



**NATIONAL SEW DAY:
FEBRUARY 1 WAS TOPS!**

By Betsy Podriznik

Our first Annual Sew Day last month was simply grand, with 1,361 registered participants in six time zones, and 586 tops (plus 35 quilts!) completed that day. We even had three ladies sewing along with us from Germany!

QOVF Executive Director Susan Gordon and I traveled to four separate events in the greater Atlanta area, stopping at each to test the chocolate, applaud the stitchers, and admire quilt tops in progress. Between locations I drew numbers, and Susan had the pleasure of phoning 76 registered participants to let them know they were winners.

As I lay my head on my pillow late Saturday night after the evening news, I imagined the following news story:

...BROWNOUTS WITHIN THE U.S. POWER GRID WERE REPORTED ACROSS AREAS OF THE COUNTRY TODAY...RESEARCHERS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO IDENTIFY THE CAUSE AS THERE WAS NO CLEAR PATTERN...AMONG THE REPORTS WERE SMALL SPIKES, MINOR DISRUPTIONS, AND LARGE SPIKES THAT STRANGELY INCLUDED SOUNDS, MUCH LIKE LAUGHTER...THE INVESTIGATION IS ONGOING...

Thanks to all the participants that contributed to the success of our very first National Sew Day. Please enjoy the comments below received from members of our community in the run-up to the event:

I'm a non-quilter, but I'll make muffins and press if I can find a group.



Jules Kirshman, Gulf War veteran, sewed patchwork at her Singer Featherweight. She's the fourth generation in her family to use the 'little black beauty'. She worked at Glenwood Church of Christ in Glenwood, AR.

I have added more stitchers in the last two days, 24 total, and only half that many machines—panic time!

What an exciting event—I envision hundreds of quilters getting together on this day for an important reason, but having fun at the same time, all across the country.

I am glad I decided to host this sew day for our area.

I've invited my sisters over—it will be a SISTER SEW DAY.

I will have just had thyroid surgery and won't be able to drive, but I promise to be sewing at home.

We plan to have all the volunteers put their name into a hat for the drawing. Since you don't have their names, can you please enter mine 25 or 30 times?



New to quilting and QOVF both, Karen Buchanan helped display a just-completed top at First Baptist Church in Dover, AR. Another volunteer, Donna Bryant, member of the QOVF group called A Second Tour, put the kit together.



Eleanor Burns and 18 of her many friends observed QOVF National Sew Day during a two-day workshop, piecing blocks called "Salute to the Stars" at Eleanor's studios in San Marcos, CA. Naturally, they completed all the patchwork blocks in a day! In the evening, at home, Eleanor joined blocks with sashing and cornerstones to complete the top. The next day, the group added an appliqué panel.

(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)



Nancy Liebner, a member of the Southern Tier Quilts of Valor group, sewed on her own at home, completing a top she started from a jelly roll kit she picked up the group's regular meeting the week before in Corning, NY.



Honor student Mollie Simon (left) and sew-day coordinator Beth Culp display one of the tops constructed by Chamblee High School National Honor Society students and other quilters at Intown Quilt Shop in Decatur, GA.



Tanya Logan held up the top she completed at Cottage Quilts & Fabric in Elk River, MN, where the group started the day grazing on doughnuts. Shop owner Marshall Walker whipped up a lunch spread of fresh-cooked pasta, cheesy potatoes and ham, and salad. When other shop regulars stopped in to chitchat, some were put to work pressing and making binding.



Forty-nine participants at Saxe Gotha Presbyterian Church in Lexington, SC, made 168 string blocks in two and a half hours. When they ran out of space in the room, they commandeered the hall. Coordinator Anne Mixon's granddaughter Paizley, just 3½, brought her own machine. Sack lunches were enjoyed by all.



Four participants at the Longarm Lady Studio in Gyserville, CA, took a break from sewing to pose for a photo in front of a finished QOV made by Dora Wode, right. Two participants finished tops in the course of the day. Everyone shared quilting stories during lunch and coffee breaks.



Working at a member's home, six of the Gazebo Quilters of Huntley, IL, combined three large pieced flag panels made by another member with star blocks constructed during monthly QOV workshops to complete three tops. The Gazebo group has awarded approximately 400 QOVs since 2011.



Members of Sew Random Quilters spent the day at The Stitching Post in Oklahoma City making "Thank You Star" blocks. By the end of the day, all twelve blocks were finished, sashed, set together, and bordered.

