

Boise/Southwest Idaho Chapter News

8,315

Children
Have Received Blankets
from
Project Linus
Boise/Southwest Idaho



See page 4 for
Schedule of
Blanket Days
and Events



What A Project Linus Blanket Means

Sometimes while making a blanket you wonder who will receive the blanket and what that blanket will mean to the child who receives it. After you read the letters and articles in this newsletter, you will have a better understanding of how much the blanket you made means to a child and his or her parent. Some of the articles are long, but I think you will agree that they are worth the time it takes to read them.



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www.LinusIdaho.org

Project Linus Plans 8th Anniversary Event

Come join us for our annual National Make A Blanket Day and our Chapter's 8th Anniversary Celebration on February 18, 10 am - 3 pm, at Robinson's Sewing Center, 572 Caldwell Blvd., Nampa, Idaho. Call 466-7642 for directions to the store.

Bring your favorite finger food, appetizer, or dessert; soft drinks and water will be furnished. If your last name is from A - M, please bring a

dessert; N - Z, please bring an appetizer, salad, or finger foods. There will be goodie bags and other surprises, so come join us and have a good time!

We will be working on blankets for the kids, but if you just want to drop by to see what we're doing, eat some good food, and visit with other volunteers, we would love to have you. If you haven't been to a previous Blanket Day - that's ok - come anyway, you are welcome!



Chapter
8th Anniversary
February 18, 2006

Idaho Steelheads Fundraiser

We're really excited about our upcoming fundraiser at the Idaho Steelheads Games on March 22, 2006. Our fundraiser with the Steelheads last March was a huge success, so we're doing it again!

The Steelheads are donating some wonderful prizes for our raffle. First prize will be a Suite, which includes 12 game tickets and a hockey quilt. Second prize will be "Steelhead for a Night"

which will give the winners two tickets, a behind the scenes look at what goes on with the Steelheads before a game, seats by the bench during the game and a hockey tote bag. Third prize will be 4 game tickets and a hockey pillow.

If you have family or friends that are hockey fans, why not buy a few raffle tickets? You'll be helping Project Linus raise the funds necessary to keep our chapter going and have a chance at some really neat prizes!



Hockey Raffle Quilt
made by
Marlys Baxter,
quilted by
Karen Hanson
Call 250-2119 to
buy raffle tickets

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Evacuees Receive Project Linus Blankets

On September 2, 2005, all Project Linus coordinators received an e-mail from Project Linus National Office stating that requests were starting to come in from chapters in the hurricane evacuation center areas.

At first, the requests were small: 100 blankets needed,

then 300, then the numbers increased to 2000, 2500 . . .

This went on for days and days as more and more families were evacuated from areas battered by the hurricanes.

Volunteers all over the country were busy making

blankets. Our chapter sent 195 blankets to Katrina evacuation centers and gave 6 to children who came to Boise because of the hurricanes. The total number of blankets made and delivered by Project Linus chapters was over 25,000.



From the Project Linus Coordinator in San Antonio, Texas

Since not everyone was able to share their shelter experiences, I thought I would tell you about my trip down to the Windsor Park Mall Katrina shelter, the day after it was open.

One of my blanketeers, Cathy S., and I filled the backseat and entire bed of her F350 with bags of blankets. Since no one from the United Way or Red Cross could give me information on where to bring blankets, we decided to just head down to a shelter and see what we could do. I came prepared with all official badges and paperwork to prove that Project Linus was a non-profit and that I am who I say I am.

We arrived at the shelter around 2:00 p.m., and after a brief discussion with the security guards and several volunteers, we met a Red Cross volunteer that took a personal calling to our organization. She helped us cart our bags of blankets in, then showed us where all the children were.

In the upstairs section of the old Montgomery Wards, there was an area set up just for kids— basketball courts, chalkboards, TVs, and even a large, supervised, roped-off play area for parents to drop off the littlest ones.

We set up a station (apparently right in the middle of a football field— boys kept collapsing on our piles of blankets!), and the children were brought to us to pick out their blankets.

Most of the children we talked to had just gotten to the shelter that day or the day before, and they were all from Louisiana. Some had even been staying in the Superdome, and all were grateful for a shower and a hot meal.

Each child would pick out a blanket from the small, medium, or large pile, or parents came to pick blankets for their young ones. We would write the child's name on the label with a Sharpie, then they were instructed to take the blanket downstairs and put it on their cot before they resumed playing.

The boys in their young teens were my favorite. They would saunter by, cool as can be, watching the blankets. When asked if they wanted one, they were always very polite. "No ma'am. I'm ok, but thank you." When we told them that they could have one of their own to keep, you could see their eyes settle on one particular blanket that they had already picked out in their minds. They

would waver with indecision, then say, "I'll take . . . this one!! Thank you!" Then walk off clutching their blanket to their chest with a small smile.

