



QOV FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Quilting Honor & Comfort For Our Wounded



March To Excellence

by: Catherine Roberts
Executive Director/Founder

Quality assurance is something that has been a concern from day one. So that is why Gammill and Hobb's sponsorship with Quilts of Valor is such good news! Marcia Stevens, a pioneer in the machine quilting industry, has been with Quilts of Valor since '06. She and many others in the Minnesota region have created their whole system of making, dropping off and placing the quilts with their locally wounded warriors. Marcia was curious to see if there was a desire for Hobb's 80/20 batting manufactured specifically for Quilts of Valor size. There was.

Now, enter Gammill Machine Quilting. Gammill has always been very generous loaning their machines for the MQX and MQS shows at our QOV booth. Discussions were held to see if they would sponsor the shipping of this batting nationwide. They were happy to partner with Hobbs and QOV. The end result is we have a large number of machine quilters with fantastic batting at a fantastic price.

And, what this translates into is this. Our Quilts of Valor will last for generations to come.

Another subject related to excellence is our collection of quotables. They are the jewels which continue to enrich and inspire us. I hope you take time to read, copy, and share them.

I want to thank everyone of you who has contributed to the making of a wartime quilt. I know that many hands make one quilt. I love the stories of hearing how a

group of older ladies will sit with the quilts and lovingly put the binding on. Others sew presentation cases.

Still at war; still quilting.

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

PS: We have just completed our second move in less than a year. We keep down-sizing although the moving men didn't see any evidence of it. Our new abode comes with 2 Llamas - Cash and Liberty. I get to play grandma to them as the landlord is the official caretaker.



New Partnership Logo

QOVF Community News

Here is news from around the country about your fellow QOV'ers. Their stories inspire and motivate. If you want to show up here, email newsletter@QOVF.org.

COLEMAN, WISCONSIN KIDS MAKE QOV'S

Last year, around Veteran's Day, my husband, who is a Vietnam Veteran, was asked to come to the school where my granddaughter is a 3rd grader, to speak to the students in her grade about his experiences in the war while they were studying about Veteran's Day.

He gave his talk about what it was like when he was in the war, then he asked them if they knew anyone who was fighting in the war now in Afghanistan or Iraq. We were quite surprised to see about 80% of the kids raise their hands. Then he asked them if they had any questions. Their questions flowed mightily, as well as comments from the kids, and we were amazed at the perception these 8 and 9 year old kids have about what it's like to be a soldier and the sacrifices they make. The question and answer time went on longer than expected so my part of the scheduled time was cut short.

I got the idea to have the kids each make a quilt block so we could make a quilt from them for a wounded warrior. I ironed freezer paper to the back of muslin and each student (96 of them) got a block to color on with their crayons. They were encouraged to write some kind of a message of thanks on the blocks. We didn't have enough time that day for the kids to color their blocks so I left them at the school so they could finish them when they had time.



We had enough blocks for 2 quilts so when I got the blocks back right before Christmas vacation, I got busy sewing sashing between the blocks and adding borders. I did a simple stitch in the ditch to quilt between the blocks. I was so pleased at the job these kids did! They had some wonderful pictures as well as many *Thank You* messages on the blocks.

When the quilts were done, I took them back to the school to show the kids and teachers how the quilts turned out. Everyone was so pleased. The kids were really proud of their work as well as the teachers and I told them how proud of them I was, too, because they really did do a great job.

Besides making the quilts, the teachers incorporated some letter writing lessons into the project, too, and many of the kids wrote letters to the soldiers and they will go along with the quilt as well as pictures of one of the classes with the quilts.

Before I got the quilts sent out, there was an awards ceremony at the school for some of the kids to receive "Good Citizenship Awards", and at the end of the program, the teacher who I have been working with and I, held up the quilts for the parents to see. We told them about the QOV organization and their kids participation.

The response was overwhelming. We got a big round of applause, and the parents were very pleased to hear what their kids had been doing--they were proud of their efforts. Many came up to me afterwards and personally thanked me for making the quilts and supporting our troops and getting the kids involved.

There has been enough interest generated in this project because of the kids involvement that the Parent Teacher Organization has said they will donate money for making some quilts.

I've been invited back to the school to make more quilts, and this time we are taking things a bit farther. The 4th graders will be making blocks, too, so we should have enough for 4 more quilts when they are done. The best part is that I am going to be teaching the kids how to make a quilt from start to finish.

I'm taking my sewing machine and supplies into the classroom and the kids are going to actively participate in the quilt making process. They should have more blocks colored when I get to the school this week, and I have fabric all marked for them to start cutting for sashing. Those who wish to can even get a crash course in using the sewing machine and try to sew some sashing onto blocks. This is going to be an ongoing weekly project until the quilts are done. I'm so very pleased and honored to not only be making QOVs for our wounded warriors, but also for the opportunity to be teaching kids to learn to make quilts, and learn compassion for others as well as teaching them about community involvement.

Sincerely,

Barbara Wilmot

Coleman, Wisconsin

QUILTS PRESENTED TO LOCAL GUARD UNIT

I had an idea to present quilts to every member of our local guard unit. They have been deployed to Iraq in the past, but not everyone in the unit is from that time--they have new members. I didn't want to exclude anyone as I think they all need some appreciation shown to them for the job they do regardless of where they do it.

I have been heading up the quilt making effort for my guild and I knew another lady that had gotten together a bunch of quilters here in Flandreau and made some quilts. I

knew between the two of us we could have enough quilts.

I contacted the local Commander and we set everything up for their monthly meeting. The commander came for the ceremony--he actually read the name of each person as they came up and were presented with a quilt. When we were all done, we also presented the Commander with a quilt. The members were very touched and, I think, surprised that we would do this for them. I was struck by how young so many of them looked--you tend to forget just how young they are. One man came up afterwards and said that he had been wounded in Iraq and had received a quilt when he was in the hospital in Germany. For me, it reinforced why I am making these quilts. Everybody that makes the quilts should get to present them sometime and it would renew their commitment to making the quilts.