NATIONAL
SEW DAY
 February 1, 2014

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE: SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR

By Betsy Podrznik

I am honored to fill the new role of Special Events Coordinator for the Quilts of Valor Foundation. The purpose of this position is to focus one volunteer on the planning and execution of national-level QOV events.



Betsy Podrznik

Our recent National Sew Day (NSD) is an example of a QOVF-generated event. NSD had broad participation and produced many quilt tops. Much of what was learned may help improve future events sponsored by QOVF.

Other national events are annual consumer quilt shows organized and operated by others, such as Home Machine Quilters Showcase (HMQS), Machine Quilters Exposition (MQX),

and Original Sewing & Quilt Expo (OSQE). These repeat shows around the country offer opportunities for involvement with our foundation, including free space for an information table or a larger area for attendees to sit and sew QOV blocks.

In past years, Regional or State Coordinators handled such events in their area without the benefit of national coordination. When surveyed last fall about the challenges of their job, one suggestion was national assistance for events like these.

Over the next few months, my goal is to identify national events where QOVF can have a presence and, with the help of the SC, support local teams.

My background is in sales training at Hewlett Packard. I also work as a consultant for companies hosting or participating in expos and trade shows.

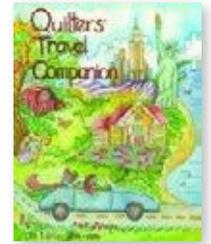
I welcome your comments and suggestions and very much need your support, so I can help our foundation grow.

Contact Betsy at
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QTC—DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT!

By Marianne Fons

Many quilters with itchy feet and a vehicle with plenty of trunk space are familiar with the Quilters' Travel Companion (QTC), that marvelously thick catalogue listing 3500 quilt shops across America, organized geographically by region.



The 13th edition of the handy guide that is revised and published every even-numbered year will be available in June. When you flip through your copy, you'll come across a full-page ad encouraging quilters to become Quilts of Valor volunteers. Our web site address and other information are in the ad. QTC owner Audrey Anderson, who is a SCUBA diving enthusiast as well as a publisher, made the page affordable for QOVF in an effort to help us recruit more volunteers. Click here for ordering information.

PELLON BATTING PROGRAM SUPPORTS QUILTS OF VALOR

By Marianne Fons

Pellon, a Florida-based manufacturer of batting, interfacing, and fiber fill, assists QOVF by offering its Legacy™ batting at a special price to registered QOVF volunteer longarmers and local sew groups.

A 30-yard roll of 90-inch-wide 80/20 needle-punched cotton/poly batting is \$50.70 per roll (\$1.69/yard), plus shipping. Minimum order is a 16-roll pallet. Be aware shipping costs can be substantial (\$250-\$350 west of the Mississippi, \$200-\$300 east of the Mississippi). Also, some trucking companies charge an extra "lift gate" fee if there is no loading dock at the delivery location. It's best to have the trucking company deliver to a distribution center geographically near the local sew group that will claim the delivery, cutting away the plastic wrapping, dividing the shipment, and carrying rolls home in their own vehicles.



If you are a registered volunteer longarmer or a local sew group that needs batting to finish QOVs, you can contact South Carolina State Coordinator Anne Mixon, manager of the Pellon program (anne.mixon@QOVF.org) for tips on organizing and help placing an order. (Do not contact Pellon directly.) Be aware the pallet must be shipped to a business address and that placing an order and getting it filled can take several weeks (i.e., plan ahead).

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer longarmer, click here, or email Longarm Coordinators Jim and Joan at jandj.wobbleton@QOVF.org

According to Darlene Christopherson at Pellon, "We do not consider QOVF a charity but a national service foundation. The men and women who create Quilts of Valor sew heartfelt respect and gratitude into each stitch. Legacy™ by Pellon is honored to have a small part in this ongoing effort to honor and comfort our service members and veterans."

Click here to see how Pellon describes its support of QOVF on the company's web site.

Executive Director Susan Gordon says, "Quilts of Valor Foundation cannot thank Pellon and Darlene Christopherson enough for supporting our mission in this way."

(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.)

QOVF and DHA AWARD QUILTS

By André B. Sobocinski

The Quilts of Valor Foundation recently partnered with the Defense Health Agency (DHA) in Falls Church, VA, for “Wartime Quilting: From Past to Present,” a display that included six Quilts of Valor. DHA, which manages medical care for service members stateside, overseas, and in combat areas, shares a common goal with QOVF—caring for and comforting those touched by war. Together, they awarded five Quilts of Valor during the opening ceremony.

