

CHARITY STITCHERS STITCHING LOVE ONE SQUARE AT A TIME

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Hospitalized children, Alzheimer's disease patients, mastectomy patients and even Meals-on-Wheels clients: all of these people have benefited from a small group of quilters with giant hearts.

Charity Stitchers meets once a week for a full day at Burlington's St. Paul the Apostle Church to stitch quilts that make a difference in the lives of many, near and far.

Gloria Bilous said the group has been meeting for several years to laugh, chat, eat and of course - be creative.

Most recently, the volunteer group of a dozen or more women pieced together a large wall quilt for Acclaim Health, a non-profit organization that provides home and community care

for Halton's aging population. During Volunteer Week this past spring, Acclaim had asked its volunteers to write on or decorate a six-inch square of fabric that shows what volunteering means to them.

Some 120 squares later, and two lovingly crafted, pastel-coloured, quilted wall hangings with thoughtful sentiments will now be hung at the non-profit's offices in Georgetown and Oakville.

Acclaim Health volunteer engagement co-ordinator Fran Savelson said she was thrilled with the outcome and overwhelmed with how beautiful the quilts turned out.

She said they were planning on stitching the pieces together themselves until they saw how many they had, and they became overwhelmed.

They needn't have wor-

ried - the outcome was impressive.

Bilous said it was a pleasure working on it and said the group has connections with several groups. Several of their quilts go to Victoria's Quilts Canada, another non-profit, that topstitches them before they reach their destination - cancer patients. Since 1999, they've delivered more than 72,000 quilts.

Some of the Charity Stitchers' quilts make their way to chemotherapy patients, wheelchair-bound people; heart-shaped quilted pillows for those recovering from mastectomy; pillowcases for Ronald McDonald House; children's quilts with fun, bright themes that have been donated to Halton Women's Place; flannel blankets sent to Guatemala; and more.

To that end, the quilters



Julie Slack/Torstar

Fran Savelson, volunteer engagement coordinator at Acclaim Health (left) and Patricia Blakely, director of community support services, both from Acclaim Health accept a quilt from the Charity Stitchers that will hang in Acclaim offices in Georgetown and Oakville.

rely on the generosity community donations for their supply of quilting materials.

Bilous said there's al-

ways a need for more materials and encourages anyone who's considering tossing out unused fabric to donate it instead. They can

use cotton, flannel, upholstery fabrics and even thread.

To donate, email charitystitchers18@gmail.com.

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