



## First Quarter 2019

### **Perspectives by Patty:**

It's been a long, cold, icy and snowy winter in Kansas City, MO. But, my spirits have stayed bright thanks to the many notes we get from the children and parents of children that receive our blankets. We share these notes on our national and local websites, in this and local newsletters, in our LOVE NOTES (see inside this newsletter), through local and national social media and more.



We've been busy working with national companies and getting lots of good press from them that helps us to build awareness of Project Linus and all the good work we do. JOANN stores continuing to be a great partner and stepped up their efforts with their February 16<sup>th</sup> instore events (see inside for pics). *Martha Stewart Living* and *Midwest Living* both recently featured Project Linus. Press likes this has a direct impact on individuals reaching out to our chapters to become volunteers. We appreciate the support of these national companies as well as the many local companies that support our chapters.

The Mystery Quilt Challenge has finished but will start again in August 2019. Now we are ready to move on to a new event – The Knit and Crochet Along. See inside for more details.

Thanks for your ongoing support of Project Linus.

*Patty Gregory*

**Blankets donated  
since 1995: 7,375,351**

### **Local Chapter Highlights:**

Congrats to the Culpeper, VA, Chapter (Coordinator Debbie Busby) for donating over 25,000 blankets by the end of 2018!



The Onondaga NY Chapter (Coordinator Karen Monnet Lathrop) reached the goal of distributing 20,000 blankets in January 2019. Congrats!

The North/Central Chicago land chapter (Coordinators Judi Goldman and Penny Gidd) donated 2,000 more blankets in 2018 than ever before for a total of 157,613 since they started.

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## Project Linus Knit and Crochet Along



Announcing our FIRST EVER Project Linus Knit and Crochet along! In the past few years we have held a quilting Mystery Challenge. We felt it was time to offer that fun to those who knit and crochet. Even if it's past March 2, you can still register so come join the fun!

### HOW THIS EVENT WORKS

You can sign up to join our Knit & Crochet Along by going to:

<https://www.projectlinus.org/knitcrochet/>

Every two weeks **beginning March 2, 2019** we will release a new part of each pattern. Each pattern has 5 parts and at the end of the 10 week period we will have the Big Reveal! These pattern parts will be available on a registrant-only page that will appear on March 2. This page will be accessible from our menu under National Events > Knit & Crochet Along > Patterns.

This event is a fundraiser for Project Linus. Your donation of \$15 (or \$30 if you choose to register for both the knit and crochet patterns) will allow you access for whichever pattern you registered to make a complete blanket. The blanket is yours to keep or you can donate it back to Project Linus.



Our 2019 Mystery Quilt Challenge and Contest has ended and it has been a HUGE success! In August, 2018, registration opened for our 2018 Project Linus Mystery Quilt Challenge.

The Project Linus Mystery Quilt Challenge is a weekly mystery quilt reveal held once a year as a fundraiser for Project Linus. Registration is a \$15 donation to Project Linus. Each week during the challenge a "mystery clue," is revealed. Quilters of all levels of expertise will be given detailed instructions and videos as they complete a child-sized quilt. This year we had 1671 participants in the challenge which means we raised \$25,065 for Project Linus chapters across the country.

The quilt challenge is followed by a contest for participants who are interested in entering their finished quilts. Prizes are awarded to the quilt that raises the most money for Project Linus through an online voting process.

Many, many thanks to EACH of our 30 contest participants. All totaled \$11,002 was raised for Project Linus from the contest.

The top 4 winners are:

FIRST PLACE: Quilt #9 - Dianne Edington - The Janome DC2015 Sewing Machine donated by Missouri Sewing Machine Company

SECOND PLACE: Quilt #11 - Gerri Smoluk - The Accuquilt Go! Fabric Cutter Starter Set donated by the Accuquilt Company

THIRD PLACE: Quilt #8 - Diane Timpano - The 100 Fat Quarters of Fabric donated by Quilting Treasures

HONORABLE MENTION: Quilt #12 - Heather Dahlmeyer - 90 x 40 yard roll of Warm and Natural Batting donated by the Warm Company.

