

Donation Quilts Committee

The Donation Quilts Committee is the group that collects and distributes charity quilts made by Guild members throughout the year. All members are encouraged to make at least one quilt in any size for donation each year.

Distributions are usually made twice a year, plus special requests as they may come in. Groups and organizations the Nanaimo Quilters Guild donates to through this committee include:

Aboriginal Infant Development Program – Snuneymuxw First Nation

Building Better Babies Program – Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre

Crossroads Crisis Pregnancy Centre

Eden Gardens – Seniors Care (Dementia)

Nanaimo Family Life

Nanaimo Community Hospice – Palliative Care Unit at NRGH, Hospice

Nanaimo Regional General Hospital - Dufferin Place, NICU Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation – VI Scan Unit, NRGH

Vancouver Island Health: Prenatal Lunch Bunch, Connections Program for parents of babies

Victim Services - RCMP

These are the organizations that we routinely donate to. We also accept suggestions and requests if someone feels there is a need for quilts somewhere.

The quilts we donate comfort those in many areas of the community and many stages of life and development. From premature newborns at the NICU to the terminally ill in Palliative Care we try to add a little warmth for those suffering a variety of life's challenges.

Our wheelchair quilts have been well received at both Eden Gardens and Dufferin Place where seniors feel the cold even when it is warm outside. Dufferin also keeps several in their travel van for use on day outings. These quilts need to be replaced every few years because they are well used and go through the facilities' laundry regularly.

Nanaimo Family Life provides services to individuals and families in various stages of life. Our lap size quilts often go to youths in the Life Works program or to parents and seniors learning community living skills.

Nanaimo Hospice has several uses for child and adult lap size quilts. Some are kept at Hospice House for use by families staying at the home. Some go to the Palliative Care Unit where they add a personal touch in the final transition of life for the terminally ill. And occasionally a quilt is given to a child who has lost a close family member. We've heard several stories of how touched people are to receive and use these quilts.

We have a continuing need for baby quilts as well. Building Better Babies and Aboriginal Infant Development both support young, low income parents of aboriginal descent and we have provided them with quilts many times. Crossroads Crisis Pregnancy Centre gives our baby quilts to young women in unexpected pregnancy situations. And VIHA sponsored Prenatal Lunch Bunch provides baby quilts to their young, low-income families. They are all grateful recipients and it is a fun part of these organizations' programs when young parents-to-be get to choose their quilt from those donated by us.

As the community grows the need for assistance seems to grow as well. We have distributed as many as 175 quilts throughout the community in one year, so there is lots of need and we encourage you to use up some scraps to provide a long lasting gift that will be appreciated.

The sizes of quilts we most often have a use for are as follows:

Preemie: 36 x 36 inches, dark flannel backings, no batting. These special quilts are for the NICU at the hospital. The quilts are draped over incubators, where they add a comfort to parents and block light so the babies can sleep better. When the babies go home, their quilts go with them so we have a continual need to replace them.

Baby or Crib size: 36 x 36 to 45 x 45 inches.

Wheelchair size: 36 x 40 inches. These quilts are enjoyed even more when backed with a cozy fleece or flannel. If a heavy fleece is used, such as polar fleece, batting is not needed. They need ties at either side, attached near the top. These are easily made of a finished 1-2" width of fabric folded in half to make double ties on each side about 20" long. These ties attach the quilt to the wheelchair so it doesn't fall off.

Lap size: averaging 45 x 60 inches, these quilts go to comfort children and adults in many different situations. We donate more of this size quilt than any other.

Twin size: 63 x 87 inches.

Quilts larger than this are in less demand but can still be used by places like Salvation Army.

Members are encouraged to use their scraps to make quilt tops for charity. You can then use your own batting or obtain batting free of charge from the Donations Committee. We have pre-cut pieces and also encourage members to pre-order so you can get exactly the size you need and easily pick it up at the next guild meeting. This can be done at a meeting or by emailing the Donations chair. We also have a selection of backings if you need them in order to complete the quilts.

And finally, we ask that a label be attached to each quilt for donation so the recipients know where the quilts came from. They are usually very touched that so much work is put into making these gifts and they like to know that they come from the Guild.

We have labels available at the Donation table at each meeting or you can use your own if you choose. The wording on our labels is "Made with care by the Nanaimo Quilters Guild".

There are Donation Committee members at every Guild meeting ready to help or answer any questions you may have so please stop by if you are unclear on any of this information.

And thanks for giving your time, talent and fabric! Your donations mean a lot to those in need.