



TOUCHING LITTLE LIVES NEWSLETTER

First Quarter 2021 January - March

Editor: Linda Marshall Contributing Editor: Sally Bricker



BOARD NEWS

Happy New Year from TLL's Board of Trustees! We look forward to the coming year and our opportunity to continue to serve the babies of Ohio. At the December Board meeting, changes were made to the Board. We want to congratulate and thank Carol Tolliver and Kim Varker for taking on the positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, respectively. Carol has worked closely with Sally during the past year helping with grants, "crunching numbers" and streamlining some of our forms. This has resulted in time savings for Sally so she could focus on other things. Kim has been helping with packing deliveries at Sally's house on an ongoing basis and due to Covid has recently been the only help Sally has had to pack deliveries. Kim's help has been invaluable to keep deliveries going out and relieving Sally of some of the stress of doing it on her own.

Thank you to Jan Kiikka and Nancy Coho for their previous service as Chair and Vice Chair and their continued service as Trustees. Linda Grandstaff will continue as our Secretary and Sally Bricker as our Treasurer. Robin Hughes, Laurel Grubbs & Jill Hawse will serve as Trustees to round out our nine person board. Thank you ladies for your past and continued service to TLL!

For the past two years, TLL has used some of its monies to purchase used clothing. We hoped to further serve families and babies in need by providing gently used clothing to babies and older children in our area. During 2019 & 2020, we spent approximately \$4000 and provided 20,400 pieces of used clothing to our facilities. Due to our current financial status, the board voted to discontinue using TLL funds to purchase used clothing in 2021. The Board felt we needed to conserve our money

to focus on our primary mission of providing newborn and preemie items.

Although we are no longer spending TLL funds on purchasing used clothing, we are still accepting donations of gently used clothing to donate to our facilities. There is still a great need for clothing from newborn to approximately size 4T. If you have baby clothes you are no longer using or know of someone who wants to donate clothing or would like to purchase used clothing, we are still distributing these items to the facilities that need it. Please wash the clothes if you can, or indicate on the "turn in" slip that it needs to be washed. Tax receipts can be provided upon request.

It goes without saying that Covid disrupted everyone's lives in 2020. TLL has adapted to this "new normal" and we are grateful to all our volunteers for taking the changes we've made in stride and continuing to work for "our" babies. During March, April & September, we halted or had very limited deliveries. Some facilities were no longer able to accept deliveries or they were functioning in a limited capacity. Despite all this, we are pleased to announce we made 324 deliveries in 2020 to 47 facilities for a total of just over 53,000 items. This includes over 9000 items of used clothing. This is a HUGE accomplishment that everyone can be proud of. This would not have been possible without each of and every one of you and we are thankful for your continued perseverance during these trying times. We don't know what 2021 will bring, but we will continue in our mission to the best of our ability.

TLL is committed to our mission of "serving the babies of Ohio". We've all had a challenging year in 2020 and are so thankful to our volunteers for working so hard to keep us supplied with all the items we donate. Over the past 20 years of TLL's existence, we have faced different challenges, but have met those challenges head on and have continued to grow and adapt to become an even better and stronger organization. We are confident in 2021 that we will continue to fulfill that mission with the help of all of you. Happy New Year everyone

WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

We threw a lot of changes at our volunteers in the last newsletter. We want to thank you for listening and following these new guidelines. We are in the process of phasing out the items we will no longer be making. Most of the supply on hand will be going out with December deliveries. Requesting supplies through your Work Group Coordinators has helped Sally immensely. This alone has helped her keep track of requests and fulfilling them correctly and timely. With the new “turn in “slip, she now knows at a glance where incoming bags need to go, depending on if they need finished, need tags, need washed or whatever. She has also been able to better contact volunteers to give feedback about items and also post pictures with the volunteer’s name on Facebook. Please continue to use them inside EVERY bag and mark the appropriate box(es) if they apply. If none of the boxes apply, all we need is your name and workgroup. Thank you to our delivery people who have adapted, not only to the new delivery procedures, but our new delivery schedule.

SPEND SMARTER TO MAKE OUR \$\$ GO FARTHER

Our challenge for 2021 is to SPEND SMARTER. TLL took a financial hit in 2020 as donations, including grants and individual donations, were down 36 percent. We unfortunately went over our proposed budget by approximately \$3,900 dollars. This overage was due to purchasing needed supplies. We also found, due to shortages, prices were higher for some items we normally buy. We project that this trend of lower donations and higher prices will continue for at least part of 2021. In order to prepare for that possibility, the Finance Committee is recommending that we only purchase essential supplies.

