

Quilts of Valor Foundation

Quilting Honor and Comfort for Our Wounded

WAR WOUNDED AND FORESTS...

Catherine Roberts is the Founder and Director of the Quilts of Valor Foundation (QOVF).

FACT: Our War Wounded are all around us. Over 1.5 million men and women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan and many of them several times over. Okay, where are they? Do you recall the saying “Can’t see the forest for the trees”? This comes to my mind when I think of our War Wounded. Maybe by telling you where I find them, I can give you some ideas where you can look.

1. My Toyota Dealership. I took my car to get its oil change. As I was talking to the young man taking my car info, I noticed a 3 ring binder with a Marine Corps emblem pasted to the cover. One question led to another and I discovered that not only did this man qualify for a QOV, but there was another employee who just came back from Iraq.
2. Christmas Party. During the usual small talk at a Christmas party, I happened to ask if the person knew anyone deployed in Iraq. The woman replied yes. “A doctor, when he first went over, his emails were quite jovial, but by the end, his mood was very

different...more morose and somber.” I told her about our program. Another woman at the party had a son-in-law who was deployed in Iraq. He wasn’t “purple heart” wounded, but he and one other marine were the sole survivors from their squad. To me, this was a clear indication for a QOV for this young man.

3. Shopping Mall. I saw two marines and stopped to talk to them. I assessed that they were eligible for QOVs and offered to send them quilts.

Recommendations: Wherever you go, ask if any of the employees/relatives/friends have been deployed. Your local newspapers, high schools, VFWs, National Armories are all sources that may help. Call your nearest VA Medical Center and talk with someone in volunteer services. Another excellent source of information is the Family Readiness Center that each state has. When you find your warriors there is a high probability that they will know others.

If you are thinking that I am being “too liberal” in dispensing

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STATISTICS

Jan 9, 2008	Iraq	Afghanistan
Killed	3921	478
Wounded	58035	7795

Date	QOVs Awarded
Jan 9, 2008	14000

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

our wartime quilts, think again. Our mission statement says our goal is to cover ALL our war wounded with physical and/or psychological wounds. I wager 99% of our warriors who have been deployed do carry war wounds that debilitate and rob them of joy. This is a clear indication for a QOV. These Warriors need to be covered by our lovingly made and healing wartime quilts.

For those who still feel that this is too liberal an attitude, I invite you to learn more so you can make your own informed decision. One way to do so is to talk to primary sources. In

other words, those who have been deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I look forward to you finding and honoring your own locally wounded and seeing that they receive the recognition they merit. We would appreciate you sharing with us how you are finding your local war wounded.

Still at War, Still Quilting



Catherine Roberts

PHOTO JOURNAL: HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL QUILT FESTIVAL 2007

On opening day we were able to draw people to our booth by having a Marine Color Guard march down the red carpeted Main Street from aisle D to R.



As they marched down to our booth, the gathering crowd cleared the space in front of them, stood aside and applauded, then as they passed, the crowd closed ranks behind them and followed them to the booth.

Then Aaron Blake, a Juilliard graduate and masters student at Rice University's Sheppard School of Music at Rice University masterfully sang the national anthem, unadorned in his spell-binding tenor voice. The whole convention center came to a halt during this time.



Chaplain Goode, a retired Army chaplain who works at the VA in Houston gave the invocation.



Gail Belmont, a veteran and notable QOV longarmer awarding 2 QOVs to 2 Army purple heart recipients. One of the QOVs was made by Al who just started sewing and making qovs this year. He is 89 years old, a WWII who was also a POW. Talk about having one generation of warriors speaking to another!





We were able to pass out targeted professionally looking and designed postcards to piecers, machine quilters and donors thanks to the creative graphic arts talent of Connie Jenson. BTW, these cards will be available to you at just a little above our cost plus shipping.

We also had our newly designed QOV lapel pins and magnets which were by another QOV talented graphic artist, Ruth Wasmuth. These will be available soon in our shop.



I could not have asked for a better manager than Evelyn Garland. She ran the booth like a beloved marine drill sergeant and it showed. I am very grateful for all our booth volunteers who worked until they were about hoarse from talking. We also were able to have one of the two Opportunity Quilts, the Rose of Sharon at the booth.



QUALITY QOVs

A Quilt of Valor is a war time quilt made to honor and thank our wounded warriors. These quilts are made from our hearts with the skill of our hands.

There is a wealth of information on our website about size, patterns, fabrics, and the newest website should have all that even more accessible. Unfortunately a few have either missed the information or forgotten it. Please don't sacrifice quality in pursuit of quantity.

Please use good quality fabric that is 100% cotton and quilting weight. You should not be able to read the paper through it, nor should it be poplin, canvas, denim, corduroy, upholstery or other heavier weight fabric.

