

Project Linus

Providing Security Through Blankets

January/February 2009

East Tennessee Chapter

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*The best kind of sleep under
heaven above, is under a blanket
handmade with love.*

Coordinator's Corner

It's hard to believe it's 2009. Project Linus, the coordinators from around the country and our East Tennessee volunteers were truly one of my blessings in 2008. I for one am looking forward to the New Year! As you can see in this newsletter, Project Linus of East Tennessee continues to be very busy and I'm looking forward to what we can accomplish in 2009.

This newsletter is filled with lots of information. Be sure to read about:

- The TAPS program and April 15th deadline for the red, white and blue blankets
- The February 21st Meeting
- Snowball Express
- Changes in drop off locations
- 2008 totals for blanket deliveries by facility

Deb

February Meeting – Hope you can join us!!!!

February 21st 1–3 PM Concord United Methodist Church, Knoxville (directions at end)

Drop Off Locations for Blankets: Please note the changes below to our drop off locations. A full list of locations is attached and available on the website.

New Location: **Knoxville:** Lisa Ross Birth and Women's Center, 1925 B Ailor Avenue – From 17th street, turn left onto Ailor. Turn right on Citico, 3rd street to right. Main entrance is in the lower level, facing parking lot. Directly south of the new Food City and Cherokee Health - one block south of Middlebrook Pike and 2 blocks south of Western Avenue. Please tell receptionist that the blankets are for Project Linus. 865-524-4422 Hours Monday-Thursday 8:00 – 6:00, Closed Friday-Sunday

The Career Center in Blount County will no longer be a drop off location. Please contact Lynda Everman 865-681-4499 to make arrangements to drop off blankets.

Your Donations of Blankets and Other Items Truly Make A Difference in the Lives of Area Children. PLET has recently or will soon be delivering donated items to the following recipient

organizations:

- ❖ Ronald McDonald House - Knoxville:
- ❖ Hope Resource Center - Knoxville:
- ❖ Smoky Mountain Children's Home – Sevierville:
- ❖ East TN Children's Medical Center – Knoxville:
- ❖ **UT Medical Center–Knoxville: 77 blankets**
- ❖ **Baptist Hospital West/Baptist Hospital for Women: 25 blankets**
- ❖ CEASE Domestic Violence Shelter & Program – Morristown:
- ❖ Lisa Ross Center:
- ❖ Children's Center of the Cumberlands (Scott County):
- ❖ Campbell County Children's Center:
- ❖ Community Health of East Tennessee (Campbell County):
- ❖ Kids First Child Advocacy Center of the Ninth Judicial District (Loudon, Meigs, Morgan and Roane):
- ❖ Mission of Hope:
- ❖ Department of Human Services:
- ❖ Good Samaritans – Cumberland County:
- ❖ **Avalon Center–Cumberland County: 35 blankets, scarves, hats and bags**
- ❖ CHILDHHELP USA (East TN):
- ❖ Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep – East TN:
- ❖ Saving Little Hearts (East TN):
- ❖ Family Promise:
- ❖ Clinch Valley Childrens Center (CAC Anderson County):
- ❖ MidEast Community Action Agency:
- ❖ Women's Care Center of Sevier County:
- ❖ **A little boy in the area being treated at home with major respiratory difficulties**

Thinking of You

To those of you that have lost loved ones recently, our sympathies are with you.

To those of you that are ill, we hope you are feeling better soon.

Wish List

- Stamps
- Gas Cards are appreciated
- Ink Cartridges: HP 54 and 57
- Yarn (bright child friendly colors – washable)
- We NEED \$\$\$: We always welcome financial donations to help with PL expenses including publishing the newsletter, brochures, buying labels for the blankets, etc. If you want to make a donation, please send it to Deb. We'd prefer a gift card (Staples, Target, Walmart, , K-Mart, etc.), check made out to Project Linus or cash.
- Remember Project Linus is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization. Be sure to check with your tax advisor regarding applicable tax deductions.

UPDATE from Headquarters

(I've received a number of inquiries about this.)

This is in regards to the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. You may have heard of the CPSIA, or have had volunteers or others email you with information and questions. Again, the act is in response to the issues of lead in toys and other products marketed to children. Simplified, the act states that all products marketed or intended for use by children 12 and under must undergo testing by a certified laboratory to be CPSIA compliant. There are enormous costs to do so, and fines and penalties involved for non-compliance. You can learn more at www.cpsc.gov.