At the top of the “essential” list is batting and backing for quilts. We are currently well supplied with flannel and fleece, but will purchase those again when our supply runs low. We have a good supply of baby yarn, worsted weight yarn, fiberfill, thread, serger thread, knit fabric, ribbing and snaps. We may run out of certain colors or types of these supplies but as long as we have some, we will not be purchasing new supplies. For example, we have a good supply of baby yarn, but we may not have the color you want. We have plenty of ribbing, but we might not have the color that matches your fabric perfectly. We may run out of white serger thread, so you may need to use a color along with the white on what you are making. We realize that these situations are not ideal, but our financial mission this year is TO MAKE OUR MONEY GO FARTHER. We will be using the supplies that we

currently have in the best way possible. To those of you that purchase your own supplies, please continue to do so. It is greatly appreciated and helps to somewhat alleviate the financial situation we are currently in. We do want to assure you that we remain fiscally sound and not in danger of going under, but we must SPEND SMARTER in order to stay within our smaller budget in 2021.

FREE MONEY

One way you can help us raise money is by taking advantage of some of the “free money” available to us. If you haven’t already, sign up your Kroger card so that TLL receives a donation every time you shop. In 2020, we received over \$987 from Kroger. Also, please use Amazon Smile <https://smile.amazon.com/> and iGive <https://www.igive.com/> and designate your donations to TLL. These seemingly small ways to contribute add up and every little bit we receive helps.

Thank you to South Central Power Company Foundation for their “Round Up” grant of \$4000 this year. This money was used to help us purchase flannel. This is the second year we’ve received support from them and it was much needed. Also, thank you to the Groveport Moose Lodge for their ongoing financial support. We recently received our quarterly check from them for \$946.32. We appreciate their commitment to TLL especially in these hard financial times. Retiree Sandy H. volunteered 25 hours for TLL for which we received a \$500 volunteer match donation from the 3M Foundation. Thank you to 3M and Sandy. Check with your employer to see if they have a similar matching donation or volunteer match program.

CONDOLENCES

Our sincerest condolences to our volunteers who have lost a loved one recently:

Jan Rond – Her husband Mike in October

Chris Petee and Kate Myers – Chris’s dad/ Kate’s grandfather in November

Sue Ann Dykes – Her brother Porter in November

Susan Cisco – Her brother David in November

Jan Brinkerhoff – Her husband John in November

Charlotte Oliver – Her brother Gary in November

The family of Westerville volunteer, Pat Janeway in November.

Sandy Engelmann – Her son Larry in December

We know there are many other volunteers who have family that are suffering with medical issues and/or Covid related illness. Our thoughts and prayers go out to you at this time.

BUCKEYE BABY

Even though the OSU/Michigan game was postponed until December and then eventually cancelled, our Buckeye Baby items went out to our facilities in December. We sent out approximately 70 quilts and also tons of sleep sacks, sweaters, jackets, hats, booties and toys as well. We made up sets including sleep sacks with a hat and toy; jackets with hats and booties; blankets with sweater or sleep sack and a hat, bootie and toy. We had so many OSU themed items that we were able to distribute either quilts or other items to just about every facility in December. So “our” babies were still able to cheer on the Bucks despite another Covid twist. In addition to our Buckeye quilts, we sent out over 180 Christmas quilts in November and December!!

JUST THE BASICS

Our Just the Basics campaign to collect various hygiene products was a huge success. As of the end of December we collected 824 items for distribution. These were welcomed with open arms at our facilities and were given to parents in need of these basic supplies. Thank you for your overwhelming response to this campaign. Although our campaign has officially ended, please continue to purchase these needed supplies and donate them if you can. There is always an ongoing need.

COVID:

We are all sick and tired of hearing about Covid at this point, but there are several things we wanted to address to all our volunteers. With the vaccine around the corner, we hope to see some semblance of “normal” come back by mid-year. In the meantime, we will continue to operate as we have and make adjustments

A couple of things we wanted to stress:

If you have Covid or have been exposed to Covid, please quarantine as advised and **DO NOT TURN IN ANY OF YOUR ITEMS TO US THROUGH YOUR WORKGROUP OR TO SALLY.** Please let your workgroup coordinator or Sally (whoever you normally go through) know of your situation so that we can take the appropriate action. This information will be held in confidence and just be used to advise as to what we need you to do regarding your TLL items.

Although you may continue to work on things for TLL, we ask that you do not turn in your items until you are out

of quarantine. Please wash all finished items (or rewash as appropriate). Please put items into a plastic bag and seal it completely. Isolate that bag and when you turn it in at your workgroup please make us aware as to what bag it is.

Once we receive it, we will quarantine it again for a period of time until we are positive there is no danger of exposure. There seems to be only a small chance that Covid survives on fabric or surfaces for a long period of time, but since our items are going to hospitals and babies, we do not want to take any chances

Bottom line: If you have any reason to believe anything you are turning in poses a Covid risk, let us know, hold on to your items until you are out of quarantine, and when you do turn it in, let us know so we will be able to isolate it again if needed. Please help us keep “our” babies safe!