Janet Myers

QUILTS PRESENTED TO ARMY FIRST SERGEANT AT BALBOA HOSPITAL

Mary Whittaker



QOV QUILTERS OF ELMWOOD HALL, DANBURY, CT, HELP SENIORS STAY INVOLVED

I am Senior Center Coordinator at Elmwood Hall/Danbury Senior Center here in western Connecticut, entering my 30th year on the job. I have run a quilt group here since the early 1980's. We have always made charity quilts for the various community organizations, for the Veterans Homes and raffle quilts with the proceeds to support our senior center. When I learned about the QOV project from long-time friends, Cindy Lewis and Jane Dogherty, I brought the idea back to my group. We jumped in wholeheartedly and haven't stopped. Working at the senior center or at home, our members have made over 30 quilts and have at least a half dozen, at any given time, in various stages of readiness for the longarmer. All of our fabric is donated and our fundraising group, *The Prime Timers, Cin., Friends of Danbury Seniors*, buys our large rolls of batting for the non-QOVs.

Our community is involved in several ways as well. Area assisted living centers and other senior citizen communities write letters of thanks and encouragement for our QOVs. Many have lived through a war-time era and know the feelings of these new servicepeople. A QOV was made by a local Girl Scout troop for the Bronze Badge. They actually made three QOVs! A middle School young man and his friends sold brownies and cupcakes to raise money for veterans. While deciding how to use the \$150.00 they raised, they saw the article in our local paper about our QOV project. After contacting me, they bought enough fabric for at least three quilts and gave the balance of the money for other related expenses. The first quilt from that fabric was presented for viewing at our 2008 Veteran's Honoring Celebration. This community involvement is so very special.

We have made two quilts where the white space is used for signatures. People of all ages are so proud to sign these. These quilts were each introduced at our two Veterans Honoring Celebrations in November of 2007 and 2008.

These are the first two QOVs created by individuals in our group. The first quilt was created by Sibbie Beresin. I found a picture of a similar quilt in a book and Sibbie made a pattern to fit our needs. The blue panel



with the large white stars was a remnant that arrived in a donation just in time to be used here. Our stash of reds made up the bow ties while a lightly patterned white stabilizes the variety. Sibbie has made several other QOVs since this one. She has been quilting for many years.

Mary Miller has made many quilts and took on the challenge of making this Log Cabin quilt in the speed piecing method. The inspiration for this quilt was a small scrap of red fabric with white eagles in the print. I was able to center an eagle in nearly every square and there was just enough to use here. Mary chose the other fabrics and the placement of the log cabin squares.



These two QOVs were longarm quilted by Norma J. Riehm in Hayward, WI. She sent them back to us for finishing. Actually we wanted to see the stitching pattern before we sent it off to the injured one--very lovely

work!! Both these quilts were sent to Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland.

We are proud to continue making QOVs. We do a specific workshop one day a month. The longstanding group meets every Monday morning from 9 am - 12 noon. Several QOVs have come from this group also. We love the creativity of making these quilts and send our love and prayers with each one.

We are thankful to Catherine for starting this process and to everyone who supports it!!

Regards,

Frances C. Hendrickson

Senior Center Coordinator
Elmwood Hall/Danbury Senior Center

ARTICLE IN LOCAL PAPER INITIATES PRESENTATION OF QOV TO WOUNDED SOLDIER

In June I read in our local paper in Kewanee, IL about a soldier serving in Afghanistan whose Humvee was hit by a IED. He was ejected with a broken leg but crawled back to the vehicle and pulled out the driver.

I asked Catherine if I could give him a quilt I had made and she said it was great that I was finding locally wounded and that to her, it's the best way. So, after re-reading the newspaper (it was a couple weeks old), I tracked him down. Much to my surprise, he answered the phone.

He was very surprised to be talking to a strange woman who wanted to give him a quilt. I assured him how proud I was of him and he allowed me to come the next day to present it to him. I took my granddaughter along to take the photos. He had his mom and girlfriend there to witness the presentation.

My heart sang with happiness all that day because I was able to do this for him!

Now, we are waiting for another boy to come home so we can give him his quilt. He

is due in a couple of weeks and this time the longarmer, Debbie Spencer, will go with me to do the presentation. Debbie has quilted six of my QOV tops so far and says it gives her great pleasure to find just the right design to go with each of the quilts to honor our wounded.

Our local quilt guild did patriotic blocks for the block of the month and presented eighty-six 12 1/2" blocks to me. I have completed five tops so far and two more to go. It is one of the finished ones that we will be giving away this time. We are going to hang the finished tops in our quilt show in May and the local newspaper is interested in doing a feature on them. I gave a talk recently on QOVs and we agreed that our efforts mirror the quilts made during the Civil War.

Well, I'd better get back to my sewing machine -- the rest of the blocks are calling to me.

Melanie Rupp

FEBRUARY IN QOV-LAND

by: Katy

Last month was our first month at our new location at Scholfield Honda East. And it worked beautifully! While most of the attendees were hard at work finishing up tops and making bindings, Cass was in the back hallway organizing all of the QOV supplies into the cabinets Scholfield has provided for that purpose. Thank you Cass! I know that was a chore and a half! Because we now have everything in the one location and organized by cut of fabric, we will have an easier time with this month's project.

Our Bee this month will be held next Saturday the 14th. The shin-dig starts at 9 am and goes until about 3 or 4 in the afternoon. We have the facility until 4 pm so we can stay that long if need be. We just need to be cleaned up and out by then.

This month we still have a stack of quilts that are needing machine quilting. If you are a longarmer and can pick some up, that would be fantastic. Ft. Riley is needing more QOVs. Bring your rotary cutting supplies this month. We are going to start working our way through our stash and assembling kits. We also have a stack of yard cuts that need made up into pillowcases if someone wants to take that project on. And we should have a couple quilts coming back from our machine quilters that will need binding and labels.

We hope you can join us this month at the Bee. We are going to have the American Legion Riders dropping in on us at 1 pm, along with the family of Greg "E-bay" Hanson, co-founder of the Patriot Guard. As many of you know, E-bay passed away last month, right before Christmas. He was a major supporter of QOV and was working on a massive fundraiser for us at the time of his death. In keeping with that, the family established a memorial in his name to benefit QOV. E-bay's family is bringing us that donation tomorrow and is accompanied by the Legion Riders of Post 406 (and I think a couple other posts) bring us the donations they have collected for QOV as well. Please join us in giving the Legion Riders a huge thank you for the support they have shown us over the years.

