

Quilts of Valor

Quilting Honor and Comfort for our Wounded

A Monthly Newsletter

March 2007

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A QOV Chat Session

Catherine Roberts is the Founder and Director of the Quilts of Valor Foundation (QOVF). cath@qovf.org

I usually get keyboard frozen when it comes to writing the monthly newsletter intro. You've heard me say that it's worse than delivering an overdue large baby with a first time *scared* mom and a lawyer sitting in the delivery room videotaping the whole birth. Yep. It's that bad. So to alleviate this irrational fear on my part, I have decided to just chat with you. Nothing erudite or philosophical. Just chatty.

Remember my request for a pentagon quilt? Now I want to tell you about my trip. My visit was with The Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sergeant Major Estrada. For those of you who don't know ranks, The Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps is #2 in the whole Corps and #1 NCO (non-commissioned officer). He is like the Vice President of the Nation. Hard core marines shake in their boots in his presence. Get the picture? Sergeant Major Estrada's gunny sergeants advocated for office time and I got 30 minutes. I filled my LARGE rolling suitcase with four beautiful QOVs and QOV accessories.

The Sergeant Major came out of his office and welcomed me with a

hearty handshake. I told him I had to rush through my presentation because I only had 30 minutes. He said the person after me could wait if we ran overtime.

Once in his office, we started talking. Two gunny sergeants were taking notes. I shared with the Sergeant Major Estrada basic information re: the program and various impediments I saw in getting QOVs to his marines. He listened intently and periodically told a gunnies to make a note of this or that. After we discussed the challenge of finding all our combat injured/wounded marines, I got

to do show and tell. They were in a w e . . . Three of the QOVs will be awarded

by the Sergeant Major and the fourth will hang in his office! The one to be displayed was beautifully designed and pieced by Betsy Campbell and exquisitely machine quilted by Marcia Bowen both of IL. The quilt is an exact replica of one they made for Betsy's son Nate (a marine) who served three tours in Iraq. Betsy included her journal.



By the time show and tell was done, we were going on 45 minutes. The upshot of the meeting is this. Injured/wounded marines will be identified and awarded QOVs throughout the world. This week, the Sergeant Major will take QOVs to award on his visit to Bethesda Naval Medical Center. Ladies and gentlemen, I can't tell you how much this will mean to that Marine. It also signals to me a commitment from the highest level of the Marine Corps to see that all their wounded Marines get your Quilts of Valor. (Subtext...we must make *lots more quilts!*)

One other note, I met with Chaplain (CH) Kallerson last week at Walter Reed. I met his replacement, CH Pappas. She has been involved awarding QOVs with CH Kallerson for years knowing the value of your quilts. She is a seamstress/quilter. I know she will be as committed to QOV Program as CH Kallerson is. Since the shake-up at Walter Reed, I have heard rumors from A to Z. Change is definitely in the air. And, no, they aren't using our quilts as bed linen!

Still at war; still quilting,

Catherine Roberts 1/10
Founder/Director, QOVF

“Quotables”

This month’s “Quotable” is a letter submitted by Linda Lafford that she received from a Lieutenant in Afghanistan.

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for the quilt I was given while recovering from wounds at the Bagram Hospital here in Afghanistan. I was wounded in an ambush on August, 21st and evacuated with several of my men. We were moved without a change of clothes, toiletries, or any other personal comfort items. Each of my soldiers and I received our quilts in the early stages of our recovery and during a period of discomfort. I saw the look on my soldiers’ faces when we were brought the quilts and read the letters attached, and I can tell you that they brought comfort to all of us.

Thank you very much for taking the time and effort for supporting us. I don’t know if you realize how much your gesture meant.

My men have been returned to the States for further treatment and I just returned to my platoon here in eastern Afghanistan. I know my men took their quilts with them when they were evacuated from Afghanistan and I took mine with me when I was released. I plan to take mine home when we re-deploy. I have informed my wife and my family and they too express their gratitude.

In closing, I wish to thank you myself and on behalf of all of us over here. Support from those back home means so much.

