



Dear Home & Country,

We had such a wonderful meeting last night that I felt compelled to write about it and share this organization's work with all of our ladies in WI!

Victoria's Quilts - an organization that provides comfort quilts to those going through cancer treatments - spoke to us last night. St. Mary's Anglican Church in Russell has a very successful branch of V.Q. that has actually been so popular it has branched off to several other groups in the area. A quilt must be applied for in the name of a cancer patient, with the permission of the recipient. A quilt is made for that person and given to them - all free of charge and one per recipient.



At the "Friends of Victoria's Quilts" branch in Russell, Anne Mains, its founder and Judie Matthewson its current coordinator, explained to us that anyone working for this organization does so as a volunteer. Some members are beginners learning the various techniques while being guided by others with quilting experience. Others are looking for a hobby that is rewarding and productive. Still others are repaying with their time and their joy of life after having been a recipient of one of these wonderful quilts themselves.

And it is exceptional work. All pure cotton materials are used because it is gentle to the skin. Toppers: all different designs and colours; Batting: used to give bulk and warmth to this blanket; Backing: soft and luscious flannel, gentle and warm and long lasting; Quilting: some are hand quilted, some are free-hand machine quilted and others are computerized pattern quilted. Each quilt also has a patch from Victoria's Quilt with a poem/prayer sewn onto its flannel backing. They are inspected, washed, allocated, and then blessed at Sunday Services in the church before being given to their recipient. My uncle received one and it kept him warm during chemo sessions. Several Members of our Branch have received quilts and describe them as a feeling of love, wrapping them in hugs as they sit and endure the rudeness of the treatments. Some of our ladies were brought to tears last night, listening and learning of the selfless work that these ladies invite all to share in.

When asked how many quilts they have made since 2005, Judie Matthewson explained, "Generally about 100+ quilts are made a year, but this year the demands are extraordinary and 44 have been made already - and it is only March."

Now, of course, this has to all be funded somehow. Materials are given and donations of funds to buy supplies or equipment are donated by organizations like our own. This year, Russell held a Trivia Night fundraiser to support this cause. Some quilts are delivered out of town by friends of the group, as postage is so very expensive.

If your WI group has a chance to have a branch member of Victoria's Quilts speak to you on their work, you will not be disappointed. They are amazing ladies doing such beautiful and creative work for the enjoyment of others. If you have a quilting group and would like to start a V.Q. branch of your own, email betty@victoriasquiltsCanada.com. If you as a Branch would like to make a quilt, talk to Betty about the size and materials and where to take it when it is done. You won't be disappointed. It fits so well into the WI way of thinking! Teach, learn and share.

For more information, visit www.victoriasquiltsCanada.com.

Jean Williams

President, Russell Village WI, March 2014

