



Smith Village resident Collette O'Connell talks with Tosha Smith, Smith Village spa assistant, about items they are crafting for charitable causes. (photo by Gary Middendorf)

Smith Village 'Crafting for a Cause'

Smith Village employees and residents are working together to help others—one stitch at a time.

Crafting for a Cause, a group of knitters and crocheters, is encouraging adults from the community to join their effort.

"They're also relaxing and forging friendships in the process," according to Karen Jellema, human resources director for Smith Village.

Since last March, the crafters have been spending noon hours every other Monday in the life-plan community's craft room, making colorful sweaters for children served by Knit for Kids, a division of World Vision. The organiza-

tion serves children in Armenia, Nicaragua, Swaziland, and Tanzania, but also children in American destinations including Appalachia, New Orleans and the Bronx.

"Knitting for Kids is just one great cause we plan to make items for this year," Jellema said. "We have several others in mind."

The group plans to make hats and scarves for Operation Gratitude, which serves U.S. soldiers; hats for patients served by Little Company of Mary Cancer Center; and prayer shawls and lap blankets for St. Germaine Roman Catholic Church in Oak Lawn.

Beyond that, the group

plans to make hats, gloves, scarves and blankets for rangers employed by an international conservation group protecting endangered wildlife in Africa, as well as hats and gloves for Chicago's homeless.

The group welcomes skilled knitters and crocheters as well as beginners. Patterns are free and simple to manage. Those who get stuck can ask for assistance from other crafters.

Crafting sessions are scheduled for noon on the following Mondays: July 1, 15 and 29.

To find out more, call Annette Kebek at (773) 474-7300.