



Grateful Thread – January 2025

<https://www.facebook.com/FromtheHeartStitchers>
<https://fromtheheartstitchers.org>

Dear From the Heart Members,

As I step into the role of President of this incredible organization, From the Heart, I am filled with gratitude and excitement. It is truly an honor to serve alongside such a talented and compassionate community of individuals dedicated to crafting warmth, comfort, and love for those in need.

First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your incredible contributions. Your beautifully crafted handmade items—whether cozy hats, blankets, scarves, or comforting quilts—are so much more than donations. They are true expressions of care and kindness, bringing warmth and joy to countless lives. As we approach an extraordinary milestone of 600,000 donated items since our journey began in 2001, I am deeply moved by your dedication. Your creativity and commitment inspire me daily, and I am truly amazed by what we accomplish together.



I also want to take a moment to extend my deepest gratitude to our outgoing President, **Kulla Ficare**. Her steadfast dedication, thoughtful leadership, and tireless efforts are greatly appreciated.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the opportunities that lie before us. Together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference, exploring new projects and partnerships while nurturing the camaraderie that makes our group so special. I welcome your ideas, feedback, and enthusiasm as we embark on this journey together.

Thank you for your creativity, generosity, and unwavering support. I look forward to collaborating with all of you as we continue to advance our mission of giving back, one stitch at a time.

Wishing you and yours all the best in 2025! — **Dorothy Bernstein**



THE 20TH ANNUAL FROM the HEART RETREAT SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2025

At [The Place in Innsbrook](#)

Registration will begin in June.

We are also looking for additional vendors for the 2025 retreat.

If you know of a vendor, please email the information to

fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com.

Be sure to include the vendor's name and contact information. Thank you!



Another Beautiful Quilt for The Pink Chair Project RVA

Joan M. (left) and **Michelle P.** (right) are members of the **WE Quilt** group. They meet monthly in the West End and several members are also FtH members. This talented group has contributed many quilts, pillowcases, small pillows, hearts, totes and fidget items to us. This particular quilt was donated especially for [The Pink Chair Project RVA](#). Thank you, ladies!

Special Visitors to the Richmond Workshop

One week before Christmas, Santa sent his helpers to check on our FtH volunteers and members. Our understanding is that the findings revealed that we have all been very busy this past year which is very good. **WHEW!** Our thanks to everyone for all of their lovely projects, yarn, fabric, fiber fill, toys as well as financial donations in 2024. And a special thanks to **Marilyn C-H** for always lifting our spirits with her surprise treats.



Yip Yips for Service Members!



São B. crafted three charming Yip Yips and delivered them to the USO to bring joy to service members traveling home for the holidays.

If you make and deliver items on behalf of From the Heart, please be sure the items have a FtH tag, and please email fthdistributionteam@gmail.com letting our distribution team know so your kind contribution can be counted with our donation numbers.

Inspiring the Next Generation of Volunteers!

During a recent visit to the workshop, one of our dedicated elves brought along her 12-year-old granddaughter, **Grace**. Grace was captivated by the many items on display, particularly the fidget toys and knitted blankets. Inspired, she went home that very day and began sewing. Since her visit just a few weeks ago, Grace has created several fidget toys and even a knitted baby blanket. She's also enlisting her younger sisters to help find small items for the fidget pillows. It's truly heartwarming to witness the mission of From the Heart being carried forward by such young and enthusiastic hands!



Crafting Kindness: Youth Group Brings Creativity and Joy to *From the Heart*



On December 7th, **Zoe G.** and several members of her youth group members from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints joined us at From the Heart to volunteer. They eagerly offered their help with anything we needed—vacuuming, sorting, and more.



However, we had a better idea, knowing that vacuuming might not be the most enjoyable task. Instead, we introduced the group to the art of crafting bunnies from knitted squares. The girls had a wonderful time making and personalizing their bunnies, turning their visit into a fun and creative experience. At the end of the day, they generously donated their adorable creations!

Soap Sacks and Toiletry Items Always Needed

From the Heart continues to collect cotton soap sacks (4" x 6") that will be added to hygiene bags and distributed to the local unsheltered population in Central Virginia. Patterns to loom, crochet or knit can be found [here](#).

Also, FtH collects full *size or sample size (shampoo, conditioner and deodorant for men and women)* for the “unsheltered” in Chesterfield County. These items, along with other donations being provided by other services, will be used to make “Blessing Bags” (hygiene kits) for those in need.

