



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Spreading Warmth to the Edmonton Community, One Stitch at a Time**

Edmonton, AB – September 25, 2018 – With early snowfalls already hitting the Edmonton region, the annual Great Knitting Giveaway is coming at just the right time.

Over 100 dedicated seniors at GEF Seniors Housing spent their year hand-knitting cozy items for local charities. The tables at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Knitting Giveaway will be overflowing with thousands of toques, scarves, mitts, baby blankets, dolls, blanket squares and more!

The items will be presented to *Operation Friendship Seniors Society (OFSS), Ronald McDonald House Charities, Project SNUG, Blankets for Canada, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Terra Centre, The Mustard Seed and Grey Nuns Community Hospital* on Friday, September 28, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. at Ottewell Place located at 6207-92 Avenue in Edmonton.

The impact of the seniors' donations is far-reaching and very meaningful to many members of the community. "We had our End-of-Summer Bazaar last weekend and a family member of one of our tenants came to do some shopping," explained Nicole Attwell, Recreation Coordinator with GEF Seniors Housing. "This lady was looking at all of the knitting we had out and picked up one blanket and said 'oh my gosh, this is where it's from!'" Nicole went on to explain that she later found out the rest of the story. "A few years ago, this lady and her husband had a newborn baby who passed away. When the nurses handed her the baby to hold, the baby was wrapped in a knitted blanket. Well, the blanket that she picked up at the Bazaar was the exact same colour and pattern as the one her baby was wrapped in. It was a pretty special moment for her to find out that the blanket was made right here."

One of the charities that has been a long-time recipient of knitted items shared this inspirational message about the impact the event has on their clients:

"Thank you to GEF and its residents for thinking of OFSS when it comes to the Great Knitting Giveaway. The seniors we serve are often unprepared for the cold weather and don't have the appropriate outerwear to keep them warm. Knowing that someone shared their time and talent to create these special knitted items from the heart goes a long way in keeping our seniors warm this time of year. There is no better donation than one made with love" said Jimmy Morrison, Community Relations Supervisor with Operation Friendship Seniors Society.

Knitters will enjoy a special thank you luncheon while listening to some heartwarming and often very emotional stories from the recipient charities. At the end of the event, the charity representatives will pack up all of the knitted items to be distributed to their clients while the knitters select from the vast amounts of donated yarn to begin their knitting projects for next year's event.

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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. Our mission is to provide friendly, affordable, secure housing and services for seniors in the Edmonton community. With the help of our employees, volunteers and donors, we make a difference in the lives of more than 3,500 seniors, giving them and their families peace of mind.***