Sincerely,
Lt. Aaron Dunn
1st Platoon, B Company, 27th
Engineers

QOV Print Shop

Printing brochures and flyers to tell people about Quilts of Valor has always been challenging and expensive. Because of the generosity of Trinity Transport, Inc. in Seaford, DE, we were able to buy a workhorse laser printer. We are now putting that workhorse printer to work for you. We are offering printing services at prices that are just pennies above our cost which we are still determining. Prices are subject to change if we find we are losing money.

We want to give you the means to get the word out about covering ALL our combat injured servicemembers. Printed material is one effective way to do this. And, at our prices, there is no excuse not to!

For more information, please contact Nancy at nancy@QOVF.org or (860) 872-9069 (EST).

Postings from the QOV Community

A Message From June

LONGARMERS & TOPPERS, PLEASE READ!

Sorry for the high drama, but there are some reoccurring problems that must be dealt with.

Quality

Fabrics for top and backing should be unused, clean, and 100% cotton quilt weight fabric. They can be regular cotton fabric or flannel. The only exception to 100% cotton would be Minkee used as backing. **DO NOT** use home dec, stained, coarse, thin or stiff fabric. The longarmers are charged with monitoring this.

Size

The minimum size is 50” by 60”. Period. If yours is smaller add a border. The longarmer is not expected to add a border or provide appropriate backing for the topper. If this has happened, the longarmer should be reimbursed.

Partners

The stand up quilters volunteer when they can. Not every quilter is able to volunteer each month. Just because you are paired with a longarmer once, that doesn’t mean they are obligated to take every other QOV you make. Longarmers, you may choose to have a topper send you more quilts, if you wish.

Borders and Seams

It’s okay for flag to wave; when borders wave, tucks happen. Borders on opposite sides of a top should be cut the same length and made to fit. Look in any good quilt book, check the instructions at <http://www.quiltville.com/borderhints.shtml> or check out my video next month.

Check your seams to be sure both fabrics are caught, that intersections are pressed, and that threads are trimmed.

THE LONGARMERS DO NOT VOLUNTEER TO REMOVE, TRIM, AND REAPPLY YOUR BORDERS OR TO REPAIR AND FIX YOUR SEAMS!

Backing Size

Please follow your longarmer’s instructions for the size of backing they require. Most of us need 3-4 inches on each side for attaching the side clamps so that the machine doesn’t bump into them when it is on the far left or right of your top, and 6-8 in length for attaching to the leaders and to avoid running out of backing near

the end of the quilt.

Requesting a Longarmer

1) Go to www.QOVf.org 2) On the right side of the page choose Longarmer Form 3)Click it , fill out the form, hit “Submit”

Note: Check the spelling/typing of your email address. I cut and paste, so if you spell it wrong, IT IS NOT MY FAULT THAT YOU DON’T RECEIVE MY EMAIL.

Common Courtesy

Toppers, please communicate politely with your longarm partner, be prompt in sending your quilt top and backing, and don’t badger them about their progress. If your quilt is not returned to you within 30 days of the longarmer receiving it, and you haven’t heard from her/him, please contact me. Longarmers, if problems prevent you from completing a quilt on time, let me and your topper know ASAP.

Please don’t refuse to answer emails and telephone calls. Again, common courtesy and common sense should prevail.

If you’ve read this far...

Then this list was probably not aimed at you. VBG J Thank you for your dedication to making great quilts from your heart, for caring for the wounded, for being warm and gracious partners, and brightening my days.

Get FREE Fabric for your next QOV Quilt!

Lucky Sandra Hawthorne has more fabric than she knows what to do with thanks to a friend’s sewing room remodel, and has agreed to donate it to the QOV community for the price of shipping. If you are interested in high quality cotton fabric, please contact Sandra at

sandra_hawthorne@hotmail.com, and be sure to put “QOV Fabric” in the subject line.