My friend, a tall leggy blond, was a particular attraction to several of the younger girls. (Apparently thin blond hair is a rarity in their world.) One brought a Barbie doll brush over and began trying to style Cathy's hair. When it wouldn't hold a curl, several girls came over to help the efforts.

With a gaggle of girls at Cathy's head (pulling out hair, with Cathy trying hard not to wince); I had a small helper of my own. A little girl named Antionnika took me by the hand and led me over to the chalk board, where she showed me a picture she had drawn for me and Cathy. It was two stick figures holding a blanket, with the words underneath, "I Love You." Antionnika stayed with us all afternoon long, helping the other children pick out blankets and drawing us more pictures.

Moments like that can keep me pumped up for this organization for a long time. Thank you all for the hard work you did that made the Hurricane Relief efforts possible!

Letter to Project Linus National Office from a Mother evacuated to Houston,

I am not writing to receive information, but to say THANK YOU!

My Children and I evacuated to Houston when New Orleans had been threatened by Hurricane Katrina. Of course as usual, we left with the mindset that we would return home in a few days. As the day dawned and the news came that the levees indeed did not hold and New Orleans was under water, it also dawned on me as a Mother that I had not prepared for the inability to go home again. As the horror of the situation back home began to sink in, so did the uncertainty of our future.

I am a single mother of three school aged children. Benjamin 16, Loren - he's 14, and Lindsey, 10. They were wanting answers, and I was only full of questions. We had arrived in Houston to a hotel room my Mom had called from California and reserved for us. We had a place to stay for three days. The weight of our situation grew as the uncertain hours passed.

I had left home with my three children and 6 show dogs. I quickly got on the computer at the hotel and got word out to other Australian Shepherd breeders around the country that we needed help dispersing our dogs. Folks came

and got them and placed them in new permanent homes for us. I was so very grateful, but my daughter cried with the parting of every pup. I told her there would come a day when she would be able to have a dog to show again, but right now, it was better for everyone for them to go to new homes.

My boys were so unhappy at having left their schools and their friends, and wanted to go home. They were struggling with having no home to return to and with knowing that I had a lot to deal with. We had no place to live, and I had no job. Surely this was

(Continued on page 3)



Letter to Project Linus National Office from a Mother evacuated to Houston, Texas - continued from page 2

some kind of joke, right? I mean our lives had been swept out from under us, and it was only a couple of days ago all had been normal.

A woman with a large house in Katy, Texas, sent a friend to our hotel to find a family that needed help, and we moved in here the next day. After a week of not knowing where to go, we now have a temporary home. I set about the process of enrolling my kids in local schools to avoid them failing the year, and to provide some sense of normalcy to their lives.

I then paired up with a friend who had evacuated to this area also, and we returned to New Orleans to see what we could salvage if anything. The last thing my daughter said to me when we left was; "Mama, please bring my quilt back with you." Our house was flooded and everything was crawling with mold. I could not bring her favorite blanket.....and after seeing our home like that, I was wishing I had a favorite blanket!

I returned to Houston with very little from our house, but had tried to take something from each child's room, something that belonged to them.

A few days later my oldest son Ben came home from his new High school and said: "Mama, I have something for you." I looked up and he had in his hand the most beautiful quilt! I asked: "For me? Where did this come from?"

He stated that he had been called to the office at school and told he could pick out a blanket for himself. They had been sent by "Project Linus." I had never heard of it and had no idea it existed. He told the office staff: "My Mom would like this one", and instead of taking one for himself he brought me the most beautiful quilt in the world!

I cannot tell you what happened inside of me that day. HOPE ran through me right then and there. I held that blanket close and felt the love that had gone through the hands that made it.

It was an amazing experience. I thanked God right then for the folks who made these blankets and arranged for those of us who have no answers, to have what is most important in this life - hope, love and comfort.

A couple of weeks later my daughter Lindsey came running in from school shouting: "Look Mom!" She too had been called into the office at her elementary school and had been allowed to pick out a blanket. Hers had horses all over it and they are her real true love.....she was truly blessed! I couldn't bring her quilt from home, but she now has one "just for her."

These days Thank You just seems so small. But I am writing to say those small words from the depths of my heart. THANK YOU to all involved with Project Linus! You are "touching" lives! May God bless you abundantly with every stitch!

Nanette, Benjamin, Loren, and Lindsey

Thank You Notes Received by our Chapter

I just wanted to thank you for the beautiful blanket that my daughter Kayla received from St Al's. We were in a bad car accident on 1/3.

