



QUILTERS, PLEASE PUT YOUR WALLETS AWAY!

By Catherine Roberts

It's that time of year when every organization under the 501(c)(3) sun is asking for donations. Quilts of Valor Foundation needs funds for administration expenses too, such as web site maintenance and redesign, liability insurance, state non-profit status filings, postage for brochure mailings, and legal fees.

However, there is one caveat.

QOVF is not requesting monetary donations from *you*, our community's generous quilters and longarmers. The

foundation would, however, appreciate monetary donations from your family members and friends who love and support what you do for QOVF.

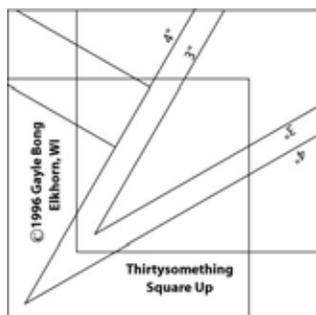
Who do you know who would contribute \$5, \$10, \$50, or \$100 to show appreciation of the work you do all year to comfort and heal those touched by war? Please, just send your supporters a note and this contribution link. <http://www.qovf.org/donate.html>

(About the Author: Catherine Roberts is founder of the Quilts of Valor Foundation. She and her husband Chris live in Anacortes, WA.)

TWO QUILTING CHALLENGES SUPPORT QUILTS OF VALOR

By Sharon Ledbetter

Quilter's Rule, a tool company based in Waterford, WI, has issued its third annual "Quilt Rule Challenge" to the Quilts of Valor community. Participants must first buy a \$10 tool, the Thirtysomething Square, designed by Gayle Bong, and must use the tool to construct a quilt that meets QOVF requirements. Some of the quilts entered will travel with Quilter's Rule for twelve months prior to Machine Quilting Today's Upper Midwest Show in Ocono-



mowoc, WI, in 2015. Plans are to award the quilts to combat veterans at the show. For challenge rules and entry form, click here.

The Home Machine Quilting Show (HMQS) held each May in Salt Lake City is, for the third year, hosting a Quilts of Valor challenge sponsored by Quilting Treasures. Utah State Coordinator Diane Jaeger is the organizer. A \$20 fee covers postage for the kit of fabrics from Quilting Treasures' "Nations Song" collection. Information and an entry form are available here. First, second, and third prizes are \$500, \$300, and \$200. View swatches of the fabric collection here. Quilts entered will be forwarded to QOVF destinations without further cost to the quilter. Kits will be available January 15. For more information about the show itself, visit www.hmqs.org

(About the Author: Sharon Ledbetter is Director for the Quilts of Valor Foundation. She lives in Clarkson, ID. Contact Sharon at sharon.ledbetter@QOVF.org.)

DID YOU SAY "QUILT MULES?"

By Betsy Podriznik

WANTED, QUILT MULES:

Patriotic individuals needed to transport quilts across state lines. Special insignia. Priceless benefits.

Would you believe being a "mule" is an honor? What is a "quilt mule" anyway?

About three years ago, Catherine Roberts was traveling across the country visiting QOV groups. The Franklin, NC, QOV quilters hosted a luncheon in her behalf. The celebration included QOV recipient speeches and Catherine interviewing Vietnam War veterans.

Groups were asked to introduce themselves and share their ideas and projects. The Liberty Lane Quilters from western North Carolina explained how they moved pieced quilt tops to long-armers and on to destinations without spending money. They used Quilt Mules.

Needless to say, the room burst into laughter, but as the conversation continued, others embraced the concept. Moving

"Quilt Mule" volunteers go the extra mile to earn one of the Official Quilt Mule pins created by scrapbookers to recognize those who provide free transport for Quilts of Valor tops and completed quilts.



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Quilt Mules cont.

quilt tops from point A to B and then back to A or on to C without spending a dime leaves money for fabric and other supplies.

So Quilt Mules started hauling throughout the southeastern states. Becoming a mule may not sound appealing, but the GA-NC Coordinator's scrapbooking friends created an attractive Quilt Mule pin, minus the mule's silhouette. There was no turning back. The innovative transportation process caught on like wildfire, and volunteers offered to haul quilts to places along routes where their family or friends lived, or where quilt shops were located.

