

The great-big ♥s

of the Bead-It-Forward project



Whether told in names, numbers, or faces, the story behind the 2013 Bead-It-Forward project is one of generosity!

by **Stacy Werkheiser**

The Bead-It-Forward project has been on the heart of the beading community since 2006 when Jeanette Shanigan started collecting tiny beaded squares for a great cause. Even when Jeanette passed the project to *Bead&Button*, the goal remained the same — to rally our gifts for beading and direct them toward a cure for breast cancer.

And, oh, how you rallied for the 2013 Bead-It-Forward project! We received more than 1,300 squares and worked them into 315 items, including

ornaments, quilts, shadowboxes, stationary, picture frames, jewelry boxes, and even a decorative towel. These and other beady donations were auctioned at the Bead&Button Show last June to the tune of \$18,133, all for breast cancer research!

Along the way, we were touched by individuals and groups whose generosity surpassed our wildest expectations. Here are just a few of the facts, figures, and friends we will treasure most from the 2013 Bead-It-Forward project.

Digital deliverance

The journey began with a question we just couldn't settle on our own: What should this year's theme be? We posted the question on Facebook and were overwhelmed by the flood of thoughtful, funny, or just plain clever responses. Many thanks to Marissa B. for "Flowers: Stitching to find a bloomin' cure."

Then, our Facebook, Twitter, and blog followers contributed 23 flower-themed patterns as part of our Bead-It-Forward Pattern Challenge. We published the patterns as free downloadable graphs at www.BeadAndButton.com, which gave many bead-ers the confidence to stitch a square or two or 10. Your designs were very much appreciated, Amy, Barbara, Catherine, Donna S., Donna W., Kathleen, Kristen, Marina, Miranda, Perre, and Robin!



Associate Editor Connie Whittaker demonstrates how to stitch two squares into an ornament at one of the Bead-It-Forward Assembly Nights.



This mosaic was rendered in 70 Bead-It-Forward squares, which were stitched in the Czech Republic.



Members of the Palmetto Palms Beading Club of Florida pose with their squares. Front row, left to right: Barbara, Kay, Patricia, Elaine. Back row, left to right: Ruth, Connie, Judith, Dee, Sharron, Sharon.

Strength in numbers

We saw a major trend in this year's Bead-It-Forward project: Bead stores, bead societies, and smaller enclaves of bead-minded folks stitching and submitting as groups. We received envelopes bursting with squares from:

- A Bead Abode, Virginia
- Bead Society of Central New York
- Bead Society of Greater Kansas City, Kansas
- Bead Society of Hawaii
- Bead Society of Slidell, Louisiana
- Bead Soup, Maryland
- Capital Area Beading Organization, North Carolina
- Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, Oregon
- College of the Mainland – Delmar Learning Center, Texas
- Czech Beading Team
- Hawaii Stitchery & Fiber Arts Guild
- Houston Bead Society, Texas
- Indiana Bead Society
- Las Cruces Bead Society, New Mexico
- Lodi's Beads, New Mexico
- Northwest Atlanta Bead Society, Georgia
- Obsession Beads, North Carolina
- Oklahoma Bead Society
- Operation Tackle That Bead Stash, Facebook group
- Palmetto Palms Beading Club, Florida
- San Antonio Bead Society, Texas
- Three Rivers Women's Cooperative, New Mexico (beads donated by www.monsterslayer.com)
- Wednesday Night Beaders of Dayton, Ohio
- York Town Craft Guild of York, Pennsylvania

The combined efforts of these groups accounted for 54% of this year's squares!

International undertaking

We can't help but recognize 22 beaders from the Czech Republic who used 70 Bead-It-Forward squares to create a mosaic of one of Vincent Van Gogh's most famous sunflower paintings. Yours was an incredible testament to international cooperation, Alena, Diana, Edita, Eliska, Eva, Evik, Katka, Klara, Maja, Majka, Marina, Milena, Natalie, Petra, Radka B., Radka T., Renata H., Renata Z., Sarka, Sasa, Vladka, and Ziminka!



Everyone's eyes were on the Bead-It-Forward items during the auctions at the Bead&Button Show last June.

A stitch in time

While beaders around the world were stitching their squares, the women of the Warm Hugs Quilt Group in Hales Corners, Wisconsin, were doing stitching of another kind. This group made and donated more than 50 quilts, all ready to be topped with Bead-It-Forward squares! Just a few of these women are pictured at top on the opposite page. Seated, left to right: Corinne and Kathy. Standing, left to right: Sue H., Sue L., Karen, Donna, Carol.

Local lending hands

Much thanks also goes to Kalmbach Publishing employees, members of the Loose Bead Society of Greater Milwaukee, plus friends and family of the *Bead&Button* staff who attended the Bead-It-Forward Assembly Nights. During these events, everyone put their bead and craft skills on overdrive while creating most (most!) of the 315 items mentioned earlier.

Many of these same folks helped run the auctions at the Bead&Button Show. They kept things organized for Show attendees, who in turn dug deep for the Bead-It-Forward items.

Together, as a worldwide beading community, we generated that whopping donation for breast cancer research. And while this eagle-eye view of the 2013 Bead-It-Forward project is far from complete (so many names we haven't mentioned!), we hope that each and every participant feels the triumph of this cause. Won't you and your great-big hearts join us again in 2014? ●

U.S. squares by state (State / # of squares)

Alabama / 1	Montana / 2
Arizona / 36	Nevada / 13
California / 46	New Hampshire / 3
Colorado / 8	New Jersey / 7
Connecticut / 1	New Mexico / 118
Florida / 20	New York / 63
Georgia / 13	North Carolina / 107
Hawaii / 45	Ohio / 11
Idaho / 9	Oklahoma / 20
Illinois / 23	Oregon / 78
Indiana / 36	Pennsylvania / 14
Iowa / 28	South Carolina / 2
Kansas / 15	South Dakota / 3
Louisiana / 47	Tennessee / 12
Maine / 1	Texas / 164
Maryland / 39	Virginia / 18
Massachusetts / 10	Washington / 1
Michigan / 15	Wisconsin / 13
Minnesota / 4	Other U.S.A.
Mississippi / 1	(unspecified) / 4
Missouri / 1	

International squares by country

Australia / 8	New Zealand / 2
Canada / 3	Poland / 18
Czech Rep. / 120	Scotland / 3
England / 7	Singapore / 1
France / 18	Switzerland / 2
Germany / 17	United Kingdom
Japan / 2	(unspecified) / 62

More Bead-It-Forward fun to come!

The 2013 Bead-It-Forward project isn't quite done, and the 2014 project is just starting. Here's how to participate:

- To purchase 2013 Bead-It-Forward items we set aside for online purchase, visit www.etsy.com/shop/beaditforward. It's open to international buyers!
- Go to www.BeadAndButton.com/beadquiltproject to get details about the 2014 Bead-It-Forward project. The theme is aquatic: "Turn the tide on breast cancer."
- "Like" *Bead&Button* on Facebook for instant updates about the 2014 project.