



**Gail A. Doherty**, 68, founded the Albuquerque chapter of Project Linus in 1999. Named after the blanket-toting character in the Peanuts comic strip, Project Linus began in Colorado in 1995 and now has chapters in all 50 states. As a non-profit organization, it relies solely on volunteers to complete its mission of providing – through gifts of handmade blankets – warmth, security and comfort to children who are ill, traumatized or facing other needs. Doherty has single-handedly enrolled nearly 350 “blanketeers” in greater Albuquerque who have created more than 14,000 blankets since January 1999. She continues to enroll volunteers.

For Doherty, volunteerism is just a way of life. “I am so blessed with so many things,”

she says, adding that helping others is “a responsibility, an obligation and an opportunity.”

She grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y. and came to Albuquerque in 1980 when her husband’s military career brought him to Kirkland Air Force Base. She worked as a librarian at St. Pius High School, beginning before it moved from the Northeast Heights to the West Side.

She has volunteered at Presbyterian Hospice since 1991 as a way to cope with having family back East that she couldn’t assist. “I fell in love with the entire philosophy of the hospice system and I committed to it,” she says.

Doherty also visits the UNM Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, where she provides warmth and affection when parents are unavailable. After Hurricane Katrina, Doherty also volunteered for the American Red Cross. And she is a Eucharistic Minister and lecturer at her church.