

Sent with love...



From the Heart ♡

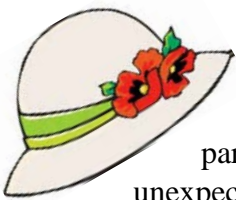
Grateful Thread – May 2025

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

## We All Wear Different Hats

The theme of this year's *From the Heart* Retreat—"We All Wear Different Hats"—got me thinking about all the hats I've worn throughout my life, and the ones I proudly wear today.

Let's start with my **wife hat**—a well-worn classic! I've been wearing that loving, comfortable, sturdy hat for over 42 years, and it's still one of my favorites. Then there's my **mom hat**, which I wear with immense pride. My twin daughters were born 39 years ago... Wait, how is that even possible? I can't be *that* old, right? But with age comes the incredible privilege of my most adorable **nana hat**. I won't gush (too much), but trust me—she's the best!



My **mother-in-law hat** fits beautifully, thanks to the amazing people my daughters chose as partners. And more recently, I've added a **dog-mom hat** to my collection. That one brings me unexpected joy—early morning walks with my little companion clear my mind and start my day off right, always with a smile.

Of course, there are other hats too: my **friend hat**, **social hat**, **religious hat**, and **neighbor hat**—each one adding a unique thread to the fabric of my life. Once upon a time, I even had a **tennis hat**! Okay, I was always a C-level player, but we had fun, and hey—the hat was cute!

I hung up my **work hat** three years ago, and I can't say I miss it. But funny enough, many of the skills I picked up during my career have come in handy as I've taken on the **president hat** at *From the Heart*. Proof that no hat is ever truly wasted!

And let's not forget the creative hats—**knitting**, **crochet**, and **sewing**—which help me relax, recharge, and prepare for whatever new hat life hands me next.

So now I ask you: **What hats have you worn? And which ones are you wearing today?**

**Decorate a hat with your story! Join us for the *From the Heart* Retreat on August 23rd**, where we invite you to bring a decorated hat that represents the many roles you've played in life. Whether it's a literal hat or a symbolic one, come show off your creativity, share your journey, and celebrate the many "hats" that make each of us who we are. We can't wait to see what you'll wear! —**Dorothy B.**





**REGISTRATION IS OPEN**



*We All Wear Different Hat!*

For the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual

**From the Heart Retreat**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2025, 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

At [The Place in Innsbrook](#)

The Board of Directors is hard at work planning a day full of wonderful events for our members. It's the perfect time to call your best friend and invite them to join you for what promises to be the best day of the year!

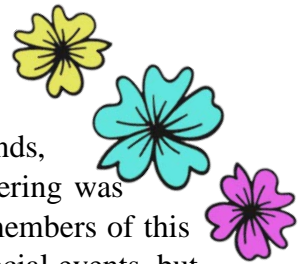
We are pleased to announce that the registration fee will remain at **\$45 per person** again this year. Please be sure to register early — we can only accommodate 125 attendees. To save on postage, you are welcome to drop off your completed registration form and check (no cash) in the donation box at the Richmond workshop. The registration form is on page 15 of this newsletter or you may click [here](#).

Once again this year, we are offering four reserved tables, available on a first-come, first-served basis. Each table seats eight attendees. To reserve a table, an additional \$20 donation is required and must be submitted with the table coordinator's registration. After reserving a table, the coordinator should email [rickmns@verizon.net](mailto:rickmns@verizon.net) with the names of all attendees who will be seated at the reserved table.

**More information is coming in the June newsletter. We look forward to seeing you there!**



### **The Fredericksburg Spring Gathering Another Unqualified Success!**



There's nothing quite like enjoying a small group of friends, fellowship, food and fiber! The Fredericksburg Spring Gathering was another great day for those who were able to attend. Many members of this group are not able to travel to the bimonthly workshops or special events, but their contributions are numbered in the hundreds. Some of these members have been with FtH for many, many years, and we deeply appreciate each of them.

We always enjoy the "Show and Tell" segment of the program. There were so many stunning eye-candy pieces to enjoy from the recent call for blankets, blankets,





blankets! Tips and tricks for scrap yarn were also featured and patterns for fidget items shared. Of course, there were lots of door prizes and a raffle to help offset expenses.

We are all looking forward to the Fall Gathering and hope to see you there, too!



**Richmond**  
magazine

From the Heart ❤️ Will be Featured in

*Richmond Magazine*



Be sure to pick up a copy of the May issue of *Richmond Magazine*. From the Heart will be one of the featured articles in the 'Living' section on page 60! You can find *Richmond Magazine* at the following locations on the checkout aisles and/or on the main magazine aisle. Barnes & Noble, Ellwood Thompsons, Food Lion, Hudson News, Richmond International Airport, Kroger, Libbie Market, Publix, Target, Walmart, Westbury Pharmacy, and Whole Foods.



