

February 2006 QOV Foundation Newsletter

8 February 2006

A Worthy Addiction

(This newsletter is long. You might want to print it out and read it at your leisure.)

Greetings fellow quilters old and new! Some of you QOV 'old-timers' have realized that making QOVs can be addictive. Those of you who are new to the program are forewarned. Not only are they addictive but your fabric preferences may change from feminine and frilly to more masculine and woodsy. I look forward to the day when I can go to a fabric store and not have QOV filters on the brain.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, I receive many emails asking me if the program is still going on. My answer reassures them the program is alive and well. The fact is there are still thousands of our wounded servicemembers who do not *yet* have QOVs. Even if we had contacts in every single military and VA medical center where someone would identify each and every wounded servicemember/vet, we still would be missing thousands of our wounded.

"How?" you ask? Our wounded sometimes get missed in the hospitals. They may land in med-hold (sort of an out-patient status) and/or get discharged from the military. Or, they are injured in theatre (Iraq/Afghanistan), get treated and then go back on the job forgetting that they were wounded. And, this doesn't even begin to factor in PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder). So you can easily see how many of the wounded go pass GO without collecting their QOVs.

This year, it is my goal to bring our nation's attention to our wounded servicemembers. And, not just for one day but on a regular basis. How? Milk cartons? Well, continue reading to see how we're going to do this. And, if you have any ideas, email me.

QOV RECAP

Last year was the year the QOV program took off. I give much credit to Marcia Stevens, one of the pioneers in the longarming world. Her decision to give back to the community after 18 years in the longarming arena by joining forces with the QOV program has proven to be very fruitful. Marcia's endorsement of the QOV program has brought many volunteer longarmers to the group which we might otherwise not have. The QOV program excels primarily because of the quilt-topper/longarmers partnership. I want to congratulate all you teams out there that have made our QOVs sing and shine with brilliance.

The total number of QOVs awarded in 2005 was 3,437 (Marcia!)! In 2004, the total QOV number was 387. That brings us to nearly 4,000 QOVs in 14 months of existence. I think this is truly remarkable and I applaud all who have contributed wartime Quilts of Valor to our wounded. Don't underestimate your contribution to the healing of those servicepeople and those around them. Remember the ripple effect from just one little pebble?

We started out with one chaplain contact at Walter Reed. We now have nearly 70 contacts in military and VA medical centers across the nation and abroad.

The official number of wounded servicemembers today stands at: 16,606. This number is a bit deceptive because the Pentagon casualty report list does not include the injured or ailing from non-combat causes including PTSD. According to the UP International's Mark Benjamin report on servicemember's casualties, there are more than 17,000 wounded that are not accounted for.

I guesstimate we Americans have made over 12,000 quilts for our wounded servicemembers. You do the math.

So, in answer to those who question whether we still need quality QOVs? The resounding answer is an unequivocal "Yes!"

"Quote-ables"

"I just wanted to say thank you. I received a "quilt of valor" when I arrived from ICU in Iraq to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. The reason it meant so much to me is because when I arrived here I came with nothing at all. I was in fear for my health and what would become of me. to me the quilt symbolizes all of the support and prayers that we soldiers are getting from back home, personally for myself as well as all the troops who cant make it to the computer to email you, I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Just by looking at this quilt I can tell that there were many hours spent on the craftsmanship as well as all of the money spent on the high quality materials needed to make such an awesome gift. Honestly I plan on keeping this quilt and passing it on to my children some day, just to symbolize that people out there support their troops, and this country, and its freedom although sometimes taken for granted, isn't free, I am proud to be an American, and although I might not ever make it back down range, I at least know I did my part. Thank you. Your quilt means so much more then I can ever say to me and the rest of the soldiers here, again thank you."