Connecting the Threads Between QOV Quilters and Recipients

Submitted by *Susan C. Slaninka*

Some of you most certainly remember receiving a present of a “diary” with a key when you were young. I would open the diary to the first page and begin to write my “most private thoughts.” In those early days, most of my diary entries were about what boy I liked, what teacher made me work too hard, or what record I liked (yes, we had records when I was little....not tape cassettes and not CDs...but 45 rpm records!). I have to mention here that the boy I liked was Rick, the teacher who made me work hardest was Mrs. Ownsby, and my favorite singer was Paul Anka (my daughter is laughing as she reads that last part of this line!)

As I grew older, my “diaries” became “journals” and I filled journal after journal with my daily activities, but more importantly with my thoughts and feelings about my life. Journals became very therapeutic for me as I found myself sharing things that I might not share with anyone else. Journaling was a different way of processing what was happening in my life and I found that the pen often times had a mind of its own. I would start just “free writing” and find that some very significant stuff was coming out on the page.

When Catherine suggested that we begin to add journals to our Quilt of Valor experience, I was thrilled with the idea. I like what she wrote in the December issue of the QOV newsletter, “that simple entry will allow

your recipient a glimpse into your life, letting them know you are a real person living a real life who is also thinking of them and doing something.” It was clear that the journals allowed the recipient to have a human connection with the person who had so lovingly created the QOV. Catherine began to hear reports that the recipients liked the journals almost as much as the quilts! They enjoyed hearing even the mundane things that we all do as we work on these quilts. In a recent conversation with Catherine, I mentioned how much I enjoyed the journaling part of this experience and she suggested I write an article for the newsletter, so here I am.

The Journaling Process

First of all, I write all my journals by hand, rather than on the computer. Most people can read my handwriting and I decided this would give the journal a personal touch. I do most of my journals at night just before I go to bed. I found myself surprised at some of the things I was sharing, some just ordinary entries like what I did today, some reflections on other military people I have known, and some attempt at connection with this person it was likely I would never meet. I decided that the best way to talk about this with you was to simply share some of my journal entries with you. This is just a small sample of the kinds of sharing I have done.

Journal entries explaining the QOV process:

“This QOV is truly a team project. The material for this quilt was cut out by my friend and quilt teacher, Karen Zimmerman. She has been clearing out the stacks of material that

she has in her house and making QOV packets ready to be quilted. It has made this process easier for me and she sometimes challenges me with a new pattern (always the teacher). I sew together the quilt top and the backing which is the fun part for me. The quilt then travels to a longarm quilter who actually puts the quilt top, batting, and backing together by quilting it on a machine. Doing this part on machine allows the quilts to get to you much quicker. The quilt makes a trip back to me for the binding, the label, and the journal. The last step is logging on to the QOV website to find out where the quilt is going and finally to you! This whole process allows each of us to connect with each other and with you and your quilt. We all put so much love into this project.”

“I spent the evening marking the ¼ inch seams on each of the pieces of your quilt. Some people find this task tedious, but I find it very meditative and calming. I try to always work on your quilt with love and compassion going into every stitch.”

“Finished sewing each of the 20 blocks in this pattern tonight. Tomorrow I will spend most of the evening sewing the blocks together in rows and then each row together to make the large quilt. It’s almost done. Hope you like blue!”

Journal entries trying to connect with their experience:

“Can’t help but think about who is going to be receiving this quilt and hoping you will like it. No thanks required for sure; in fact, the quilt is our THANK YOU for all you have done. I can’t imagine what it must be like to be in a war zone. The people that I know who have been to Iraq

don’t really talk about it much. I’m hopeful that this quilt will pave the way to your healing and that you may share your experiences with those who care about you.”

“It’s hot here in Florida today and I find myself uncomfortable with the heat of the quilt material on my lap. I quickly find myself imagining you in full gear in Iraq during the really hot season and wondering what I have to complain about. Thanks once again for your service to our country.”