Signage in the exhibit, which continues through May 1st, explains how “the wartime quilt in America has served as a symbol of comfort and bereavement, as well as a memorial to military service personnel” from the Civil War to the present day. Throughout its history, the quilt made for wartime purposes has had a powerful impact on those who create them and those who receive them.

The traditional military ceremony featured remarks by QOVF Executive Director Susan Gordon and John Morse, DHA Director of Administration Management. “We believe that we sew with love, caring and gratitude,” expressed Gordon. “It flows through our hearts and through our hands and into these quilts.” John Morse sees today’s wartime quilt as a symbol of family, security, and love of home. “It is that comfort and protection from loneliness needed in the warzone.”

QOVF Director Sharon Ledbetter and other QOVF staff, supported by the Scottish-American Military Society, honored the recipients, each nominated by their service branch. The written citations acknowledged the honorees’ service and sacrifice. Invited Guest Retired Capt. Mark Little, a wounded warrior and himself a QOV recipient, awarded a quilt to the Army’s honoree.

Ceremony attendees were invited to stop by the QOVF exhibit area to meet foundation representatives, sign a quilt block that will be made into a Quilt of Valor, obtain information about nominating fellow service members or veterans, and support the QOVF in its mission.



Quilts of Valor on display at the Defense Health Agency (DHA) headquarters in Falls Church, VA



QOV recipients with their awarded quilts during the opening ceremony at the DHA. Services represented are (left to right) Air Force, Marine Corps, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.



Wounded warrior Mark Little stands ready to award a Quilt of Valor. Little is himself a QOV recipient.

(About the Author: André B. Sobocinski is official Historian at the Office of Medical History, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, US Navy, Falls Church, VA)

QOV CUSTOMIZED FOR A SIGHTLESS SOLDIER

Information provided by Tiffany Ramble

Just about everyone can envision a combat veteran wrapped in the warmth of a colorful, quilted hug, looking at the quilt pattern, and examining the label that now identifies the quilt as his or hers.

But what if the recipient cannot see his quilt—and can only feel it? Such was the situation for a young veteran who lost his sight during combat.

Tiffany Ramble, a four-year QOVF liaison at Eisenhower Army Medical Center Residential Treatment Center at Fort Gordon, GA, and two nurses took the time to personalize the soldier’s QOV before awarding it. The nurses, Pam Bixler and Christian Barnes, appliquéd stars and eagles and spelled out his name in rhinestones on the label using the style of Braille he had learned.

The QOV quilter had created a beautiful book with a quilted cover that described her journey in making this particular quilt. Ramble and the nurses enhanced the “feel” of the book cover with the soldier’s Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) patch and other patriotic emblems.

The story does not end there—Ramble additionally contacted Blind Services at the Veterans’ Administration for help in translating the book into Braille so the soldier could read it himself. Perhaps it was providence that her contact at the VA was the soldier’s instructor who also is blind. To convert the words to the style of Braille the soldier learned, Ramble had to type the book’s entire content into a format the instructor could use.

According to Ramble, the soldier was so overwhelmed by the thoughtfulness of the quilter and the treatment center staff, his hands trembled as he read the story of his Quilt of Valor.



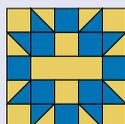
Tiffany Ramble



A thoughtful quilter created a quilted book to accompany her QOV. Other caring people enhanced the cover to make it tactile for a blind recipient.



Susan Gordon,
QOVF Executive Director



Hearth & Home Block

SUSAN'S CALL TO ACTION

Join me this month as we start a new block drive to create gifts of comfort with representation from all over the country. Our block is Hearth & Home. Click [here](#) for directions, and share the pattern with other quilters and sewing groups beyond your QOV quilting friends.

Send your blocks by **July 31st** to: Judie Yates, 539 W. Moraga St., Mountain House, CA 95391. Questions? E-mail Sharon Ledbetter at sharon.ledbetter@QOVF.org. Make one, make ten, make as many as you'd like. Let's see how many blocks we can make over the next four and a half months!

STATISTICS

Iraq

Killed: 4,489

Wounded: Many

Afghanistan

Killed: 2310

Wounded: Many

Suicides to Date:

Statistics Unknown

Total QOVs Awarded as of 3/8/14

97,781



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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 [here](#).

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

Newsletter

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Marianne Elliott, *Managing 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.