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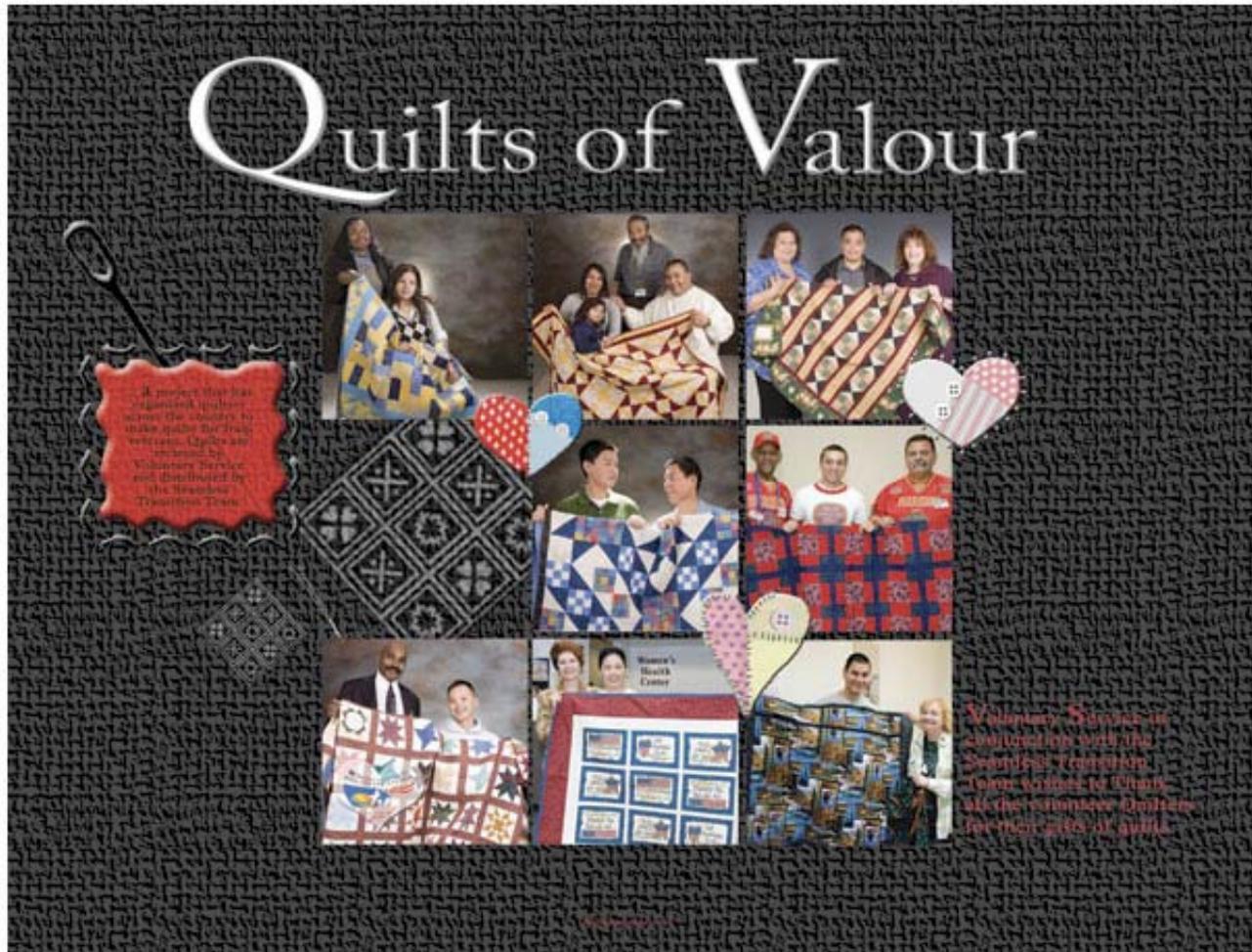
I emailed back and got this response.

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"Because of the circumstances that took place I am going to be shipped from Germany ICU to an ICU stateside where they can evaluate my current medical condition and see if I am still fit for duty, and from what I gather I am not, so I think that my military career will end very soon. It scares me because right now my fellow soldiers "my family..brothers, sisters so to say" are still over there and I want to go back and be with them too. We have all became so close through the time we spent over there it's like we are all that each other has. We live, eat, sleep, shower, and spend almost every minute of everyday together ...and now for me that's over! It's hard to come to that realization but somehow I

feel I am to blame, and that I did not complete my mission. When I think about it, it saddens me. But your kind words mean a lot to me right now..they bring tears to my eyes and warmth to my heart. Your support is priceless. Your intentions are derived from pure unconditional love each strand of the quilt means something. thank you."

