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Group creates quilts to comfort victims' families of Uvalde school shooting

Cheryl M. Whitaker | Wilmington StarNews | USA TODAY NETWORK

On Dec. 14, 2012, an unforgettable and horrific mass shooting at Sandy Hook School in Newton, Conn., claimed the lives of 20 first-graders and six educators. ● Paula DeSilva was living in Connecticut then and wanted to know what she could do to help. Sitting at her computer from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. replying to dozens and dozens of people who also wanted to do something, anything. Just as long as they could help. ● DeSilva started Quilts2Heal, which officially became a nonprofit, and with the help of volunteers created personalized quilts to comfort others. ● DeSilva now residing in Leland, established Quilts2Heal, North Carolina Chapter. The chapter has nearly 100 volunteers who meet regularly to iron, cut, measure and sew quilts for those needing comfort. ● Over 1,900 miles from Netwon, Connecticut, on May 24, 2022, 10 years later another awful mass shooting occurred at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, leaving 19 children and two teachers dead. **See QUILTING, Page 2C**



Paula DeSilva presenting quilts to two families during her visit to Uvalde, Texas.

Quilting

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To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Sandy Hook School shooting, DeSilva started the Quilts2Heal Uvalde Quilt Project.

Liz McKinlay of Leland, a volunteer with the Quilts2Heal Uvalde Quilt Project, helped create a personalized quilt for one of the children, named Layla. As she sewed each quilt square, she learned what Layla liked, her favorite activities, and Layla's dreams for the future.

"I felt great sadness for Layla, her family and all the people of Uvalde," McKinlay said. She also said she

very honored and happy to provide a little comfort and compassion to Layla's family.

Embroidery, appliqué and over 100 different themed fabrics were purchased to create 22 quilts for the families. Volunteers Carin Rupp, Peggy Fulton, Linda Wengerd, Sherrie Plowman, Ruth Baggs, Liz McKinlay, and Anne Boone all of Leland, were among 80 who worked for five months to personalize each block in each quilt.

"I long arm quilted two quilts for the Uvalde Quilt Project. After Carin brought me the quilt tops, she had carefully created, I opened them up and immediately my hair stood on end," said volunteer Sherrie Plow-

man.

DeSilva and her husband delivered the quilts to Uvalde, Texas, one week before the 10th anniversary of the mass shooting that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Quilts2Heal has distributed hundreds of quilts in North Carolina, including to people after Hurricanes Florence and Dorian in Pender, Brunswick, New Hanover and Robeson counties, to incoming refugees in Craven County and to Samara's Village in Southport.

For more information, contact www.quilts2heal.org/ or Quilts2Heal@comcast.net.



Quilt for Xavier's family PHOTOS PROVIDED