“Watched an interview of Bob Woodruff, the news anchor who was injured in Iraq. He has truly made a remarkable recovery from his Total Brain Injury experience, but it took a lot of work on his part and the support of his family and the health care team to get where he is today. It made me think of all the wounded men and women from this war. SO SAD....When will it be over? I decided to make one of my QOV an “I Spy” quilt that might be used for people with brain injuries. It turns out that my quilt teacher had the same idea!

Journals sharing about other servicemen and women:

“My college roommate’s Mom helped me today when I was laying the blocks out to make a pattern. Did I mention that her husband was a veteran of WWII with the CBI (China, Burma, and India) initiative and she is still an active member of that group? They all went to Washington DC when the dedication of the WWII Memorial occurred. It was a moving and powerful experience for them. Some day there will likely be a memorial for the War on Terror as well.”

“My Mom has been very interested in this project. She was a code breaker during WWII and my Dad served in the United States Army in the Aleutian Islands so we all have a special place in our hearts for the military who serve our country. Good night and don’t let the bed bugs bite. That’s what my Mom used to say to me when I was little.”

“My college roommate was in the US Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam era. She was stationed at Walter Reed Medical Center where many of you are presently being admitted. We have attended the Memorial Day concert held on the Capitol lawn in Washington DC. When they play the different service anthems and the servicemen/women stand up, I get tears in my eyes and am so proud of her and of you!”

Journal entries about typical, every day activities:

“It was warm today and so I got some sun by the pool and read a novel. I’m reading Perfect Match by Jodi Picoult. If you like to read, this is a great book and she is a wonderful writer. Did another six blocks for your quilt today. The pattern goes pretty quickly.”

“I visited the Gamble House today for a tour. This was the retreat home for the Gambles of Procter and Gamble. You may have heard of them. One of the cottages on the property is modeled after the cottage in Snow White. They even had seven beds in the loft marked for the Seven Dwarfs. Let’s see if I can remember them all: Doc, Happy, Sleepy, Dopey, Grumpy, Sneezy, and I can never remember them all the first time I try.....oh, I remember now, Bashful.

Well, off to bed for me too. I finished 7 quilts blocks tonight for your quilt.”

“Decided to explore a bit today and found a great museum in Daytona that had an exhibit of Anthony Quinn’s paintings and sculptures. I knew he was a great actor but had no idea that he was so varied in his talents. The extra bonus at the museum was a quilt exhibit that wasn’t even advertised. There were over 100 quilts with lots of different patterns that I have yet to try out. It was a fun day. Finished five more quilt blocks tonight.”

Finally:

Thank you for the opportunity to share this experience with you. I do hope that you will all consider adding the journal to your QOV. I’m sure that you will find yourself connecting with this person who ultimately receives the QOV. Think of it as another piece of thread that connects us together.

Search Engine Raises Funds for QOV Foundation

Submitted by Daniel Ryan

There is a search engine set up using the Yahoo search engine to give 1 cent for every search done to the charity of your choice.

I have added QOV Quilts of Valor to their list and they have already approved it. It should start working on Thursday March 8. Try it out the next time you do a web search and if everything is set up ok you should receive the money at some point in the future.

When you want to do a search, you just need to go to the website www.goodsearch.com <<http://www.goodsearch.com/>> and

enter the search word in the top space and either QOV or Quilts of Valor in the space where it says charity.

Both Yahoo groups have been notified. Hope this works; it's a painless way to raise money and if everyone did it every time they searched, it could start adding up.

General Business

QOV DVD ‘07

Thank you for sending your pictures for the upcoming DVD. I am re-inspired each time I see your beautifully made QOVs. If you sent me a Webshot or web link where your pictures are stored, please resend the pictures themselves. Unfortunately, I don’t have time to download the pictures.

BBC Radio Interviews

I had the good fortune to connect with a BBC radio producer here in Washington, DC. I told him about my search for quilters in the UK so they might start a similar program for their combat wounded. I had one live interview in DC and then through the magic of the internet and Skype, I had nine interviews with BBC stations throughout England from my home. (Skype works like a phone through your internet and home computer.) As a result of those interviews, I have had several interested UK quilters contact me about starting their own program.