The question has arisen as to how this will affect charities such as Project Linus. I have spoken to a compliance officer at the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and while there is still no definitive answer to the question, I can give you a little more information which you can also pass along to volunteers or anyone who inquires of you:

"Project Linus has been working with representatives from Congress and the Consumer Product Safety Commission for clarification of how the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act may or may not affect our charity and others. We know that our specific circumstances are under discussion at this time. We do not anticipate that the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act will have a significant impact on our organization or its mission. We will continue to monitor this situation very closely and provide updates as necessary." Project Linus National Headquarters.

For now, it's all we know. Again, we do not anticipate that this will be a problem for us. For now it's business as usual. Keep doing what you are doing, and encouraging your volunteers to do the same.

Thanks everyone!
Carol Babbitt



Dorcus Quilters: 16 blankets
Kathi Van Houton: 8 blankets
Dianna Mraz: 14 blankets
Dianna Moore: 6 blankets
Jean Altshuler: 12 blankets and booties
Ruth Phillips: 1 blanket
Teresa Branham: 5 blanket
Judy BuBois: 4 blankets
Anna Nichols: 1 blanket
Sharon Carey: 10 blankets
Jean Altshuler: 12 blankets, bags and booties
Ms. Mills and Suffern: 3 blankets, caps and bags

Special thanks to:

- **Doris and Jim Cole** for donating postage and mailing the newsletter, deliveries/pick-ups and much much more.
- **Mara and Tom Eckhardt** for help with deliveries/pick-ups and many other things.
- **Karen Eidson** for help sewing labels.
- **Barb Loadholtz** for picking up blankets at Lucille Sherrod's, sewing labels and for providing yarn.
- **Denette Flynn, Kelley Thomas, Debbie Petree and Sug Sexton** for help with deliveries/pick-ups.
- **Thanks to the staffs at the TN Career Centers in Lenoir City and Rockwood**
- **Thanks to the gang at ETHRA Workforce Development.**
- **Dorothy Cameron** for her quilting services.
- **Dianna Mraz** for her quilting services.
- **Patti Stewart** for help with deliveries, shopping, cutting fabric and whatever I need!
- **Kathy Bates** for sewing on labels.
- my folks **Irene and Don Hawker** for delivery of blankets in Cumberland County
- **Wanda Nance** for the website.
- **Teresa Chasteen and WIN** for paying for the PL storage unit each month

Jen Gorth: 2 blankets
Pat Woods: 1 blanket
Carol Norts: 4 blankets, 1 pillow
Blount County Habitat Restore: 21 blankets
Ruth Cook: 2 bags of yarn
Sandy Rea: 1 blanket
Girl Scouts of Tanasi Council: 8 blankets and scarves
Girl Scout Group Troop #749: 2 blankets
3rd, 4th and 5th Graders CINEMAS group: 2 blankets

If I missed thanking you for a donation, please accept my apologies and let me know so I can recognize you next time! Sometimes we get behind in picking up and unpacking blankets – please don't be offended; just let me know and we will be sure to get your items logged in and passed on to recipient organizations.

- Debi

Thank You's Received at the National Office:

For five years I have been meaning to send a note saying thank you so much. I have two preemies that both received blankies in St. Joes N.I.C.U. in Towson, MD. They are both healthy girls-five and 15mths. We will always keep these blankets and my five year old loves to hold her blankie and hear the crazy story of her 8 wk. early birth. You are a wonderful organization and we thank you! Andrea

I am a RN who worked Christmas Eve on an inpatient eating disorders unit. We received blankets from your organization to hand out. It can be pretty depressing for these young women to be in the hospital, especially over a major holiday. They drew #'s to see who would choose first but in the end, after some trading, everyone had a beautifully made blanket they liked. It's often not a weight issue but a love issue. Thanks for the love. Debra RN

THANKS

We once again received a nice thank you note from Ronald McDonald House. They are always very appreciative of our blanket donations.