Please go to our website ([www.projectlinus.org](http://www.projectlinus.org)) to view the winning quilts. Thank you to our Project Linus friends for your support and CONGRATULATIONS to our contest winners. We hope all of you will join us for our 2019-2020 Mystery Quilt Challenge and Contest! Please check back. Registration opens in August, 2019.

**Project Linus was THRILLED when JOANN's called to tell us they were going to hold blanket making days at their local stores on February 16<sup>th</sup>!**

**A few examples of these great events are below:**

Hudson, Bergen, Passaic, Morris, Sussex Counties Northern New Jersey Chapter (Leslie Maltz Coordinator): The store in Paramus, NJ, donated the fleece for making blankets. The managers were delightful and supportive, and offered to host us whenever we want. The customers were really interested in learning all about Project Linus.



Pat Weber (Coordinator for the SandHills/Moore County, NC Chapter) reported they had a great day at their local store In Fayetteville, NC, where customers and employees worked together to make blankets and collect blanket donations. They are all looking forward to future events!

The West Central Coast, FL Chapter (Coordinator Chris Spilker) reported a good turnout and fun time at her local JOANN's store. Volunteers dropped off blankets, customers bought kits to use to make Project Linus blankets at home and the JOANN's associate talked to every customer they could about Project Linus.

JOANN's in Waco and Roundrock, TX (Temple/Killeen, TX Chapter, Coordinator Sandra Rowell) made and donated a total of 43 blankets.



Many chapters reported an increased interest in Project Linus thanks to this event! Thanks JOANN's for your support!

**Local Chapter News continued:**

**Project Linus Charles County, MD Chapter (Karen Huffman, Coordinator )**

The Jaycees of Waldorf hosted 30,000 blanket celebration and holiday luncheon in December. We had a nice gathering of Blanketeers from inception of our local Chapter in 2002 to recently joined in 2018; services that support us including individuals from CC Senior Centers and Century 21 New Millennium; and community services we support including representatives from Charles Regional Medical Center, Catherine Foundation, CC Department of Social Services, CC Infants & Toddlers, LifeStyles of Maryland, Hospice of CC, and MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center. Our guest speakers Karen Hefter from Catherine Foundation and Shellee Stine from Charles Regional Medical Center shared stories about the comfort our blankets bring to the children and families who receive them. Music was donated by Cheryl Recheweg, President/Public Affairs Chair for Port Tobacco Players, who played holiday favorites throughout the event.



Amy Davis from CC Department of Social Services presenting us with a certificate of appreciation. Project Linus members include Grace Worsley, Mary Hancock, and Karen Huffman.



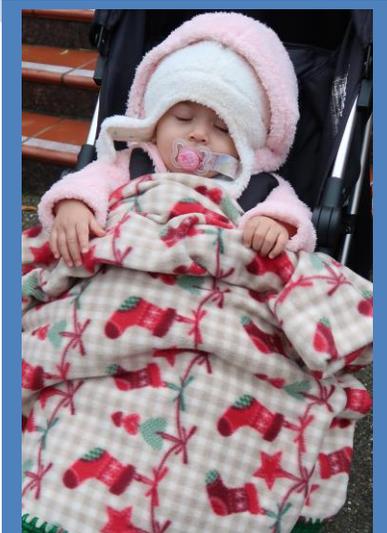
Debra Bowling and Sylvia Mudd from LifeStyles of Maryland with Karen Huffman.



Blanketeers and supporters enjoying the appreciation luncheon.



Congrats to the Hudson Bergen, NJ Chapter (Coordinator Leslie Maltz! They started 2019 out by donating their 44,000<sup>th</sup> blanket to a child in a traumatic situation! Each blanket truly makes a difference!!!!



