

Quilts of Valor Foundation

NEWSLETTER

Quilting to Honor & Comfort Our Wounded

Newsletter

Autumn 2011

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Please visit our Blog for more articles and Regional Information

QOVF.blogspot.com

Questions, Comments, Concerns?

pls email: newsletter@QOVF.org

Re-inspiration From Two "What-Nexts?"

I have been at the QOV helm for almost eight years. Many wonderful things have happened since November 2003. We are close to 50,000 awarded QOVs. Quilts of Valor is a name that is known internationally. Nine fabric companies have created and produced gorgeous American Valor fabrics. Marianne Fons, who has become an integral part of the QOV family, conceived of an engaging model of garnering new quilters with the Under Our Wing program. We have more than 10 nationwide, dedicated, volunteer Regional Coordinators whose primary task is to nurture and guide people who want to make QOVs. June Moore and Lori Kutch have been running the operational portion of the QOV Foundation while Joyce Lundrigan manages our little shop.

I have taken a few steps away from this flurry of activity regrouping asking myself "what next".

The "what-nexts" came in two waves whose energy revitalized and inspired me.

The First What-Next

The first 'what next' was Iowa Public TV coming to Anacortes, WA where I live to interview me about how QOV got started. Marianne Fons along with Ande Coyle and John, her shooter, spent one whole day interviewing me and two QOV recipients—both of whom are Vietnam vets. As I told my story, I remembered the early days when getting 100 awarded QOVs was a milestone. I recounted the year my son, Nat was deployed in Iraq and how that inspired me to do something to keep from going crazy with worry. Chaplain Kallerson at Walter Reed was our first Point of Contact (POC) at a military medical

center. Fast forward to today. 50,000 QOVs awarded and worldwide recognition.

The Second What-Next

The second What-Next was an invitation from the Gazebo Quilters from Huntley IL to join them with Marianne Fons for their Weekend of Valor. My itinerary started out as a quick roundtrip on a plane from Seattle to Chicago IL but eventually evolved to be a solo cross country trip with my camera/video gear, a two person tent and my Prius.

Was/am I crazy? Maybe. But I felt I needed to make contact with my fellow QOVers nationwide and driving and camping across country was in order. I had no idea how much I needed this contact in order to jump start me out of my doldrums.

Inspiration Comes From You

My goal was/is to meet QOVers across the nation. I realized I am

hungry to hear your stories, ask you questions, see your quilts. I need to connect with you, the QOVF community, in order to stay inspired, motivated and energized so we can continue this mission/goal of bringing comfort and appreciation to those who have been touched by war. I really want to meet you, talk, take your pictures, records your stories and maybe even film interviews that others can eventually see.

You are Appreciated–Yes, You in the Back Row

I also want to let you know that you are appreciated; yes, you in the back row. You may think what you are doing is 'nothing' but nothing could

be further from the truth. Your hard work matters, your love, concern and national service make a difference.

The quilt that you sew and quilt turns into a healing and comforting quilt as a Quilt of Valor for someone who has crossed the wire into hell and back. I like to think these QOV quilts are full of magical healing energies. I have heard tales time and time again of how they, both literally and figuratively, touch the lives of recipients and their families. If you want to see this in action, I recommend awarding a QOV to a Vietnam Vet. You will not only be touched, you will be inspired.

I am in awe by you in the field who continue to serve your community and your nation. Thank you for being so generous and kind. This human to human interaction is so fundamental that we sometimes forget how powerful it can be.

I will be meeting only a small fraction of you on this trip. I foresee many more trips where we can meet and inspire one another. Get in touch, via email, Facebook or twitter. I look forward to hearing from you!



Catherine C. Roberts
Executive Director/Founder QOVF
cath@QOVF.org

Clearing out the QOV Closets

We've all heard the stories..... A facility or hospital has "hundreds" of QOVs stuffed in a closet and these quilts are not reaching our wounded heroes. These stories spread very quickly through email or Yahoo groups and they negatively affect overall participation in Quilts of Valor. Sadly, there may be some truth behind these stories, and since we all want to know that the quilts we have made are comforting a deserving service member, not languishing in a closet, **requesting a destination through the qovf.org website is more important than ever.**

One thing to keep in mind is the volunteers and service members who serve as our Points of Contact (POCs) often have limited space to store Quilts of Valor which is why they request only a certain amount of quilts be sent to them either weekly or monthly. They also know approximately how many recipients

will pass through their facility in a given time. Going through Destination Coordination reduces the likelihood of a facility receiving too many, or too few quilts since assignments are being coordinated across the country and overseas.