Poster created by the Los Angeles VA Medical Center of their QOV Recipients.



News and Noteworthy

Last week when the nation heard that ABC news anchor Mr. Woodruff and his camera man, Mr. Vogel were injured in an IED incidence outside Baghdad, Americans were taken through the paces our wounded go through when they are medically evacuated to Landstuhl Germany and then on to the States. One group within the QOV family has focused their efforts on sending their QOVs to Landstuhl Medical Center. I will let Mary Lynn Slough tell their story.

“Since the summer of 2005, the Tidewater Quilt Guild (TQG), composed of members from Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Chesapeake, Virginia have been very involved in

making Quilts of Valor (QOV). The Tidewater area of Virginia has a long history as the world's largest naval base, as well as the home of several Air Force and Army installations. Contributing to QOV is TQG's way of showing its appreciation to those serving our country.

The lapsed quilts all have varied, colorful designs that primarily range from patriotic colors of red, white, and blue to some made of fabrics with golfing themes and lighthouses. Every quilt has a label that includes the Purple Heart emblem, an inscription thanking each soldier or Marine for their brave service, and the names and hometowns of the piecer and of the quilter.

Countless persons have donated time toward cutting fabric, assembly of kits, sewing time, gifts of fabric, batting, long-arm services and even completely made quilts to the QOV program. It is because of the QOV partnership program between piecers and long-arm quilters that the program has been so successful. QOV from Tidewater have been quilted by wonderful long-arm quilters living in Michigan (Ron Olson); Florida (Nancy Wines); North Carolina (Joy Danforth, Anita Beard, Alice Barnes, and Liza Burgess), Utah (Hazel McMullin and Melba Oviatt); and Virginia (Rosemary Skinner and Pat Stewart).

Periodically accumulated finished quilts are driven from Virginia Beach, to Terri Johnson's quilt shop, *Sew Special Studio* in Woodbridge, Virginia. Terri, an enthusiastic endorser of the QOV Program has been holding quilt making workshops at her shop for over a year. The daughter of friends of Terri's, Air Force Captain Kristen Keller (Nurse Corps), transports all the QOV to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center on the medical transport flights between Andrews AFB in Maryland and Ramstein AFB in Germany. Once the quilts arrive at Landstuhl hospital they are given to Colonel Ann Shull, senior nurse in the Intensive Care Unit. Through the combined effort of the hospital chaplains, Colonel Shull, and her nurses, the QOV are given to patients on the day they are flown back to Bethesda National Naval Medical Center, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, or Brooks Army Medical Center for further medical treatment and rehabilitation. Colonel Shull makes certain that every patient is covered with a quilt for the long, cold flight back to the United States. It's hard for us to imagine what comfort the gift of a quilt from "home" means to these brave young men and women.

As round about as the passing of QOV through this large circle of caring quilters and medical treatment personnel may seem, it really does work. As of this writing, the quilters of the Tidewater Quilt Guild have made 235 quilts to honor America's wounded heroes."

Article submitted by Mary Lynn Slough, TQG member.

Facelifts without surgery!

Our website will have a new look and new name in a very short time. The name 'Quilts for Soldiers' is a great one but when dealing with the military, each branch stands on their own and don't like being lumped together. Therefore in order to be INclusive and have a name that will be a better descriptor of who we are, the name of our group will change to the QOV Foundation with the following domain name www.qovf.org. (Don't worry about remembering all this. Both links will get you to the working website.) Our mission is still the same...covering all our wounded from the War on Terror and providing sewing and civic skills to our youth.

After the new redone site is up, I welcome your comments. It will be in its BETA version for awhile. With your critiques, suggestions, etc, we will work the inevitable bugs out. Therefore, when the new redone website is up and crawling along, I will email you so you can take a test drive and put it through its paces.