Take time to do your best work. I don't believe in the quilt police, but I do believe it is very important to make sure my seams are sewn, that I press carefully, and apply borders that are made to fit. Basic quilting instructions can be found in most quilting books and magazines or online at places like <http://quilting.about.com/> and Marica Hohn's wonderful Quilters Cache: <http://www.quilterscache.com/QuiltBlocksGalore.html>

We are using our best work and quality of materials as a gift of caring given to our wounded warriors. I have seen the tears and warmth with which they are received. These young men and women have given their limbs, their sight, hearing and peace of mind in service to our country. Surely they deserve more than our cast offs.

NOTES FROM THE JOURNAL GURU

The idea for this month's column comes from Barbara Jack who shared this idea of "writing a letter to a friend" as a tool that has worked for

her. The following is an excerpt from Barbara's letter.

"Hi, Well, I guess the journal was the hardest part of preparing a QOV, but I hit upon a formula that helps me. I make it in the form of a letter to a friend.

I begin by mentioning why I am sewing this pattern (a mystery from the yahoo club, a wonderful fabric I had to use, or my own favorite pattern.) I add a photo sometimes of the pile of loose fabric and always one of the quilt top on my sewing machine. I just stop while constructing the quilt and take a photo. I talk about why I do this and how I think of the person who will one day hold the quilt and pray while I sew for my seams to be straight and the recipient to be able to stand straight even if it is from a wheel chair ...(they know what I mean!)

I tell about my husband's cancer scare and how we promised to find something to laugh about each day no matter what. I share with them that this not always easy. I include a photo of my husband and son fishing or hunting depending on the season, and how we have a very different diet than "normal" people because of their hobby. I put other things in the letter that I think they may laugh at or something to take their minds off what is going on for them for a few seconds. I end with my prayer for them to find happiness and safety from this day forward.

I include a photo of me sewing so they can see the "old" lady who cares for them from afar.

Once I got started, it really wasn't all that hard to write a letter to a friend. Each letter is similar, but always has something specific pertaining to their quilt so they do not feel like they are getting a "form letter."

I hope this helps."

I hope that others of you in the QOV family will share your journaling ideas by sending them to Susan C. Slaninka at scsvu@juno.com.

QUOTABLE

The following is an excerpt from an email sent from J. Jan Thomas in Golden, Colorado www.rmqm.org

I'm a volunteer with the Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum in Golden, CO. We currently have an exhibit in gallery 1 on quilts made by men. One of those was made by a 6 year old boy for Quilts of Valor.

The museum has placed a journal by the quilt so members and visitors can sign and write messages to the soldier who will receive it. Tomorrow at 5:00 MT Colby will be at the museum for a press interview. I have created a fact sheet with the Foundation web page and your e-mail address in case there are questions for you. I'm so touched by this child's generosity that I wanted you to know what he did on behalf of your amazing creation.

In Colby's words, "I made this to give to an injured soldier for the Quilts of Valor program...I made it sitting on my mom's lap. My favorite thing was pushing the fabric thru...I put it in the Weld Co. Fair and won a blue ribbon...I did it myself ...I like being a quilter because you can make designs, mix colors up and I get to play with machines."

QOV RAFFLE TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE

You can still get/sell tickets for our two beautiful opportunity quilts. They will be raffled off in April at MQX. Both of these quilts are spectacular and not your average raffle quilt. Linda McCuen machine quilted Rose of Sharon and our own Marcia Stevens did Winding Ways. Please click on the following link to find out more:

[QOV Opportunity Quilt Details](#)

QOV STORE

Please visit the QOVF store <http://www.qovf.org/shop/products>. Magnets are available! Advertise for QOV while you drive. **We also have QOV Wartime Grocery Bags - a great way to help the environment while supporting the Quilts of Valor Foundation, but we are down to our last bags!! After they are gone, that's it. Get them while they last!!** There are also two DVDs available (they're great to take with you to shows and fundraising events). And don't forget about the QOV Lapel Pin - stylish and affordable. We here at the QOV Foundation appreciate your patronage and continued support. If you have an idea for new QOVF merchandise let us know, we love hearing from you!

VOLUNTEER STAFF

CATHERINE - Founder/Director of the QOV Foundation. cath@qovf.org

JUNE - Longarm Coordinator. june@qovf.org

KATY- Coordinator of Local/Regional WOVF groups. katy@qovf.org

MICHELE - Newsletter Editor. michele@qovf.org

DONNA - Handles the books & answers tax donation questions. donna@qovf.org

LEZLEY - Coordinates QOVF efforts in Canada. lezley@qovf.org

ERIC - In charge of raffle numbers for QOVs sent between April 2007 & April 2008. ej@qovf.org

Please Feel Free to Contact Your Volunteer Staff With Your Questions/Comments/Concerns

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 \$900,000 dollars in 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.