POCs and their situations change frequently as their tours end or they are reassigned elsewhere. It is easier if the POC only has to notify the Destination Coordinator of their replacement or their new address, instead of trying to contact everyone who has sent them quilts in the past. We have received word of quilts "following" a POC to their new assignment for months after they have moved on. Unfortunately, they are sometimes not in a position to present QOVs and have to arrange for the quilts to be shipped back to their correct destination. Obviously, this is inefficient and delays the presentation of the quilts.

New POCs and destinations are being developed monthly and going through Destination Coordination

allows these new destinations to receive the quilts they need in a timely and coordinated manner. This also includes "one-time" events such as Welcome Home Initiatives and retreats. The other side of this is that as operations wind down in certain parts of the war zones (or hospitals close) a certain destination may no longer be valid at all.

I understand many quilters want their quilts to go to service members in their own states and as such it may be tempting to send or deliver their quilts directly to their "local" facility. However, if we want to eliminate "that closet" and know that our quilt(s) are going to the destination where the need is greatest at any given time; please help by Requesting a Destination for your completed QOVs at www.qovf.org/req-destination.html

Thank you,
Marcella Pirner-Cormier
Destination Coordinator
destination@QOVF.org

QOVF Shop News

We have two new labels in the works! We hope both of these labels will be available in September both at the shop and also from Spoonflower.com.

One is for the person who "Does it All" - Pieces, Quilts & Binds.



The second one is for the "Team".



I'll announce their arrival on the QOV Chat list, and Facebook.

Thank you,
Joyce Lundrigan
Joyce@QOVF.org

Region 3 Reminds us why we make QOV's

Whether you receive an actual Thank You note or not, your QOV makes a difference! These thank you's were collected and shared by Sheila Gaub, Region 3, Wyoming/Montana.

Just four short years ago we "jumped on the wagon" to help cover our warriors with the comfort of quilts. We have been able to cover 201 from the state of Montana, and word has just been received that a group of quilters from Wyoming just finished 38 quilts - they are really stitching up a storm.

I would like to share some of the "thank you" notes we have received:

From a mother who was privileged to deliver a QOV to her son: "I was able to hand deliver the quilt. He was very appreciative of it. He and his wife were amazed at all the detail there is. It was fun to be there to give it to him and to spend time with him and his family. Thanks again." E. A.

"Hello, my name is J. M. I was wounded by a half dozen grenades in Afghanistan on Sept. 29th (2010). During the course of my movement back to the states I received a quilt made by your chapter. **This quilt didn't get framed or displayed on a wall. Your quilt kept me warm.** Your quilt was used. Since I have returned home, your quilt is kept in a

cabinet with other blankets where my family uses it nearly every night . . . for snuggling. Thank you for such a warm addition to my home and my heart. J, B & P M."

"Dear Quilts of Valor: I'm sending back this post card to tell you how much I appreciate the things you do. I was recently injured in Iraq and medevac'd to Germany where I received your quilt. Having the ramp drop off the plane, and being introduced to Germany's 50 degree cold and rainy mornings, I was freezing. A lot different than the 130 degrees I've been used to. **Your quilt gave me warmth and comfort in an extremely cold and stressful time in my life.** Thank you? Love, J. B."

"Thank you for your dedication to assisting others in matters large and small. We all serve in many ways and by a variety of means, applying our own insights to the needs of others. Thank you for the love and care that you and your team put into the Quilts of Valor. **Yesterday, I received the quilt you sent and it's beautiful. It reminds me of many things – but most of all the sense of support by people that care.** Thank you! Warmest Regards – Dave"

From Landstuhl Regional Medical Center:

"To all those who have been sending gifts to our wounded warriors:

Please visit QOVF on our Blog, on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter to connect with the Quilts of Valor Foundation community. There are hundreds of pictures, stories and friends waiting for you there!