## The Joy of Joyce: A Volunteer Who Warms Hearts

**Joyce Puller** puts a smile on your face the moment you see her, thanks to her happy, effervescent personality. She truly seems to enjoy life—and being around her makes you enjoy it too!

Joyce learned to crochet and knit at around 8 years old, taught by her grandmother alongside her cousins. She was introduced to FtH by **Kulla F.** when the two worked together years ago—so many years, in fact, that Joyce jokes she's lost count! She was thrilled to discover the workshop, especially since she loves to crochet and her family can only wear so many hats.

Her favorite part of the workshop is getting to talk with and get to know the people who stop by. In addition to being on the From the Heart Board of Directors, she also volunteers as one of our elves. Joyce especially enjoys crocheting bereavement items, finding comfort and meaning in contributing to such a heartfelt part of the mission.

Joyce has four children, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren—all in the Richmond area—so she always has plenty to keep her busy. On top of her workshop involvement, she also volunteers with Sports Backers, helping kids train for the Monument Avenue 10k, and she participates in an online Bible Study Fellowship that includes members from around the world. — **Mary Jo F.**



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## Meet the FtH’s Newest Board of Directors Member – Heidi Robertson



Heidi Robertson is originally from Oregon and, as an adult, has lived in Charlottesville, Christiansburg, and Minneapolis, MN, before moving to the West End of Richmond in 2020. Her mom taught her how to crochet when she was eight years old. Using books, Heidi taught herself to become a more advanced crocheter and later used a book to teach herself how to knit. Heidi shared, “I was very good, though I didn’t realize for several years that I was knitting into the back loop and twisting all of my stitches unnecessarily. LOL!”

Thankfully, Heidi found From the Heart. She said, “I started making and donating items to From the Heart during COVID, while I was grieving the recent death of my oldest daughter, Lily, who was almost ten years old and struggled with a painful terminal disorder.” Heidi added, “At the time, I enjoyed making blankets and horseshoe shawls with scrap yarn, as well as stitching blanket squares together and finishing them. It was another form of therapy to help me heal.”

In April 2024, Heidi trained to be an Elf for FtH and says she quickly fell in love with "elfing." She soon signed up to help twice a week. She has recently become more involved in the activities at From the Heart and has also taken an interest in making Knitted Knockers. Heidi said, “I’m excited to join the board and look forward to finding more ways I can help!”

Heidi truly enjoys giving back to the community. She has made blankets for children in hospitals, served at a hospice, fundraised to build an indoor mall playground, delivered groceries to the poor, served at her church, delivered meals to the needy, served on her neighborhood’s civic board as Treasurer and Secretary, become a regular blood donor, and volunteers at her children’s schools, which includes fundraising and event planning.

Heidi is married to Brett and they have two children: Kate and Walter. You may recall seeing Heidi and Kate on the cover of the [Richmond Times Dispatch](#) earlier this year in an article highlighting the work of From the Heart. We are excited to welcome Heidi to the Board of Directors and look forward to her contributions in advancing our mission.

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## Ryan’s Case for Smiles

**Christine Milefsky** (photo right) and her **husband** picked up two bags of children’s pillowcases for the Children’s Hospital on March 15. Christine is the volunteer area coordinator for Ryan’s Case for Smiles, a charity that provides homemade, whimsical pillowcases that give children who are hospitalized an emotional boost and remind them that they are not defined by their illness.



The charity was founded in 2007 in memory of Ryan Kerr, who was diagnosed with bone cancer when he was 12 years old. After his diagnosis, Cindy Kerr, Ryan’s mother, and neighbors and friends began making pillowcases for Ryan and they were a source of comfort and joy to him. He didn’t stop fighting the disease through five cancer recurrences, 30 months of chemotherapy, 15 surgeries, the amputation of his right leg and over 150 days of physical therapy. Ryan didn’t allow his illness to keep him from the active and adventurous life he loved. Although Ryan lost his battle with bone cancer, his legacy lives through Ryan’s Case for Smiles. You can read more about Ryan’s Case for Smiles at <https://caseforsmiles.org/>.

With the help of thousands of volunteers, the organization has distributed close to 3 million pillowcases to children in 350 hospitals, Ronald McDonald Houses, and clinics across North America. There are over 100 chapters of the

charity, including four in Virginia (Alleghany Highlands, DC and suburbs, Richmond and Norfolk/Hampton Roads/Virginia Beach) and some in Canada. More than 75,000 children are helped each year.