**Volunteering with Project Linus:** Would you like to know more about volunteering with Project Linus? Contact your local coordinator to learn more. There are no requirements for how many blankets you must make (or any) or what meetings you have to attend. Some people that help, don't sew, knit or crochet, but they help in other ways through financial contributions, providing space for meetings or events, conducting fundraising and much more. Just check with your local coordinator. More info at: <http://www.projectlinus.org/volunteer/>

## ***Snowball Express (snowballexpress.org)***

**by Michele Mingoia** (Coordinator Orlando/Central Florida Chapter)

Gold Star Kids and their families gathered this year for Snowball Express. This event, which provides activities and interactions for children who have lost active military parents after 9/11/2001, has been held in Dallas for many years and for many years, the Dallas/Denton County chapter has coordinated nationwide Project Linus donations to the children who participate. In December 2018, organizers, the Gary Sinise Foundation, moved the event to the vicinity of Walt Disney World near Orlando. The baton passed to the Orlando/Central Florida chapter of Project Linus to coordinate for the 1100 children who participated. Each child could choose a blanket from categories like US services, fictional superheroes, cars and trucks, and animals. Fleece, knit/crochet, and quilts were all popular. The event was supported by the 5 Project Linus chapters in the Central Florida area (Melbourne, Orlando/Central Florida, Polk & Highlands, Volusia, and West Central Coast) to gather, sort, and distribute blankets and everyone came out in full force. We even had volunteers from the Dallas chapter and from the local Oviedo Woman's Club sewing group. We gave out the first blankets to children who were meeting their departure to the airport transport at 5AM. Thanks to all the chapters nationwide who sent inspected and labeled blankets in September through November. Special thanks goes to the Dallas/Denton County chapter who gave us great advice about past practices and to Renesas Electronics in Palm Bay Florida for extended use of their loading dock facilities for receiving and sorting. Snowball Express is expected to return to the Orlando area in 2019 and 2020.



### **A Special Quilter:**

Annabelle Hammer (Fairfax Co. VA Coordinator) would like to introduce you to a special quilter: Joyce I. from Vermont. Joyce's grandson lives in Northern Virginia and unfortunately suffers from cancer. He received a PL blanket from INOVA Children's Hospital. Joyce's daughter told her mother about the blanket and our chapter. Joyce wants to "pay it forward". However, there is no Project Linus Chapter in her area of Vermont, so Joyce has been generous enough to send her quilts down to our chapter. Now Joyce is inspired to open up her own Project Linus chapter in Vermont. Thank you, Joyce, and good luck!



## **Response to the West Coast Wildfires:**

**Camp Fire Request for Blankets:** Project Linus, Solano County Chapter (Coordinator Laura Procter) received a special request from The 100 Club of Solano & Yolo Counties for blankets for the families of all first responders who so diligently worked the Camp Fire. They were planning a Christmas event to honor their heroic efforts in fighting the fire. Could we possibly supply 226 Project Linus blankets for the children of these first responders? Laura contacted Diane, the Coordinator of the Yolo County Chapter of Project Linus — she put out the word to her Blanketeers. Diane's Blanketeers answered her call and within days they were able to donate 125 blankets for the event to take place in Chico on December 23rd. The Solano County chapter donated the additional 101 blankets that were needed.

### **Many Organizations Help Project Linus such as the Woman's Club of Arlington, VA.**

Coordinator Annabelle Hammer (Fairfax Co.) share this information: I would like to showcase a wonderful partner of our chapter, The Woman's Club of Arlington (WCA). WCA provides us with afghans and fleece blankets every quarter. They pay for their own materials and provide the many busy hands. Angela M. is the club's liaison to our chapter. Here is an article she wrote about the club and its many other community service activities, besides Project Linus.

"The Woman's Club of Arlington was formed in 1931 and became a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs the following year. The club's objectives are charitable, educational, scientific, and literary. With that in mind, in the early years of the club the members joined other Arlington women's groups for outreach projects with the Gulf Branch and Long Branch nature centers, the Columbia Pike Library, and the Servicemen's Club in Arlington. Today our members' outreach projects include Fairfax Hospital's Mended Hearts Project, Project Linus, Opera NOVA, Arlington Food Assistance Program, OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration), Wakefield High School Scholarship, and others.

<http://womansclubarlington.org/> "

Thank you so much, Angela and WCA! (In the photo, Angela is standing in the back, on the right-hand side.)

