



South Carolina Department of Corrections South Carolina Department on Aging

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For immediate release

Contact: Chrysti Shain, (803) 413-8206
Shain.Chrysti@doc.sc.gov

Contact: Hank Page, (803) 315-5622
HPage@aging.sc.gov

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Offenders at the S.C. Department of Corrections made cards and gifts for nursing home residents this week as part of an effort to lift spirits during the COVID-19 quarantine.

The offenders drew cards by hand and made jewelry, knitted caps and footies, stuffed animals, bookmarks, blankets and other comfort items as part of “Operation Spread the Joy,” a collaboration between SCDC and the S.C. Department on Aging.

The items were delivered to nursing home residents across South Carolina today.

“The offenders embraced this project and showed real creativity in making these cards and other items,” SCDC Director Bryan Stirling said. “We hope these gifts brighten spirits of the nursing home residents during this lonely time.”

About 2,000 items were delivered to residents across the state at a time when visitors aren’t allowed into nursing homes or prisons.

“For many of our residents in the facilities, these cards and special items may be the only things they receive during this pandemic,” SCDOA Director Connie Munn said. “We are grateful for the partnership with SCDC and their efforts to reach out to spread the joy to our older residents.”

The S.C. Department on Aging was created to enhance the quality of life for seniors in South Carolina. The agency works with local organizations and a network of regional offices to provide

services that help seniors in their communities. The agency also operates the state's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, which serves as the advocate for more than 45,000 residents in long-term care settings.

Hundreds of offenders across SCDC participated in the project, which many said gave them an opportunity to help someone in this time of need.

"We're just excited to have the opportunity to give back to the community in this tough time we're all experiencing together," said one offender who was making cards at Manning Reentry/Work Release Center. "We know how much it means to get a card or just a small gift and what that means to us to receive something like that. We're putting a lot of love and care into these items that we're making and hoping that they're received with the love that we're putting into it."