

COUNTY COMFORT QUILTS IN THE NEWS - Houlton Pioneer Times Spring 2015



Karen Gallop's monthly stop is the Houlton Regional Hospital Emergency Room to inquire how many quilts they need to give out to sick children who arrive on their doorstep. The Friends and Needle Quilt formed a charity group of transforming fabric into patchwork quilts with the mission of giving these "hugs" to children who are suffering hardship, whether that is a death in the family, fire in the home, or an illness.

The Guild Members realize how blessed they are to be able to share their talents with so many children and bring a smile to their faces. The Guild delivers quilts to hospitals, schools, and social agencies in the Southern Aroostook area. The Guild's quilts have also reached many corners of the world sending comfort to children who have suffered hardships in Haiti, Hurricane Sandy, community of Sandy Hook, CT, Hurricane Katrina, Tornado Alley and in Japan after the Tsunami.

Co-Chairs, Kim Hazlett and Karen Gallop, of County Comfort Quilts have given over 1,400 quilts in its 12 year history as a community charity. The minimum size for a quilt is 40" X 50" for toddler, with larger lap sizes appealing to teenage boys and girls. Sage Financial has given generously of their office space to warehouse the quilt inventory.

The Guild has held Sew-A-Thons involving the community of quilters and non-quilters who gather to make quilts for the charity. Recently, Penny Richardson's Family Consumer Classes at Houlton High School spent a day making quilts to fill up the quilt cupboards for children to receive in our community.

Members of the Guild have seen what the quilts mean to the children and their families who receive them. The children of one family received their quilts after their father had passed. On the day of the delivery, the children were emotional and grateful, and the tearful mother stopped the departing Guild member to say it could not have been a better day for her children to receive the quilts since it was their father's birthday.

Each year the Friends and Needle Quilt Guild has an appreciation evening for the Guild members who donate a quilt or quilts to the cupboard. This past May over 90 quilts were donated by 45 members during that evening.

The County Comfort Quilts is a win-win situation for everyone. The people who make the quilts enjoy giving them, while at the same time recognizing they are doing something for others that offers comfort while delivering a message that someone cares. Those who receive them are thrilled and appreciate knowing someone cares.