And for our part: Christine says the Children's Hospital can easily use 100 pillowcases a month, and she tries to keep up with that. She was effusive with her thanks to From the Heart for supplying so many beautiful pillowcases. She also works with area quilting and sewing groups and makes pillowcases herself. —**Mary Jo F.**



## Richmond FtH Workshop Happenings!



March 15 was a busy day at the workshop! We had people coming in the whole time. **Lynette P.** (photo right) brought in dignity bibs, children's pillowcases, scent hearts, fingerless mittens and jingle bell boxes. She has been an active contributor to FtH for some time – 2015 – and learned about us from **Kulla F.**, who was her colleague at SunTrust Bank.



**Thelma P.** (photo left) brought in 80+ bibs that she had made and lucky for us, she picked out more material to sew some more.

**Mary Jo L.** (photo right) brought in a twin size blanket that she made. It took her 32.8 hours to complete and is beautiful, as you can see from the photograph to the right.

**Linda Simon** brought in 63 hats from the Knickwickers, who work at the New Found Church of Christ in Glen Allen. We had even more people come in but were too pressed for time to take pictures! It was wonderful to see so many people and to get to talk to them.



**Lauren C.** (photo left) brought in two octopuses that she had crocheted. They really are amazing and such fun to see! Lauren said she was growing tired of crocheting hats and blankets and wanted to branch out to other items, and her husband found a pattern book on different animals. Lauren said she timed herself and found it takes 16 hours to make an octopus. It's really a labor of love!



**Jane W.** (photo right on the right) and **Betty B.** (left) brought in five beautifully knitted blankets in an array of patterns. Betty said that she hadn't made any of the items, but she had purchased some of the yarn and was going to get some more. They both certainly earned credit for their good deeds and our thanks for their donations.



On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Charles N.**, (photo left) 85 years young from Amelia, donated 23 items which included drain bags, pillows & bibs!

In March, **Bob K.**, (photo right) a Florida resident and brother-in-law of **Larissa K.**, a FtH member, was preparing to begin chemotherapy treatments. To help make the process a little easier for him, he was sent a FtH port shirt. (Port T-shirts feature angled zippers sewn inside on both sides for easy port access. We appreciate Larissa providing clear instructional videos on sewing the zippers. The videos are available on the [FtH website](#) under Sewing Patterns/Port Access T-shirt.) Bob, a proud veteran, was particularly touched by the shirt's red, white, and blue design, as well as its reference to 1776—symbols that resonated deeply with his patriotic spirit.



Larissa recently wrote, *“I've been busy creating more port shirts for him. He smiles every time I bring over a new shirt...helps him forget the pain he's experiencing, even if only for a brief moment. Thank you & FtH for the inspiration and outreach to truly 'Care & Share' and Help put a Smile on someone's face 😊*

*All the best, from my ❤️”-Larissa*

We send our warmest wishes to Bob as he begins his treatments, and our hearts are truly touched by how far the love and compassion of FtH can travel—bringing comfort and connection to people when they need it most.

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### “Cozy Hearts”: Five Freshmen Making a Difference One Quilt at a Time

In November, five freshman girls from Freeman High School—calling themselves “Cozy Hearts”—reached out to **Rebecca Kennedy**, FtH board member and Dinwiddie coordinator, for help making quilts for pediatric heart patients at VCU Medical Center.



*Photo by Rebecca K.*

This was not a school or church project—it was a passion project. The girls independently contacted VCU to learn the quilt requirements and were determined to complete the entire process themselves.



*Photo by Rebecca K.*

With Rebecca’s guidance, they fundraised, purchased fabric and supplies, and learned about materials, sizes, and cutting techniques. They met at All Brands to cut squares and sort them into quilt tops. On another Saturday, the group gathered for some sewing. “It was a bit rough,” Rebecca shared, “but overall, it went very well.”

On March 22, the group gathered to complete the quilts using the traditional method of hand-tying. The final results were beautiful, and the girls were thrilled with their work.

Already planning their next project, the “Cozy Hearts” team is a shining example of how five dedicated friends can make a meaningful difference in the lives of children facing heart challenges at VCU.

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### What Have the All Brands Charity Sew Volunteers Been Up To?

Each month, a dedicated group of volunteers comes together for the All Brands “Charity Sew,” crafting a variety of essential comfort items for individuals in need. Using generously donated fabric, these talented individuals

create port pillows, underarm pillows, sleep hats, turbans, walker totes, drain bags, dialysis mitts, and more—each one made with care and compassion.



