

# Wrapped up in the holidays

*Terra Linda student blanket drive continues school's 'tradition of service'*

BY RAY PITZ

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**Terra Linda Elementary School students want to brighten the holidays for those in need while keeping them warm.**

The school's students presented more than 40 blankets to a homeless advocate for the Beaverton School District on Friday.

Spearheaded by the student Care Council, part of the school's Peacebuilders program, students spent the last several weeks crafting fleece fabric into the colorful blankets.



RAY PITZ / TIMES NEWSPAPERS

Mary Metheney, left, a Beaverton School District homeless advocate, accepts more than 40 blankets created by students at the school including, right of Metheney, Alex Baek, Will Albright and Amy Martin.

"I've never gotten blankets like this," said Mary Metheney, a district homeless liaison, shortly before the presentation. "It's exciting."

Ruth Williams, a Terra Linda first/second grade teacher who heads up the Care Council, said students brought in numerous donations of fleece, thanks to a sale at a local fabric store.

"We're celebrating today," Principal Cheryl Ames told students at the beginning of the assembly. "We're celebrating today things we do to help others."

Students were then treated to a PowerPoint presentation of "The Teddy Bear" by David McPhail, a story about a Teddy Bear lost by a boy and found by a homeless man.

When Metheney was presented with the blankets, she praised students for their attentiveness.

“I’ve been in almost every grade school and I’ve never seen an audience as polite as you,” she said.

Metheney said she planned to give some of the blankets to three different Washington County family shelters, along with keeping a few on hand to distribute to families in the district.

In addition, she plans to donate three of them to special children whose family situation has resulted in moving to several different district schools already this year.

### **Little things mean a lot**

After the assembly, Metheney said she was impressed with both the numbers and newness of the gifts.

“I’ve had donations of blankets but not new blankets,” Metheney said.

Several past and present members of the Care Council said they were glad to help out with the project.

Fifth-grader Alex Baek said the big lesson he took away was the importance of helping those who are homeless.

He said students’ efforts would ensure the “homeless will have blankets and they won’t freeze to death.”

Will Albright, also a fifth-grader, echoed similar sentiments about helping the homeless by creating the blankets, which he estimated took about 30 minutes each to make.

“What we learned is we should be grateful that we have homes that have fireplaces that heat us and keep us warm,” said Albright.

Second-grader Amy Martin said the blanket she helped create was a mixture of blue on the top portion of the fabric and rainbow colors on the bottom.

After the assembly, she reflected on the importance of the homemade items.

“I learned that for people who don’t have homes, little things can mean a lot to them,” she said.

In addition to the blanket creations, students at the school have undertaken a food drive and are collecting socks and coats for the needy.

Next month students will host a toy drive.

“This school has a strong tradition of service,” Ames pointed out.