



Blanketing Central Texas

The Mission of The Linus Connection is to provide a handmade security blanket to every child who is in crisis or at-risk situation in Central Texas.

January - March 2006

Vol. 5, Issue 1

The Linus Connection had a record year in 2005! We distributed 4,002 blankets to children in need, 1042 more than 2004. We contributed blankets to children affected by Hurricane Katrina, as well as a multitude of local organizations. We celebrated our 5th birthday, held a hugely successful garage sale and had our First Annual Challenge. We welcomed new board members and many new volunteers. Our meetings continued to grow and change. In 2005, we added Show & Tell and Demonstrations, both which have been a huge success. We welcomed recipient facilities and Camp Fire Girls to our meetings. We were on the local news and in local papers. We received several large donations from area companies to help us continue in our mission to provide security through blankets. Thank you to volunteers, supporters and recipient facilities for a fantastic 2005. Have a Happy New Year and keep making blankets!

2005 Blanket Distribution

Total Blankets Distributed in 2005 4,002
Blankets Distributed since 1999 16,846

Upcoming Blanket Meetings

All Monthly meetings will continue to be at St. Phillips Church in Round Rock from 9am - Noon on the third Saturday of each month. The next three dates are:

- ★ January 21, 2006
- ★ February 18, 2006
- ★ March 18, 2006

If you would like to attend, but do not have transportation, please contact us and we will do our best to arrange a ride.

New Board Members

The Linus Connection welcomes two new Board Members! Long-time Linus volunteers, Ellen Dutkiewicz and Marge Swearingen officially joined the board in October. A big thanks go out to both of these ladies for taking on the additional responsibilities of a board position. Thanks also go out to Linda Evans and Deb Weightman for their time on the board.

First Annual Challenge A HUGE Success

The first Linus Connection Quilt & Yarn challenge took place during our 5th Birthday Bash in October and was a huge success! We welcomed visitors from our recipient facilities and members of the press to this special occasion. 23 Quilts and 17 Yarn Blankets graced the fence around St. Phillip's playground. Everyone present had the chance to vote for their favorite blanket in each category. Our Challenge Sponsors, Bluebonnet Yarn and Honey Bee Quilt Store were on hand to present our winning Challenge Blankets. Rehka Nadkarni created the winning Yarn Blanket and received a gift certificate from Bluebonnet Yarn.

Ellen Carter made the winning Quilt and received a gift certificate to Honey Bee Quilt Store. Congratulations to the two talented ladies and to everyone who participated! Please visit www.linusconnection.org for photos.

That was Then...

Now that Linus is 5 years old, we'd like to take a look back at how Linus (and we!) have changed over the years. We'll be featuring one or two stories in each newsletter, with all contributions posted at "That Was Then" on the website. Email Jennifer with your stories - ofenjen@austin.rr.com.

Door Greeters Needed

Linus welcomes all new members and visitors each month to our our meetings. We'd like to extend that welcome by having a volunteer at each meeting act as Door Greeter. This person would give a short tour and explain what we do during our meetings. Please contact Marge Swearingen at cswear@earthlink.net or 931-0938 for more information.

Monthly Demonstrations

At each monthly meeting, immediately following Show and Tell at 10 a.m., there will be a demonstration of blanket making techniques in the kitchen. This can include assembling a quilt pattern, adding binding, machine appliqué, etc. Those Yarn Artists willing to share knowledge and techniques with the knitters and crocheters are encouraged to join in as demonstrators. Patterns will be provided for item demonstrated. Anyone wishing to present a favorite pattern or technique, please contact Ellen Dutkiewicz at 869-7616 or email at redutkie@texas.net.

January - Bindings & Borders

February - Very Easy Stair Step Quilt



Yahoo! Group

Linus now has a Yahoo! Group where you can discuss Linus, ask questions and where we will occasionally post special requests. Visit groups.yahoo.com/group/linusconnection to join!

Binding

Bring your left-over binding, nicely folded or rolled around a cardboard tube to donate to the Binding Box! We hope to provide pre-made binding to those dedicated ladies working on the blankets that have been quilted by our machine quilters. If you're dropping off a quilt top, please include enough pre-made binding to finish the blanket after it has been quilted.