Blog: www.QOVF.blogspot.com

Facebook: [QuiltsofValor@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/QuiltsofValor@groups.facebook.com)

Twitter: [@quiltsofvalor](https://twitter.com/quiltsofvalor)

I am writing to thank you for supporting America's sons and daughters who are making hard sacrifices for our precious freedom. Your donations provide both comfort and encouragement for the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and their family members that come to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and Ramstein Air Force Base. Your generosity makes it possible for us to assist these wounded warriors and their families...and your gifts enhance the holistic healthcare we provide for all those who proudly perform their sacred duty.

What you have given blesses these precious men and women. I want to thank you for your caring and compassionate service to all those who serve their country so well.

Blessings and peace, Chaplain M., Wounded Warrior Ministry Center"

Email message from CPT B.:

"I work in Germany at Landstuhl ICU. Chaplain G. was so kind to donate some beautiful quilts to our wounded soldiers from your organization and I just wanted to say thank you and to all the wonderful people supporting our troops!! I am the QOV representative for the Intensive Care Unit. **This is such a wonderful thing that you and the organization do and all of the soldiers are so appreciative and feel such gratitude.** God Bless you and yours for what you do."

"It is with my most sincere feelings of gratitude that I thank you and the members of the Quilts of Valor – Montana Chapter for the beautiful quilt. This gift is such a blessing and I will never forget what you have done for me. I pray that God will bless you abundantly and I hope I

will have the opportunity to thank you face to face. Take care and God bless. Sincerely, MH"

"Just wanted to let you know the quilts are coming in. They are so beautiful, and the care & love that goes into each one is evident to any who see them." (Message from a Chaplain's Assistant at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany)

"Hey! I just wanted to say thank you for the quilt. It is very pretty & comfortable. I appreciate everything." Sincerely – Stephanie

Via email: "Hello, my name is James and I am a Senior Chief Petty Officer Navy SEAL who was injured. On the night of July 9th **I was shot in a gunfight with Taliban forces** in Afghanistan. During my medevac, I received a quilt made by the Sheridan, MT Chapter of your organization. Last night I arrived home after **9 surgeries** and a few weeks at the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda. **I sleep with that quilt every night. I love it. The hands that made that quilt must be magic.** Thanks to your organization and to the hands that put my quilt together for me. Here is a photo of me and my quilt. Again, thank you!"

"Thank you for the beautiful quilt. I will cherish it forever. Your gifts and card do mean a lot to all of us soldiers. I enjoy travel so who knows when I will come through Montana." – PFC

"Our son was injured in Afghanistan on June 24th from an IED blast. He was flown to the military hospital in Germany and then transferred to

Bethesda. He had lost both legs and suffered severe abdominal injuries and **on July 10th he died** from a very aggressive infection. We were able to be with him in Germany and in Maryland. **While we were in Germany, Matt was given a beautiful quilt that was made by your group. We want to thank you for the beautiful quilt which we will treasure."** Sincerely – Matt's parents

"Thank you for the quilt. It is very nice. I went to the Germany Hospital and picked it up. I am in the Army but I am a former Marine. So I really enjoy it. It is on my bed and use it every night. **Thank you for supporting the troops. Thank you!** 1SG A. D."

"Thank you for the beautiful Quilt. It's very comfortable. **I appreciate what you are doing for me and the other wounded soldiers out there. It is nice to see there are people like you out supporting our Soldiers."**

"Thank you for the wonderful things you do!! I used your blanket when I was medevac'd to Germany. -- SGT S."

"I would like to say thank you. **Our Special Forces team had six Green Berets injured in an attack and we were given these quilts.** They mean a whole lot to us and we appreciate it a whole lot. **Thank you for thinking about us.** Thank you so much. – A.

"Dear Quilters: We are medics here at Ramstein AFB in Germany and see many patients with your quilts on a daily basis. **They look forward to heading home and sharing your loving gift. It means so much to**

know that they are receiving a gift of warmth from someone they've never met. Many thank from us, our troops and their families. – SSGT K. V. and SSGT E. T.”

Yes, Quilters, this is the reason we are still stitching. Keep up the wonderful work!