You have been an Absolutely Fantastic partner in helping Project Linus serve the sick and traumatized children in our area.



### **Many Organizations Help Project Linus through the Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday "Day of Service".**

Here is one example:

Project Linus Fairfax County VA was honored to participate in Martin Luther King Jr. Service Day at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria. The Coordinator Annabelle Hammer gave a little introduction about Project Linus and supervised the blanket-making event. The young people made 30 blankets! Thank you to Patricia Cooper of the Technology and Innovation Learning Department for inviting our organization to participate. It was a lot of fun!



## Strength is Forged in Fire

By Sharon Garver, Chapter Coordinator

Santa Clarita Valley / Antelope Valley /  
Sylmar, Los Angeles, CA Chapter

“Strength is forged in fire.” This is my personal mantra for my life, and something I tell my children and students constantly, yet I never imagined it would literally be something that would be a new foundation for my chapter when, on January 8th, I received a news alert on my phone from a local radio station back home while on a vacation to visit my in-laws in Florida. When I clicked on the link, I watched a video of a local storage unit, engulfed in flames, then I saw the address and realized, in horror, that it was the location of my storage unit where my chapter keeps *all* of our prepared blankets that are ready to go out for delivery. I watched, knowing that the smoke was creeping in and contaminating everything in our unit despite my meticulous efforts to have things sealed in clear plastic bags and bins. Tears welling in my eyes, my children asked me what was wrong. “I have to throw it all away and start over,” I whispered. When we got back, my son wanted to help me throw it all away; the little boy who was the reason I started the chapter in the first place, the boy who received his blanket from the chapter just to the south of mine, helped me dry my tears and carry smoke damaged fabric that looked fine, but smelled of smoke, and throw it on the piles of charred material. The other tenants were throwing away memories; I was throwing away promises and hope that I had ready to give to children. I wrote an email to my sponsor, Logix Federal Credit Union, letting them know before I published the information because I did not want them to find out via social media. I told my contact, Alethia, I wasn’t sure what to say to our public and that is when she wrote a press release for me. Later, that press release gave me the strength and courage to write a Facebook post where all my fellow Coordinator brothers and sisters immediately jumped to offer supplies that were lost: over \$6,000 in fabric and 200 blankets were lost. I had already spoken to our national office and asked what I was supposed to do, and we were working through logistics, but I was sure that I didn’t want to take from other chapters. The reason for this was sad, but true: we live in a time where there are too many natural disasters and tragedies caused by humans, and I was worried that if I took from others’ resources, we would not be ready for the next major call to action. Additionally, I knew that I had a very giving community and I knew that my connection throughout my community and school districts would probably help me get the word out - that Logix Federal Credit Union would also help with publicity. I was right. I sent the press release out and then went into my local JOANN’s store and handed them a copy of my press to let them know that I was hoping that the community would drop off donations and to call me as soon as they came in so as to not bother their store. About three weeks later, I was contacted by JOANN’s corporate and offered a very large fleece donation that more than compensated the loss of fabric. My local managers at the store had been working with corporate to help out our chapter. Not only that, my community has already donated about 50 or more of the lost blankets. My local Target offered a \$100 gift card, and several people are still dropping off supplies. My upcoming Make a Blanket Day has more than double the sign ups than we usually have at this point and we have slowly started small deliveries back up again. So, my personal mantra is proving to be true, like the phoenix who rises from the ashes, our strength has not only been forged in fire, our chapter is rising higher from the ashes and becoming stronger as a result of that fire, and we are grateful for all of your support, the community support, our sponsor, Logix, and JOANN’s.



