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Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) members take a pic with all the blankets they made for Birthline and Stepping Stone Shelter. Courtesy photos

By ROBERT PIERCE

- Leader & Times

Normally during the Christmas season, the weather outside is frightful, just as it has been this weekend, and this leaves young and old alike the desire to stay at home.

That home could be a little cold, and while furnaces and other heating devices help to a certain degree, gas and electric bills keep many from turning the temperature up.

Thus, for many, blankets and heavier clothing become a necessary part of the equation of staying warm, and one local group of ladies is helping some needy people stay warm this holiday season.

The Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) group in Liberal hosts meetings twice a month, and normally, like many people, they host a Christmas party during their last meeting of the year.



This year, however, the group decided to give something back to the community by making blankets for the Stepping Stone Shelter and Birthline.

“We ended up making six baby blankets and five adult blankets,” said Erica Engleman of MOPS. “Six of them went to Birthline, and five of them went to Stepping Stone.”

During their traditional Christmas parties in the past, group members exchange cookies or white elephant presents, but this year, the MOPS group decided it was time to focus on community in others in the spirit of the holidays. This led them to do something different, and that eventually led them to the blanket project.

“We are looking at doing more community-involved things this year,” Engleman said. “There was some more talk about doing some more projects like these. We’re just not for sure on where we’re going to go yet.”

When it came time to choose where in the community to make a difference, Engleman said MOPS members put their heads together to figure out needs and where they could help out.

“We called Stepping Stone,” she said. “They said they were always in need of blankets.”

Engleman said the shelter’s blankets have been distributed, but Birthline’s have yet to be delivered.

“They looked pretty excited about getting them,” she said of volunteers at Stepping Stone.

Engleman said MOPS is looking to do more for the shelter around March 2014.

MOPS has been around for a while in the Liberal community, and Engleman herself has been a part of the group for six years.

“I know that it’s been around longer than that,” she said. “It’s a group of moms that get together. We do Bible study and socialize and get our kids together. We meet every other week on the second and fourth Friday of every month.”

Engleman said Stepping Stone helped MOPS decide what the group should do to help out with the needs of the shelter.

“They have a list of things that they send out,” she said. “They send them out to the churches, and it’s a list of items they use on a daily basis. Our church donates toilet paper once a week, and we looked at doing that.”

In addition to toilet paper, Engleman said Stepping Stone could likewise use cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, paper towels and anything else that would be used to run a household.

“They just send out this paper and ask for donations for these items instead of having to spend their money that could be used for other things,” she said. “We were looking at maybe doing

something like that.”

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