



## STITCH N' PITCH<sup>SM</sup> Slides Into Its 3<sup>rd</sup> Season!

"It's a Grand Slam event for people who love to knit, crochet, cross-stitch, embroider and needlepoint!"

**Zanesville, OH** – March 1, 2008 – "Take me out to the ballgame...to stitch? For the past 2 years, STITCH N' PITCH events have been popping up all over the USA and Canada. Fans in the thousands are going to baseball games to knit, crochet, embroider, cross-stitch and needlepoint, and sit together with friends, family and colleagues to celebrate two timeless traditions - baseball and needlearts. Offbeat and unique – crowds of needleartists not wanting to drop a stitch as much as the outfielder not wanting to drop the ball! This year 25 Major League Baseball Teams (80% of the total 30!) are hosting Stitch N' Pitch events that may include teaching expos, special giveaways and surprises. Local needlearts and baseball fans, guilds and groups will come by car, bus and train to be a part of this fun needlearts craze– Stitch N' Pitch!

Two years ago, The National Needlearts Association (TNNA), the non-profit trade organization dedicated to the advancement and promotion of needlearts, formalized the Stitch N' Pitch. Tickets were sold through TNNA member retailers and wholesalers, needlearts guilds and other interested groups. Word about Stitch N' Pitch quickly spread through local shop email blasts, popular craft blogs and needlearts groups. Utilizing unique guerilla marketing tactics and promotions resulted in massive groups attending these events and the official Stitch N' Pitch website receiving over 1 million hits the first season.

Patty Parrish, Executive Director of TNNA explains, "We are thrilled with the success of this program! Our mission is to get the needlearts into the public spotlight and what better way than at a baseball game? Combining these two wonderful traditions made sense to us and most importantly it's FUN. What was once an 'out of the box' idea has developed into an amazing program that has 'team Spirit' - Stitch N' Pitch resonates with our needlearts community. We have a wide demographic of people attending with needlearts projects in hand; women, men and children. It's just fantastic."

Interest in Stitch N' Pitch continues to grow with contacts as far as Europe, Asia and Australia. While taking the program international definitely proves exciting, TNNA is concentrating on capturing all of USA and Canadian Major League Baseball

Teams first. This year Stitch N' Pitch is expanding to formally include Minor League Baseball Teams. Since its inception, the program continues to receive emails from Minor League Baseball executives and fans who are craving to have a Stitch N' Pitch with their hometown Team. With more than 150 Minor League Baseball Teams, many more fans of the needlearts and baseball have the chance to attend an event!

Another natural partnership to join Stitch N' Pitch is the Needle Arts Mentoring Program<sup>SM</sup> (NAMP), of the not-for-profit Helping Hands Foundation (HHF). NAMP volunteers teach and mentor children, grades K -12, about the needlearts – fun healthy hobbies. NAMP provides mentors with free start-up supplies, instructional materials and skilled guidance for volunteers to create their own programs. NAMP is growing with more than 160 programs now in 30 states. Penny Sitler, Executive Director of HHF, adds, "Teachers and others who work with children have found that the needle arts improve reading and math skills, ability to focus and follow directions, as well as self esteem as projects are completed."

On Stitch N' Pitch Game Day watch carefully and you might "catch" a knitting contest, team mascots wearing handmade colorful scarves, images of men knitting, teaching tables full of children learning how to needlepoint, a ceremonial first pitch with a ball of yarn and so much more!!

The needlearts is a billion dollar business. Since 2000, the industry has grown over 30% capturing the attention of major TV and movie celebrities, politicians, sport figures, fashion designers, musicians and others.

Go to [www.StitchNPitch.com](http://www.StitchNPitch.com) for the schedule of 2008 Teams, information about Stitch N' Pitch happenings and photos from events and more.

TNNA is a non-profit trade organization established in 1974 and is dedicated to the advancement and promotion of needlearts, through trade shows, educational seminars, special events, public relations and professional programs that continue to meet the needs of the industry. For more information go to [www.TNNA.org](http://www.TNNA.org)

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