I am going to close with a message I received this week from Chaplain Manley at Ft. Riley:

As of this morning, I got the last of our 17 December nominations awarded. Of the 12 nominations for January 09, we have awarded 8.

They are all very appreciative, and hopefully most will write and tell you so themselves. In helping both the awardees, and the squad leaders who have recommended them, to understand my methodology in the care I take in storing and awarding these quilts, I have recently been sharing something I've learned by looking in a quilt shop in Leavenworth where I live. I found out that most of the quilts in the store that compare roughly with the size and complexity of the quilts

being awarded run from \$350 to \$500. About 10 years ago, my wife ordered a quilt from a co-worker who made them as a hobby, and the cost then for a similar size and quality of quilt was \$200.

Beyond pointing out the intrinsic worth, I also point out to those rare qualified soldiers who want to decline a quilt saying to their squad leader, "Give it to some younger (or more worthy) person", that their spouses, or their parents, or their descendants might not agree with their attempt at a noble gesture.

But whether the quilt is valued as an art form or as a precious family heirloom, I highlight the profound grace of you ladies who go to such lengths to make strangers in uniform feel your grateful devotion to them. I have two more years here at the WTB, unless offered the job again, and will continue to keep your trust in receiving, securing, and awarding these quilts to the right folks.

God's blessings upon you and those who share your ministry with our wounded warriors at Ft. Riley.

AN UNCONVENTIONAL POC

Last spring, I became an unconventional POC for Quilts of Valor. I saw a need, and jumped in with both feet! I remember clearly the day that fifteen quilts arrived from Connecticut. As my husband and I looked at each gorgeous quilt, we began to tear. We saw something in your giving that we'd forgotten ourselves, how American treats her heroes. You see, my husband had just returned from a tour overseas, and we knew he'd be preparing for another in a few months. *It's our new normal.* But, when you're "in the trenches" sometimes it's hard to see that you have so much backup! We're in a time in our lives where we are holding fast to what we know is true and right, and just like all of you, we pray that the war will be won soon.

On that day, and each one since, I've been truly blessed by the quilters in QOV, it's mission, and the soldiers to whom we are giving. QOVF is bringing hope to our soldiers, their families, and to our community as a whole. When other soldiers find out about QOVF, they are so very touched by it. Many people in our circle of friends aren't receiving quilts, mostly because we live in a town of 48k soldiers and growing, but they are touched by what's being done by total strangers for their wounded.

Please remember that you aren't touching one soldier when you create a QOV. You're touching everyone who hears about this program, everyone he tells about your gift, and all of us who know the magnitude of your appreciation. Because we live in a town of heroes, sometimes their sacrifices go unpraised.

It's so wonderful to be a part of thanking these men and women. On one occasion when I awarded, my husband told me something I value highly. When we go in and give these soldiers quilts, we become their heroes; we make their day. It means the world to me to be able to give to these men and women who have given so much to me!

Thank you for what you all are doing. It has brought much hope and joy to me and my family, but more importantly to our wounded here at Fort Bragg.

Stacy



**GOLD COAST QUILTERS GUILD
SUPPORTING QUILTS OF VALOR**

After hearing Carla Millares (QOV Coordinator for Broward County, FL) speak about the Quilts of Valor program at our guild meeting in 2008, it was decided that the Gold Coast Quilters Guild of Boca Raton, FL would support the QOV program by encouraging the members to make quilts for our wounded vets. Our guild decided that we would distribute our quilts here in south Florida. We launched the program in January

2008 and started receiving completed quilts in February. We have several longarm quilters in the guild who have volunteered their services. Sue Glasnapp and Jane Gavlick



have been co-chairmen of the QOV committee. In 2008, our members had made 148 quilts. Sue and Jane led 3 workshops in 2008 and one in January 2009. We are going strong in 2009!

We have delivered QOVs to the VA center in



West Palm Beach, to the VA Hospital in Miami and its Outpatient

Clinic in Oakland Park. These facilities do not treat many of the physically wounded soldiers, but they do have treatment programs for the psychologically wounded.

Our last distribution was during the Soldier Ride National Tour, called the Sunshine State Challenge, which was from Miami to Key West in January.



(You can find out more about this program at <http://sr.woundedwarriorproject.org>). This was the 4th one at the Miami VA Hospital, outside on the patio. The soldiers arrived with police escort as well as an entourage of

family and supporters and volunteer bicyclists. Our own quilter/photographer took pictures. We will be showing a 5 minutes slide presentation at our next guild meeting.

Webster defines valor as the strength of mind or spirit that enables one to encounter danger with firmness; personal bravery; heroism. The soldiers who were honored at the VA Welcome Home ceremony in Miami on January 15th epitomize the meaning of valor. All of the Wounded Warriors who were there that day are shining examples of men and women who have experienced physical and psychological trauma while serving their country and have overcome obstacles with much courage. We wish all of our members could have been there to welcome home and thank these outstanding veterans. Their smiles and hugs as they received their Quilts of Valor told us that the work we do in making these special quilts is much appreciated by the recipients. Many marveled at the beauty of each quilt and the excellent workmanship in each one.

Sue and Jane

News from Downrange

by: *Karen* (Karen@QOVF.org)

As you know, our nephew enlisted in the Marine Corps some ten years ago. When he enlisted we were unaware that our entire family enlisted as well. The Marine Corps sucks you in and it is so true, "once a Marine Family, always a Marine Family". As the years go by, Marine families come to know their Marine's buddies and they too become, in our case, nephews. So many Marine parents tell me that their Marine parents tell me that their Marine's buddies are also their sons. Those whose Marine lost his life in Iraq or Afghanistan tell me that their son's buddies are still their sons and they long for their presence in their lives.

Marines would be nowhere without the United States Navy. (I can hear Marines grumbling out there.) But it's true, the Marine Corps is part of the US Navy. The US Navy provides the transportation for many Marine missions. The US Navy supplies Navy chaplains to serve with every Marine unit, every infantry battalion. Navy corpsmen (medics) train with Marines. They learn and do everything a Marine learns and does. They go into battle with their Marine platoon and every one of those corpsmen is called "Doc". Countless Marines are alive today because that corpsman in the field, that Navy doctor at the Battalion Aid Station, that Navy nurse on the transport plane kept them alive. These Sailors are part of our Marine families as well and indeed we as Marine families are most grateful to them for their presence in our Marines' lives.