Jill and her husband were taking their travel trailer to Florida and could make a lot of stops on way down to Key West. She really wanted an excuse to stop at quilts shops without her husband complaining. She was (hand on her forehead) helping to comfort combat service

members. Bonnie was going to Atlanta, GA, and back to Franklin, NC. Cheryl was on her way to Savannah, GA, to visit her mother.

Quilt Shops became "way stations." Everyone volunteered to pick up quilts from the shops; after all, it was for QOVF. Even non-quilters volunteered as Quilt Mules so they could receive the coveted Quilt Mule pin. Quilt Shops loved being way stations because as quilters came in to drop off and pick up quilts, they tended to shop.

Word spread to other State Coordinators, and soon they assembled teams of Quilt Mules to haul quilts and recruited scrapbooking friends to create pins. Does your state have Quilt Mules and an Official QOV Quilt Mule Pin?

(About the Author: Betsy Podriznik is Coordinator of Special Events for the Quilts of Valor Foundation. She lives in Lawrenceville, GA. Contact Betsy at betsy.podriznik@QOVF.org or 770-841-3572)

QOVs BRING COMFORT TO HOSPITAL SOLDIERS

Information provided by Susan Vose

On a warm, sunny August day, in an outdoor pavilion at the VA hospital in Canandaigua, NY, 27 veterans received QOVs during a picnic organized by the staff for the veterans and their families.

Each veteran was invited to pick out his quilt, "They hugged their quilts like you wouldn't believe," said co-organizer Susan Vose. "It was hard for them to let go long enough to have their names printed on the labels," she added.

A reporter from the local newspaper, the Finger Lakes Times, himself a disabled veteran, covered the event. Many gathered for the event became aware of the Quilts of Valor Foundation and its program for the first time that day.

Read the article and view photos [here](#).



FROM THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE: WHAT YOUR IT DIRECTOR DOES

By Terry Yates

Meeting the stated mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation requires sustaining a robust web presence, providing timely and reliable communication methods, and managing a repository of critical documents. Only through a strong comprehensive information technology (IT) program will the QOVF successfully grow and meet our mission.

The QOVF IT team consists of two volunteers: Sajal Soni and me. Together, we are the tag team that updates the web site when changes are required. Each requested update is logged, assigned to one of us, executed, and, finally, approved by the original requestor. A single website change might take several steps. For example, there are seven steps to perform when bringing on board a new State Coordinator. We update the website daily, working to turn around results in less than 48 hours whenever possible.

While maintaining the current web site is important, we are also engaged in



Terry Yates

a web site update that will provide our audience a more engaging and visually interesting experience. Technically, the new web site structure is ready. Now we are creating new content, improving the out-of-date information, and transferring content that doesn't need revision. That effort is underway, and we hope to have the new site up and running soon.

Our IT team also manages the email system for individual QOVF staff and State Coordinators. For example, there

are group email accounts for the Board of Directors, the Executive Staff, and the State Coordinators. We also maintain email addresses for web site visitors to ask for information, request a quilt, or request a destination.

Last, as the QOVF grows, managing its records and documents is critical to maintaining our non-profit status. From organizing policies and procedures for easy access to tracking past and current awards, the IT team is there behind the scenes making it happen.

As more individuals embrace the QOVF mission, more sophisticated web content, effective communications channels, and complete documentation are vital. We look forward to those challenges and adding value by supporting QOVF in fulfilling its mission.

(About the Author: Terry Yates is the Information Technology Director for the Quilts of Valor Foundation. He lives in Mountain House, California. Contact Terry at Terry.Yates@QOVF.org)

IT STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION

By Marianne Fons

On a tour bus in Charleston, SC, waiting to head out on a tour, I chatted with Polly Mello, fellow attendee at the American Quilt Study Group's annual seminar. Naturally, I introduced Quilts of Valor into the conversation. "I really should make one," Polly said "My husband is a Vietnam vet."

"Oh, you don't need to make one," I replied. "In fact, I think a QOV made by a civilian unknown to the recipient means even more." Anthony Mello received his Quilt of Valor in November. Volunteers Jeff and Kathy Thorne coordinated the award.