Project Linus of East Tennessee: Drop-off Spots for Blankets

January 2009

- **West Knoxville/Farragut: First Farragut United Methodist Church**, 12733 Kingston Pk, Farragut @ Dixie Lee Jct. (8AM-5 PM) in Church Office
- **Knoxville: Lisa Ross Birth and Women's Center**, 1925 B Ailor Avenue – From 17th street, turn left onto Ailor. Turn right on Citico, 3rd street to right. Main entrance is in the lower level, facing parking lot. Directly south of the new Food City and Cherokee Health - one block south of Middlebrook Pike and 2 blocks south of Western Avenue. Please tell receptionist that the blankets are for Project Linus. 865-524-4422 Hours Monday-Thursday 8:00 – 6:00, Closed Friday-Sunday
- **Knoxville: Park West Church of God**, 7635 Middlebrook Pike, Knoxville. 9 AM – Noon and 1 - 4:30 PM Monday – Friday
- **Knoxville: The Yarn Haven** 464 N. Cedar Bluff Rd. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10 AM – 6 PM; Thursday 10 AM – 8 PM; Saturday 10 AM – 2 PM. <http://www.theyarnhaven.com/>
- **Oak Ridge: Bev Abele** 107 Dansworth Ln. Please call first. 481-3674 home/ 574-9451 work.
- **Oak Ridge: ETHRA Workforce Development** (same building as Anderson County Clerk's office behind the Senior Center) at 728E Emory Valley Rd. M-F 8 AM – 4:30 PM.
- **Oak Ridge: "Yarns Above"** 209 Jackson Square M-F 9 AM – 6 PM; Sat. 9 AM – 2 PM 483-6435
- **Clinton/Anderson County Area: Clinton Recreation Center/Patti Stewart** at 101 S. Hicks St., Clinton, TN (behind the old Union Planters Bank Building)
- **Blount County:** Call **Lynda Everman** and make arrangements to drop off blankets. 865-681-4499
- **Loudon County/Lenoir City- Loudon County Career Center** (part of the new Roane State Campus) downtown at 100 West Broadway Suite 141. They are open M-F 8 AM – 4:30 PM. Drop blankets at the reception desk of the Career Center for Kelley Thomas.
- **Roane County/Rockwood- Tennessee Career Center** located at 1082 N. Gateway (Old Big Lots Building) just south of the new Walmart. They are open M-F 8 AM – 4:30 PM. Drop blankets for Pat Taylor.
- **Cumberland County:** Call Irene Hawker (931) 456-0316
- **Blankets can be mailed directly to Project Linus Coordinator Deb Miller at 282 Orchard Valley Dr., Harriman, TN 37748**

Please be sure to put blankets in a tied plastic bag with a note IN the bag with the number of blankets and name of the person/organization donating the blankets. Contact Deb Miller with questions or to make special arrangements for blanket dropoff/pick-up. Miller1219@aol.com or 865 719-2862.

Please save for future reference.

Project Linus of East Tennessee Blanket Donations for 2008

The national office required a new report this year where we had to total our donations by facility that received blankets to pass on to children in need. The report is below for your information. Please note that although the city is listed, these agencies often serve children throughout east Tennessee.

Facility	Total
Ronald McDonald House, Knoxville, TN	207
Hope Resource Center, Knoxville, TN	55
East Tennessee Children's Medical Center, Knoxville, TN	464
University of Tennessee Medical Center, Knoxville, TN	262
Baptist Hospital West for Women, Knoxville, TN	302
YWCA Domestic Violence Program Shelter, Oak Ridge, TN	21
CEASE Domestic Violence Shelter & Program, Morristown, TN	65
Children's Center of the Cumberland, Oneida, TN	110
Campbell County Children's Center, Lafollete, TN	85
KIDS FIRST Advocacy Center for the 9th Judicial District, Lenoir City, TN	107
Cumberland Medical Center, Crossville, TN	105
Avalon Center, Crossville, TN	50
ChildHelp, Knoxville, TN	165
Saving Little Hearts, Maryville, TN	40
REACHS House of Hope, Lafollette, TN	80
Faces of Hope, Knoxville, TN	50
TAPS Good Grief Camp Michigan	15
Individual Children	65
Family Promise, Knoxville, TN	15
Mission of Hope, Knoxville, TN	167
Clinch Valley Childrens Center, Clinton, TN	40
TAPS Washington DC	62
Lisa Ross Center, Knoxville, TN	48
MidEast Community Action Agency, Kingston, TN	37
Women's Care Center of Sevier County, Sevierville, TN	45
Red Cross, Knoxville, TN	35
TAPS Snowball Express California	20
Total	2717