Countless Marines have found or strengthened their faith because they listened to their Navy Chaplain, because they followed his example, because that Navy Chaplain stood next to them in battle. And right next to that Navy Chaplain is a Religious Program Specialist. The Navy describes the RP this way: *Religious program specialists provide support to Navy chaplains in developing programs to meet the needs of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel and their families. RPs perform functions that do not require ordination and do no pastoral counseling.* And the RP carries a weapon -- Chaplains do not carry a weapon. The RP is entrusted with protecting the Chaplain's life.

Our family has been blessed to come to know Chaplain Denis Cox who served with our nephew's battalion, the 1/8, during their 2003 and 2004 deployments to Iraq. He and his family are part of the 1/8 family and he is part of every family whose Marine or Sailor served with him. His presence in all of our lives is a gift, a treasure. I could not continue to do whatever it is we do for our Marines and Sailors if Chaplain and Mrs. Cox did not continue to encourage me, with just the right words, exactly when I need to hear them. Chaplain Cox has given me permission to share with all of you the letter he wrote to Laurie of QOV. (Chaplain Cox and his family are currently based in Japan.)

Laurie,

Thank you so much for the wonderful quilt. I am overwhelmed at your generosity and love for me. My command had a special formation and presented it to me and I was overwhelmed and truly surprised at your act of generosity. I realized that you sent it a while ago but they just recently gave it to me. Our command has a very high operations tempo so it was one of the few times to get together and make the presentation.



Taken January 2005 at the 1/8 homecoming, Camp Lejeune, NC. Chaplain Cox is pictured with our sister-in-law Ann, the Marine Mom in our family. Marine Moms: The hardest Job in the Corps!

I can tell you that my time of ministry with 1st Battalion 8th Marines was the absolute greatest honor I have ever had as a pastor. To be their chaplain was the highlight of my ministry, ever. To be present when a warrior enters eternity is more than I can describe. To lead men to Jesus before combat and during combat has changed my life forever. Your quilt captured some of what happened to me and will always remind me of God's grace during great conflict and chaos. To be present with these men showed them that God has not nor will He ever leave them or forsake them. Once again, your quilt will remind me of my time when God's grace was great and free to His chosen warriors.

A passage that helped me deal with the issue of combat was in Romans 13:4 where Paul tells us that "Marines are God's servants to do us good. But if we do wrong, be afraid, for the Marine does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." Now, I've taken some liberty

with what Paul said but it's the essence of what he is talking about in that passage. And once again, your quilt puts the two together. That God is a God of peace, but when necessary, He takes care of business. The quilt show that God carries the olive branch in one hand which represents peace; and in the other hand he carries the sword (nothing says diplomacy quite like an aircraft carrier) which represents strength. Nothing puts those two ideas together more than the cross. The cross is an implement of torture and pain and death, but through that death we have life and life everlasting.

Once again, thank you! I will always cherish this quilt. I'm sometimes torn between using it for warmth and using it for display. But I will always, always, look at it with a sense of gratitude and appreciation for what God has done. I remain,

Yours in Him,
Denis Cox

Notes from the Journal Guru

Connecting the threads from quilters to quilt recipients.

By: *Susan C. Slavinika* (scsvu@juno.com)

"I can barely find time to work on my QOV, now you want me to write a journal too!"

I am very aware of how busy lives are in today's world and so I definitely understand that finding time to do one more thing seems overwhelming. Let me say that these journals don't need to be lengthy stories...a comment or two each time that you work on the quilt will certainly do it. Another option is to have a common blueprint for all of your quilt journals and then you can simply go in to the original word document to individualize it a bit for that quilt.

"I'm not a very good writer; this journal thing is just too difficult for me."

You don't have to be a good writer to share from the heart to the military person who will be receiving the quilt. Just view this journal like you would a letter that you might write to a friend. No need to have it in a form that you would feel you could publish...just sharing a bit about you is more than enough.

"I can't imagine the person I am quilting for wants to read about my life."

There is NO QUESTION that the recipient is thrilled to receive a journal that shares a bit about the quilter's life. It helps them so much to know that there is a real person behind this wonderful process and they are anxious to know more about you. Our recipients tell us time and time again how important this was to them.

"Each of our quilts is worked on by an entire group; who should we get to write the journal?"

This is a great question and I'm sure there are many solutions to this one. Maybe your group could take turns being responsible for the journal, or maybe you could keep the journal handy on the nights you are working on the quilts and when you stop for a break, you could write a little something in the entry.

ANY OTHER IDEAS?

I'm sure that our readers have other ideas that they can share with us about the Quilt of Valor Journal. Please feel free to email me at scsvu@juno.com and who knows, your idea might show up in the next newsletter!

Mystery Sleuths

There are many ways to participate in the QOV mission. Our main objective is to cover our wounded. Sometimes finding fresh ideas for a quilt can be a challenge. I skulk around books, magazines and

online. That is how I found <http://www.Persimmonquilts.com>. I noticed the link for a signature block drive on the QOVfchat on Yahoo. There were several designs so I printed them off, assembled some blocks, signed them and mailed them off. There were also some clues to a mystery quilt....hummmm that looked interesting! So once again the printer was whirring and out came the clues to a QOV mystery quilt. The



instructions were concise and easy to follow. The quilt that came

from the clues was fabulous. I was so



pleased with the outcome I sent a picture off to the designer Le Ann Weaver. Well we got to chatting via e-mail and an Internet friendship evolved.

Then the fun started. Le Ann asked if I would be interested in being a tester, a "mystery sleuth" so to speak, for the QOV mystery patterns she was creating. I am a pretty fast piecer; I am willing to do about anything to help get volunteers involved in making QOVs and am always game for a challenge. So I agreed.

I did my first test and it went along just great. The hard part was not blabbing information to my best buddy Debby. We work together organizing our local QOV group here in Wenatchee, Washington and are in constant contact sharing information and inspiration. We have been friends for over 20 years, I felt like I was keeping secrets from my soul mate LOL...So I asked her if she would be interested in testing as well. Of course she was. We can't seem to do anything without the other...some say we share

a brain...not a very good brain I might add. LOL

Anyway, we have been testing ever since. It is fun, a bit of a challenge sometimes, and we have learned all we have ever wanted to know about half square triangles! And a couple of the "mistakes" we have found have made their way into the quilts final instructions. Debby says "this is just another way one of us has led the other into trouble with fabric!" We do seem to get into lots of adventures together, and most of them include fabric and quilting.