The charity sew is proudly sponsored by **Karen Holden** of [All Brands Sewing Center](#), with project coordination led by FtH Board Member **Rebecca Kennedy**. These passionate sewers bring their own sewing machines, combining their love of sewing with a shared mission of giving back. While they work, they also enjoy a welcoming environment filled with camaraderie and purpose.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, All Brands was a buzz of activity. **Adaliz C.** (photo left front) was cutting dining scarves, while **Claudia H.** cut girls' dresses (for a church project). **Molly S.** (photo right) cut much-needed sleep hats made of flannel, which are especially appreciated and used by patients undergoing cancer treatments. As **Lana G.** shared in her heartfelt letter (see the full version in the Thank You section): "...The hat was a fleece cap with a large band, which I later found out was a sleeping cap. Well... my cap was the one constant thing I wore daily once I cut my hair after my first round of chemo."



full version in the Thank You section):



**Rebecca K.** (photo left) was busy packaging fidget kits and will also prepare I-Spy kits that will be sewn together at another meeting, as **Donna M.** (photo right) who has been with FtH for two years was busy sewing a beautiful tote bag. The fabric was just lovely and will certainly be treasured by its recipient!



**Phyllis B.** (photo below) cuts plastic inserts for I-Spy bags, a unique fiddle project sewn and filled with rice and a variety of small objects. The "window" of each bag is made from the clear plastic Phyllis is cutting. People of all ages find comfort in squeezing the bag and spotting the fun, hidden items inside.



♥ thank you ♥  
for all you do



## The Ongoing Need for Knitted Knockers

[Knitted Knockers](#) are now even easier to make! In January, the organization updated its list of yarns approved for creating knockers. To view the updated list, please [\[click here\]](#). For your convenience, **Jane A.** has posted a printed copy in the Richmond workshop next to the yarn bins.

According to the Knitted Knockers website, all approved yarns have been tested and proven to be washable, breathable, durable, and soft when air-dried. Using the correct yarn is essential, as the fiber must not irritate sensitive areas that may already be affected by surgical scarring, nerve damage, or radiation burns.



## “Think Outside the Bra”

Perhaps because they are the most common cancers—when one thinks of men and cancer, one thinks of prostate cancer, and when one thinks of women and cancer, it is breast cancer. However, as [CancerDancer](#) reminds us, we need to think outside of the bra when it comes to women and cancer, because “not all cancer is pink.” Ovarian cancer can be quite insidious, as it can develop and spread silently without noticeable symptoms until it reaches an advanced stage. It often comes as a shock to women diagnosed with it.

Teal is the official color used for ovarian cancer. You will find a basket in From the Heart’s Richmond workshop which contains skeins of teal yarn along, usually, with a few donated hats to be given to [CancerDancer](#) for inclusion in the kits they make to support women with ovarian cancer. (Please see the thank you note on page 10 of this newsletter from Lana G. who received a CancerDancer kit.) The basket is in the social crafting room on a table to the right of the couch opposite the desk. Any hat pattern can be used, and the hats can be either knitted or crocheted. CancerDancer provides us with yarn to make these hats. Please use the yarn in the basket. It is the correct color and is very soft.

If you make a hat for this particular purpose, please let the elves on duty know that it is intended for CancerDancer. They will put it in the correct place or you may simply write “Intended for CancerDancer” on the FtH tag. If you take the second to last skein in the basket, please let Dorothy know by emailing [fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com). She will contact CancerDancer and let them know we are running low on yarn.—**Tricia Ennis**

## "Grandma Hobbies?" Not a Fan of the Name, But They're Great for the Brain!

Another insightful article, titled [“Why ‘Grandma Hobbies’ Could Be the Secret to Better Mental Health.”](#) appeared in *Good Housekeeping* this past March. Written by Marisa LaScala, the piece opens with a lighthearted account of her own unsuccessful attempt at knitting but quickly shifts focus to explore the wide-ranging benefits of these traditional pastimes.

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## Sew-In Day with Sheddy R. Rescheduled for May 16<sup>TH</sup>

Sadly, the Sew-In Day last month - so beautifully coordinated by **Sheddy R.** and **Chris R.** - had to be cancelled due to an air conditioning issue.

However, it has been rescheduled for  
**Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 2 pm.**

The ten participants who originally signed up will have the first opportunity to sign up for the May 16<sup>th</sup> session. If there are still seats available (space is limited to 10), we will fill those on a first-come, first-served basis.

Sew-In Day is a fun and relaxing afternoon of sewing! Each participant will receive a quilting jelly roll and may choose from two simple quilting patterns designed to showcase the fabric. Spend the day stitching while enjoying the creative energy of fellow quilters as their projects come to life.