TAPS: The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors is the non-profit Veterans Service Organization offering hope, healing, comfort and care to all those who are grieving the death of a loved one in the Armed Forces. TAPS receives absolutely no government funding, but through the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, all families faced with a death of a loved one serving in the Armed Forces receive information about TAPS and the military survivor programs. One program is the Good Grief Camp for Young Survivors. This includes youth whose loved ones died during the most recent battles in Iraq and Afghanistan, suffered a heart attack while serving in the National Guard, were at the Pentagon at the time of the attack on September 11, or were killed in a car accident. The life and the service of those they loved, not the geography or circumstances of the death, is honored. A letter similar to the one on the next page is sent to each surviving family. Project Linus chapters throughout the country provide red, white and blue patriotic blankets to these children each year. If you would like to be a part of this effort, please have your hand made red, white and blue blankets to a drop off location by no later than **April 15**. Our chapter has participated in this initiative for the last few years and we are honored to do so again this year. Many of you have already sent in your patriotic blankets and I've got them safely stored until it is time to ship them to D.C. More information about the Good Grief Camps and TAPS' many other programs is available at: www.taps.org. There are wonderful videos on this site of past Good Grief camps and other events.

Good Grief Camp for Young Survivors

Dear Survivors,

My name is Lt. Col. Judy Mathewson and I volunteer with TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors) a peer support organization for all the families who have lost a loved one in the military. Besides being a military member myself, I'm a retired school teacher and have worked with military Family Support programs for many years. I am also a children's grief counselor and have been on a crisis response team with the military since 1989.

I am so very sorry for your loss. TAPS was originally started for losses similar to yours - Bonnie Carroll, the founder, lost her husband and 7 other soldiers in Alaska in a plane accident. Whether we are talking about Iraq, Korea, Afghanistan or here at home, it is painful and difficult to face the grief journey alone. Thus, Bonnie channeled her energy into starting a peer support program for adults and we also knew that we needed to do the same for children - infant to age 21 - with the TAPS Youth Program.

Each Memorial Day, from Friday through Monday noon of that weekend, we bring together children of all ages from around the world whose loved one died in service to our country. This includes youth whose loved ones died during the most recent battles in Iraq, suffered a heart attack while serving in the National Guard, were at the Pentagon at the time of the attack on September 11, or were killed in a car accident. We honor the life and the service of those they loved, not the geography or circumstances of the death. These children are all part of the living legacy of military service.

Our volunteers include some whose losses were suffered when they were children during the Vietnam War and their dads never returned back home. Other volunteers are members of the Honor Guards who perform the funeral services for our fallen heroes. These volunteers (and we are all volunteers, trained in grief work) assist families who are experiencing the pain and other emotions of grief and loss. Yes - for some it is very fresh, like yourself, and for others, who have worked through a great deal of their hurt over the years. We help each other through the hurt, without losing the memory and love of our military member.

For 4 days, your children will be placed with a mentor, an Honor Guard, who will stay with your children and be a "shoulder" of support. It has been my experience that the youth help each other feel that they are not alone and that they can work through their grief. Since we are in Washington DC, we will travel to the Iwo Jima Memorial, WWII Memorial and other monuments that honor the sacrifices of our loved ones.

The seminar culminates in the Memorial Day Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery and four youth participate in the laying of the wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns and bring the American and TAPS flag into the Amphitheater as part of the ceremony. It is a great honor and we really support the youth in many ways! They learn how we, as a nation, honor those who have served and sacrificed, and they also learn coping skills for handling their own grief. They meet other children their own age, and gain a peer support network they can lean on throughout the year.

I hope this will give you some information about the weekend. We have posted the [camp schedule](#), and if you need some materials and journals for your children, I will be glad to mail them to you. Please send me your address and I will get them in the mail ASAP. Please know that TAPS is there for you and your children.

With love and care,

Judy Mathewson

Snowball Express: Snowball Express is another effort of the TAPS program to support children that have lost loved ones in service to our country. In the December newsletter, it was noted we shipped patriotic blankets to California to help support this effort. Below is some information from the website (www.snowballexpress.org) about this wonderful program. If you have internet access, please go to the website. There are some great videos of the event, coverage by Brian Williams and the national news and more.

- Snowball Express is dedicated to helping the children of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces since 9/11.
- From December 16-20, 2008, 927 of these children and 487 surviving parents/legal guardians had the trip of a life time to be with others who are just like them. The trip was to Disneyland in California and not only included a great time at the amusement park, but time to be with other children that have also lost a loved one and to participate in activities to help them cope with their loss.
- And, the following letter...

To Everyone at Snowball Express,

It has been a long journey for my five-year-old son and I. After we lost our beloved daddy and husband, to a PTSD related suicide, it seemed as if we would never smile again.