We have used a couple of the mystery quilts for local QOV presentations. They have been very well received. One quilt we presented at a Veteran's Day assembly to a Grandfather of one of the students at a local school.



It was really touching to hear the Grandson express such pride in his Grandpa (a Vietnam Veteran) and to know the Grandfather will treasure his quilt until it is time to pass it down to his Grandson. The other mystery quilt we presented was to a young couple



renewing their wedding vows as part of a radio promotion. They both served in the National Guard and the young husband had

been deployed over 30 months of their 5 year marriage and is still active duty. A QOV seemed like a small reward for such personal sacrifice.

I hope you will join us in the fun and check out the QOV mysteries at Persimmon Quilts. The link is listed under mystery quilts on the QOV website.

*Lori Kutch &
Debby Phillips*

NCW Quilts of
Valor
Wenatchee, WA



CURRENT MYSTERIES

QOV Mysteries by Le Ann Weaver of Persimmon Quilts

Mystery #6 began March 7th. It is a 6 week, 6 clue mystery that is strip friendly and perfect for all skill levels. For more info, go to <http://www.persimmonquilts.com>.

Check out LeAnn's website for her previous mysteries, too. All her mysteries will be available for at least a year, so you can jump in at any time and complete a top on your schedule!

QOV Mystery at QOVquiltmystery Yahoo Group

Mystery #18 began March 20th with posting of the Fabric Requirements. This Mystery is being provided by "Bev", a member of the Yahoo group. Clues are posted on Fridays until the mystery has been solved.

Nancy Miller has provided most of the mysteries through this group and they have been wonderful.

If you're looking for a new pattern to make a QOV, check out the above mysteries. They are a lot of fun and make wonderful quilts!

What QOV Means to Kids

By: *Alycia C.*

(AlyciaC@quiltygirl.com)

My name is Alycia and I work with the 5th grade at Platte Valley Elementary in Kersey, CO. I told the kids that you were looking for submissions for your newsletter and gave them a chance to write anything they liked. Some of them have begun turning in their essays and I would like to share them with you.

From Kim R:

My fifth grade class is working on quilting for the Quilts of Valor project. I love sewing and I enjoy helping others, and this project is a wonderful way for me to do both of these tasks. Quilts of Valor is a tremendous way to show respect to all the soldiers that went to war for us and got injured. How it works is we are sewing quilts in honor of the soldiers at Fort Carson right here in Colorado. We hope to get up to at least four hundred quilts. So far we have received a great response of three hundred and fifty-two quilts. These quilts have come from all over the United States including a few from Canada. Then, about ten fifth graders will be allowed to go to Fort Carson to present the quilts to the wounded soldiers. Everyone in the fifth grade really loves helping with all the cutting, designing, and sewing of quilts.

From Lauren H:

Quilts of Valor is sending quilts to injured soldiers. This has changed some things about me. Such as, I think and see life differently now. I see things more positively now. When I heard that we were going to do this project, I said there is no way I can make a quilt, it is way to hard. Now I know I can do it. Some other things are I though it would be crazy staying inside during recess and giving up some parties for this, but it is worth it. I really love quilting now. It is very exciting. I wonder what the quilt I was making would look like in the end. Every week we received some new quilts and hung them in the classrooms. Then they would be packaged up and ready to go to Ft. Carson. Our

goal is to have 400 quilts. We are very close. I thought to myself, I wonder if the quilt I am working on will be as beautiful as the ones from many states. Well those are some of the ways Quilts of Valor has changed me.

From Derek W:

What an incredible feeling! The Quilts of Valor project has made me a more caring person. When you think of those wounded soldiers in Fort Carson, or all over the United States, it brings out love in your heart. The project has also made me a more patient person. Making these beautiful quilts makes me very patient. The last thing the Quilts of Valor project has taught me is to respect what all of the American soldiers have done or sacrificed for our wonderful country. Care, love, and respect are some of the traits that the Quilts of Valor project has brought out in me. I feel honored to make these quilts for our soldiers.

From Bryce F:

Quilts of Valor means hope and joy to me. I am a fifth grader at Platte Valley Elementary in Kersey, CO. We are creating quilts for wounded soldiers that we will soon bring to Fort Carson. Our school is trying to encourage others to make Quilts of Valor too. So please make a quilt for a soldier. It means a lot to the Wounded soldiers who have nothing.

From Matthew H:

Making a quilt for the soldiers has been a lot of fun. It has been fun because I know the quilts are going for a good cause. We have been doing this as a class project. I have learned a lot about making quilts. Like how to sew the patterns and seams together. It takes us some time to do the sewing, but the more we do the easier it seems to get. We are trying to complete 400 quilts. We have a bar graph and a percentage graph that shows how many each state has done as well. The quilts are going to soldiers that have been injured and have risked their lives for all of us. It has been fun doing this project. Think this is why I enjoy helping out.

"Quotables"

"Jewels of Inspiration" - Allow the intent of the speaker to enter your heart. You cannot help know that our wartime quilts of valor heal some of the wounds of war.

FROM NANCY ROGERS OF MASSACHUSETTS AND CAROL HALL OF FLORIDA

Nancy and Carol worked together to make two very special QOVs that were awarded to two Vietnam veterans. The following is an email received from one of the veterans:

I don't know what to say. I can't think of anyone that has done anything like this for me. I have pictures and flags and pins and awards all over my walls but the gift of your hands makes them all pale. Kathy has already said that it will have to go on a wall. Not sure which one just yet, but she is right. I have no words to thank you or words to express how I feel about it. It is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

Many have been asked the simple question of why they do it. Serve with little pay and risk their lives over and over again. I, myself have never been able to think of a proper answer. I know it is not for the glory for there is no glory in taking lives no matter the cause. Patriotism, perhaps, but I feel it is more than that. It wasn't just for honor or country or freedom. It was because without someone doing it life might not be worth it.