Works in Progress

QOVs-Of course! Your QOVs keep getting more and more [beautiful](#). The chaplains and service directors are absolutely floored by the quality. They can't believe you are sending these remarkable quilts and that they are "free".

One thing that doesn't change is this. You can never go wrong making a patriotic QOV. Remember there are more women than ever in this deployed army so keep them in mind. The QOV cases are a great hit and really do dress up the presentation besides being pragmatic.

Wartime QOVs and Their Maker's Book-If you feel your QOV is remarkable and want it included in my upcoming book on [Wartime Quilts of Valor and Their Makers](#), email me. This book will be a picture book along with **your journaling** about making a wartime quilt of valor. I am looking for QOVs that are representative of you and/or your group. You must have your journaling along with high quality pixs taken by a professional photographer. Why journals? Because I will only be compiling and editing the written information. YOU will be the author of your chapter. Professional photographer? Yep. Don't worry. This part is easy. Contact me.

QOV DVD- I will have a DVD you can purchase that will give you options on how to tell the QOV story depending on who your audience is. This DVD will consist of pictures of your QOVs, QOV-recipients and servicemembers in Iraq and Afghanistan. If you want your QOV in this DVD slide show, please email the pixs to me. The higher the resolution, the better. In preparation of the DVD, I have gone over 3,000 pixs. You will be astonished to see what you and your fellow

Americans are doing. You also will be glued to your screen seeing the reality of war and your wartime QOVs. The cost of the DVD will be minimal.

Podcast Show- I have been trying to get national attention re: our wounded and that door seems stuck closed at the moment. Therefore I am going have a weekly internet broadcast show (podcasting) focusing on our wounded servicemembers. Why am I doing this? So we can find our wounded, tell their stories and the stories of those who are involved with them. The format will be interviews. For example, one week I will interview a quilt-topper, another week, a longarmer, then a wounded servicemember, a chaplain, a veteran, etc. I am being helped and guided by Todd Cochrane. He has been in the Navy for over 21 years and lives in Hawaii with his wife and four children. He has written a book on podcasting and has had his own show with listeners world wide www.geeknewscentral.com. When I told him about our program, he said he wanted to give back and by helping me to get this show live, he could do it. I am right now collecting the hardware and software. After this, Todd is arranging for someone on the East coast to come to my house to help me set it up. After that, it'll be "mudd in your eye" with our podcast show. Check the website for broadcast updates.

Kids Projects compiled by Annie Bowersox

Please allow me to introduce Annie to you. She is in charge of the Kid's side of the QOV Foundation. She is very humble but don't let that fool you. She knows about kids and QOVs. Last year, her son's third grade class made a QOV that truly was outstanding in two aspects: the blocks and the journal that accompanied the QOV. Their QOV will hang in honor in the busiest corridor at Walter Reed Hospital as soon as its glass enclosure is fabricated and approved by 12 committees!

Here is her report.

[Kids and their mentors all over the country are busy doing their part for the QOV project.](#)

[Alycia XXXX is managing construction of 7 tops with the 5th graders at PV Elementary. The local news has filmed their progress. They hope to present the quilts to the VA hospital at Fort Carson.](#)

[Carol Cooley and the 7th-QOVs2th grade students of Great Hearts Preparatory Academies in Chandler, AZ are using a patriotic Better Homes and Garden pattern for their QOV.](#)

[Kathleen Redington Eyler and her kindergartners at xxxx are decorating muslin squares to be set with red and blue. They will embroider around the edges of the quilt with sentences that they will stitch with a parent volunteer. A parent is video taping and photographing the kids digitally for a "journal".](#)

[Girl Scout Courtney Crigger of is using the QOV project for her Girl Scout Gold project. Her plan for the project is to hold a quilting open house, near Fort Bragg, and invite anyone from 4-H](#)

groups, Girl Scout groups, home school groups, youth groups, teen groups from the base, and anyone else that will come. They will design their own fabric (coloring with crayons and ironing to make it permanent) that they can take home, and then they will sew some squares that Courtney will already have cut out. They can sew one or they can sew 20. Whatever they would like to do. They would then donate them to Courtney. The next step will be to go to the high school and middle school home ec classes in the area, explain the purpose and importance of the project, and "challenge" the girls to sew as many precut squares as they can in one class period, and donate them to Courtney. Courtney will then sew the squares into quilts.

