



QOV FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER



Quilting Honor & Comfort For Our Wounded

May 2009

Quilts of Valor Across America Road Trip

CAMP LEJEUNE OR BUST

Gail Belmont

Operations Officer

Have you ever been traveling and seen an RV or a car with a sign that said, "North Carolina or Bust"? (*you can insert your own destination*) I've often wondered what they meant. Now I know!

Our Quilt of Valor Foundation is in the process of doing the same thing. With limited funds, we are working to achieve our goal of delivering 1200 quilts from across the country to North Carolina. We may be thumbing for gas and pitching tents along the way but we will make it!

I won't mention what I said when Catherine first mentioned providing 1200 quilts but I was determined to never give up on our mission or our warriors. So began Operation Quilts of Valor. The route has been selected and our Point of Contacts (POC) are ready and eagerly awaiting the arrival of your quilts and the QOV Van.

This may be a first for the quilting world – going from place to place, gathering quilts in order to award them to our deserving warriors. We should be so proud of this Organization – everyone coming together to complete our mission. I personally would like to thank everyone who is making this possible.

We are hoping to set up a blog before we leave so that we can upload pictures and keep everyone abreast of our progress as we go along. *We want you all to be apart of Operation Quilts of Valor Across America!!*



Ceremonies at Camp Lejeune have been scheduled for **June 15th**. We don't have all the particulars yet but will notify everyone as soon as they become available.

POINT OF CONTACTS

A Huge thank you to all of our POC's for helping with the collection of your quilts. This trip would not be possible without them.

WEST COAST (Van Leaves June 6th)

Belmont Family Quilts
6516 Stabulis Road
Valley Springs, CA 95252
belmontquilts@comcast.net

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd.

Washington - Oregon - California

TEXAS

Suzanne Lesch
807 Stoneway Drive
San Antonio, TX 78258-2327
SVL@satx.rr.com

Quilts need to arrive no later than May 20th

Do NOT request a signature for delivery - Suzanne needs them dropped off at this location (completely safe). Please email Suzanne when you have mailed your quilts.

UTAH (Van Arrives June 7th)

Frank McCombs
1203 N. 950 East
Bountiful, UT 84010
capt.usmc@comcast.net

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd

Utah - Arizona - Idaho - Nevada

BOULDER COLORADO (Arrive June 8th)

Sallie Foret and Rebecca Fellows
3849 Abeyta Court
Boulder, CO 80301
rebeccafellows@msn.com

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd

Colorado - Montana - New Mexico - Wyoming

EAGLE/LINCOLN NEBRASKA (Arrive June 9th)

Sara Kenny
PO Box 300
Eagle, NE 68347
21902 A Street
Eagle, NE 68347
sarakenny@yahoo.com

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd

Nebraska - North Dakota - South Dakota
Kansas - Oklahoma - Minnesota - Iowa

MISSOURI (Arrive June 10th)

Jean Jaeger
19623 State Highway CC
Warrenton, MO 63383
jean1941@centurytel.net

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd

Missouri - Illinois - Indiana - Kentucky
Wisconsin - Michigan

KNOXVILLE TENNESSEE (Arrive June 11th)

Beth Sizemore
607 Chestuee Street
Englewood, Tennessee 37329
tenfolks@gmail.com

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd

Tennessee - Kentucky - Mississippi

EAST COAST STATES - NORTHERN

Victoria Lemire
382 Wallace Road
Goffstown, NH 03045
tenfolks@gmail.com

Quilts need to arrive by June 3rd

Maine - New York - New Hampshire
New Jersey - Delaware - Maryland - Ohio
Pennsylvania - Virginia - West Virginia

EAST COAST STATES - SOUTHERN

Please ship directly to Camp Lejeune:

Kimberly Hagner
Attn: OPERATION QUILTS OF VALOR
PSC Box 20093
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542-0093
(If shipping UPS, leave out the word 'Box')

Florida - Georgia - South Carolina
North Carolina - Alabama

We have tried our best to make it convenient for everyone. Our goal is not only to pick up your quilts and meet some of our quilters as we cross the United States, but also to do some fund raising and advertising for QOVF. This trip will help us get the word out.