At the post office one day, shipping brochures, I told Kristi, my friendly postal worker, what was in the boxes, introducing the subject of Quilts of Valor. "If you know of a combat veteran who should have a quilt, just let me know." Kristi's uncle out in California, another Vietnam vet, the only survivor in the



Anthony Mello received his Quilt of Valor, My Medal, made by Mary Fons, at a private ceremony with family and friends present. Anthony's medals were displayed on a table at the front of the room during the event.

patrol that almost cost him his leg, received his Quilt of Valor in November, awarded in person by California State Coordinator Mary Welch.

Someone once told me, "Everyone knows a quilter." Everyone, undoubtedly, also knows a combat veteran, since an estimated 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 of



Displayed along with Anthony Mello's many medals from his wartime service was a photo of him in uniform.

them are living in America today. As QOVF volunteers, almost any conversation we have in our day to day activities can lead to thanking our veterans for their service.

(About the Author: Marianne Fons serves on the QOVF Board of Directors as Quilting Industry Liaison. She lives in Winterset, IA. Contact Marianne at marianne.fons@QOVF.org.)

COLORADO FIFTH GRADERS MAKE AND PRESENT QOVs

Information provided by volunteer

Alycia Carmin

How many kids does it take to make eight Quilts of Valor?

Eighty-four, if you are talking about Alycia Carmin and the fifth grade class at Platte Valley School in Colorado. The teachers came together to make one more for a total of nine QOVs for soldiers from Fort Carson Army Base in Colorado.

It all began when Carmin started quilting for QOVF in 2005. When her son Jake and his classmates learned about her involvement, they wanted to join in. They even used money that was earmarked for their annual Christmas Party to buy quilt supplies. In May 2006, Carmin contacted a chaplain at Fort Carson to arrange for delivery of the quilts. They would go to wounded soldiers in the Evans Army Community Hospital at Fort Carson.

"I took 12 kids, nine quilts, and two teachers and went 'on post' with a security detail. It was awesome!" Carmin said.

"We presented our quilts to the chaplain, and then the chaplain asked if we wanted to present one to a soldier."

Sgt. Frank G., who had been wounded and was in rehabilitation at the hospital, received a quilt. "He was an amazing man of character and strength," Carmin said in a blog she started as part of QOV projects. "This man served his country, did his job, and did it without expecting anything. He was so amazed that anyone even cared. He was so humbled to receive a quilt it brought tears to his eyes."

QOV became a regular part of the students' extracurricular activities. People in the community donated fabric, and the effort expanded to include students at the local high school. During the next five years, students made more than 100 QOVs. Over those years they also presented more than 1,000 QOVs made by other quilters to soldiers at the hospital and, later, to soldiers of the Warrior Transition Battalion at the hospital.

"They were very dedicated," Carmin said. "I taught quilting in the school until 2011. It was a blast!"



Platte Valley School students present a Quilt of Valor, one of hundreds generated in the community over several years.



Students in Alycia Carmin's fifth grade class at Platte Valley School in Kersey, Colorado, display a Quilt of Valor made at school.



As the Quilts of Valor Foundation grows, we continue to be good stewards of your contributions. To that end, we are **now looking for volunteers with non-profit legal experience and non-profit CPA experience** to help us continue to maximize the donations we receive while operating within the legal boundaries of a 501(c)(3) corporation. If you have these qualifications or know of someone who might volunteer to assist the Foundation, please contact Susan Gordon, Executive Director, at susan.gordon@QOVF.org

STATISTICS

Iraq
Killed: 4,489
Wounded: Many

Afghanistan
Killed: 2,288
Wounded: Many

Suicides to Date:
Statistics Unknown

Total QOVs Awarded as of 12/13/13
94,373



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State Coordinators (SCs) 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 SC for your state. A full list can be found at <http://www.qovf.org/content/regional-coordinator-overall-view.html>

For more information regarding QOVF Structure and Volunteers, please visit: <http://www.qovf.org/content/about-us.html>

Newsletter

Susan Gordon, *Editorial Director*
Marianne Fons, *Assistant Editor*
Tony Jacobson, *Graphic Designer*

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