**Please note: This is not a quilting class.** Participants must be familiar with their sewing machine and able to sew an accurate 1/4-inch seam.

Participants are welcome to bring their own sewing machine or reserve one of the shop's five available machines.

**Registration is required.** To register, please email [fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com) by **May 12**. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and indicate whether you will bring your own machine or need to use one provided by the shop.



### Hop Into Spring with This Adorable Lovie Pattern! 🐰 🌸



A big *thank you* to the wonderful **Laurie H.** for discovering this irresistibly cute bunny lovie pattern! Laurie went the extra mile—not only did she find the perfect pattern, but she also reached out to the designer and secured permission for From the Heart to offer it *free* to our members. How amazing is that?

And it gets better—this pattern has been fully “**Laurie Tested,**” so you know it’s a good one! Laurie shared that it can be made with *any* fabric, so let your creativity run wild. We’re dreaming of sweet springtime prints and cuddly textures. Ready to get sewing?

[Download the pattern here](#) and bring a little bunny joy to your next project!



*Bunny lovie made by Dorothy B. using corduroy and denim.*

P.S. Laurie is one of our newest elves, and we’re already blown away by her talent and enthusiasm. We’re lucky to have her in our stitching family! 🧵 ❤️

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### Is Binding Off a Blanket Putting you in a Bind?

If so, try the [Magic Binding Blanket](#) technique sent to us by **Sheila H.** This clever method simplifies the binding-off process while giving your blanket a clean, polished edge. A heartfelt thank you to Sheila for contributing these wonderful instructions—which can now be found on the FtH website under the sewing patterns or by clicking [here](#).



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### Quick, Thoughtful, and Fun Gift For the New Baby in your Life!



**Sheila H.** also shared how she makes adorable Tag Blankets—an easy, quick project that makes a wonderful gift for a new mom! [Click here for the instructions.](#) Designing these blankets is a truly enjoyable part of the process. With so many colorful ribbons and textured fabrics to choose from, you can personalize each one to delight the little



one it’s made for, adding a heartfelt and creative touch to your gift.

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## Our Sincerest Thanks To:



Thank you to the **anonymous donor**, who sent photocopy paper, Red Heart yarn (so pretty), and a big box of trash bags from the FtH Amazon Wish List.

Thank you, **Elizabeth G.**, for sending us T-shirts and quilting batting from our Amazon Wish List. These will be very helpful to patients receiving cancer treatments, and the batting will be used to make some very cozy quilts.

Thank you, **Martha F.**, for all the skeins of beautiful yarn and fiber fill from our Amazon Wish List!

**Dianne G.**, thank you so much for the wonderful donations you sent from the FtH Amazon Wishlist! The dolls are always needed for the memory care units and paper towels are also always needed in our busy workshop.

Thank you so much, **Kathy A.**, from Lititz, PA, for donating nine pairs fingerless mitts, six soap sacks, a dialysis blanket with matching mitts, and two blankets (photo right). So many beautiful colors and your crocheting is lovely!



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## Thank You We Received and Greatly Appreciate!



“From the Heart Stitchers.

On March 21, 2023, during an emergency room visit, I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Now, I knew I was sick, but the diagnosis was completely out of the blue, as I believe it is for most people being diagnosed with cancer. During my first visit to my oncologist, one of the nurses gave me a [CancerDancer](#) bag. After I took a nap because I was stressed out from the doctor’s appointment, I looked into the bag and found a hat that would be a part of my life for the next 12 months. The hat was a fleece cap with a large band, which I later found out was a sleeping cap. Well... my cap was the one constant thing I wore daily once I cut my hair after my first round of chemo.

I was always looking for another cap, however, I could not find anything close to it online, so I treasured my go-to cap, a sleeping cap, when my head was cold in the summertime. I wore this cap during my second and third rounds of chemo treatment and after surgery. After my surgery, I was having a good day and went to From the Heart with my items, and walked in the door, and two ladies at the desk were surprised to see my cap. They asked me where I received my cap, and I mentioned it was in the bag with some items from CancerDancer. One lady was so excited because she explained she had made the chemo sleep caps, but had never seen someone wear them. I decided that I needed to model the hat for her and explained that with hair, the cap does not fit well, but when one is bald, it’s a perfect fit. I talked about my love for my cap and was allowed to pick a second one for my last three rounds of chemo. My second chemo sleeping cap was my best friend as the weather started to get colder, which is not fun when you are barely growing hair. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would ever be a recipient of an item donated to From the Heart.

