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Flying Needles collecting items for Handmade for the Homeless event through Aug. 12

WILLIAMSBURG, VA, JUNE 5, 2017 – The Flying Needles, a Local Yarn Shop, is collecting handmade and purchased items for its Handmade for the Homeless event, now through Aug. 12.

For two months, The Flying Needles will collect handmade items, like, mittens, hats, scarves, socks, etc., to donate to the Harbor, a day center for the homeless located at the Williamsburg House of Mercy and a collaboration between Williamsburg House of Mercy and Greater Williamsburg Outreach Mission, united to serve the homeless.

During the Handmade for the Homeless event, The Flying Needles will raffle off a **GRAND PRIZE**, sponsored by Bryson Distributing, Plymouth Yarn and Done Roving Yarns. The prize will go to the person who donates the most number of handmade items. The Flying Needles **will collect handcrafted items AND PURCHASED** items through Saturday, Aug. 12. Everyone who donates a handmade item will be invited for a group picture at noon, Saturday, Aug. 12, with Williamsburg House of Mercy's Executive Director Shannon Woloszynowski, and The Flying Needles Owner Susan Dickerson. The picture will be submitted to local media.

The timing of the **Handmade for the Homeless Project** is perfect, said Williamsburg House of Mercy, Executive Director Shannon Woloszynowski. "We're coming into the Winter Shelter season, and people don't really think about his until November. To have these items in September as we gear up for Winter Shelter is ideal."

Items needed for the homeless population include: hats, gloves, scarves, and socks are a great need as the weather starts to turn colder. Other items in great demand include: men's underwear (new), laundry cards, laundry detergent pods, bus tickets, diapers, new tents, new sleeping bags, wipes, toilet paper, razors, deodorant, toothpaste, and small-sized shaving cream.

Socks are among the most needed items at homeless shelters, yet among the least-often donated. "People don't think to donate socks," Woloszynowski said. It's such a problem, that shelter groups tend to end up purchasing socks for those in need. Even regular donors of clothing such as coats and pants will usually wear their own socks until they have holes and then throw them away. Because of the shortage, the nation's homeless population is constantly at risk of serious foot disease and, during winter months, in severe danger posed by the cold.

And interestingly enough, for those interested in making hats and mittens, the homeless population tends to hang onto their hats and mittens longer. "I've had guys come back a year later with the same hat. They just wear them longer."

The homeless population in Williamsburg consists of men, women, and many times, children. Numbers ebb and flow throughout the year, but late fall and winter are particularly difficult as seasonal jobs begin lay-offs and employment becomes increasingly hard to find.

Woloszynowski will be at The Flying Needles' World Wide Knit in Public Day to provide information about the needs of the homeless and Williamsburg House of Mercy's mission and activities.

To support **The Flying Needles' Handmade for the Homeless Project**, The Flying Needles for the first time ever will provide several of its classes at half price. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to view The Flying Needles' full calendar of classes.

"Those who knit, crochet and use fibers to make things have huge hearts," said The Flying Needles Owner Susan Dickerson. "I hope this Handmade for the Homeless Project is just a vehicle to channel those compassionate souls in a fun way."

Items to donate – either handmade or purchased:

- New 2 or 3 person tents
- New sleeping bags
- Hats
- Gloves
- Scarves
- Socks
- Men's underwear (new)
- Laundry cards
- Laundry detergent pods
- Bus tickets

Diapers
Wipes
Toilet paper
Razors
Deodorant
Toothpaste
Small-sized shaving cream

Itinerary to support The Flying Needles' Handmade for the Homeless Project

10 am to 5 pm, World Wide Knit in Public Day – The Flying Needles will launch the Handmade for the Homeless Project at the WWKIPD – a day for all fiber artists to come together and work on projects in public. The Flying Needles will have a captive audience to make its announcement at noon with Williamsburg House of Mercy Executive Director Shannon Woloszynowski

From 5 to 7 pm, Wednesday, July 26 & again 10 am to Noon Thursday, July 27 – Those who have handcrafted socks are invited to a Flying Needles Christmas in July Event where they can make gift tags to include with their socks. Tags & markers will be provided.

Noon, Saturday, Aug. 12 – A photo will be taken of all handmade items, the people who made them, the Grand Prize winner, sponsors, The Flying Needles Owner Susan Dickerson and Williamsburg House of Mercy Executive Director Shannon Woloszynowski.