

Project Linus for Chelsea Community Schools Contributes to 30,000th Blanket

The playroom of the Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center beams with bright colors and smiling faces as the coordinators of the Greater Boston Chapter of Project Linus sort nearly 100 handmade blankets to donate to patients. While giving blankets to children of the hospital is a normal occurrence for the coordinators, this particular occasion is special. Today, they will donate the 30,000th blanket created by their chapter, showcasing the dedication and commitment of their volunteers.

Fuzzy fleece, cuddly crocheted, colorful quilts and snug knit blankets are piled on a table, their beautiful pastel colors bringing springtime into the walls of Ace's Place Playroom. The blankets have been donated by individuals across eastern, MA including volunteers from Chelsea Community Schools' Knitting for Project Linus. When the coordinators are finished sorting the blankets, Ginny Finn, Director of Child Life Service at Tufts Floating Hospital for Children, arrives with the recipient of the 30,000th blanket. The coordinators anxiously gather some of their favorite blankets, encouraging the recipient, Morgan DeSousa, to choose the blanket she prefers best. After careful deliberation and with the help of Project Linus coordinator Gloria Mozzicato, Morgan decides on a rainbow colored, crocheted blanket made by a volunteer from Knitting for Project Linus. Chelsea Community Schools Director, Bea Cravatta, is present at the donation to help present the blankets.

“Each one of these children has their own individual story and each of these blankets has fit into that story,” says Ginny Finn. “The blankets have such a special meaning to the kids who are away from home and in the hospital. It has even more meaning to the parents because they know what goes into the blankets.”

The Greater Boston Chapter of Project Linus created its first blanket in 2001. There are five coordinators who manage the labeling, sorting and distribution of the blankets. With over 1,000 volunteers across eastern Massachusetts who range in age from young children to 90 years old, the chapter includes individual knitters, scouts, sewing and religious groups, and senior centers. All of the blankets are required to have a personal, handmade touch to show that time and love were put into making them.

“We realize 30,000 blankets is a tremendous effort on the part of the volunteers, and this is their accomplishment,” says Gloria Mozzicato, a Project Linus Coordinator. “We’re so excited to have the community see what they have done.”

Chelsea Community Schools contributes to the Greater Boston Chapter of Project Linus through their program, Knitting for Project Linus. Meeting Saturdays from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at the Williams Building, the group knits and crochets handmade blankets to donate to Project Linus.

“Knitting for Project Linus is like an old ‘quilting bee,’ it gives us a sense of community and a chance to bond,” says Carol Siriani, Project Linus Coordinator for Chelsea Community Schools. “The organization enables us to do what we love the most and to create blankets for those who really need them.”

Project Linus is a national, 501(c)(3) charitable organization comprised of volunteers, known as “blanketeers,” who create handmade blankets to offer as gifts to seriously ill or traumatized children, ages 0-18. They have over 300 chapters nationwide that have donated over 2 million blankets. Project Linus accepts donations of new, clean acrylic yarn and cotton fabric, and fleece materials and monetary donations.

“I cannot tell you what it means to the staff to be able to provide this form of comfort to a patient,” states a staff member of the Franciscan Hospital for Children in Boston, MA. “You can see the commitment and love in every square or loop in each blanket. Project Linus truly does provide security through blankets.”

To get involved with Project Linus or to learn more about the work of the organization, visit www.bostonprojectlinus.com. To contact the coordinators, email bostonprjlinus@aol.com or call 781-273-0544. For more information about Chelsea Community Schools’ Knitting for Project Linus, email ccs@chelseama.gov or call 617-466-5233.