

Mid-News-Update (mid Jan. 2005)

Good morning Group,

Just a couple of thoughts in-between newsletters.

All 'Non-Publicity' is Good

Got a lot of emails re: the CBS news report. In case you didn't know, our group was not the one featured on CBS news report Wed nite. I don't know who the group was. They borrowed my 'Quilts of Valor' name for their quilts which is flattering. Our goals are the same but the approach different. I know one day you!! be featured without having to have a triple amputee exploited to make Americans care. I now know what Chaplain Kallerson was telling me when I first talked to him about doing this project 14 months ago. The news media want the triple amputees because *that's* what they think Americans want to see. To me, that stinks and is an insult to us as thinking and caring Americans.

Thinking Outside the Red, White & Blue Patriotic Box

I am inviting you to think OUTSIDE the traditional red, white and blue (rwb) patriotic fabrics that are flooding our magazines and fabric stores. Try and put yourselves in the boots of a returning wounded soldier/marine who has been to hell. They are in their early 20's and as Chaplain Killough says "full of piss and vinegar". Many of these kids are your basic grunt or enlisted kid who may not have warm and fuzzy feelings about the Army, the war or whatever. I know you all are creative and loving PLUS our quilting fabrics have as many varied and diverse fabrics as anyone could want. Now, I am NOT saying don't use R,W,B but before you launch into those colors/mentality, think "piss and vinegar and early 20's and wounded". If that adds up to R,W and B, then so be it. Look at the civil war quilts, like the Dear Jane quilt. And, longarmers, challenge yourself with your quilting. Customize it. Be adventuresome. Anne Bright's designs are fantastic.

Pre-delivery QOVs

Please wash your qov before sending them off to their final destination. The qovs should be as clean as possible. Free of pet dander, dust and everything else that populates our houses. Remember these kids are in hospitals and their defenses low. This also ensures it won't come apart (two of mine did at some seams) and/or bleed.

New VA Contact

Thanks to Paula in FL, we now have a new contact at the largest VA rehab center on the East Coast, the James A. Haley VA Hospital. Slowly but surely we're making our way to finding the discharged vets in the communities.

Journaling-Your Voices ARE Important.

How long am I going to beat this dead horse you ask? Hmm...I'll take the fifth. I want to encourage you all to document your making of this wartime quilt. Take pixs. Write your thoughts. Then, include these items for your soldier to have. During my time meeting some of you and others in the group, I know of several women who are breast cancer survivors. What a story to relate to your soldier! You both face(d) death. We all know we'll die one day but with a diagnosis of CANCER, it becomes all too real. Our fighting soldiers walking out of their 'protected' compound face the reality of not going back. It's a crap shoot for them. And, maybe it is for all of us. Anyway, your thoughts, feelings, insights are important. Please do not dismiss them. Pass your wisdom to our younger generation of warriors.

And, to make this easier, we are very fortunate to have among us an historian who is also a quilter, Elise. She has volunteered to help us with this exercise. Thank you, E.

This is YOUR Ship.

I read the book "It's Your Ship" by Captain Abrashoff. I adored it. Finally a naval captain who actually listened to the men and women aboard his ship and made changes according to THEIR recommendations! Likewise, I want to avail myself to your suggestions. If you are working in a group and want to do something 'different', you don't need my permission. As long as the qov is big enough, won't fall apart during washing and is appropriate for a wounded warrior, go for it! If you want to give me suggestions on how to improve the project, website, please do so. My door is always open and hopefully my ears too. This is OUR project for OUR wounded.

Finally

I leave you with this story. Two days ago, I received a phone call from a 'medical hold' staff sergeant in Kentucky. He had seen the CBS news report and he also knew of a buddy who had been through Walter Reed and had gotten a quilt. He wanted one. He was injured in Iraq. He said he'd pay for the postage. I wanted to cry. Where he is presently staying, there is only a National Guard armory where he must report to daily while on medical hold (still undergoing medical/surgical procedures/treatment). Most of the National Guard soldiers at this armory are in Iraq. Who was I going to get to award him his qov? Closest large army facility is 300 miles away. Their chaplain is either in Germany or Iraq. The person I finally got to award this SSG his qov will be the recruiting NCO who is his rank at the armory. I asked the recruiter if he knew about quilts. In a very heavy Kentuckian accent he told me his grandmother quilted! Ok. I immediately felt better sending him the qov. He also understood the importance of proper awarding of the qov. It will be done in formation (when the remaining of the soldiers gather together in a group for formal stuff).

