



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Seniors, others donate knitted items to homeless

APPLETON, Wis. – Since early this year, dedicated knitters and those who crochet have been keeping their fingers busy creating items to help area residents keep warm this winter.

In February, Touchmark on West Prospect launched “knitting for a cause,” which encouraged people to use their knitting or crocheting skills to make hats, scarves, mittens and other items for clients at Homeless Connections of Appleton. On December 10, 139 lovingly created items were presented to Homeless Connections during a heartwarming ceremony. The donations included 74 hats, 48 scarves, 13 pairs of mittens, sweaters, socks and an afghan.

Homeless Connections’ clients will appreciate the items, which come in a variety of sizes, said Jennifer Dieter, community relations director for the Appleton nonprofit.

“Our clients tend to be exposed to the elements much more than the average population. With limited transportation options, waiting for a bus or riding a bike in winter is sometimes necessary to get where they need to go. Having knitted items to keep them warm is especially important,” she said. “Touchmark and everyone who worked on this effort put so much care and talent into making each piece. When our clients put on the items, they will not only feel the warmth of the item itself but also the warmth of someone who cares enough to make something specifically for their use.”

Touchmark Executive Director Barb Pandolfo said one group of eight women met every Thursday afternoon and made most of the items.

“We have some dedicated knitters at Touchmark, and they wanted to use their talents and do something to help others, and “knitting for a cause” was born,” she said. “The cause resonated with others and brought together people of all ages, from schoolchildren to seniors. As everyone finished different items, they put them in the barrel, which we filled almost twice. This was truly a community-wide effort to make a difference in people’s lives.”

Members of the Touchmark knitting group who were honored for their hard work and dedication include Joan Geenen, Rosemary Fulcer, Betty Manthey, Doreen Dietz, Jean

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TOUCHMARK ON WEST PROSPECT
Full-service Retirement Community
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Ormson, Val Cornwell, Jane Havinga and Judy Tonnell. Those who don't knit or crochet donated yarn to the group.

Pandolfo said staying active and participating in a variety of wellness activities like knitting play an important role in helping older people stay mentally, physically and emotionally healthy.

About Touchmark

Located on 40 acres directly across from the Butte des Morts Country Club, Touchmark is home to more than 150 people. The full-service retirement community offers a wide range of homes and lifestyle options.

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