



# PortPal© Kit

Individual Sewing  
instructions

CALIFORNIA EASTERN  
STAR - PATIENT  
COMFORT PROGRAM

# Patient Comfort Program Mission

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In 1957 our Past Grand Matron Marguerite Weisheimer wrote- " The members of the Order of the Eastern Star throughout the world support the fight against cancer in many ways. California Grand Chapter members have taken a decisive stand in an effort to alleviate the suffering of the victims of this dread disease." She continues to say "We thank the "Strong Minds, Great Hearts, True Faith and Ready Hands" which are making this work possible."

Times have changed but our mission has not, each "Patient Comfort Station" is individually run by members and volunteers. Each station is unique in what it makes, since each area is a little different in where they donate items, ie. hospitals, care facilities, individual patients, camps, etc. Even though each area is different, our goal is the same to provide comfort items free of charge to cancer patients.

Each item has a label on it saying "Made with Loving Hands by the Order of the Eastern Star", these items are made by dedicated members/volunteers who have worked for many years and many hours to make each cancer patient know that we care about them and are willing to help in any way we can to provide them with the "comfort items" they need.

The dedicated members working these programs give many hours of service. Donations fund the materials to make the many comfort items. New volunteers are always welcome. Click the Volunteer button to find a Patient Comfort Program near you. Donations are also always welcome.

# PortPal© Individual Sewing Instructions

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**EVENT SUMMARY** – This project is designed to create an opportunity for chapter members, and members of our Masonic family, to create and distribute PortPal© pillows to local doctor’s offices and cancer treatment centers and/or hospitals.

These instructions are designed for an individual seamstress/sewer, who owns a sewing machine, and is comfortable sewing simple straight lines! You will receive a kit or you can create your own. We’ve included the instructions needed to assemble as many PortPals© as you have supplies.

**DISTRIBUTION** - Once the pieces are complete, the finished product is loaded into a delivery bag and can be distributed to local hospitals or infusion centers. This includes pediatric cancer clinics!

**TARGET AUDIENCE** – The target audience for PortPals© is for anyone who has a chemo port. Generally, this is anyone who’s had, or is having chemotherapy treatment, or any sort of chest surgery.

**RESOURCES** – If you would like additional help organizing your event, please contact Kathie Ketels-Lichtig [kklichtig@gmail.com](mailto:kklichtig@gmail.com) or Julie Willis [willowjd@aol.com](mailto:willowjd@aol.com) . You can access templates and more via our Google Drive.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9j4kcgZZQQPMDAtaTltd1ZR Uk0>

# Project Overview

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The Sewing Blitz started in 2015 with the members of Diablo Star Chapter in Orinda. Members got together to sew, and challenged ourselves to see how many heart (surgery)

pillows and PortPals we could produce in 4 hours. The final count was 130 pillows and 35 PortPals with 15 members and friends. It was awesome! The photos below show the fun and give you an idea of how to set up your space for production capacity and fellowship!





# Project Overview

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## Secure supplies

### Kits

Receive a pre-packaged kit from your local chapter or Comfort Care Station coordinator. Everything you need **EXCEPT the Polyfill to stuff the pieces**, will be included in this kit. You will need to purchase the polyfill.

The front bag is the kit you will receive. The back bag is full of completed pieces and is ready to be delivered!



### Supplies on hand

If you do not receive a kit, and would prefer to use materials on hand, you can follow these instructions to create your own kit.

Review the full set of instructions to insure you have everything you need before you start.



INSTRUCTION\_Create  
e Sewing Kits - PortP

Whichever you choose, you will need to purchase some Polyfill to stuff the pillows. Watch the sales at JoAnns or Michaels!

## **Distribute the finished products.**

Once your PortPals are complete, you will want to contact doctor's offices, cancer treatment centers, chemo infusion centers, and/or hospitals in your community and the surrounding area. To find centers in your area Google "cancer treatment center, California".

Ask if they would like to have a supply of PortPals© to give their patients. You may want to explain that they are handmade! Take samples! In our experience, no one has said no! Give the location your contact information so that they can order more! Get their contact info as well.