New QOV Website

Well, the beta version is here (but not for your viewing pleasure yet). Hopefully by the next newsletter, we will be using it. The boys have worked hard to make it usable for us. As with anything new, there will be bugs. So when you use it, please email us with your likes/dislikes.

Gettysburg Trip

The Overall Plan

We will have our own private tour bus and licensed battlefield tour guide to guide us through our two days. Our field-trips will be tailored to what we want to learn.

Day One:

We will begin our two day field-trip at the National Visitor Center where we will meet our licensed Battlefield Guild. He will give us an overview of our two days. Although battle strategy is important, we will also look at the battle from a human interest viewpoint; how it affected the townspeople and surrounding areas. Where and how hospitals and wounded were cared for and by whom... nurses and the Sisters of Charity. We then will attend the Electric Map Show giving us an overview of Gettysburg and the surrounding areas involved in the three day battle. After this, we’ll have lunch at the historic 1776 Dobbin House Tavern. Following our lunch, Jim Getty will come and talk to our group as Mr. Lincoln. (Mr. Getty is nationally renowned for his character portrayal of Lincoln.) After lunch and Lincoln, we will tour the Eisenhower Home and Farm. This will last approximately an hour and fifteen minutes.

Day Two:

The second day will be devoted to touring the battlefields and condensing the three day battles into one day with our licensed battlefield guide.

Possible optional tours:

- Shriver House
- Rupp House
- Tilly House
- Lincoln Room in the Will’s House
- Railroad station

Other activities (on your own).

Pre Tour

Eisenhower World War II Weekend. Sept 16, 17. A living history encampment featuring Allied soldiers, tanks, and military vehicles.

Post Tour

Fabric shopping in Amish country. A few notable shops: Sauder's Fabrics is 1.5 hours away from Gettysburg by car. Quilt shop fabrics start as low as \$1.99/yard, and Zooks Fabrics, Intercourse, PA.

You will need a day or so to really do justice. Also, money and empty suitcases.

Accommodations:

Holiday Inn Battlefield: This hotel is walking distance to the National Park Visitor's Center in addition to shops and restaurants. The discounted cost will be \$119 single or double with 9% tax. They have free, fast internet access in all rooms, free parking, laundry and a fitness center.

Cost \$: Dependent on the number of attendees.

Please email me if you are interested → cath@QOVF.org.

QOV Store

Please visit the store. Magnets are still available! Advertise while you drive. We now have QOV sweat-shirts, embroidered t-shirts and stylishly embroidered aprons with Lady Liberty cloaked in a quilt. All are reasonably priced.



Midshipmen at the US Naval Academy learning how to quilt while working on a Quilt of Valor.

Going Grassroots

Submitted by Jacquie Campbell. My name is Barbara Winkler. Last fall, I started working with the Long Beach School district's Service Learning Coaches. Each high school student is required to do 40 hours of volunteer work in order to graduate. If they don't have the hours completed by April, they can't go to the prom, any school activities or walk at graduation. So, I set up a program where they can come and learn to sew (with my fabric) and create a QOV. We have three tops out being quilted now, and another one should be finished today.

I also started assisting at a bilingual church youth group in Bellflower named Pathfinders. I am doing the same thing with these youngsters (4th-8th grade, I believe). Many of the boys have patience to do it right the first time.

Sunday, Feb 11, I will be doing a similar event with adults at Temple Menorah in Redondo Beach called Good Deed Day. They will be sewing my fabric to get tops done.

Every yahoo group I am on the internet, I tell what I'm doing, and many have joined. I have also gotten a few local friends to make tops to donate, and I pass out brochures wherever I can. My nail shop even

has a stand to hold my QOV brochures.

Calendar of Events

Future Events

If you know of an event that would be of interest to the QOV community, please contact Jacquie at jacquie@qovf.org to have it posted online and in our newsletter.

Final Thought

If you have read this far, you're good! I want to remind you to get your yearly mammograms, colonoscopies (ugh) and pap smears. Weight bearing exercises and walking are very important to good health. I am reading a fantastic book, "[South Beach Heart Program](#)" which is basically learning about good heart health. I want all you around for a long time. Sometimes I think we quilters are an endangered species.