He was not included as a casualty of the war, although he served bravely in Iraq. Not long after his death, I contacted your organization in hopes that my son could meet other children who had experienced similar loss. Honestly, I did not expect to hear back from Snowball Express because my husband did not die in combat.

Much to my surprise, I received notification that my son and I would be attending the first annual Snowball Express!! I also learned that it was not just a trip to Disneyland. It was an invitation into a family of caring people who welcomed us with open arms. The friendship, laughter, and love has changed our lives. We are smiling again and when we need to cry, there are people there to listen.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts,

From the Anaheim, CA Project Linus Coordinator that facilitates delivering the PL blankets for Snowball Express:

For us, it's all over but the celebrating. For the moms and kids, today is their day at Disneyland. The sun is shining, after a day of heavy storms yesterday, and I know they will have the time of their lives. Our Linus group was at the hotel from 10:30 am until 8:30 pm. We went with 1,000 blankets and there were 14 left when my helpers packed up to leave. These were left at the registration desk for any late-comers. I can't begin to tell you what a joy (and sorrow) to meet these wonderful people, many of whom are truly struggling to survive, both financially and emotionally, and are so grateful for this respite. The Snowball Express group were there to meet their planes (donated by airlines), help them register and get to their beautiful hotel rooms (also donated by the hotels) and orient them to the activities planned for them and to Southern California. Although we are rather cool for us this week, many had left below 0 temps and blizzards.

Time and again we heard high praise for the roles that Project Linus, TAPS and Gold Star Mothers have played in their lives. We can once again pat ourselves on our backs for a job well done--and continuing. Thanks again to all of you coordinators out there across this great country of ours for helping to make this donation possible. It was truly the highlight of our year, once again. It's hard to get back to normal. But someone has just reminded me that Christmas is coming--soon! Oh, dear. Fortunately, my grandsons will understand if it is rather sparse this year. They have very generous natures and, as teenagers, donate their time often and regularly.

Thank you for this rare opportunity.

Cappy Brown, Project Linus Anaheim, CA

I wanted to drop you a quick note to once again thank you and your dedicated volunteers for all of the precious blankets. We received 4 huge bags of blankets before Christmas. We gave all of our children coming in for therapy a blanket for Christmas and we still have quite a bit left over. We should have enough to last us for at least 6 months.....Thank you!

Assistant

Denise Dubrule, Administrative



Kids First **Child Advocacy Center**

Thank you for sharing the Project Linus Blankets with our domestic violence shelter. We also have an additional Family Services program for parents of young children. Our home visitation program serves families with pre-school children. Our goal is to enroll first time parents, ideally when the child is a newborn. Sandy Burress is our parent educator who makes visits in the home each month to bring child development and parenting info. Sandy saw the beautiful children's blankets. Do you think that the next time you give blankets to the shelter you could give us a few for the children in our home visitation program?

Just to keep you up to date, REACHS is now officially has a new name – Community Health of East Tennessee – for awhile we will use the title as Community Health of East Tennessee, *formerly REACHS, Inc.* until the community adjusts to our new name. But we are the same people doing the same jobs of helping people in our area have a better quality of life. And we *Thank You* for the Project Linus Blankets and the part cozy, warm blankets do to help a child feel better and have hope that many people care.

Nelsie Wooden

Community Health of East Tennessee

Formerly REACHS, Inc. Jacksboro, TN 37757

Directions to Concord United Methodist Church for the February 21st meeting:

Get off I-40 at the Lovell Rd. Exit. Drive towards Kingston Pike.

At Kingston Pike turn right and go 9/10th of a mile. Turn left on Loudon between the Aspen Square and Essex Point shopping centers.

Go 1/10th mile on Loudon and it will deadend into Roane St.

Turn left on Roane and go under 1/10th of a mile and turn right into the Concord United Methodist Church parking lot.

The entrance to the meeting room is on the front right corner of the building. You have to go up a few steps. If you can't do steps, go to the main entrance and come back down the hall to the meeting room.

Call Deb if you get lost 719-2862

Linus has a blanket that's all his very own.

It comforts and sustains him when he's feeling quite alone.
He knows that others love him for 'twas made with special care
And because it means so much to him, it's carried everywhere.

You too can have a blanket that's created just for you,
To comfort and support you when you're feeling rather blue.

It's yours to keep forever, so you may always know
That others out there love you and to you our wishes go.