Gail Belmont

Operations Officer





QUILTS OF VALOR ACROSS AMERICA - ROAD TRIP

- ◆ *The thoughtfullness of your QOV has been a healing balm to my soul.*
- ◆ *This quilt is a piece of home and source of strength I use when I am down.*
- ◆ *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.*
- ◆ *After the shell shock, trauma and intense pain, as well as numerous surgeries, your quilt was just the thing I needed.*
- ◆ *Please continue the outstanding work you are doing. Also know that when you touch our hearts you also heal our souls.*
- ◆ *When I get scared with the memories of war, I curl up in the quilt and everything goes away. It makes me and the hundreds of wounded I've seen feel better knowing there are people in the states who care about us.*
- ◆ *I gave away another quilt, and the big bad Marine cried.*
- ◆ *I received the Purple Heart because of injuries while in Iraq. But the presentation of the quilt hit me hard. It isn't another military medal to be placed in a box.*
- ◆ *A lot of times veterans don't receive the recognition that we deserve. I was moved to tears on Sunday after receiving my quilt.*

At the beginning of year, we made the decision to cover the deployed 3/8 Marine Battalion from Camp Lejeune, NC with our wartime Quilts of Valor. These 1,200 wartime Quilts of Valor are about giving our combat warriors a tangible reminder of the recognition, love and prayers for healing they merit. With postage so costly (\$12/quilt = \$14,400), we decided to go across country and pick up as many quilts as we can. Our trip will not only deliver the quilts but help publicize what we are doing: *Quilting honor and comfort for our war wounded.* Note for anti-war readers: It is **not** about politics but **about people.**

QUILTS OF VALOR ACROSS AMERICA ROAD TRIP DELIVERY SERVICES NEEDS YOU!

We need you **and** your friends to make this road trip happen.

THE COST OF QUILT DELIVERY - 2 CHOICES

We know our warriors give everything they have for *the Mission.* We aren't asking for everything; merely \$5, and that is *tax deductible.* (Jacksons, Hamiltons, Grants and smilin' Bens will never go astray.) If you and your friends will send a pocket sized picture of Abe (or Andrew, Alex, Ulysses or Ben), we will be able to get gas, lodging and eggs and grits. We need about \$8,400. That is 1,650 pictures of Old Abe. We know you have done so much already. Spread the word -- Spread the work. Help everyone take part in the mission.

- 1) You can click here to send your tax deductible \$5 or more via PayPal:

http://www.qovf.org/index.php?option=com_donation&task=pay

OR:

- 2) Send your tax deductible donation directly to this address:

**QOVF
PO Box 1003
Seaford, DE 19973**

Thank you for making this happen. We will be filming our journey. If you can meet our QOV van, we'd love to meet and shake your hand! Spread the word! A little bit from a lot of people will put us over the top!

(For those of you who don't know us, please visit our website at www.QOVF.org. We have made over 22,000 and counting Quilts of Valor since 2004)

Still at war; still quilting and road planning,

Catherine Roberts (7/10)
Executive Director/Founder
cath@QOVF.org

Gail Belmont (50/10)
Operations Officer QOVF
US Army Veteran 1969-76
gail@QOVF.org

QOVF Community News

News from around the country about your fellow QOV'ers. Their stories inspire and motivate. We would love to know what you are doing. Email newsletter@QOVF.org.

A GIANT

by: *Jan Parsons*

Thank you to all of you who have chosen to recognize the 3/8 Battalion. My son is in that unit and has been deployed to Afghanistan. Each day I 'google' his unit to see any and all posts that have any information and I saw the QOVF site come up. I read how you've decided to honor the Marines with the Quilt of Valor and think it is a lovely idea.

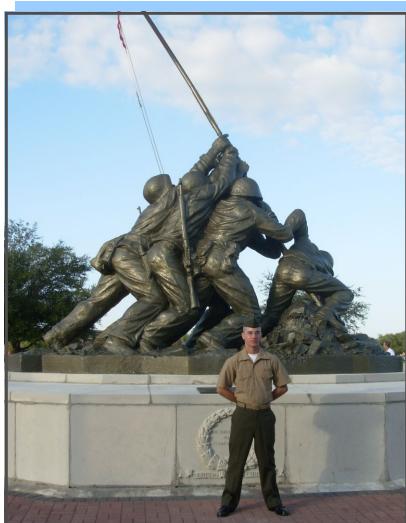
As a parent of a Marine, I just wanted to say thank you for your recognition and support of our troops. I know they will cherish and appreciate what you've done for them. After all, they have proven how much they cherish and honor each of us daily.