New Region 4 Coordinator

I would like to introduce myself; I am the new Regional Coordinator for Oklahoma. Having just come on board in late July 2011, I have known about Quilts of Valor since 2007 when my son, a wounded warrior, received one of these beautiful and meaningful quilts. I just recently started looking back at the website thinking about what I can do to show my continued appreciation to our military. Then I ran across the Regional Coordinator section on the website and seen no coordinator for Oklahoma, I decided after a phone conversation with Lori Kutch that this was meant for me! So with that said here is a little bit of an update on Oklahoma:

I have been busy here talking with new folks about starting up some sewing groups, sending out information to all the quilt stores and quilting guilds here making sure that we are getting the word out to all about QOVF. I have meet with Carol Capshaw from Chickasha/Lawton area; she is talking to her existing quilt group about helping out, and is working on getting a monthly date set at the quilt store in Chickasha “Bush Family Affair” for anyone who wants join in. This sewing group also will be presenting their first quilt to a local

wounded warrior at Fort Sill this month. Yea Carol and her helpers!

Also we have the group in the Tulsa/Bartlesville area that has been associated with QOVF for many years they are busy keeping the quilts rolling out to our wounded warriors overseas. I have hopes of getting more groups formed here in Oklahoma like this one.

Another exciting phone call I got from Carmen Manning from Yukon OK (a longarmer for QOV) she told me the local library in Yukon was donating some window space in the library for the month of September for us to set up a display about QOVF.

I would just like to say THANK YOU to all the people that have so graciously welcomed me into the Quilts of Valor Family!

Carole Hanks
Reg 4 Coordinator - Oklahoma
Reg4ok@qovf.org

Kids U.O.W. Camp

What happens when you put nine active kids together for several hours a day with some muslin blocks, lots of strips in patriotic colors, and patient volunteers and their sewing machines? Ninety completed blocks, and two completed quilt tops!

Gwinnett Quilts of Valor Quilters (GQoVQ) hosted a kids’ camp at Intown Quilters Quilt Shop for four days in June, organized and directed by Ginny Wineinger. The kids ranged in age from 8 through mid- teens, and Ginny and 12 other wonderful adult volunteers brought their own machines and guided the eager kids through making the blocks. Each day the colorful blocks stacked up as the young people chose the strips they

wanted to use and learned how to sew them diagonally on the muslin base. Two of the girls were so excited with their blocks that they finished enough to put an entire quilt top together! A second quilt top was a group effort, and the remaining blocks were given to our GQoVQ group and will be made into numerous quilts for our Wounded Warriors.



What a wonderful opportunity the **Under our Wings** (UOW) program provides to share knowledge and to inspire others to create beautiful quilts! We hope that our kids’ camp experience will be the first of many (our next Kids UOW is already scheduled for late December) and that this wonderful program will continue to grow.

Susan Gordon
Region 8
susang@qovf.org

Save the Date for Make a Difference Day October 22, 2011

Make a Difference Day (MADD) is the most encompassing national day of helping others -- a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors. Everyone can participate! Created by USA WEEKEND Magazine, Make a Difference Day is an annual event that takes place on the fourth Saturday of every October.

Millions have participated. In 2009, 3 million people cared enough about their communities to volunteer on that day, accomplishing thousands of projects in hundreds of towns. What a wonderful opportunity for you and the Quilts of Valor Foundation to make a difference in the lives of those service members who have been touched by war.

Here are some ideas of the events that you can organize for this year's MADD (October 22, 2011):

Sew days, long arming events, block drives, Under Our Wings events, educational programs/displays, QOV presentations and/or new volunteer recruiting events.

So save the date, begin planning, and be on the lookout for email notifications of downloadable flyers, and block/quilt instructions to support your Make a Difference Day events. Please contact us with any questions you may have, and let us know how we can support your Make A Difference Day efforts! june@QOVF.org

Quilts of Valor Foundation

News from National. Editor's Corner. General Info. Keeping you in the Know.

Statistics



Iraq Statistics

Killed - 4,474
Wounded - Many

Afghanistan Statistics

Killed - 1,738
Wounded - Many

QOV Statistics

Total QOVs Awarded - 45,376

Awarded this week - 44
Awarded this month - 431

We need significantly MORE QOVs.

Please keep up the good work and we'll keep covering our nation's war wounded.

Reminders



Remember the **R's**

REGISTER as a member of the QOV community <http://www.qovf.org/localqov-list.html>

REPORT quilts awarded directly by you or your group <http://www.qovf.org/quilts-awarded-report.html>

Request Destination form. If you don't complete it before you submit it, it does not get sent, recorded or received.