Statistics

For much more information regarding the statistics from Iraq and Afghanistan, go to [The Iraqi Coalition Casualty Count](#).

3/23/06	Iraq	Afghanistan
Killed	3,226	373
Wounded	55,961	11,721

Date	QOVs Awarded
3/25/06	8,932

In addition, **180** quilt tops have been assigned for March! Excellent team work ladies and gentlemen!

Volunteer Staff

Let us know how we can help you...

Catherine
cath@OOVF.org

Catherine is the founder/director of the QOV program.

June
june@OOVF.org

June is our **longarm coordinator** and has been onboard for over two years.

Nedra
nedra@OOVF.org

Nedra has taken on the much needed and appreciated position of QOV **Administrative Assistant**. Please contact her if you are hav-

ing difficulties getting in touch with Catherine.

Lenny Truitt
lenny@OOVF.org

Lenny **handles the books** and talks to the QOVF accountant. If you have any questions about tax stuff, donations, etc, contact Lenny.

Michele michele@OOVF.org
michele@OOVF.org **newsletter@OOVF.org**

Please send any information that you would like included in the **newsletter** to Michele. We ask that you have all submissions in by the

first of the month in order to make that month's issue.

Lezley
lezley@OOVF.org

Lezley is in charge of coordinating efforts in **Canada**.

Jacquie
jacquie@OOVF.org

Jacquie is our **Event Coordinator**. She will be in charge of receiving and organizing information regarding any QOV event that needs national/regional attention.

Andrew
andy@OOVF.org

Andy will serve as the QOVF **web support person**.

Barb
barb@OOVF.org

Barb is our **kid's coordinator**. Barb is a resource for those who have questions and/or projects with children. If you want your kid's project on the web, email Barb and she will get it ready.

Nancy
nancy@OOVF.org

Nancy is our **print maven**. If you have printing needs, contact her.

Judy Laquidara and Nancy Miller

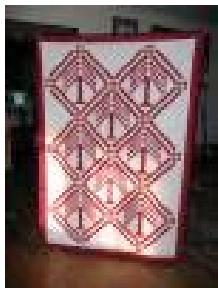
Lots of you know our **QOV Mystery Queens**. They are both very talented and inspire others to make QOVs.

More Volunteer Staff Members Needed!

QOV Book Editor.

This position requires someone who has editing experience in the real world of publishing and who would like to do this voluntarily.

How to Donate...



Since the QOV Foundation started out in November of 2003 as Quilts for Soldiers, we have run on a shoe string budget. Staff members work on a voluntary basis. The monies we received are directed back into the Foundation and used to increase our visibility. (If you would like a copy of the QOVF's 5 year plan, please email Catherine). This is paramount if we are to reach all our combat wounded with the message that they have a QOV waiting for them.

The thousands of members in this group give of their time and money. To date, we have collectively spent over \$1,070,000 of our own money making QOVs.

When you make a monetary tax deductible donation, you can request where it should go. The various choices are: administrative, fabric, shipping and printing handout literature.

You also can contribute fabric, sewing machines, batting and quilting threads. if you would like to go this route, please email [Catherine](mailto:Catherine@qovf.org) at cath@qovf.org or call 302 236-0230.

Please help us keep this project alive and well with your **tax exempt** donation, visit www.qovf.org.

Our Mission

The mission of the QOV Foundation is to cover ALL combat wounded service-members whether physical or psychological with wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor (QOVs). The wounded service-members from the War on Terror or Long War are to be considered first and foremost.

The second mission is to teach our children how to sew QOVs. This skill will teach sewing skills in addition to encouraging civic involvement and volunteering for the betterment of our nation.

A natural extension of our mission will be to link up with our coalition countries and see that their combat wounded are also covered.

When all is said and done what we are doing is providing a means by which our combat wounded can have a better life. This foundation will do whatever it takes to reach this goal.