blankets and hats.

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

