



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thousands of Hand-Knitted Items Add Warmth to the Community

Edmonton, AB – October 26, 2015 – More than 100 dedicated seniors at GEF Seniors Housing spent their year hand-knitting cozy items for local charities. The tables at the 6th Annual Great Knitting Giveaway will be filled with thousands of scarves, toques, blankets, afghans, blanket squares, mittens, slippers and newborn baby hats, along with the occasional sweater. The items will be presented to *Blankets for Canada, Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton, Cross Cancer Institute, Operation Friendship Seniors Society, Project SNUG, Ronald McDonald House, Royal Alexandra Hospital and St. Benedict School* on Thursday, October 29 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. at Rosslyn Place located at 10915-134 Avenue in Edmonton.

“Each charity ends up having a big table absolutely covered and piled high with knitted items,” said Emily Rotella, Rosslyn Place Recreation Coordinator.

Recently, some of the GEF knitters attended *Read in Week* at St. Benedict’s school, one charity that was a recipient of knitted items in previous years. When asked who had received knitted items last year, the students had these comments for the knitters: “Wow, I was so surprised because the mitts and toque matched my coat. Hey, how did those ladies know about my pink coat?” said a girl in grade one. Upon receiving his new mittens, a boy in grade two said “It made me feel good, they were soft and I can make good snowmen with them.” A grade three girl commented, “My mom doesn’t have much money, she was so happy because my brother and me both got new mitts, toque and scarf. That saved mom lots of money.” “I know the knitters really like seeing where their year-long knitting work goes and to hear the charities talk about who the knitting helps is an opportunity for them to see what a difference they are making. Seniors make a huge impact on the community and this is just one way they give back and the amount that they knit during the year is incredible,” added Emily.

The seniors create all of their projects with yarn donated by the community. At the event, the knitters get to ‘shop’ and stock up on yarn to continue their knitting projects for another year. “The knitters love going through all the balls of yarn and taking a bunch of colours they like. It gets them excited to go home and start knitting for next year!” said Emily.

Knitters will enjoy dessert and beverages while listening to presentations from the recipient charities. Two of the charities that were recipients in past years shared these inspirational messages about the great impact the event has on their clients:

“Thank you to GEF and its residents for thinking of Operation Friendship Seniors Society when it comes to the Great Knitting Giveaway. There is no better feeling than being warm when it comes to the cold winter months. A warm piece of winter wear knitted with love will keep our seniors warm this time of the year. There is no better donation than one knitted with love” said Jimmy Morrison, Community Relations Supervisor

“The SNUG program and our clients are warmed by the hats, mittens and scarves the knitters make and their loving stitches remind the most vulnerable they are cared about and have not been forgotten” said Outreach Worker, Laura Sterling.

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GEF Seniors’ Housing is a not-for-profit registered charity. We are the largest provider of subsidized seniors’ housing in Alberta, with approximately 3,500 Edmonton senior citizens calling GEF home. Our mission is to provide friendly, affordable, secure homes and services for seniors in our Edmonton communities.