Pop Tops for Ronald McDonald House

HOW IT ALL ADDS UP

10 lbs	1 Meal for Family
27 lbs	1 Night Stay for Family
55 lbs	1 Weekend Stay for Family
190 lbs	1 Week Stay for Family

We are getting a lot of pop tops.... but it takes a huge quantity per pound. [Ronald McDonald House](#) receives 0.50¢ per pound. Please keep collecting and be sure to drop off yours when you visit the Richmond workshop.



Skylar's Love Mission

Needs Baby Blankets

21" x 21" to 25" x 25"

all in pastels of blue, pink, lavender, mint;
not white, off white or yellow.

Skylar's Love Mission is a charity located in Wilsons, VA, and founded by Shannon Armes to honor her daughter Skylar. Inspired by faith, hope, and love, the organization provides compassionate support to families facing pregnancy or infant loss.

To learn more about Skylar's Love Mission, click [here](#). For baby blanket specifications, please click [here](#).



Needed - Baby Valentine Red Hats with White Hearts Deadline is February 1, 2025



These full-term baby hats can be knit or crochet, any stitch or pattern (but no straps), any weight yarn except chunky/bulky. They need to be red and include



a white heart somewhere, if possible, although red hats with heart shapes clearly visible in the pattern are also OK. If necessary, a white heart securely fastened to a red hat is also fine. To crochet a heart to attach to your red hat, click [here](#). The red and white hat pictured to the right is a free pattern on Ravelry called "Milda," and the pattern is available [here](#). For a crochet hat pattern (photo left), click [here](#).

Help Us Stock the Shelves with Skeins of Yarn



With the cold weather here, many of us will be spending more time cozied up indoors, knitting and crocheting to our hearts' content. And if you're like most yarn enthusiasts, that likely means a little extra yarn shopping—because somehow, there's always a color or two missing from your stash, right? Next time you're out selecting those perfect hues, why not pick up an extra skein or two of acrylic yarn to donate to FtH? Your thoughtful contributions help keep our shelves stocked for the wonderful FtH projects that bring warmth, comfort, and joy to those in need.

Quilting and Sewing Assistance What Would YOU Like to See Offered?

Sheddy R. and several of our quilting and sewing experts have been diligently brainstorming innovative ideas and projects to share with you in 2025. However, before moving forward, we'd love to hear from you! Are there any specific sewing or quilting projects you'd like to see featured or receive assistance with? Let us know by emailing fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com.

Happy New Year from the Material Girls



Now that the "hustle and bustle" of the holidays are behind us, it is time to begin to think about projects that we have been putting off. As we slow down for a long wintery nap, there are bibs, walker totes, seat belt protectors, pillowcases, flannel and chemo hats to make - just to name a few. We have a new pattern for a neck pillow and a mastectomy pillow that resembles a heart. We have plenty of fabric for that quilt you have been wanting to make.

Don't panic! It can be a lap quilt.

Did you say recycling? If you are cleaning out your closet, make sure your fabric and yarn wind up at From the Heart instead of the land fill. Making shopping bags for our clients to use instead of plastic bags is a great way to show that you care about the environment.

We still have kits and precut fabric for seat belt protectors, mastectomy pillows, and bibs. We also have T-shirts and zippers to make ports easier to access. You can use a needle and thread to sew a zipper if you prefer. Come by and an elf can show you how to make one!

We look forward to seeing you in 2025! — **Jane W.** and **Chris R.**

Winter Has Arrived! Here's a Quick Reminder of Our Inclement Weather Policy.



FtH workshop in Richmond **is closed** if the Richmond area (Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, Richmond City, etc.) public schools are opening late or closed. Yes, even if the public schools open two hours late, we will be closed. Fredericksburg workshop will be closed if Spotsylvania schools are closed... but unlike Richmond, will open if the schools open two hours late. Please **be safe**, enjoy the snow day and work on your favorite project.



What is ORVUS?



FtH member, **Larissa K.**, recently shared a tip for washing her knitted and crocheted projects. She has used ORVUS for all of her needlepoint and handmade items for many years. This product will leave your items so soft after washing and blocking. Where can you find it? Not surprising, [Amazon](#) carries it as well as Tractor Supply. OK, more questions...why would Tractor Supply carry it? For washing your livestock and pets of course. 😊 That's right, ORVUS paste is a detergent that is so gentle it can be used to wash your horses, quilts, knits, etc. **Larissa** suggested that since ORVUS is sold in bulk and can be very pricey, friends should consider sharing the cost and dividing up the product in containers. Thanks for the tip, **Larissa!**

Checkout this Website!

