
CARING HEARTS was founded in 1999 by avid knitter Judi Wing. Troubled by back problems and unable to work outside of her home, she had found comfort in creating – with lots of love – beautiful sweaters for children of all ages.

JUDI FELT that there must be some need in her area for these items and visited the local Ministry of Human Resources office. However, she was told that this ministry was not able to accept these items but did give Judi phone numbers and names of some transition houses that might be interested.

TO HER delight they were, and with this new information Judi began her search to find more programs in need of handcrafted clothing and blankets for children. She realized she couldn't fulfill the need on her own and put an ad in the local paper looking for others to help. Several women answered the call and the charity was in full swing, creating and distributing items made from volunteer purchased materials and small amounts of donated yarn.



AT FIRST, yarn was distributed from a room in Judi's apartment. But as more people became involved and materials outgrew the room, half of the social room in her apartment building became the centre of activity. Volunteers made weekly deliveries. Money was raised through hot dog sales, craft and garage sales and even by partnering in a golf tournament.

JUDI SAW that the need for these handcrafted items was only going to increase and started the time consuming steps to register a non-profit society. On September 19, 2000 it became



official - Caring Hearts for Underprivileged Children Society was a registered charity. Now, funds could be applied for and letters were written to corporations and politicians requesting their support. Generous individuals

donated money to keep the rent paid and gas in the vehicles used to deliver the items. In addition, Judi attended many service group meetings to speak about Caring Hearts and to emphasize how much this organization was needed.

LITTLE BY little donations came in to keep Caring Hearts afloat. The first successful BC gaming application was received in 2002... a small amount but a huge milestone for the charity, enabling the purchases of new yarn and fabric.

UNFORTUNATELY, LATER that year, Judi's health deteriorated. She had to step down as president and the torch was passed to Mary Warren, her right hand helper. Caring Hearts was moved to Mary's husband's garage where she capably carried on the work of co-ordinating and distributing items to the programs requesting help.

THE ROSTER of Lower Mainland crafters was steadily growing. More and more knitters,

crocheters, sewers and quilters were coming to the aid of children in need. And not only were children benefiting from Caring Hearts, but so were the volunteers. They were coming together with a common goal to help children in need and were making friends, acquiring skills and experiencing a sense of purpose.

SADLY, IN the spring of 2005, Mary suffered a fatal heart attack. The garage was no longer available and Caring Hearts had to look for a new home. Fortunately, the husband of a volunteer had an employer with some space to sublet and Caring Hearts was relocated to a small office space on 132nd street where it stayed for 3 years.

CARING HEARTS could now have regular opening hours and many came to the office, spending the mornings sharing tips and tricks and marvelling at the beautiful work of the volunteers. With the new location and more volunteers lending a hand, the charity continued to grow and become better known in the communities. Media attention and word of mouth also helped



greatly in Caring Hearts' growth and community profile. More funding was coming in, more yarn, fabric and notion purchases were being made for the volunteers to create the much-needed items and consequently more product was being produced and distributed. A website was developed for Caring Hearts as it moved to keep up with the times. *(Con't over)*

IN 2008, the sublet space was needed by the owner and Caring Hearts once again was looking for a home. After much searching, space was found in the Payal Business Centre where we are today. It is the largest space so far and makes the work of Caring Hearts so much easier to accomplish.

Volunteers can sit and have coffee and chat, sorters have enough room to work unimpeded and materials are easy to access.

CARING HEARTS has come a long way since the days of donated yarn out of a basket in a spare room. Now we have a bright and cheerful office, hundreds of volunteers, funding, and a widespread reputation for helping kids in need in the communities we serve. The Board of Directors (and anyone who wants to help) continues to research suppliers, funding and recipients.

THANK YOU to all of the volunteers for making Caring Hearts so successful in its goal to keep children in need warm and cozy!

Mission Statement

To give comfort to children and families in our communities by providing handcrafted clothing, blankets and toys to those in need.

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**“Caring Hearts”
For
Underprivileged
Children Society**

...our history

