

Tight-knit group crafts cozy items for good causes

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A group of six women ? members of Crafty Ladies ? gathered in the Newcomb Hall lounge on a recent Monday evening to sit together, knit and chat. It was the first monthly meeting of the school year, and the women were finishing up scarves that they'd started knitting during the summer. Their handiwork will be sold at the Race for the Cure event (Oct. 22) to support the Susan B. Komen Foundation, an organization that funds breast cancer research.



Members of the Crafty Ladies group of the Tulane University Women's Association donate 17 handcrafted scarves to be sold at the Susan B. Komen Foundation Race for the Cure Oct 22. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

[Crafty Ladies](#) is an outgrowth of friendships knit together through the Tulane University Women's Association book club. The group has been meeting since 2004.

“Knitting became a comfort to us, working on projects, since we took our supplies with us when we evacuated after Hurricane Katrina,” said Graci Rickerfor, operations manager at the Newcomb College Institute. “This is important to me, because we're giving to the community.”

The group of staff and faculty members and spouses of Tulane faculty also have knit shawls and scarves for cancer patients undergoing treatment at Tulane Medical Center. At the group's Dec. 5 meeting, scarves, hats and baby blankets handcrafted by the Crafty Ladies will be collected to donate to the Crescent House Healing and Empowerment Center, for women and children who are survivors of domestic or sexual abuse.

April Brayfield, an associate professor of sociology and founder of the group, said, "This is therapeutic for us. The group is for all different skill levels of knitters, and we try out other kinds of crafts such as beading, to be more diverse and inclusive. Last year we made Saints' wreaths â?| and they worked!"

The group has taken on even more meaning for Brayfield, whose car has a CRAFTY1 license plate. She counts herself among cancer survivors. Brayfield and other members of the sociology department plan to walk in the Race for the Cure.