This website has free crochet and knitting patterns. <https://crochetkim.com/> — Thank you, **Mary Jo F.** We will have fun browsing the many free patterns!

Tip for Knit and Crochet:

If you are working with a textured, lumpy bumpy, fuzzy or dark yarn, it can be difficult to see your stitches clearly enough to count them or check for mistakes. Here's how you can view your stitches - tape the work to a window on a sunny day, and with the light streaming through, you'll be able to see and count your stitches. —**Dana D.**

Unusual Knitting Facts You Need to Know

(Or at least maybe have an interest in)



- Knitting is pretty much ageless as nobody can really say when the first person picked up a string and a stick and began to make knots in the string. The English word “knit” comes from the Old English word “cnyttan”, the original sense of which was to ‘tie in or with a knot’. The word “knit” first appeared in the English language in the 14th century.
- The earliest woven wool garment fragments found by archaeologists have been dated to 4000-3000 BCE.

- People began to breed long-haired sheep for wool around the 6th century BCE. Archaeological evidence suggests this may have been in the area where Iran is today.
- According to the Gospel of John, the soldiers who crucified Jesus did not divide his tunic after crucifying him but cast lots to determine who would keep it, as it was woven in one piece, without seam. It has been hypothesized that this robe may have been knit in one piece from top to bottom.
- In the old, old days, most people did not use wool to knit as there was insufficient availability of wool outside of agricultural areas. Knitters used silk or cotton (especially cotton as there was more cotton available than there was either silk or wool).



- The oldest REAL knitting (made by pulling loops through loops on two sticks) are the 'Coptic socks' found in Egypt, which date to around the year 1000 CE. All of the pieces found so far were knit in shades of white and indigo, in stockinette.

- Knitting was once the domain of men, and in 1527, the first knitting union was founded in Paris by men, as they dominated the knitting profession.

- Our ancient knitting ancestors used needles made from bone, ivory, and tortoise shells as these were durable and could last literally lifetimes.
- Historically, fishermen needed to know how to knit as the technique was used in the craft of creating and repairing fishing nets. Knowing how to knit allowed the fishermen to craft nets with specific mesh sizes and designs needed for different types of fish.
- Prior to the early 19th century, knitting in England was mostly a folk art and cottage industry, something poor people did to earn a living.
- Queen Elizabeth 1 of England was known to purchase hand knitted stockings.



- Queen Victoria popularized knitting in the later 19th century as she was an avid spinner, knitter, and crocheter – although this craft is not known to have been practiced prior to the 15th century or so.

- The knitting machine was invented in 1589.

- The first knitting pattern book, by Johann Siebmacher, was published in 1611 and contained 126 pages of charts and graphs ranging from simple to extremely complicated.
- In many countries, throughout history, knitting was considered a national duty during wartime, with many women taking up the craft in order to support the troops.



Thank you, to the FtH member who shared this insightful and engaging article!



Our Sincerest Thanks To:



Heidi Robertson for donating trash bags.

Jeanne McClain for sending 4 dolls from our [Amazon Wish List](#) to honor Fredericksburg FtH member, **Peggy L.** Peggy sent a fidget item for Jeanne's husband.

Graceful Knitters from Grace Episcopal Church in Williamsburg for 3 large boxes of beautiful hats, scarves, blankets, store-bought socks and handmade socks.

Richard Corbett and his lovely mother, **Lilly**, for the large donation of yarn.

An anonymous Amazon Wish List donor for the lovely yarn and fiber fill.

Carmen Smith for the box of yarn and accessories.

Kroger Community Rewards Program for the donation of \$323.99 for the months of September through November. Shop at Kroger? Please sign up for their [Community Rewards](#) and select From the Heart Stitchers, organization #MA699.

And, to all the donors not providing their names.



"I am a surviving cancer patient but still have to receive IV/IG Infusions every month at the JW Cancer Institute. The little pillows that you make have been a godsend. The nurses put a little heat pack in them and place them behind my neck and back. What a relief and help they are. Thank you for taking your time helping cancer patients. Sometimes it's the little things that make the most difference. Your support and love are precious and appreciated. — **Brenda A.**" December 5, 2024



"Hello, my Mom has cancer and when going to her doctor appointment she was able to receive one of your projects. She has tons of material and wanted me to see if she could donate to your organization. She wants to give back because of how blessed she has been. Thank you. — **Barbara F.**" December 14, 2024



"I liked the article on adding beads that was in the most recent [December] newsletter. I took some beads the last time I "elfed" as I wanted to use them in a fidget lap blanket, but I didn't know how to do it and now I do! Thank you. **Mary Jo F.**"

Additional Ways to Help from the Heart



Please consider donating items from the [FtH Amazon Wishlist](#).