So, meet a few of the boys of the 3/8:



Joshua is on his knees, 2nd from the right.

Josh on Graduation Day, boot camp at Parris Island.



Joshua holding his weapon.



Josh is everyone's son. He was the Middle School and High School football player, never a star but always full of team spirit. He was a wrestler, but not quite aggressive enough to take home the trophies. He was an above average student, but still not quite college bound. Polite, reserved, funny, but above all, prideful. Prideful of his country. He was the child who at 15 and 16 couldn't stand for the National Anthem at sporting events without his eyes welling up.

Because of his decision to become a Marine (and there was never any other option in his mind), he is my every dream come true and my worst nightmare. I am overcome with pride in him and fear for him all at the same time. The boys have earned the respected title of "The Few. The Proud." They are each that. They are an example of what all young men should strive to become. They are capable of great things; they are kind and tender, yet strong and tough. Compassionate and loving, yet brave and fierce. They are our Marines.

I am saddened to have missed so many holidays and special events with Josh, but so very proud of who and what he is and stands for. I never miss an opportunity to let him know that not only is my family, but the world, a better place because of his dedication.

When Josh first told me that he had enlisted, I was terrified. I said to him, "Josh, what will I do if anything ever happens to you?" He answered, "Mom, let's just hope it never does, but know that if that's the case, you were all worth it to me." What's a mom to do after that??!

Thank you all so much for caring back. They are all our kids and they are, THE BEST OF THE BEST!!

*Very proud mom of Lcpl. Joshua Parsons, USMC.
Jan Parsons*

**THE WILD ROSE QUILT SHOP & RETREAT
CENTER–BLOCK OF THE MONTH**
(www.thewildrosequiltshop.com)

by: *Connie Frick*

A few months ago, "The Wild Rose Quilt Shop & Retreat Center" in Orting WA, started a monthly meeting where they offered a block of the month to all of it's members. And, for bringing in your completed block for Show N' Tell to the next meeting, you are given a coupon making you eligible for one of the door prizes. There must be around 30 ladies who attend the meeting every month. We get to see all the new fabrics that the shop has ordered, along with all the new craft and quilt patterns, and new books that they have available, upcoming classes etc. There is also time set aside for Show-N-Tell for projects the ladies have been making. Needless to say, someone from our QOV group always has a QOV in the making to show and we always have information about our group get-together -- where we hold them, when the next one will be, and invite anyone who might like to join us to 'come on over'. We mention the QOVF website and the important mission of the QOV Foundation. There is always a warm response when we show our work and talk about how rewarding making QOVs is for us.

But, last month was a very special meeting at "The Wild Rose Quilt Shop" because the owners



QOV Group

of the shop, Robbie and John, held a "Fat Quarter" Bingo Game for our QOV group after the regular meeting was over. They had a snack table, coffee and water just for the Bingo game! Everyone was welcome to stay and play. No cash money was involved with the games.

A Newsletter was sent in February to all the ladies who attend the regular monthly meeting -- to let them know about "Fat Quarter Bingo." To

play, you needed 2 patriotic fat quarters of quilt store quality fabrics and for each card you wished to play, you needed a 'spring or summer' type fat quarter. You could bring them from your stash or you could buy them at the "Wild Rose Quilt Shop." Most gals had at least 3 or more spring and summer fat quarters along with the 2 patriotic type fat quarters.

All of the patriotic fabrics were given to our group to use in making QOVs! We ended up with almost 40 fat quarters!

We played 4 Bingo games: regular bingo, 4 corner bingo, letter X bingo, and black-out bingo! We used paper bingo cards and marked the called numbers with buttons. John was the caller, Robbie walked around serving snacks, and handing out hands full of buttons for markers. Each win received around 8 "Spring/Summer" fat quarters with the last game winning the Jackpot of 18-20! How much fun is that! And, I won the last game!!

