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### March, 2005 Newsletter

**Project Linus** is a national volunteer organization that has provided over one million seriously ill and traumatized children with handmade security blankets and quilts. During the three years since our chapter was established, we have played a part in this effort by contributing over **six thousand blankets**.

This year has been another busy one for our chapter. At the end of August an article appeared in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* producing a lot of interest whereby increasing our chapter's membership to over one hundred knitters, crocheters, and quilters. We have also made many presentations to numerous organizations and facilities, and have gained generous support from them. Our volunteer base has also expanded to include more labelers, more delivery people and more drop-off sites.

In addition to our increasing membership, we have gained interest from many younger contributors. Last spring the third grade class at Old York Road Temple Beth Am in Jenkintown made fleece blankets. At Christmas time a quilt was made by a third grade class at Lower Salford Elementary School as a giving project, after hearing the reading of the book *The Quilt Maker's Gift*. On Martin Luther King Day, Germantown Academy Middle School students made many fleece blankets. Over the past year, the New Horizons Montessori School had another yarn drive for us; numerous Brownie and Girl Scout troops made fleece blankets; and many individual contributors made blankets to fulfill their service requirements for Confirmation, Bat Mitzvah and school projects. We are pleased that these children are learning the art of volunteering.

The contributions from all of the people described above allow us to continue to distribute blankets to children in need in these local hospitals and agencies:

- Abington
- Lankenau
- Central Montgomery
- Mercy Suburban
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- St. Christopher's Hospital for Children
- Temple Children's
- Visiting Nurses Association of Abington
- Cambridge-Point Pleasant
- Birthright
- Grand View
- Pottstown
- Laurel House

In addition, hospitals in the Allentown area have received blankets from:

- Lehigh Valley
- Turning Point
- Camelot for Children
- Volunteers of America
- Easton
- St. Luke's

Several new efforts have been undertaken during the course of this year.

- The **Keystone Quilters Guild** has assumed the responsibility of providing quilts to the sick and needy babies and children at Grand View hospital. In February they had a blanket day on which they made 104 blankets for future distribution – great job!
- The **Blue Bell Knitting Guild** has taken on Project Linus as their charitable interest for this year. Many of their members have knitted lovely blankets for us. In addition, they made a financial contribution to us in lieu of having a Pollyanna gift exchange at Christmas time. We are grateful to them.
- **Pottstown Hospital**, now a drop-off site, has begun to develop a network of crafters who are making blankets. We welcome their enthusiasm.
- We have been instrumental in setting up a partnership between **Project Linus** and the **A.C.Moore** stores in the general Atlantic seaboard region. The store in Allentown initiated this partnership along with our assistant coordinator there, Jean Larison. They have promotional days each month. The store in Montgomeryville is also developing a program that will benefit both the crafter and Project Linus. Watch for announcements later this year.
- Nationally, **Project Linus** and **Lion Brand** has partnered for a yarn marketing tool. One of our blanketeers, Karen Jordan, made a beautiful crocheted blanket in accordance with this project. Her picture, with the blanket, was submitted in this effort.

In addition to these efforts, there have been other forms of contributions throughout this year. We commend those individuals who have cleaned out their yarn surpluses and gave us their “left-overs”. We also appreciate those businesses that have donated materials, such as “Pins and Needles”, a shop in Princeton, NJ, when they decided to discontinue their quilting enterprise. Their generous donation made **Make a Quilt Day** in October a huge success. During the course of **Make a Quilt Day**, a request was made that we have more gatherings of the blanketeers in our chapter to share ideas, patterns and camaraderie. Therefore, we are instituting a monthly meeting of interested persons who care to bring their projects (knitting, crocheting, or quilting) or assist the chapter with other chapter needs. Those meetings will be held on the third Monday of each month beginning with April 18 at 7 p.m. at the Senior Adult Activities Center at 45 Forest Avenue in Ambler. The May meeting will be on May 16 at 1 p.m. We will alternate afternoon and evening gatherings through the year. It must be noted that the second mission of Project Linus is “to provide a rewarding and fun service opportunity for interested individuals and groups in local communities, for the benefit of children”. Please join us for the camaraderie of working together for a common goal”.

Other new endeavors include a newly developed system of delivery of these much-needed blankets. This system consists of drop-off sites throughout Montgomery and Bucks Counties specifically located in Ambler, Collegeville, Doylestown, Fairless Hills, Huntingdon Valley, Langhorne, Montgomeryville, Pottstown, Telford, and Yardley. If you are willing to receive blankets from blanketeers in your area, please call Barbara at 215-699-2495.