I broke 5 ribs and my leg and was knocked unconscious (I was also 29 weeks pregnant at the time.) When I woke up in the ER, I saw Kayla wrapped up in the blanket, being held by her daddy. She (and the belly baby) are thankfully fine. I just love the blanket and I am very appreciative to all those who took the time to donate the materials and make the blanket for us.

Thank you, Linda F

I thought I'd let you know about the whereabouts of some of our quilts and blankets. It's always nice to hear

where they "go to live." A number of adults and children who are currently homeless received quilts in December. Some had been really cold before they got the quilts. Others just felt warm knowing that someone cared enough to make something nice for them.

One little girl cried when she was told she could keep her quilt and proceeded, like Linus, to drag her quilt with her everywhere. Several teens were elated with their quilts.

I had a recent experience with a twelve year old foster boy I have worked with for several years. He had to undergo a very difficult CARES interview following disclosure of sexual abuse. He was so scared and it hurt him to talk about what had happened to him. He was wrapped up in a "froggie" quilt and hasn't stopped talking about the quilt

since then! I saw him last night and he told me how cool it was to get his quilt and how it made him feel safe.

They are not "just quilts" that are made by our Linus friends - they are an amazing act of love that continues to wrap these vulnerable ones in love. I'm so happy to be a part of a group who cares so much and gives such love! Thank you to each person who had a part in making these quilts - from fabric selection to that final stitch and label.

*Marilyn Tucker,
Family Developer, Casey Foundation.*

Note: Project Linus does not usually give blankets to adults, however, some of our volunteers made blankets for homeless adults and children just before Christmas. We did not put Linus labels on the blankets that were given to the adults.



"Our" Camps

Our Project Linus chapter has made blankets for camps since 1999 when we started making blankets for Royal Family Kids Camp (a camp for kids who are in foster care). In addition to Royal Family Kids Camp, our chapter now provides blankets for Camp Rainbow Gold (for kids who have cancer) and Camp Hodia (for kids who are diabetic). This year we will also help provide blankets for children at Camp Erin (Idaho's first bereavement camp). Approximately ninety blankets will be needed for the four camps this summer.

One of our volunteers, LaVera Basey, makes special labels for each of the camp blankets on her embroidery machine. She embroiders the camp logo and a line that says "This blanket

belongs to _____" with a space for the child's name on each blanket.

We just received this letter from the American Cancer Society and Camp Rainbow Gold:

Thank you for your continuous donation of quilts and blankets to the campers of the American Cancer Society's Camp Rainbow Gold. On behalf of the staff, volunteers and campers we can't thank you enough. The blankets you provide are always such a tremendous success and the kids absolutely love them. We have started a tradition when delivering them; we sneak them into the cabins while the campers are sleeping so they wake up to such a wonderful surprise. Many of them think they come from angels.

Camp Rainbow Gold is a summer oncol-

ogy camp held in the Sun Valley area of Idaho for kids 6 - 16 that have been diagnosed with cancer. For one week, 70 - 75 kids get to forget about their worries and enjoy endless outdoor activities under the supervision of a full medical staff as well as a wonderful team of volunteers . . . all free of charge to the campers and their families. Because of the generosity of people like you, these kids will be able to enjoy this experience for many years to come.

*Meg Omel,
Camp Manager*

Schedule of Important Events

Make A Blanket Days

Robinson's Sewing Center
572 Caldwell Blvd, Nampa
10 am - 3pm

February 18, 2006
April 22, 2006

Marilynn's Pickets & Patchwork
Nyssa, Oregon
10 am - 3 pm

March 10, 2006
May 12, 2006
July 14, 2006

September 8, 2006
November 10, 2006

Idaho Sewing & Vacuum
4500A Overland Road, Boise
10 am - 4pm

March 25, 2006
May 20, 2006
July 22, 2006
September 30, 2006
November 18, 2006

Events

Service Training Day
Bishop Kelly High School, Boise
March 9, 2006
9 am - 2 pm

Idaho Steelheads Fundraiser
Qwest Center, Boise
March 22, 2006

Idaho PieceMakerS Quilt Show
Kuna, Idaho
August 5 & 6, 2006

Boise Basin Quilters Quilt Show
Boise Centre of the Grove
September 30 & October 1, 2006

We are always looking for volunteers to help at the various events that we have throughout the year. Come work for an hour or two, or all day - whatever fits your schedule.

If you can help, please give me a call at 250-2119

Donations Received

Our Project Linus chapter has been blessed by the generosity of many groups, businesses and individuals over the past year. St. Luke's Regional Medical Center has again given us a grant to help pay for all the items needed to make blankets for kids who need a hug. The outpouring of support after Hurricane Katrina battered the Gulf Coast was amazing. Over \$500 was donated to our chapter in just a few days to help with the expense of making and shipping blankets to the affected areas.