I'm sorry to say I did not have my camera with me! And, my old phone does not take pictures.

Thank you so much, Robbie and John, for your time, effort and donation to our QOV group.

We also were given a finished quilt top from one of the regular members, Nita D. Thank you Nita! It will make a wonderful QOV.

TRAVELING QUILTERS

by: *Jean Jaeger and Jackie Heggemann*
jean1941@centurytel.net

Four years ago I went to the Quilt Show in Paducah, Kentucky, and saw a piece of paper (3-1/4 by 8-1/2) on the corner of a vendor's table. On it was information about Quilts of Valor. Thinking I could make a quilt and invite ladies in to hand quilt, I picked up the paper.

One day at our church quilting group, I talked about making this quilt. Jackie went home and made four quilts and I made one. Then, we wondered how we were going to get these quilts quilted. We invited ladies from the area churches and on July 19, 2005, we had our first quilting bee with 5 quilts and 23 ladies. Now we have as many as 100+ ladies coming from eight

different counties at our "Quilting Bees." And, it keeps growing.

The response from the community has been amazing. The area American Legion groups donate money to pay for shipping. Other organizations and individuals help to pay for supplies.



There is never a shortage of quilt tops. We will have exceeded our goal of 300 quilts by July 2009, our fourth anniversary. Over 98% of these quilts are hand quilted. Quilts have shipped to 20 different states, Canada, Germany and Afghanistan.

Each time we reach a certain number -- 100, 200, or 300 -- a special quilt is made and every lady gets to quilt on it and sign a letter that will accompany the quilt.

Each month we meet at a different church or civic organization, hence the name "*Traveling Quilters*."

QOV CREATIONS FOR RETURNING MARINES

by: *Kathryn M. Kruse*

krusecontrol2000@yahoo.com

I am a former Marine making QOVs for the returning 3/8 Battalion Marines. I have been working on ten since I first heard they were returning in March. I am also quilting them as I sew. I'm making Bar g e 11 o quilts.. I don't have the time nor the money to send them off somewhere to be machine quilted so I do it all myself.



I started making QOVs before Catherine had the Foundation created. I made 32 before it became impossible for me to continue due to health problems from teaching.

Now that I am retired, I am back to creating these gifts of love for our wounded warriors.



PATRIOT TRAIL - LEWIS COUNTY, KY

by: *Rosanne Wood*

Chair, LCQTC

Roseanne.wood@uky.edu

A new sense of artistic patriotism is being exhibited in a very large way in Lewis County, Kentucky. Historic barns throughout the county are adorned with large, colorful quilt square patterns painted on sign board. Lewis County has chosen to honor our troops with a **Patriot Trail**, a barn quilt trail dedicated to all our military



Marine Corps Barn Quilt



US Navy Barn Quilt

The trail is a special loop in the county's barn quilt trail. Every square on the trail is painted red, white and blue to honor our defenders of freedom.

Lewis County High School art classes sketched and painted the patterns on the boards. The vocational school's carpentry classes assembled the frames, and the school system's maintenance crew helps hang the frames and squares.

The local VFW Post has sponsored six of the barn quilt squares. Five of the squares are painted with the flags of the five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces -- Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. The sixth is painted with the VFW flag.



If you are not familiar with barn quilts, visit our website at <http://www.visitlewiscountyky.com> and click on Patriot Trail.



MACINE QUILTERS EXPOSITION (MQX), MANCHESTER, NH

by: *Jackie Dudek*

ddudek@stny.rr.com

My name is Jackie Dudek and I live in New York State. In April I had the wonderful opportunity to host the QOV booth at Machine Quilters Exposition (MQX) in Manchester, NH. This was my 3rd year hosting the booth and was by far the best experience yet. Each year just gets better and better with the number of quilts we collect, the number of quilts we get longarm quilted and the number of people who learn about QOV.

The owners of the MQX show (Janet-Lee Santeusonio and Mary Schilke) have always been strong supporters of QOV and they have generously donated space for us to have a working booth. This year Gam-mill helped supply us with 2 longarm machines through the dealers that attended and we can't leave out the



battling donations from Mountain Mist and Dream Cotton along with Superior Thread. Without all the generous donations it would be very difficult to afford such a luxurious and spacious booth.

