

THE DESIGN CENTER AT THE MERCHANDISE MART WELCOMES NEW TENANT: SEWonderful Quilts.org

One-of-a-Kind Quilts for Children with Life-Threatening Illnesses

March 9, 2010 -- (CHICAGO) - The Design Center at The Merchandise Mart is now home to SEWonderful Quilts, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that recycles discontinued fabric into unique comfort quilts from some of the design world's most renowned textile brands including Kravet, Osborne and Little, Hinson, and Duralee, to name a few.

Founded more than 5 years ago by interior designer, Francine Spacek, SEWonderful Quilts mission is threefold:

- To donate SEWonderful Quilts to children with life-threatening illnesses
- To recycle discontinued fabric with the help of volunteers
- To keep this fabric out of landfills

"We are honored to have SEWonderful Quilts in the Design Center as the program not only provides a great service to sick children, but also gets our showrooms involved in the process," said Mel Schlitt, vice president of marketing, MMPI.

As an interior designer for more than 30 years, Spacek has access to trade showrooms, workrooms and fabric studios. Her love of fabric and children inspired her to blend these two passions together to create the SEWonderful Quilts Program. By using discontinued fabric from designer showrooms, SEWonderful Quilt Volunteers create one-of-a-kind quilts that are environmentally-friendly. SEWonderful Quilts has a permanent space in Suite 1527A that is open Monday-Thursday, 1-4pm and also by appointment.

"Our new space at The Merchandise Mart will help us develop relationships with more than 150 designer showrooms and design professionals interested in donating fabrics and their time to this unique program," said Spacek.

Thanks to these gifts of kindness, SEWonderful Quilts helps to greatly reduce the anxiety surrounding healthcare experiences for many children and their families. The process goes beyond just receiving a quilt from a stranger. There is a human connection that lets the children and their families know someone cares about them.

To date, SEWonderful Quilts has gifted over 2200 Quilts to children in hospitals, hospices and sexual abuse centers.

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ABOUT THE DESIGN CENTER™ AT THE MERCHANDISE MART

The Design Center at The Merchandise Mart, located in Chicago's historic Merchandise Mart, is home to four floors constituting the world's largest and finest design center. As a leader in the \$65 billion residential home furnishings market, The Design Center offers the largest presentation of high-end, couture, home furnishings worldwide, all under one roof. Encompassing 900,000 square feet, boasting 130 showrooms and featuring more than 2,500 product lines, it is the design professional's ultimate resource for luxury furniture, fabrics, floor coverings, wall coverings, lighting, antiques and much more.

The Design Center's Designer Portfolios are a unique online resource for homeowners to learn about working with a design professional and help them find the perfect designer to match their tastes, expectations and budget. More than 80 area design professionals are featured in the online Designer Portfolios, with his or her own web page featuring their design philosophy, area(s) of specialty, project photos, fee structure and more. Designer Portfolios can be easily accessed by visiting www.merchandisemartdesigncenter.com and clicking on the Designer Portfolio logo.

MMPI is the world's leading owner and operator of showroom buildings and trade show facilities, bringing buyers and sellers together in more than 300 market events, trade and consumer shows and conferences each year.

MMPI manages The Merchandise Mart and 350 West Mart Center in Chicago; Market Square, the Suites at Market Square, Hamilton Market, Plaza Suites, Furniture Plaza and the National Furniture Mart in High Point, N.C.; the Architects & Designers Building and 7 W New York in New York; the Boston Design Center in Boston; the L.A. Mart in Los Angeles; and the Washington Design Center and Federal Center Southwest in Washington D.C.

Vornado Realty Trust, owners of MMPI, based in New York City, is a fully integrated equity real estate investment trust. Vornado's common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and are traded under the symbol VNO.

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