This organization gave me a purpose after I was laid off and unemployed for a year. It helped me find some worth when, at times, I could not see past the moment. In between treatments and surgery, I always had a bag nearby with a project to help me focus on something besides how I was feeling at the moment and help me keep focus during chemo fog.

Words cannot express how this group has been a joy in my life and continues to be a joy. Currently, I have finished chemo and maintenance chemo, and my last scan was clear, so I am 2 years cancer-free and still maintaining. I want members to know that you may never know how your talents and skills lift one's heart and

soul during challenges in one's life. To everyone who is a part of this group, continue to craft from the heart." Sincerely, **Lana G.** – Letter sent April 3, 2025

♥  
"Dear Lois Moore & Team,  
Thank you so much for your gifts. We appreciate your team's continued support & dedication to our participants/mission. Thank you for all you do!" - Circle Center Adult Day Center  
Note received April 6, 2025

Dear From the Heart Stitches Volunteers,  
Thank you so much for all your help at the Villa! Your support means the world to us and we are extremely thankful for all your volunteer work to help our clients and staff.  
♥ The Villa Team

Note from St. Joseph's Villa, April 22, 2025

♥ "Good morning, I am writing to you as I sit at my mom's hospice bedside. We have a lap fidget blanket that has helped her tremendously to not pick at herself. My mom taught me to sew as child, and I checked out your webpage and saw the patterns to make...My mom has a lot of fabrics that won't be used, and I would love to pay it forward and make some things to donate. Thank you for your time," **Shannon S.**, April 12, 2025

♥ "I do some volunteering with hospice in Fredericksburg. Thank you all for what you do. The patients really enjoy your creations." **Jacob W.**, April 15, 2025

♥ "Thank you for your contribution to our 2025 NICU Esther Eboade Basket Project (photo right). I appreciate your support. My team and I thank you." **Aanu Adewusi** (Founder and CEO), March 23, 2025



### 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.



### Elf of the Month

The Elf of the Month (who is also one of our newest elves) is **Cathy F!** Cathy, please select some of the nicer yarn that is set aside for this purpose. If you need assistance, please contact Dorothy at [fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:fromtheheartstitchers@gmail.com)

Thank you for joining the Elf Team and for generously volunteering your time in April!

We couldn't do this without YOU!!

## Workshop Scheduler for May



The Richmond workshop scheduler for May is **Kulla Ficare**. Please contact Kulla at [kulla.ficare@verizon.net](mailto:kulla.ficare@verizon.net) to volunteer.

In Fredericksburg, please contact **Nancy Phillips** at [phillips5831@gmail.com](mailto: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!

## Preparing From the Heart Items for Distribution

So far, this year, From the Heart has distributed **15,765** into our local communities. You have all seen items coming into the workshop and, indeed, have contributed to those items through the generous gifts of your time and talents. You may have seen the bins in the workroom and are



aware of how quickly these fill up and then empty as items somehow find their way into the full, labeled plastic bags on the table in the workroom (L) where they wait until they are either picked up by or delivered to our recipients. There is something missing from that story and that is the question of how the items in the bins find their way into the plastic bags. The answer to that question is found through looking at what our Distribution Team members do to make the transition possible.

The process begins with the email that **Susan R.** sends to our recipients approximately once a month asking them to please send their requested items for the following month. From there, the monthly distribution takes on a weekly format. Each Saturday, a member of the team

counts every single item in every bin and records how many of each type of item is available for distribution that week. Next, the Item Request Sheets sent back as a result of Susan's email are matched with the available items, a Monday Distribution List is created, and tags are made to be put on the plastic bags once they are full. That all happens on Saturday and then the list and bag tags take a brief break until Monday morning when the real fun starts.

On Mondays, those on the six-member Distribution Team meet at the workshop at 8:45am and take their stations in the workroom, all curious to see what beautiful items are available for distribution and which recipient has requested which items. The bins are each specifically designated for a specific item and the Monday Distribution List, created on Saturday, is used to count the requested number of items from a particular recipient. These items are put into one of the plastic bags and labeled, all the while performing a quality check on the items and ensuring that the From the Heart "Not for sale" tag is secured on each item. An ongoing count total is maintained for all items and entered into our database and attendant spreadsheets. It is from this database that the inventory reported in the monthly newsletter is pulled. If the total items requested from a recipient agency cannot be filled with that week's available items, it is recorded and



(L-R) *Diane B., Susan R., Leslie K., and Glen A.*  
*Not pictured are Nancy W. and Katya A.*

carried over to the following week. Bear in mind that each member of the team performs her own quality control check at every step of the process.