To all who contribute, it is not for thanks, rewards, or recognition that we make blankets for these needy children. We do realize how grateful many of the recipients are. We regularly receive thank you notes from Mommies who appreciate the blankets that have been given their babies. Here are a few:

- Thank you for the beautiful blanket for my newborn baby boy. It is perfect for the cold weather coming soon.
- I would like to thank you for the wonderful baby blankets that was given to me and my baby. He is going to love it as soon as he gets out of the NICU.

Here's one from a preemie baby (with help from her mom):

- When it came time for my mommy and daddy to take me home from the hospital, the nice nurses sent me off with a blanket made by one of your blanketeers. I love it and still use it to this day for snug winter naps. Thank you for making such a quality blanket as my first.

And one from a girl, perhaps 4 or 5 years of age, who drew a card and wrote this note:

- Thank you very much for my beautiful blanket. It kept me warm and cozy while I was in Abington Hospital. It's so pretty – I just love it.

In closing I leave each of you with a quote from Mother Theresa. "It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving." Project Linus supports this same premise. A **Project Linus** blanket is like a big hug when you most need one. Each blanket must be made and given with a lot of love – just as you would for your children and grandchildren, so that the love wraps around each recipient, cuddling and comforting them. Spread the word - "each one, bring one" – and share the joy of giving.

For your reference, here are the guidelines for the sizes of the blankets most requested by hospitals:

**Preemie:** 18 x 24 or 24 x 30      **Infant:** 30 x 42 or 26 x 36

Please use pastel colors of soft 3 ply or 4 ply yarns, Please do not double the yarn.

**Toddler:** 36 x 45      **Child:** 40 x 60      **Teen:** 45 x 72

Please use bold color of 4 ply yarn.

Flannel, fleece and quilting fabrics can be used within these size perimeters also.

For those contributors who are looking for a new challenge, here are two blanket patterns. These patterns can be found on the Project Linus website [www.projectlinus.org](http://www.projectlinus.org) This website has lots of other information about our organization that you may find to be of interest.

### Knitted Afghan: Wheat Ears Afghan

**Size:** Approximately 30" x 36" **Materials needed:** 15 oz. 4 ply soft yarn and  
Size 10-1/2 knitting needles

**Directions:** Cast on 122 Stitches. Pattern is a multiple of 8 stitches with 10 stitches for the side borders (5 stitches each side)

**Rows 1-5:** Knit.

**Row 6 (wrong side):** K5, p6, k2, yo, sl 1, k1, pss0, (p4, k2, yo, sl 1, k1, pss0) across to last 11 st, p6, k5.

**Row 7:** K11, p2, yo purlwise (bringing yarn end to front), p2 tog, (k4, p2, yo purlwise, p2 tog) across to last 11 st, k11.

**Rows 8-13:** Repeat rows 6-7 three more times.

**Row 14:** K5, p2, k2, yo, sl 1, k1, pss0, (p4, k2, yo, sl 1, k1, pss0) across to last 7 sts, p2, k5.

**Row 15:** K7, p2, yo purlwise, p2 tog, (k4, p2, yo purlwise, p2 tog) across to last 7 st, k7.

**Rows 16-21:** Repeat rows 14-15 three more times.

Repeat rows 6-21 until piece measures 35". Knit last 5 rows and bind off.

### Crocheted Blanket

This is a good blanket for hospitals since there are no hold for medical equipment to get tangled in. Thanks to Cindy Adams, Cactus Needles Knitting Guild, for the pattern.

**Size:** Approximately 30 x 30 **Materials needed:** 4 skeins chunky yarn and  
J crochet hook

To use different yarns and hooks, or to change the size, just make the foundation chain the desired length by having a multiple of 3 plus 2 chains.

**Directions:** Chain 83.

**Row 1 (right side):** In 5<sup>th</sup> ch from hook work (sc, hdc, dc); \*sk next 2 chs, in next ch work (sc, hdc, dc); rep from \* across to last 3 chs; sk next 2 chs, dc in last ch. Ch 2, turn.

**Row 2:** In next dc work (sc, hdc, dc); \*sk next 2 sts, in next dc work (sc, hdc, dc): rep from \* to beg 4 skipped chs; sk next 2 chs, dc in next ch. Ch 2, turn.

**Row 3 (right side):** \* In next dc work (sc, hdc, dc); sk next 2 sts; rep from \* to turning ch-2; dc in 2<sup>nd</sup> ch of turning ch. Ch 2, turn.

Repeat row 3 for desired length. At end of last row, do not ch 2, do not turn. Finish off.

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