A poet said many years ago:

*I am the unknown soldier
and I may have died in vain,
but if I were alive, and my country called,
I'd do it all over again.*

*Thank you so very much.
Lee*

FROM LAURIE ARMSTRONG, PACIFIC GROVE, CA

A QOV was presented to Sgt. Jason Y, USMC, after third surgery for injuries received during his 3rd tour in Iraq:

This is something I'll have for the rest of my life. I can't believe someone I don't know would do this -- it's so special!"

FROM KATY VICKERS

Katy received this letter from a soldier in Kansas about his QOV:

My name is Aaron Isaacson. I am a Captain in the U.S. Army. I have just recently returned to Fort Riley from my 3rd back to back combat deployment. While in Afghanistan on my last deployment I was sounded during a combat operation along the Pakistan border. I had to endure a long and diffi-



cult hospital recovery process that is hard to explain. After returning to Fort Riley I was placed in the Warrior Transition Battalion to continue hospital treatment. I was going through a difficult time until one day when I was asked to go see the Chaplain. The Chaplain presented me the quilt that you all had made and I had to fight back the tears. I had no idea that people really cared so much.

I just wanted to take the time to let you know just how much your quilt matters. I ask that you please keep up your hard work. You are bringing a warm and much needed 'welcome home' to so many people that need it.

*Thank you so very much.
Captain Aaron Isaacson*

FROM BARBARA GILLANDER

Note received from a Major in the USAF Reserves:

Dear Barbara,

My name is C. L., I'm a Major in the USAF Reserves. I received your quilt yesterday in recognition of 1-1/2 years duty at the Dover AFB Port Mortuary. It means a lot for us at

The Mortuary to receive the beautiful quilts you all create. We may not be on the front lines, but the mission we accomplish, and the things we see are very stressful. Our mission is to return our fallen heroes to their loved ones with dignity, honor, and respect. All the personnel at The Mortuary are very dedicated and professional, and are very unsung in their daily mission. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart for your generous gift!

*Respectfully,
C*

FROM SANDI HAWTHORNE AND HER SISTER, KAREN

My sister, Karen, and I received another beautiful, heartwarming letter from a recipient of one of our quilts. It comes from a young man who just completed his Army service. He served in Korea and most recently in Iraq. He returned to Fort Campbell, KY. He and his wife recently had a baby boy. The following quote is part of the letter that really touched me. We never know how a quilt will provide comfort:

We love your quilt and use it often, especially at night while rocking the baby. It is such a comfort to have a physical reminder that there are Americans out there thinking of and praying for soldiers everywhere. Thank you so much for your kind heart. I wish you all the happiness this life can bring. Thank you and God Bless.

C.A. in Kentucky

FROM CHRISTOPHER BURR, US ARMY

I am a recipient of one of the purple heart quilts, even though I was deemed ineligible for the purple heart, along with the 4 other members of my helicopter crew after we crashed in Iraq in May 2005. Two of us received Quilts...we were hurt the worst (spinal fractures) and to this day, we both display and on cold nights, use the quilts proudly.

My quilt was signed "Jan Stearn, May 2005, Jackson, Michigan". I was wondering if there was a way I could get a hold of her...or barring that...if there was any way you could convey my absolute thanks and gratitude to her. Receiving that quilt helped me work

through a pretty terrible time in my life. I wasn't sure if I'd even be able to walk again for a few weeks. It took several months of physical therapy and I still walk with a slight limp. But thanks to your organization and Jan's quilt, I am still Crewing Chinook Helicopters and still serving proudly.

Thanks, QOV Foundation

FROM LESLIE ANN WEBSTER

Dear Catherine: Every once in awhile - I get tired. "Let someone else take up the cause!" Just a half hour ago I was at a gas station at Sam's Club in Riverside, California. A pickup pulled up behind me. I was pumping gas, talking on my cell phone (Bluetooth head set). "Excuse me, Ma'am, do you quilt? I see the Quilts of Valor magnet on your car. I was at Fort Bliss for a year recovering from my wounds. I saw lots of quilts being handed out. I have one and a pillowcase. Please thank all those who make these quilts. I'm fine now, retired from the Army and doing very well. I really appreciate what you do!"

Guess that speaks for itself -- I'll try to help with your goal for May 31st! I have a couple happy quilts, bright colors but not patriotic. I will, however, go get some appropriate materials!

Still quilting!!!

Spreading the Word

WORKING WITH VFW TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT QOV

For the past year I have been working with one of the local VFW Posts. I walked in the door last year and talked to them about QOV. I asked them if they would volunteer their hall for a Show and presented them with information and the website. After checking over the information, they agreed to the hall. They let me put my fliers up at their Post and spread some of them to other posts for me. I asked them to come and see what we do. On the weekend

of the show I had Post and Auxiliary members coming in and asking questions and looking at the quilts. The Commander of the Post was so happy at what we are doing that he gave me an Angel Pin from the Post and asked me to think about joining the VFW and become a permanent QOV spokesperson.

I checked out what it takes to be a member of a VFW and found that my son is in the Air Force, currently stationed in South Korea. Well, that makes me able to join the VFW Auxiliary. Now the Post that I belong to and QOV are working hand and hand in covering our Wounded Warriors. I have been giving speeches to other VFW's in the area and they are jumping on board to help QOV.

The VFW's have a program called "Wounded Warriors" and QOV fits right in that program. To help with getting the word out around the State, I went to a District dinner and presented a quilt to the District Post and Auxiliary Presidents and gave them information on QOV. I told them to present the quilt to a Wounded Warrior at their Post - they were very excited to be part of the QOV process. Now they are starting to help spread the word about QOV with other VFW Posts while traveling around the district. I have enjoyed working with my VFW and the other Posts in the area that have given support to QOV. If you are trying to start a group in your area this is a great way to start.

I hope you will find this information helpful. If you have any questions please feel free to email me at stichingsheryl@yahoo.com and I will do my best to help you.

Stitching with Prayers and Angels

Sheryl Anderson, QOV Chairperson

VFW Post 91, Tacoma, WA

Ditty Bags From Eleanor

by: *Elizabeth Roberts*

When Catherine suggested adopting U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan,

Eleanor Frick of Defuniak Springs had a good idea -- to make ditty bags for them filled with toiletries, games, playing cards, tennis balls, yo-yos, pens, paper, envelopes, dominoes, DVDs, or any item that could fit into 8" x 14" bags of good-quality cotton or other fabric with military, patriotic, or funny designs. She has already shipped 50 ditty bags overseas, each of them containing some small comforts of home along with a note of appreciation for the deployed servicemen or women putting their lives on the line in Afghanistan.