Finally, once this process is completed, each recipient to whom items have been distributed is sent a second email to let them know that they have X number of bags awaiting pickup.

So, now you know 😊 The process is not magic but is accomplished through the magical hard work and diligence of our amazing Distribution Team. — **Tricia E.**

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## Take a Look at the April Distribution Numbers! GO TEAM and THANK YOU!!



**Thanks to all of you who have taken adult hats and scarves off your needles and are working on Red/White/Blue blankets, knitted knockers, and baby blankets!**

### Current Needs

#### **Richmond**

- Red/White/Blue blankets (all sizes)
- Pillowcases in children's novelty fabric
- Knitted knockers
- Baby blankets
- Baby hats
- Chemo hats(flannel)
- Octopuses
- Fleece blankets/quilts for children

#### **Fredericksburg**

- Colorful Kid's hats ages 3 to 15
- Kid's and lap blankets
- Shawls
- Chemo hats
- Fidget balls or toys
- Walker totes
- Wheelchair totes
- Snugglers - A snuggler is like a short cape that goes around your shoulders.

| Donation Inventory Numbers<br>as of<br>April 30, 2025 |         |
|---|---------|
| Previous Total  |         |
| Mid 2002 - 2024.....                                  | 597,362 |
| 2025  |         |
| Jan.- March.....                                      | 11,992  |
| April.....  | 3,773   |
| Grand Total.....                                      | 613,127 |

### **Fredericksburg Workshop Workshop Access**

**Reminder:** You can no longer access the workshop through the back door. All entry must now be made through the front entrance on Central Park Blvd. You may park in the back, and enter through the Rappaport Corporate Office glass doors located to the left of the electric room doors. Go through their building to the glass doors that exit onto the street side, turn right, and walk down the sidewalk to the FtH entrance a few doors down. Signs are up to help guide you. The FXBG workshop is open on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month 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+Blvd,+Suite+108+Fredericksburg,+VA+22401).

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## Thank You for the Creative Collaboration!

A heartfelt thank you to **Heidi R.** and **Debbie M.** for their creative teamwork with these delightful fidget items!

Thank you so much Debbie M. for generously donating the eye rings/google eyes. They are adorable and really eye catching. Wink! Wink! The eyes can now be found in a small box on the shelf with buttons and other embellishments used for memory mats and twiddle mitts.

A GREAT big thank you to Heidi R. for skillfully creating two whimsical patterns using these playful eyes! These are sure to bring joy and sensory comfort to those who use them.

### **Butterfly**

**Row 1:** Holding the ring with the eyes facing down, (*sc, ch 4, sc*) repeat 4 times

**Row 2:** In each chain space, (*3 dc, ch 3, 3 dc*)

**Row 3:** In each chain space, (*4 dc, ch 3, sl st into first ch, 4 dc*); *sc* between each section (between the *dc* stitches from Row 2), end with a *sl st* at the top of the last *dc* from Row 2



### **Octopus**

**Row 1:** Holding the ring with the eyes facing down, *11 dc, ch 10*, then *sl st* to the ring before the first *dc* to form a circle

**Row 2:** Turn, *sc* in first 2 stitches, then create a tentacle: (*ch 15, turn, 2 dc* in 3rd st, then *3 dc* in each *ch* back to the beginning, *sl st* into same *ch* as the *sc*). Turn work to continue along the chain.

Repeat: *sc 2, create another tentacle*, continuing until you've made 5-6 tentacles and reached the end of the chain. Finish with a *sl st* at the end.



\*\*\*\*\*

### Speaking of Fidgets...

Look at these unbelievably ADORABLE fidget mats from our very talented friend

**Michelle B!**



Photo by Chris R.



**From the Heart**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat Registration Form**  
**“We All Wear Different Hats”**  
**August 23, 2025 – 10:00 am to 3:30 pm**  
**The Place at Innsbrook**  
**4036 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060**  
**Number of attendees is limited to 125 total**



Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h): \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first time attending the retreat? \_\_\_\_\_

You will enjoy a lovely selection of breakfast breads and pastries with coffee and/or tea in the morning. Lunch will be buffet style. Attendees needing assistance with their lunches will be assisted by FtH volunteers and the staff of The Place.

**PLEASE LIST ANY KNOWN FOOD ALLERGIES OR IF  
YOU ARE GLUTEN FREE OR A VEGETARIAN \_\_\_\_\_**

***CHECKS AND REGISTRATIONS CAN BE PLACED IN THE DONATION BOX AT THE  
WORKSHOP OR MAILED TO:***

**Susan Rickman  
1716 Cloister Drive  
Henrico, VA 23238  
[rickmns@verizon.net](mailto:rickmns@verizon.net)**

Registration fee is \$45.00 per person. Please make checks payable to ***FROM THE HEART***.