FtH members who link their [Kroger Reward Card](#) to FtH can support our organization just by shopping there.

Donation Inventory Numbers As of December 27, 2024

Previous Total

Mid 2002 – 2023 552,659

2024

January – November 41,051

December.....3,507

Year to date total.....44,558

Grand Total.....597,217

New Recipients

The Salvation Army, Potomac Division, Central VA Area Command – Adult Hats

Chesterfield County Police Department, Community Engagement Unit – Blankets, hats (adults and children), scarves, toys

If you know of a new organization or group that we can serve, please email fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com with the name of a contact and their phone/email information.



Elf of the Month

The Elf of the Month is **Heidi Robertson**.

Heidi, please select some of the nicer yarn that is set aside for this purpose.

If you need assistance, please contact Kulla at kulla.ficare@verizon.net.

She will show you where we keep the nicer yarn for personal use in the closet and on the dresser by the desk.

Thank you for your joyful disposition and the many hours you volunteered in December.



Workshop Scheduler for January

Tricia Ennis is the Richmond workshop scheduler for this month. Please contact her at triciaennis2014@gmail.com to volunteer for a shift.

In Fredericksburg, please contact **Nancy Phillips** at phillips5831@gmail.com.

If you are a new volunteer or would like to become a workshop elf, let your scheduler know, and you will be paired with an experienced elf. It is that easy and so much fun!



We appreciate our elves who are always so generous with their talent, time, and many contributions!

Current Needs

Richmond

- Dialysis blankets (fleece, knit, crochet)
- Full-term baby hats; red with white hearts
- Bibs/clothing protectors
- Wheelchair totes
- Dialysis sleeves
- Adult/child mittens or gloves (can be purchased)
- Fidgets, fidgets and fidget mats....and lots of fidgets!

Fredericksburg

- Blankets for adults, babies and children. All sizes.

Fredericksburg Workshop Hours

In January, the FXBG workshop is open on the second and fourth Tuesday; January 14th and 28th from 10 am to 1 pm. The address is [1320 Central Park Blvd., Suite 108 Fredericksburg, VA 22401](https://www.google.com/maps/place/1320+Central+Park+Bldv,+Suite+108+Fredericksburg,+VA+22401). Please park behind the building. Entry to Suite 108 is from the rear parking lot through the glass double doors marked “Electrical Room”. If you only want to drop off items and not enter the workshop, use the front door from the street side. Be advised that parking is limited on the street side.

In December, FtH received a bin with 33 children’s sweaters that needed neck and



side seaming. Thanks to our amazing volunteers, the sweaters were quickly seamed and ready to bring warmth and comfort to children in need. These adorable sweaters proved to be a simple and speedy knitting project. Some members indicated interest in the pattern. We found it!

[Click here to view the pattern.](#)

We would be delighted to have the above child-size pattern adapted into an adult-size version.

Who is ready to take on this challenge?



From the Heart sends warm wishes

for a happy and healthy 2025!

May the New Year bring

peace, joy, and happiness

to each and every one of you!

Happy
New Year
2025



Happy
New Year
2025



Something I saw online. I laughed...hope you laugh today too!

It's getting cold out there, make sure your home is properly insulated this winter ❄️🍷