## Thank You Notes and Emails:

This beautiful note came in from North Carolina: Tonight I laid our blanket on our daughter's bed; a year and a half after first receiving it at New Hanover Hospital. She had been transferred to the hospital when a routine blood draw returned abnormal results. She was 6 months old. I had watched her lifeless body be transferred by ambulance; an image I'll never forget. When they placed her in the hospital bed, it resembled more of a cage- too big for a bassinet, too little for a bed. Tubes and monitors were hooked to her and the room was buzzing around me. The nurse brought in this pink blanket and it seemed to swallow my daughter. But, I had come with nothing. It was supposed to just be a routine check at the doctor's office. And there I was, with an inconsolable child and a pink blanket. Today, this blanket is our oldest's favorite. She sleeps with it nightly. While she was too young to remember her sister at that time, it somehow brings her comfort and me, too. Both daughters are thriving, growing like weeds. We are lucky. We count our blessings. And when we do, we think of you. Thank you to the souls who bring comfort to those who you may never know; you're doing God's work! We are forever thankful!

Ten years ago, I was 9 years old, and in a hospital bed. I'd attempted suicide. I lived in a severely sexually abusive home, and they didn't even know. I would go on to attempt suicide 7 more times, before age 15. That's when I'd be removed from home and put in a foster home, where my story would come out. I received your blanket in that first hospital stay. Ten years later, through foster care, homelessness, and an abusive boyfriend, I still have the blanket. I'll never leave that blanket behind; for it reminds me of the first sign of human kindness I ever had in my life. I'm blind now, legally blind and actually have practically no sight at all. But I'll always know what the blanket looks like, I spent way too many years holding it to not know. Thank you. It's made a big difference.

I am interested in knitting blankets for you. I also have a personal story regarding why I want to do this. The first Monday in December of 2018 my 3 months old child was attacked by step-children's mother with a car door. The first hospital that we went to overnight had a wonderfully knitted white blanket with pink trim and a hat that matched. My daughter loved that blanket and slept with it all night and it even kept her calm when having CT scans done. It was found that she had a skull fracture and small bleed. We went to another hospital and all that she wanted when I could not be there was that blanket. Due to the nature of the injury DCF doctors had to see her as my step-children's mother was charged with child endangerment and abuse. Both my 2 step-children and my very cranky 3 months old (skull fracture is very painful) all got blankets from DCF as we had to explain what was happening and how injured their sister was. While these blankets might not have been from your organization the reason for the blanket is the same. My daughter is now 4months old and we are still dealing with the effects of the head injury. She is consistently in the hospital with her blankets as she loves them. I want to thank you all so much for what you do and I want to be able to give that gift to another family.

I just wanted to write and say thank you so much for the beautiful giraffe quilt we received when my daughter had to stay overnight at Maple Grove Hospital! It is an absolutely beautiful quilt, that my daughter will have for years. We were so grateful for a little comfort like this and I can tell the quilt was made with love! Thank you so much for all of your hard work and effort in giving kids these lovely quilts!!

On Saturday, my son (8 years old) got in a terrible dirt bike accident and fractured his femur. We were transported to St. Rose Siena Peds Unit in Henderson, Nv. Our nurse came in with this beautiful blanket. She overheard my son say his favorite color is green like his dirt bike! His face lit up with absolute happiness! After surgery he wanted it right on his pillow. 💚 This blanket will now be with him through recovery. 💚 Thank you again.

**Linus Love Notes:** Linus Love Notes can be found on YouTube. These are thank-you notes that are in a short video. These notes are updated regularly and you can “subscribe” so you will receive an alert when they are updated. Through these notes, it’s easy to see the real impact a Project Linus blanket has on a child and the family.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-ywG-rtBUA>

In addition the national office and local chapters receive “Thank You Notes” on a regular basis. None of us expect to be “thanked” for the opportunity to ensure children in traumatic situations receive a warm Linus blanket hug. However, the notes do demonstrate the value of the blankets and the impact they have on recipients and their families.



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Project Linus every time you shop, at no cost to you.

When you shop at [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

The easiest way to shop at AMAZON SMILE and make sure that your purchase benefits Project Linus is to click through the link on our [home page at projectlinus.org](http://projectlinus.org). Or, you can simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) from the web browser on your computer or mobile device and search for “Linus Project”. You may also want to add a bookmark to AmazonSmile to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

**Donations:** To support Project Linus (nationally or a local chapter) with a donation, simply go to our website (<http://www.projectlinus.org/donations/>). You can designate a local chapter if you want your funds to be directed locally. In the newsletter, you will see opportunities to support Project Linus through the use of Amazon Smile and other organizations.