Tips & Tricks

- ★ YARN - Use a wine bottle gift bag or box to keep your yarn neat and clean while you're working. A skein fits in perfectly.
- ★ YARN - When you need the hook or needle you're using for another project, write down the size and pin it to your the project so you don't forget what size you were using when you come back to it.
- ★ KNI TTING - Need separators? Make rings out of a plastic drinking straw. Solid colored straws work best.
- ★ KNI TTING/CROCHET - Soak circular needles in hot water a few minutes to soften and uncoil the acrylic line before starting your project. It makes them easier to work with!
- ★ QUILTING: Not sure if your fabric is 100% cotton? Burn the corner of a scrap piece and then dip in water. Cotton will have ash and feather, while Poly will feel like plastic!
- ★ QUILTING: If you don't have a 1/4" foot, try using masking tape to mark your 1/4" seam. It makes sewing an accurate seam easy every time!

Submit Tips & Tricks to ofenjen@austin.rr.com

Linus Work Days

Honey Bee Quilt Store will again be hosting Linus work days. Please call 257-1269 or visit them at www.honeybeequiltstore.com for more information. Watch the Linus newsletter and website for future dates.

Online Calendar

Linus now has a printable calendar available on our website. Print yours today and submit your Linus group's dates to Jennifer - ofenjen@austin.rr.com.

Randall's Good Neighbor

Support Linus when you shop at Randall's! You can link your favorite charity to your Remarkable card by completing a Remarkable Application Form at any Randall's Courtesy Booth. Fill in the top portion and the "Good Neighbor Program" section, indicating account number 11267.

Drop-Off Locations

- ★ Honey Bee Quilt Store, 257-1269
- ★ Bluebonnet Yarn Shoppe, 259-4646
- ★ Round Rock: Margarita, 255-9241
- ★ Cedar Park: Dee, 331-5847
- ★ G'town: Margaret, Wesleyan Retirement, 863-2892
- ★ NW Austin: (Parmer/McNeil) Jennifer, 294-2793
- ★ NW Austin: (Parmer/MoPac) Linda, 255-4942

Linus Circles

Below is a list of smaller groups around the area that regularly meet to make Linus blankets. Please call the contact person if you are interested in attending. They welcome new members and blanket makers of all kinds at any time. For meeting times, please see the calendar at www.linusconnection.org.

- ★ Round Rock/Scrappily Ever After: Sharon Weaver 218-4750 or jaydub@sbcglobal.net
- ★ Cedar Park/Shepard's Bee: Contact Marlene, 259-2617
- ★ Georgetown/ Berry Creek Linus Circle: Contact Sharon, 930-3412
- ★ Liberty Hill/ LHUMW: Contact Gloria, 515-5862 or Caroline 515-6106
- ★ Wimberley/United Methodist Women: Contact Dona, 847-7682

To receive updates via email or be removed from our mailing list, please contact Stephanie: stephanie@linusconnection.org or 512-266-9305. For newsletter ideas, please email Jennifer at ofenjen@austin.rr.com. Still need more? Visit our website: www.linusconnection.org

That Was Then...

By Ellen Dutkiewicz

♥ In January, 2002, I made my first-ever quilt, crib sized, from a pattern in Martha Stewart Magazine. I was looking for a Linus group to donate my quilt to and found The Linus Connection and Stephanie via internet search. She invited me to drop off my quilt at her house in Round Rock. There was Linus stuff taking up much of her living room, most stowed in boxes behind the couches. I remember thinking she must be dedicated to give up her living room to The Linus Connection project.

♥ Stephanie showed me a child's quilt she was working on to give me an example of a Linus quilt. I didn't know it at the time, but the Sabatinis had their first adoption in progress and that quilt was intended for Ryan, when they brought him home from Russia. I have been impressed by Stephanie's organizational skills and inspired by The Linus Connection group ever since. Recently, I joined the board and hope to make my contributions count not only in donations of quilts, but in the behind-the-scenes operations as well. Stephanie's dedication, as well as that of the board and other members, the beautiful blankets that I see each meeting, all continue to be an inspiration to me.

