

A PRICELESS GIFT – *FROM THE HEART*

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Hair donations have been happening for quite a long time in other provinces and the United States. My interest in collecting hair for helping cancer and alopecia patients has been there for a number of years. I did some research on where it was being done and what actually happens to the hair after it was cut and donated. Some places had fundraisers. The cutting took place, the donations happened, but due to a lack of precise information on where to send the ponytails, the ponytails were actually not being used for the making of wigs, and some were being discarded. The more I asked questions, the harder it became to speak to persons in charge, so I started inquiring with some of my suppliers. Everyone was interested in my stories about sending out hair, but only a few were willing to really listen to my proposition.

The more virgin hair I can collect and mail out, the sooner it will help me secure some wigs for children and young adults. It will be up to the manufacturer’s discretion as to how much hair I will have to send in order to determine how many pieces will be available to me. I trust their judgment will be fair so that I can keep this program going for a long time.

I will provide the same professional consultations and fittings. It will be to my discretion who will profit from the wigs. There is only one major criteria – the person applying for the fitting has to let me know of their financial situation because this project is especially for families having difficulties with the financial stress of having to cope with someone undergoing hair loss due to chemotherapy or being diagnosed with Alopecia Areata. I cannot promise that all the hair being sent will be used in making wigs for cancer patients, but I can guarantee that it will be used in the wig industry. It will also be impossible to find out whom your hair was donated to. It takes quite a few really nice, long ponytails to make a human hair wig - sometimes between 8 and 14 ponytails. It is a rather intricate process to make a wig. Unfortunately, we don’t have manufacturers in Canada or the US. These wigs are coming from the Asian countries. The workers in the wig industry are not paid a great amount of money compared to us. I don’t think we would be ready to go back in time and be paid between .50 - \$1.00 an hour.

We keep track of who is sending the hair and ask that they write their full name and address, phone number and age of the donator. A few times a year, I will acknowledge the donators. I have a reliable 11-year-old granddaughter, Stephanie, who is helping me with the data. She is quite excited, and, I must say, so am I. To be able to help people in need of hair has been my challenge over the past 25 years. Now it will be to also help children and young adults with cancer or Alopecia Areata whose parents don’t have the money to pay. With donations of hair, and with hope, it will be possible right here in Manitoba in my Lorette studio.