

Sending hope one angel at a time

Farmington woman who crochets is part of world-wide network

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From the comfort of her home in Farmington, Karen Strait makes delicate butterflies who bring a touching message.

Karen is part of Angels for Hope, a non-profit organization that offers free crocheted angels and other items to anyone in need of hope. The stitchers are contacted through the Web site at www.angelsforhope.org. Soon, the thoughtful day-brightener is on its way.

They were sent 68,871 times in 2007 and the goal for 2008 is to touch 70,000 lives.

“I came across this on the Internet about four years ago,” said Karen, who is disabled. “I can make a butterfly in about 15 minutes.”

Her husband Richard received an angel when he had a heart attack. Karen has sent butterflies to people with all kinds of health issues, grief, injuries or those going through life changes like divorce. She attaches a card to say that someone cares.

Requests come to the Web site. Karen said the request can be personalized. For example, when a child died in an automobile accident, she asked what the child’s favorite color was. She said purple is the color most often requested.

The Angels use a special pattern that’s only given out to those who sign up to stitch. Karen makes red, white and blue butterflies to send to war families. There’s also a 100th butterfly birthday club to send butterflies to people who reach their century birthday. They are sent to caregivers who may be isolated as they care for a chronically ill loved one at home. Some items are donated to the Relay For Life or the Ronald McDonald House. There are 600 angels who crochet around the world.

Donations of yarn and money for postage are always appreciated. Karen said it costs about 88 cents to mail a butterfly. She uses baby yarn to make them.

“The people who receive them know they are loved and cared about and they are remembered in someone’s thoughts and prayers,” said Karen. “Because I lost a son, I know that if I can touch the life of someone that is hurting, that is what I want to do.”

Karen crochets almost every day to keep ahead of the need. She has sent them to 49 states and even to Canada. People can even request their loved one be designated a “special angel” and that family will receive lots of angels from around the country.

“I had a friend who has had a reoccurrence of cancer and I asked that she be a ‘special angel’ and she received a different angel for days.”

Karen says with the way the world has changed, so many people are isolated and alone without a support system, the Angels for Hope are needed more than ever.

“If I can bring a smile to someone’s face, it’s like being the arm of God,” said Karen.