### **Project Linus Links and More:**

**YouTube is a great website. Go to it and search Project Linus. It's amazing what you will find.** The national video and song detailed below, lots of videos on making PL crocheted edge and other blankets, etc. Take a few minutes to explore it - you will find some great information.

**Project Linus Blanket Deliveries:** Project Linus Coordinators and Volunteers make blanket deliveries to the agencies and organizations that provide blankets to children in traumatic situations. This video is a great example of how these deliveries take place across the nation every week:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxD2YyzUqEk>

**Project Linus Smiles Video:** This video is a clear example of all the smiles Project Linus brings to volunteers and the children we serve.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX6f1IaDpRw>

**The Project Linus Theme Song is Covered in Love:** You can hear it on You Tube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUAW2bSjSvg>

**Project Linus Website:**  
[www.ProjectLinus.org](http://www.ProjectLinus.org)

**Project Linus Facebook – We’d love to have you “join us”:**

<https://www.facebook.com/projectlinus/>

**Project Linus Instagram:** [projectlinushq](https://www.instagram.com/projectlinushq)



## More Thank You Notes and Stories:

A teacher had her class make blankets and shared this story with Coordinator Leslie Maltz:

On Monday, one of my students came to me and said "When you said we were making blankets for Project Linus I thought I had heard about it before but I just could not figure out where I heard the name before. Then I remembered that when I was in first grade I had a serious brain infection that almost killed me. I was getting needles in both of my arms to be attached to a machine. The nurse came in with a Frozen blanket from the Disney Movie. It was a Project Linus blanket!" She explained to the students her courageous battle (she was hospitalized for a year). She talked about how she had to learn to talk, walk, feed, and dress herself again. She described how getting that blanket made her feel. All the students were completely in tears when she told them. I can't believe that I picked this project and then I had a student a recipient a few years before. Serendipity.

My sweet boy Matthew was admitted to the epilepsy monitoring unit at Rush University Medical Center last week and we received one of your blankets. Thank you so much for your kind gestures, there truly is no where tougher than a children's unit at a hospital and the little bit of coziness sure did help him! He has since been sent home but wanted his new blanket on his bed.

Hi! my name is Alysa, I wanted to thank you guys for the blanket you guys gave me, almost 15 years ago. I remember being terrified in my new foster home, and getting that blanket, has helped me so much, even to this day. I still can NOT travel without it, or sleep without it. sadly, it has torn and the fabric is very thin now, but I'm still grateful for all the memories I had with it. forever Thankful,

We are so appreciative and thankful to the caring Blanketeers from Project Linus, Yolo County Chapter & most especially Louise Walthen (blanket & pillow case creator). Our grandson Sean received a special blanket sent to him last month. He loves super heroes and this blanket had 2 of his absolute favorites — Spider Man & Iron Man. He also received a custom made pillow case with Spider Man. Mom Nikki said that he will not let go of the pillow case ever, even if it needs washing! I spoke to Sean on Christmas. He told me that he will use the powers from these Super Heroes to do what the doctors tell him to do so that he will get better. He was able to be home for Christmas. We Thank You for all your prayers & thoughts!—Mara Aditajs & Family



## JOANN's Partnership

Select stores are drop off points for Project Linus blanket donations. Check with your local chapters to see if your JOANN's is a drop off point.

**JOANN Plus** is a great way to save money when buying materials for Project Linus blankets and it is for everyone who makes blankets for Project Linus. You must order in bulk to get the great prices. Be sure to check them out at: [www.joannplus.com](http://www.joannplus.com)

Project Linus is thrilled to be growing our relationship with JOANN's.

*Blanket Beacon* editor: Deb Miller, Project Linus of East TN Chapter Coordinator  
[Deb@ProjectLinusEastTN.org](mailto:Deb@ProjectLinusEastTN.org)

If you have not signed up to receive the *Blanket Beacon*, please go to [www.projectlinus.org](http://www.projectlinus.org). Scroll to the lower left corner of the home page for information on how to sign up for the *Blanket Beacon*.