Debbie Braezel and her third grade class in Union City, California have been working on a quilt for a wounded service member since the beginning of October, after reading about the QOV project in Fons and Porter magazine. The students completed patriotic paintings onto printer transfer paper. Debbie and her mother are constructing the front of the quilt with a combination of a star and Flying Geese pattern. The students have also signed the front of the quilt, and Debbie has embroidered their signatures. They are also making 2 scrapbooks to go along with the quilt - complete with pictures and children's writing documenting the process. They plan to keep one scrapbook in the class, and send the other with the quilt.

Margaret Tougher and her first grader students at Greenwood Elementary in XXXX have completed their quilt, including the backing, binding, quilting. Margaret and the kids were able to complete it while a student teacher was teaching the class.

Amy Grundmeyer, the Librarian for the North-Linn Community School in Troy Mills, IA reports that her middle school advisory is almost done with their quilt of valor, including the binding and the backing. The students have written a letter to the soldier who will receive the quilt, and a letter to Fons and Porter's Love of Quilting, where they saw the call for quilts. They've been taking pictures as they go. The project has been such a positive experience for the students. As the librarian, her sewing machine is set up in the library. High school boys have stopped and asked if they could help!

Lindsay Herzog, a senior Girl Scout, is working towards Her Gold Award. Since she really enjoys quilting the QOV project was a natural fit, after her mom read about the project in Quilter's Newsletter Magazine. She hopes to make 2 or 3 log-cabin quilts for the QOV Project.

Vera has dedicated several afternoons and indoor recess time to help her students complete a QOV. The 5 - 8 graders pieced together the squares, and Vera sewed them together to complete the quilt.

Wendy Bingham of Copper Lakes, TX, is working with a middle school homeschool group and her daughter's 9-QOVs0 year old class. She is also making a tri-fold brochure that describes the project, it's specifics, lists the web-site and includes a few pictures. Which she hopes to present to Home Economics teachers at the area middle and high schools.

Kathy McGillivray and her students at Westbrook Intermediate in Houston, TX are constructing a scrappy log-cabin quilt with flags as their centers. If the quilt is completed in time, they will enter in a local show to try to encourage others to join in the project.

Julie Lane and Paulann White are helping Chelsee Espino make a QOV for her senior project. It will be shown in March or April at the Sonora, CA Fairgrounds when student present their projects to families, friends and local people to see.

Longarming Report-June has paired up quilt-toppers with longarmers. I am hoping that those longarmers on the list who haven't volunteered in awhile, will.

QOV Pins for Sale



We still have QOV pins for sale. Contact Dee at Diana_yahoo.com for more information. Price includes s/h. \$6/pin 1 dozen-5% discount. 3 dozen-10% discount.

Stats-You will see a change in the format presenting casualty stats from the Iraq and Afghanistan. I am providing the link. The QOV stats will stay as they are.

In closing

I started with an email and will end with a phone call I had this week. A man called me introducing himself as a Viet Nam Vet, injured three times in one year, 1968. He wanted to buy a quilt. He spoke a little about his tour but basically said he was still too emotional to talk much about it. I listened intently and this is what I told him. I said later this year, it is my goal to open up the awarding of QOVs to ALL our wounded servicemembers. And, I promised him that one of the first ones dedicated to go to a Viet Nam vet would go to him. He thanked me profusely. And, I remembered one of the key motivators of why I started this project in the first place. I did not want ANY of our returning military to suffer what our VN vets had to go through. And, they aren't because your caring and doing.

Catherine Roberts
Founder Quilts for Soldiers/QOV Foundation