Eleanor would like to ship as many ditty bags as possible. She asks anyone interested in the project to make and fill the bags or just donate toiletries and games for them. Other items commonly included are toothpaste, toothbrushes, band-aids, memo pads, mending kits, shaving cream, razors, deodorant, hard candy and chewing gum.



Eleanor gives one example of a personal greeting: *I understand what you have sacrificed to be where you are today. Thank you and God bless you. I hope in some small way this ditty bag brings you a little bit of home and lets you know that you are appreciated in a special way.*

The bags are easy to sew. Double-stitch two 8" by 14" pieces of good-quality fabric together on three sides. Finish the opening's edge and fold it down about 3/4 inch to make a casing for a drawstring. Thread a shoelace or cord through the casing.

Eleanor will ship any bags returned to her with \$3 to cover postage to Afghanistan. More information is available from Eleanor at mumedf@earthlink.net or through another organizer, Robert Gramley, part owner of Crazy Patch Quilting and Gift Shop on Baldwin Avenue in Defuniak Springs (850-892-2093).

Eleanor has also completed 18 Quilts of Valor and has 3 more just about ready to go.

QOV Quilts of Valour Canada

by: *Lezley Swaal*

Just want to let our *Quilts of Valour-Canada* participants know that we sent out 54 quilts to Shilo Manitoba between Christmas and New Years. A very big THANK YOU to those who sent quilts! We were also written up in the Canadian Quilters' Association Magazine, Spring issue.

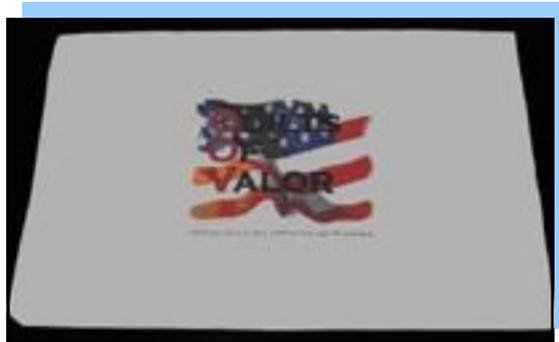
We have set up a website with information and our first newsletter at <http://www.automatedquill.com/Qov>. You can also find us in Yahoo Groups and Facebook under Quilts of Valour-Canada (*remember the "u" in the Canadian spelling of Valour*).

Contacts are coming on board across the country. Mary in Ontario is our coordinator/liaison for our quilters east of Manitoba. Our local contacts are listed on our website.

Greetings from the QOV Shop

by: *Joyce*

We have a new item at the QOV Shop that we thought we'd try. It's a QOV Pillowcase.



These pillowcases are a 50/50 cotton blend and are beautifully printed with the same image that our new T-Shirts have. They can be used as presentation cases - or use them on your own bed! We only have a few printed in our first run, to see what kind of

interest there would be. I think you are going to really like them. You can find them at the QOV Shop under *QOV Accessories* for \$7.50 each.

Also, as a reminder, the postcards are now shipping from the QOV Shop. These are



great handouts when people come to your booth and want to know how they can help. There's one specific to machine quilters, one for piecers, and another for donors.

You can buy the 3 pack (50 of each card) for \$20 which includes shipping. If you want larger quantities or only one of the cards, please email me (joyce@QOVF.org) and I'll get you a quote for the quantities that you want.

A NEW WAY TO SHOP AT THE QOV SHOP!

Many of you have told us that you are uncomfortable using PayPal or Google Pay, so we have a neat new feature to help you out.

Now you can shop online - and when you get to the checkout - select: "Payment by Check" and complete your order. You will receive an email confirmation of your order. Write your check and mail it with a copy of the order to the QOV Shop address on the order form. I will also know you have placed an order and will keep an eye on the mail.

I just love this "Check's in the Mail" feature and am sure you will too!

Emails to the Editor

We welcome your comments. Send to comments@QOVF.org

"DISAPPOINTED"

Dear Cathy and June,

I am one of the longarmers and sadly, I think I am going to have to drop out. We are retired Air Force and all of our kids are serving in the armed forces right now so I think it is a great cause, but, I think the system needs some work.

In January I was paired up with someone who didn't send a quilt and when I finally mentioned it to you, I felt like I was under attack as your response was "you should have told me sooner..." How could I have told you sooner - I expected it to arrive any day?

Now this month I received 2 quilts from a lady, very poorly done. There was even a cut in the border which she "repaired" by putting a piece of fabric on the underside and zig-zagging on the top! I contacted her, offering to cut the border shorter or replace it. She said "no, and thank you for being so observant..." (you couldn't miss it!! It was 4 inches long...) She felt she could "catch it up in the binding". Well it was about 2 inches in - it would have to be a mighty big binding!

I would never let a quilt go out of my shop that way. I am not perfect, or a snob - it was that bad - and if my name is on it...I'd rather it not be.

But the bottom line is - I wouldn't want my children to receive these. I would hope we'd want to send them our best for them putting their lives on the line.

D. T., Owner

Quilt Shop

"challenging" their guild members to make quilts for QOV. All the entries must contain some of the special gold challenge fabric and a star. The star can be pieced, appliquéd, embroidered, or quilted...even a star print fabric meets the requirement. Tops can be pieced by individuals or groups.

Challenge Quilt Chairwoman, Kate Meyers (a QOV longarm quilter) and MJ Sepples (a QOV top piecer), are pleased with the enthusiasm shown for this project.

The completed quilts will be exhibited and judged at the guild's June 12th luncheon. The winning QOVs will be displayed June 22nd on WBIR's "Live at 5 at 4" (Knoxville). Kate and MJ will be encouraging quilters in East Tennessee to support our nation's wounded Warriors through the Quilts of Valor Foundation.

MJ Sepples and Kate Meyers

Quilter's Coop Opportunity Quilt

by: *Norma Enfield*

Murrieta/Temecula California Chapter's Fundraiser



Quilt is 55" x 63" and will be given away 8/14/09. Tickets are \$1 ea or 6 for \$5. Send payment with self-addressed, stamped envelope to Norma Enfield, QOVF, c/o Quilters Coop, 28677 Old Town Front Street, Temecula, CA 92590.