We have received many hundreds of yards of fabric and batting from many volunteers and donors.

To all of you:

THANK YOU!





Fons & Porter's *Love of Quilting*TM Magazine

Subscribe to or renew Fons & Porter's *Love of Quilting*TM magazine and help Project Linus at the same time. A one year subscription is \$20 - \$8 of that will go to our Project Linus chapter

You must subscribe through Boise/Southwest Idaho chapter for Project Linus to receive the \$8. Just send me a check for \$20 made out to Project Linus and you will be getting your magazine soon. Be sure and indicate whether this is a new or renewal subscription.

I just recently received the following e-mail from Project Linus National Office:

We have just been notified that as of MARCH 1, 2006, the guild price for Fons and Porter's Love of Quilting is going up. THE COST TO YOUR VOLUNTEER IS NOT BEING RAISED AT THIS TIME, BUT WILL IN JULY. This means that as of March 1st, for every subscription sold by your chapter, your chapter will get \$4.00 instead of \$8.00. For your purposes, any subscriptions that are received by Project Linus National Headquarters AFTER February 24, 2006 will be at the new rate - no exceptions.

In July, the subscription price will be raised to \$22.00. All subscriptions after that time will be \$22.00 to your

volunteers - and your chapter will then get \$5.00 for each subscription sold. We'll let you know exactly when that happens.

We hope that you will continue to provide support for this fundraising opportunity. In the past years, we have raised almost \$9,000.00 for Project Linus through Fons and Porter. We feel that we can still benefit from this offer, even at the smaller margin.

Blanket Making Guidelines

Suggested Blanket Sizes (approximate)

Baby - 30" x 30" or 36"

Child - 40" x 60"

Teen - 45" x 72"

We continue to have a greater need for larger child and teen sized blankets and we never have enough "boy" blankets.

Please check your blankets carefully for pins before donating them. It's much better that you find that pin than the child who receives your blanket.

If you are crocheting or knitting baby blankets, please use soft baby yarn.

www.LinusIdaho.org, our chapter website, has more Blanket Guidelines.

Teddy Bear

Most quilters have an abundance of batting scraps. The ladies who make Teddy Bears for St. Luke's Hospitals can use those scraps. They shred the regular batting for use in the bears. If you have regular stuffing, that would be even better!

You can drop off your scraps at any of our drop off locations and we will see that the Bear Ladies get your scraps!

Fleece Blanket Guidelines

We prefer single layer fleece blankets.

You don't have to knot the fringe - a neat plain fringe looks very nice without knotting. We actually prefer that the fringe NOT be knotted unless it can be done very neatly.

Do not cut the fringe any longer than 2" - 4" long. Longer fringe tangles and the longer you make the fringe the less blanket there is for snuggling. Be sure that all fringe is cut the same width and length.

If you finish the edges of a fleece blanket with blanket stitch, don't make the stitches so big that fingers and toes can get caught in the stitches.

Postage Costs and E-mail

Costs keep going up for postage stamps. If each of you would bring just 5 new first-class stamps to Blanket Days, that would take care of mailing our newsletters.

To help even more with expenses, if you have an e-mail address that you check fairly often, please e-mail it to me at our chapter e-mail address on the front page of this newsletter.

Blanket Drop Off Locations

Blankets and other donations may be dropped off at:

Robison's Sewing Center
572 Caldwell Blvd,
Nampa
466-7642

Marilynn's Pickets & Patchwork,
Nyssa
541 372-5336

Idaho Sewing and Vacuum
4500A Overland Road
Boise
338-0144

2 Sisters Quilting Shoppe
850 West Franklin, Meridian
887-4707

Our Numbers

In 1998, the grand total of blankets delivered by our chapter was 91.

In January 2006, our chapter delivered 460 blankets.

Since it's inception in 1995, nationwide, Project Linus has delivered 1,540,243 blankets to kids who need a hug.

There are now 360 Project Linus chapters nationwide.

Chapter Wish List

Volunteers . . .

- ♥ Individuals
- ♥ Youth & church groups
- ♥ Quilt or sewing guilds
- ♥ Civic organizations & businesses

Blankets . . .

- ♥ Quilted, tied, crocheted, knitted, or polar fleece
- ♥ Sizes (approximate): 36" x 36", 40" x 60", 45" x 72"
- ♥ Must be new clean, handmade, durable, and washable

Blanket Supplies . . .

- ♥ New, unused washable cotton fabric, flannel or polar fleece
- ♥ Low-loft batting
- ♥ Acrylic yarn

Other Donations . . .

- ♥ Gift certificates from fabric shops, quilt shops, & office supply stores.
- ♥ Cash donations for batting, postage stamps, paper, ink cartridges for printer, and other chapter expenses.



Volunteers are Very Important People!



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