SOS: SAVE OUR STAMPS

We are asking for your help again this year to “Save Our Stamps.” We did this fundraiser at the end of 2018 and due to your generous response, we did not have to buy any stamps in 2019!

For those new to TLL, we are asking volunteers to donate one book of stamps to help with our postage needs for the year. We use these stamp donations to mail out our four newsletters for the year, and our day to day correspondence such as thank you letters, tax receipts, etc. If you would rather make a monetary donation, we use that money to send out all of our packages to individuals and/or facilities. The money we save from this fundraiser allows us to use more of our funds to buy fabric, yarn and other supplies that go directly towards making items for the babies. So please consider helping us with these necessary costs by donating a stamp, a book of stamps or any monetary donation you wish. If you are turning it in at one of parking lot meetings, you can give it to your work group coordinator or put the stamps in an envelope and put it inside the bag(s) you are dropping off. You can also mail it directly to us at our corporate address. Tax receipts can be furnished upon request.

QUALITY CONTROL

Please help us out by checking your items for quality and usefulness before you turn them in. Here are some things to check:

- Are there any loose threads that need to be trimmed?
- Are the ties on my quilts about 6” apart and trimmed to about ½” inch?

- Do my items follow TLL's size and material guidelines?
- Are they washed?
- Do my quilts or quilt tops have labels sewn on them?
- Did my items "bleed" in the wash? (watch out for red, and dark blue & purple)
- Did I check my items for ripped seams and stains?
- Did I tie my booties together or tuck one inside the other?
- Did I pack sets (sweater/hats/booties, bib/burps, etc) together?
- Did I fill out a "turn in" slip and put it into every bag?
- Do my items look nice and baby friendly?

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

Thank you very much for the donations of quilts, blankets and other wonderful stuff. Our discharge coordinators give a quilt to every baby when they go home, so all items are put to good use. Thank you for supporting our NICU and the babies and families! *Anne, Cincinnati University Hospital*

We thank you for the quilts, shirts, sleepers, towels and toys. Your gifts are such a blessing to those who shop in our boutique. God Bless you, *Heartbeats Newark*

Merry Christmas and Thank you from the *Angel House Board*

Thank you so much for your recent delivery of 161 items (wow!) to the Grant OB Clinic. Your dedication in these difficult times is amazing. We give the patients all a bib on their first visit and get a lot of OOH's and AHH's and "how cute". We much appreciate the assortment of other items and they will be put to good use. Over the past years, I have enjoyed receiving all the beautiful items for our patients. It is obvious they are made with love and caring for others. Thank you so much for everything. *Terrie R., Grant Outpatient Care Center.*

Thank you for the amazing blanket! Out baby boy loves it! From our family to you. *Jarod, Adrianna, Peter & Ashley.*

It is with profound gratitude we thank all the volunteers at Touching Little Lives for the beautiful afghan, sleep sacs, quilts, sleepers, toys and jackets. Covid has not stopped your creativity and love for our pregnant moms and babies! We so appreciate all of the work that goes into producing/delivering these lovely items. *Wendy C, Penny S, & Wendy K; Mercy Hospital*

Your recent donation of bibs/burp cloths, hats, nursing covers, booties/mittens, and sleep sacs is greatly appreciated. We sincerely appreciate your kindness for sharing these beautiful items and for keeping us and our patients in your thoughts during this challenging health event. Your continued generosity and dedication truly benefit our patients. *Veronica P. Licking Memorial Hospital*



I am a mom of a baby in the NICU at Nationwide Children's Hospital. We received a quilt from you all the other day and it is wonderful. Thank you so much. We took pictures with it today and it was absolutely perfect.

WORK GROUP MEETINGS

Our work group meetings will continue to be "parking lot" meetings until further notice. This is our current schedule:

Westerville: (Delaware) 1st Saturday of the month @ Heritage Christian Church, 7413 Maxtown Road; Time: 10:30-11:30am; send supply requests to Sally Bricker info@touchinglittlelives.org **NOTE: January's meeting will be moved to the 2nd Saturday (Jan 9th) due to the New Year's holiday. April's meeting will be moved to the 2nd Saturday (April 10th) due to the Easter Holiday.**

Moose: (COOL, Chillicothe) 2nd Thursday of the month @ the Moose Lodge in Groveport, 220 Main St. Time: 10-11am; send supply requests to Jill Hawse: jhawse@att.net (614-531-5237 cell)

Grove City: 3rd Friday of the month @ United Methodist Church, 2834 Columbus St. Time: 2-3pm; send supply requests to Vickie Dab jdabrava@columbur.rr.com or Carol Tolliver ca.tolliver@att.net **NOTE: January and February meetings are cancelled. If you need supplies, etc. during that time, contact Carol or Vickie.**

Touching Little Lives, Inc.

4882 Bixby Ridge Dr. East, Groveport, OH 43125

614- 653-3352 Email: info@touchinglittlelives.org

www.touchinglittlelives.org