Your check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

For planning purposes, registrations must be received on or before **August 1, 2025**. Share the fun, bring a friend or two!

Attendance is capped at 125 so do not delay submitting your registration. Sorry, **no walk-ins** are allowed so be sure to register you and your friends **before August 1<sup>st</sup>**.

A photographer will be in attendance and photos taken may be used by From the Heart to promote future events and/or activities.

***No refunds after August 1<sup>st</sup> but substitutions will be allowed for any reason.***

| Group Meetings  | Address                                     | City            | Day of Month   | Time of Day       | Contact  |
|---|---|-----------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Atlee Angels  | Legacy Park Social Ctr Midday Ln            | Mechanicsville  | Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup>                   | 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 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup>                 | 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 <sup>st</sup>                                    | 1.30pm            | Betsy Ziomek, <a href="mailto:betsyziomek@gmail.com">betsyziomek@gmail.com</a> 804-221-2217  |
| Chester Stitch Squad  | 11800 Centre Street                         | Chester         | Wednesday, March 19  | 6pm – 7:30pm      | Barbara R. 804-920-8005 <a href="mailto:bababs@verizon.net">bababs@verizon.net</a>           |
| 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 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup>                  | 1:00-3:00pm       |  |
| Elmcroft Retirement Group   | 1000 Twinridge Lane                         | Richmond        | Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup>                  | 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, <a href="mailto:jkmooers@aol.com">jkmooers@aol.com</a>            |
| Fredericksburg  | 1320 Central Park Blvd., #108               | Fredericksburg  | Tuesday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup>                   | 10:00am- 1:00pm   | Sally Moore 540.295.6224, <a href="mailto:smoorefth@gmail.com">simoorefth@gmail.com</a>      |
| From the Heart Quilters   | Quilter's Corner, Sycamore Square           | Midlothian      | Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup>                     | 10:00am -12:30pm. | Betsy Vest.<br>804-747-0297, <a href="mailto:epvest3@gmail.com">epvest3@gmail.com</a>        |
| 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 <a href="mailto:Michellesartelle@gmail.com">Michellesartelle@gmail.com</a> |
| Hanover Fiber Arts  | Atlee Library, 9212 Rutlandshire Dr         | Mechanicsville  | Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup>                    | 1 – 4:00pm        | Phaedra Knoller 804-933-0708<br>Beth Watkins 804-347-9286                                    |
| Hopewell Happy Caps   | Hopewell Library, 209 E. Cawson St          | Hopewell        | Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> | 10am-noon         | 804-458-6329   |
| Hopewell Helpful Hearts   | Hopewell Library, 209 E. Cawson St          | Hopewell        | Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup>                    | 5:30-7:30pm       | 804-458-6329   |
| Kay's Krafters  | 3105 Three Bridge Road                      | Powhatan        | Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup>                                       | 1-5pm             | Deborah Corbett 804-794-1251 <a href="mailto:corbett0@gmail.com">corbett0@gmail.com</a>      |
| Knitwickers, Newfound Church of Christ                            | 14166 Gordon Lane                           | Glen Allen      | Friday, 2 <sup>nd</sup>                                      | 10am-noon         | Linda Simon, 804-320-0133  |
| Louisa Hardees  | 881 Jeff Davis Hwy                          | Louisa          | Saturday, 2 <sup>nd</sup>                                    | 10am-noon         | Pat Gibson 540-872-5524  |
| Mathews Group, A Common Thread                                    | Ch of Francis De Sales, 176 Lovers          | Mathews         | Wednesday, 1 <sup>st</sup>                                   | 10:30am-2:00pm    | <b>Not Currently Meeting</b>   |
| Ragsdale Community Center   | 20916 Old School Road                       | McKenney        | Tuesday 2nd and 4th  | 5pm – 7pm         | (804) 478-6146   |
| 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 <sup>rd</sup>                                   | 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 <sup>st</sup>                                      | 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    | <b>Must call Stonebridge Rec. Ctr. To confirm first</b>                                      |
| Summerhill Retirement Ctr   | 3158 Lake Village Drive                     | Richmond        | Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup>                                     | 1:30-3:30pm       |  |
| Twin Hickory Clubhouse Group                                      | 4601 Twin Hickory Lake Drive                | Glen Allen      | Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> ,                   | 10:30am-12:30pm   | Ginger Todaro <a href="mailto:gbtodaro@gmail.com">gibtodaro@gmail.com</a>                    |
| 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  |