Group Meetings	Address	City	Day of Month	Time of Day	Contact
Atlee Angels	Legacy Park Social Ctr Midday Ln	Mechanicsville	Saturday 1 st , 3 rd	1- 3 pm	Laurie Fuller, 804-467-9109, fullerlc@comcast.net
Chesterfield Heights Comm Ctr	901 Madrona Street	Midlothian	Tuesday, every	2-3:30pm	
Chesterfield Needlework Friends	Central Library, 7051 Lucy Corr Blvd.	Chesterfield	Wednesday, 2 nd , 4 th	1-2:30pm	
Colonial Heights Sr Ctr	Roanoke Avenue	Colonial Hgts	Wednesday, every	8:30am-noon	Laura Logan 804-526-4202
Colony Critters	Patriot's Colony	Williamsburg	Wednesday 1 st	1.30pm	Betsy Ziomek, betsyziomek@gmail.com 804-221-2217
Dawn Library	31046 Richmond Turnpike	Hanover	Wednesday, every	2:30 – 4:30pm	Ann Wade, 804-632-8241
Dinwiddie Designers	Library, 14103 Boydton Plank Rd	Dinwiddie	Wednesday 2 nd , 4 th	1:00-3:00pm	
Elmcroft Retirement Group	1000 Twinridge Lane	Richmond	Wednesday 2 nd , 4 th	1:30pm	Kathleen, 804-327-1990
Five Rivers Fiber Guild	Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern	Heathsville	Friday, every	10am-noon	Judy Mooers, 804-366-1133, jkmooers@aol.com
Fredericksburg	1320 Central Park Blvd., #108	Fredericksburg	Tuesday, 2 nd , 4 th	10:00am- 1:00pm	Sally Moore 540.295.6224, slmoorefth@gmail.com
From the Heart Quilters	Quilter's Corner, Sycamore Square	Midlothian	Monday 1 st , 3 rd	10:00am -12:30pm.	Betsy Vest. 804-747-0297, epvest3@gmail.com
Gayton Kirk Knitters/Crocheters	11421 Gayton Rd	Richmond	Monday, every	7pm	
Glen Allen Library Knitting Group	10501 Staples Mill Rd	Glen Allen	Thursday, every	1 – 3:00pm	Barbara Robinson 804-310-3790
Hampton Roads		Virginia Beach			Michelle Sartelle Michellesartelle@gmail.com
Hanover Fiber Arts	Atlee Library, 9212 Rutlandshire Dr	Mechanicsville	Tuesday 1 st , 3 rd	1 – 4:00pm	Phaedra Knoller 804-933-0708 Beth Watkins 804-347-9286
Hopewell Happy Caps	Hopewell Library, 209 E. Cawson St	Hopewell	Thursday 1 st , 3 rd , 5 th	10am-noon	804-458-6329
Hopewell Helpful Hearts	Hopewell Library, 209 E. Cawson St	Hopewell	Tuesday 2 nd , 4 th	5:30-7:30pm	804-458-6329
Kay's Krafters	3105 Three Bridge Road	Powhatan	Friday 2 nd	1-5pm	Deborah Corbett 804-794-1251 corbett0@gmail.com
Knitwickers, Newfound Church of Christ	14166 Gordon Lane	Glen Allen	Friday, 2 nd	10am-noon	Linda Simon, 804-320-0133
Louisa Hardees	881 Jeff Davis Hwy	Louisa	Saturday, 2 nd	10am-noon	Pat Gibson 540-872-5524
Mathews Group, A Common Thread	Ch of Francis De Sales, 176 Lovers	Mathews	Wednesday, 1 st	10:30am-2:00pm	Not Currently Meeting
McKenney Library Group	Ragsdale Room, McKenney Library	McKenney	Wednesday 1 st , 3 rd	3:00-5:00pm	804-458-6329
Southside RVA Stitchers	Publix upstairs café, 7045 Forest Hill Ave.	Richmond	Tuesday, every	6:30-8pm	Patricia Selinger 804-467-5699
Spring Arbor Senior Living	9991Ridgefield Parkway	Richmond	Wednesday, every	1:30pm	(804) 754-8700
Stitchin' in the Stacks, Heritage Public Library, Charles City	10790 Courthouse Rd	Charles City	Wednesday, 3 rd	2:00pm	Charles City County Library (804) 652-2450 In Person
Stitchin' in the Stacks, Heritage Public Library, New Kent Branch	7791 Invicta Lane	New Kent	Tuesday 1 st	2:00pm	Heritage Public Library, 804-966-2480 In Person Mtg.
Stonebridge Recreation Ctr	230 Karl Linn Drive	N. Chesterfield	Monday every	10:00am-1:00pm	Must call Stonebridge Rec. Ctr. To confirm first
Summerhill Retirement Ctr	3158 Lake Village Drive	Richmond	Thursday 4 th	1:30-3:30pm	
Twin Hickory Clubhouse Group	4601 Twin Hickory Lake Drive	Glen Allen	Friday 2 nd , 4 th ,	10:30am-12:30pm	Ginger Todaro gbtodaro@gmail.com
Verena at the Glen	10285 Brook Road	Glen Allen	Thursday, every	3pm Tracy Lonski	Tracy Lonski. 804-261-1100, ext./ 207
Violet Bank Stitchers	Violet Bank Museum, 303 Virginia Ave	Colonial Hgts	Tuesday, every	10a-noon	Wendy Alvis - 804-520-9395
Yarn Buddies for Charity	12651 Three Chopt Road	Henrico	Tuesday, every	11:00 am	Rosa Castrechini – 814-831-6391