Village Quilters Challenge

The Village Quilters of Loudon, TN (www.villagequilters.com) are

QUILTS OF KINDNESS: SOOTHING WOUNDED SOLDIERS

from: *Linda Lafford*

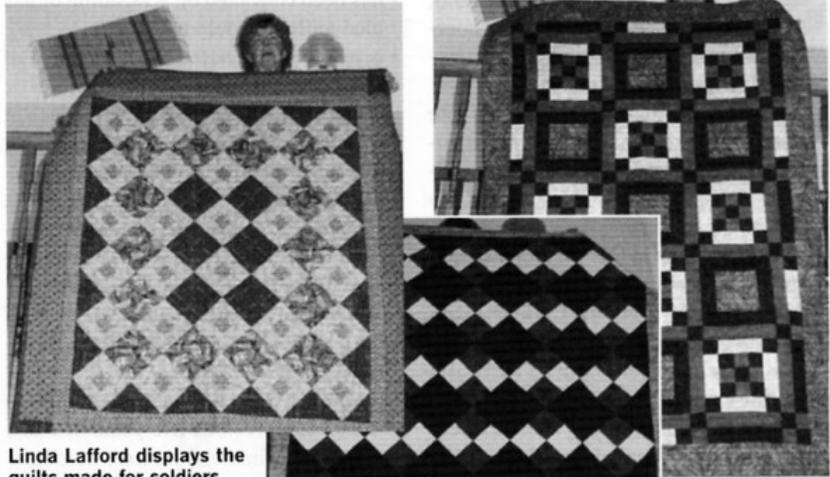
THE OUTLET

Quilts of Kindness: Soothing Wounded Soldiers

BY LINDA M. NYBERG, MEMBER SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE

Over the last three years, I've been booking the Sangre De Cristo Electric community room in Buena Vista for the Quilts of Valor on a monthly basis. One day a month, the ladies show up and spend the day sewing, talking, laughing and genuinely enjoying each other's company. I always pop my head in to see what is going on and what quilts the ladies are working on on that particular day. This happy group shines with enthusiasm. You see, the quilts they sew go to wounded armed forces all across the country and world to soothe and bring a little comfort to our military troops. Since 2002, these women have sewn and distributed over 350 quilts. The dozens of thank you letters the group has received just prove how appreciated a little kindness and a comfortable quilt can be.

The group has been sewing together for four years and changed venues several times. Three



Linda Lafford displays the quilts made for soldiers.

Paul Erickson, CEO of Sangre De Cristo Electric, typically visits the group each month and jokes

around with the ladies. "They are a great group doing something truly noble," he said. "How can you not like that?"

The quilters sew the top and back of the quilt and then ship it off to someone who has a long-arm quilting machine. There, the quilt is put together with batting in the center and machine quilted. When it is returned, the binding is sewn on one side of the quilt by machine and then hand stitched together on the other side. The whole process takes about two to three weeks.

The quilters purchase material and supplies with the donations they receive from the commu-

nity, other organizations and individuals. They make several trips a year to the veterans hospital in Denver to personally deliver quilts. "The response is overwhelming," said Linda Lafford, the founder of the Quilts of Valor. "A quilt is a special gift. It is made by hand and

*Dear Linda, Rita, and Kim,
Thank you so very much for the patriotic quilt that you took time to make for me and the other soldiers. It always feels good to know we are appreciated. The support that you and others have shown to us really boosts our moral. Sometimes things get tough, then we get support of any kind and it helps greatly. Your quilt will be my couch / TV blanket.
Thank you*

years ago they heard about the community room at Sangre De Cristo Electric and have been here ever since. The room provides large tables and room to spread out, allowing the group to work together.

comes from the heart. It helps bring comfort and feels like a small piece of home."

If you would like to make a donation to or join the Quilts of Valor, please contact Linda Lafford at 719-395-0811 or Irene Mable at 719-395-6002. You may also visit the website at <http://ccqov.org> for more information and to view pictures of the quilts. You will have a lot of fun and make new friends while doing something truly patriotic.

"A bird does not sing because he has an answer, he sings because he has a song."

— Joan Walsh Anglund

Podcasting- Video Interviews

Would you like to be interviewed or have a class you would like to teach? If you are interested, contact Catherine at cath@QOVF.org.

Classifieds

If you have a sewing need, send your request to newsletter@QOVF.org. Put "QOV Classifieds" on the subject line.

LOOKING FOR---

In a previous article in this Newsletter, Christopher Burr, US Army, stated that he had received a Quilt of Valor upon his return from Iraq. The label was signed "Jan Stearn, May 2005, Jackson, Michigan". He wants to make sure that Jan knows how much her quilt meant to him. If you know Jan, please let her know how much her quilt meant to Christopher.

Mission Statement

From the QOVF Website:

The mission of the QOV Foundation is to cover ALL war wounded and injured servicemembers and veterans from the War on Terror whether physical or psychological wounds with Wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor (QOVs). Or as a six year old put it, "When the 'sholders' are 'warring' and they come home and are hurt, the quilt makes them feel all comfy." This foundation is *not* about politics. It's about *people*.

Contact Us

Editor: editor@QOVF.org

Your feedback is invaluable.

Statistics

These are the latest statistics as of 3/27/09. It is difficult to get an accurate wounded number as it is for quilts awarded. We do know the two hall-mark injuries of this war are post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Total QOVs awarded 20,562
 *Iraq/killed (US) 4,260
 *Afghanistan/killed (US)..... 671
 *Wounded Many

*<http://icasualties.org/Iraq/index.aspx>

Articles for Upcoming Newsletters

Please send your articles, how-to's, news, quotes, etc., in by the 5th of the month (for publication by the 10th) -- and don't forget to include pictures when possible. It's always fun to "see" what you have been doing.

If you have a "what I would have done differently", send it along so we can all learn from your experience.

QOVF Website

<http://www.QOVF.org>

Looking for a Quilt of Valor pattern? There are several free patterns available on the QOVF website under the left Sidebar - "Patterns". Check them out!

There are also free patterns available for the machine quilter.



MB's Split Star QOV
 copyright 2002 all rights reserved