Contact your Chapter or Comfort Station coordinator to let them know how many PortPals© you completed, and where you delivered them.

Have fun and thank you for your service!!

# Step 1 - Layout

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## Recommended supplies

- Sharpie marker
- Ruler

Separate the cut Velcro piece, then overlap the pieces as shown, so that it fits the fabric square, and insert between the right sides of your fabric squares. Cover with the 2<sup>nd</sup> piece of fabric, right sides together. (Figure 1). The Velcro will be ‘anchored’ when you complete the stitching/seam work.

Lay the matching piece of fabric over the Velcro. Use a Sharpie Marker to make a 2” opening on the **wrong side** of a piece of the fabric as shown below (Figure 2). Experienced seamstresses can skip the marking and “eyeball” an opening large enough to turn the piece.



Figure 1



Figure 2



# Step 2 - Stitch

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## Recommended supplies

- Sewing machine
- Matching or neutral colored thread

Stich from opening mark to opening mark – 3/8” seam allowance.  
Remember to backstitch at each opening to secure the thread.



# Step 3 - Turn

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## Recommended supplies

- Sharp scissors
- Something to help push the corner, quilting tool, chopstick, letter opener, etc.

Cut across each corner of the square. This will lessen the bulk when the piece is turned inside out.



Turn the squares inside out and use your tool to pull the corners “sharp”.



Use pointed end of  
turner to push out  
points ....



... like this!



# Step 4 – Press & add Label

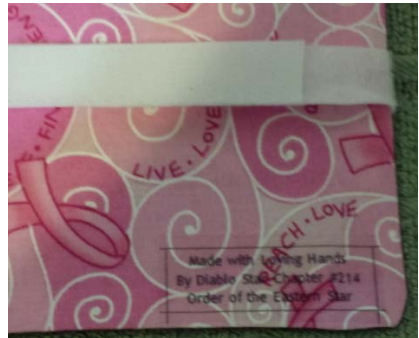
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PLEASE NOTE: Kits made after January will not have labels and this step can be skipped! We found that the ironing/sticking was inconsistent and the enclosure cards fill the same function.

## Recommended supplies

- Iron – dry irons are recommended, but not necessary
- Ironing board or thick towels and a flat surface
- Extension cord

Pre-heat the iron, it should be pretty hot. Press the piece to remove any wrinkles and to heat up the fabric – do your best to make the seams sharp/flat. Add the label. Position the label near the bottom piece as shown. It takes a few minutes to transfer the text to the fabric....it's a bit of a guess. Let the label cool and then peel off the transfer paper.



# Step 5 - Stuff

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## Recommended supplies

- Hypo-allergenic pillow stuffing
- Small hands

Add stuffing to the piece through the 2” opening, so that the pieces are pretty firm, but not overstuffed! This is a bit of a guess – you don’t want the pillow to “collapse” when attached to a seatbelt, but you don’t want it so full that you can’t easily stitch the opening closed.



# Step 6 – Stitch the opening

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## Recommended supplies

- Sewing machine
- Matching or neutral colored thread

Stitch the opening and then adjust the stuffing so that it's pretty even. The stitching can be done by hand, if you are confident with their fine stitching skills. You can also use the sewing machines to complete this task by machine stitching right along the open edge.



It's quite easy to stuff all of the pieces and then stitch them closed creating a "chain". Clip all of the loose threads.



# Step 7 – Packaging

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## Recommended supplies

- Zippered sandwich bags
- Pre-printed insert cards
- Delivery bags



This is the final step in the process! You are the final stop and responsible for “quality assurance”! Take a quick look to make sure:

- The opening is securely stitched closed, fix if needed.
- All seams are secure
- The Velcro “works”. The piece can be attached securely to a seatbelt.
- There is an iron-on label
- No loose threads hanging.

Once you are satisfied, put the finished piece into a zippered sandwich bag and add an insert card. Close the zipper seal and

remove as much of the air in the bag as possible. This will allow you to stack more finished product into the delivery bag.

Stack all of the finished PortPals into the handle bag and add a business card with your contact information. Then deliver to a local infusion center (hospital or specialty center). Remember to keep a few on hand to give to individuals.