RECRUIT friends, family and locate organizations to donate time, talent and/or funds.

UNDER OUR WINGS



[Under Our Wings](#)

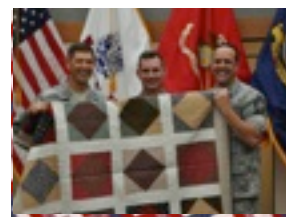
No Matter what your skills are, you can be a part of this fabulous program.

The concept is simple and does two things: first, makes more QOVs; and second, brings non-sewers into our quilting world using American Valor Fabrics for QOVs, which in turn supports local quilt shops.

Please visit the QOV website to register and learn more www.QOVF.org.

To find a local UOW Quilt shop in your state visit www.qovf.org/localqov-list.html

Longarmer Form



Please take the time to make sure you have read and understood the message at the top of the "Request a Longarmer" form. If you work with a group, please make sure all toppers are reminded.

From the form: Check list to make sure you are ready to send your top to a longarmer:

You have read [Overview of the QOV Process](#) and [The Team](#)

- Your top is pressed, free of odors or pet hair (due to allergy concerns), and threads are trimmed.
- Your backing is 6" to 8" longer and wider than top.
- Any seams in backing have selvages trimmed.

Regional News



Many additional stories including Regional News can be found on our **blog**: www.qovf.blogspot.com

This month's articles include:

- Gulf Coast Honors Marines
- Riley's QOV
- News from Region 1
- Article & pictures from Gwinnett QOVF Quilters
- Links to articles about
- 4H Nebraska's QOV efforts
- Seamstresses in Temecula CA and their QOV mission

QOVF Volunteer Staff

Let us know how we can help you...

Catherine Roberts

Is the Executive Director and Founder of the Quilts of Valor Foundation.
cath@QOVF.org

June Moore

Is the Director of the Quilts of Valor Foundation.
june@QOVF.org

Lori Kutch

Is the Deputy Director of QOVF.
Lori@QOVF.org

Judie Yates

Is the Longarm Coordinator of QOVF.
judie@QOVF.org

Marcella Pirner-Cornier

Is the Quilts of Valor Foundation's Destination Coordinator.
destination@QOVF.org

Lenny Truitt

Can be contacted regarding any and all QOVF financial matters.
financial@QOVF.org

Sajal K. Soni

Is the Quilts of Valor Foundation Web Developer Extraordinaire.
sajal@QOVF.org

Jeff Thorne

Is the Quilts of Valor Foundation Yahoo Group Moderator.
jeff@QOVF.org

Nate Beal

Graphic Design for Quilts of Valor Foundation
graphics@QOVF.org

Connie Jenson

Quilts of Valor Foundation graphic designer.
graphics@QOVF.org

Joyce Lundrigan

Is the keeper and manager of the Quilts of Valor Foundation Shop.
joyce@QOVF.org

Michele Vinbury

Quilts of Valor Foundation Newsletter Editor.
newsletter@QOVF.org

Regional Coordinators

RCs are here to assist you establish new groups, help fundraise, establish new points of contact and to maintain QOVF standards. If you have any questions or need guidance, please contact the RC assigned to your state. A full list can be found at <http://www.qovf.org/content/rc-map-page.html>

For more information regarding QOVF Structure and Volunteers, please visit:

<http://www.qovf.org/content/about-us.html>



Mission Statement

The mission of the QOV Foundation is to cover ALL those service members and veterans touched by war with wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor (QOVs). This Foundation is not about politics. It is about people.



Please Remember...

All images and articles sent to Quilts of Valor Foundation become property of Quilts of Valor Foundation. We are not responsible for the return of items. Quilts of Valor Foundation does not necessarily share the opinions and views shared in the articles and images in this newsletter. Quilts of Valor Foundation reserves the right to edit and or delete submissions to the newsletter. By submitting to this newsletter you agree to these terms.

Contact Us

Do you have comments, questions, concerns about an article you've read in a QOVF newsletter? Please feel free to contact us at newsletter@QOVF.org. We welcome your input and thoughts regarding the topics that matter to you most.

Donations

Please visit our website www.qovf.org/index.php?page=donate for more information regarding Monetary and/or Fabric donations.