Here is the email (edited slightly):

THIS EMAIL IS IN REFERENCE TO OUR PHONE CONFERSATION ON 012805 ABOUT YOUR QUILTS OF VALOR.I SAW THIS ON NBC NIGHTLY NEWS A FEW DAYS AGO I WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH YOUR PROGRAM.I WENT INTO IRAQ AND KUWAIT IN JAN.2004 I WAS A TRUCK DRIVER WITH THE KENTUCKY

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD I WAS INJURED IN MARCH 2004 AND RETURNED TO BASE CAMP IN KUWAIT, UNTIL I WAS MEDIVACED TO LANDSTUHL GERMANY FOR FEW DAYS. I WAS THEN SENT FT. CAMPBELL KY AND THEN TO LITTLE ROCK ARK. FOR MEDICAL HOLD AWAITING FURTHER TREATMENT FROM THE MILITARY. YOUR PROGRAM IS VERY TOUCHING IN MANY WAYS EVEN IF WE ALL DONT GET A PURPLE HEART THANKS AGAIN SSG. J H (KYARNG)

Leaving no unwounded behind,
Catherine

QOV Calling Card

Hi everyone,

I have been mulling this idea over and finally had an inspiration. Whenever I meet someone and talk about this project, I give them my calling card which Stacy designed. I know many of you talk up the program but may not have a calling card. I would like to offer you a template which you can use. The only thing with my template is it has all my information. ALSO, someone suggested you can put one of these in your completed QOV when you send it off.

IF you are interested in printing up some calling cards (how Victorian), this is what you do.

Open up the attachment in MS Word. You will see ten calling cards displayed with my name and phone number.

From here, you have a couple of options here. You can print these business/calling cards out with my name and phone. And/or, you can put your own name/phone in. If you want your name, it's easy to do. Just highlight my name and put yours. The same for the phone number and email. I would leave the web site alone. I also like to put that I am a morning person. In fact, I wish more people would tell me when they are REALLY awake and alert. :)

You can buy business cards at Staples or some other office supply store and Sam's. When you are ready to print, you just put the sheet in and hit print. You might want to try it on a plain piece of paper first to see if it's aligned ok.

If you do this and it works, can you let me know. Again, I am flying by the seat of my pants with this idea.

Catherine

The QOV Project and Feedback

January 23, 2005

The Problem

Not knowing your QOV has arrived where it should.

A Solution

In order to ensure that each QOV we work on is given to a deserving soldier, I am implementing the following rule.

Both the longarmer and the quilt-topper will include in the QOV package, a stamped postcard addressed to them. The postcard will have the following in the message area.

- 1-Brief description of QOV in non-quilter's terms*.
- 2-And this sentence. **This described QOV arrived safely.** Yes No

*Please include a brief description that a non-quilter will recognize. For example, do NOT put 'red Drunkard's Path'. Rather, put 'red and white alternating funny looking blocks, sized "50X60" with green fish-fly flannel backing'.

When the Chaplain receives the QOV, he will find the QOV and two stamped postcards: One from the longarmer and the other from the quilt-topper. He can then quickly view the QOV, check the appropriate box and pop them in the mail.

For example:

Quilt-topper Catherine sends her top and backing to longarmer Marcia. They decide Catherine will do the binding, labeling and final send off of the QOV. When Catherine sends the QOV to the chaplain, she will include the postcard from Marcia as well as one of her own so the Chaplain may verify that the QOV (made by Marcia & Catherine) has reached its intended destination safely. Catherine and Marcia receive their postcards a few days later and know that the quilt has ended up in good hands.

The Recap.

ALL QOVs being sent out to their final destination WILL have two stamped addressed postcards from quilt-topper and longarmer. The postcards will have their names/addresses along with a description of the QOV, the sentence "*Described QOV has arrived safely*" and two empty large checkboxes with the words **Yes and No** besides them.

Catherine

PS IF you are entering the QOV Challenge, there will be an additional postcard for that.

PPS I have briefed the Chaplains re: this new system. Expect some bumps. If anyone has a better solution, I am all ears.