This year was very special because we had our very own longarm coordinator, June Moore, helping out in the booth and I couldn't have run the booth without my longstanding booth helper, Nancy Parker. I think what was so great for me was to have Janice Cutting bring her Statler. She and her sister Joyce Lundgram, whom most of you know from our QOV shop, were amazing in the amount of quilts that they were able to complete with that Stat-



ler!!!! We were able to quilt 20 QOVs with most of them bound and ready to be shipped out once I wash them. Never before have I been able to complete this many. Usually we complete about 15 in the 3 days there with 2 machines running full time. This years 20, surpassed all I could hope for!!!

Now, I haven't mentioned all the other wonderful volunteers that helped with binding, talking to the public, and quilting. We had a lot and they were all just fantastic people who really care and love this foundation and our military. I almost forgot to say thank you to Barbara Sanders of Connecticut. She sent the most amazing quilts that we hung in the booth this year. They were spectacular!

The highlight of the booth for me though, was being able to present QOVs to some of our service members. This year we were able to present 2, one to a Marine purple heart recipient and another to a Sgt. Major in the Army who is currently recovering from his wounds. They both were so pleased and honored to receive these gifts from our hearts. Hugging them after presenting them with a QOV is the most amazing feeling.

In the end, we left 29 QOVs with the Manchester VA who was doing a presentation the Sunday after the show and I brought home 34 that my

local QOV group helped me finish binding and labeling that are now ready for delivery. Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who helped make the QOV booth at MQX 2009 such an amazing success!!!! I hope to continue hosting this booth next year as the show moves to Providence, RI. Hope to see some of you then!

MONDAY MORNING QUILTERS

by: *Joline Frazier*
jkfra@gwi.net

The Monday Morning Quilters of Brownville Jct., Maine sent it's first shipment of QOVs last week. We sent 9 quilts to the Dover AFB



Port Mortuary Staff. What a difficult job that must be. I'm glad that the quilts will be going

to them, to hopefully show how much their services are valued.

The citizens of our small community have been very supportive of our endeavor, contributing both fabric and money to the cause. The factory in town donated shipping material and packing, as well as letting us ship at a discount. We are very thankful to all the citizens who are so helpful. We hope to have another shipment ready next month.

SYRACUSE UTAH QUILTERS

by: *Diane Jaeger*
curtanddiane@att.net

I have been a QOV Rep here in Utah for 2 years and longarmer for QOV this past year. I belong to a number of quilt groups and love sharing the QOV messages.

I just returned from a trip to Victoria, Australia

explaining about the quilts to our service men and women. I told them how our group here is getting ready for a very special QOV project. I cannot wait to report later this year on the response and of all the beautiful quilts we are making.

The Syracuse Quilters are a Chapter of the Utah Quilt Guild. We are an open quilt group where anyone can come and join us.

One of our current projects is the "Quilt of Valor Signature Blocks." We are asking members to make a few blocks so that they can call family and friends and tell them about this worthy project. Then, ask them for a quote and make a block with their statement, name and where they are from. Once enough blocks are completed, we will combine them into a Quilt of Valor. Instructions for the blocks can be found at <http://www.syracuseutahquilters.blogspot.com>



QUILTS FOR THE 3/8

from: *Sue Bennett*

Been trying to think of a unique way of displaying your QOVs to take photos? Here's



what Sue did to photograph her quilts before sending them off to Camp Lejeune. Beautiful!

QUILTS OF VALOR AT WALTER REED

by: *Jane Bockel*

Red Cross Volunteer
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
(WRAMC)

Catherine asked me to write something for your newsletter. She didn't tell me what to write, but I thought you would be most interested in knowing about your QOVs when they reach their destination at Walter Reed.



First of all, it was through sheer luck that I became involved with the Quilts of Valor program. On the day that I attended my orientation as a Red Cross volunteer, I met Chaplain Kallerson who asked me if I would be interested in volunteering in the Chaplain's office. I remember him saying that he could use "a mature lady" to help him deliver quilts. I don't hold that against him!

In those days of Fall, 2006, the quilts were stacked high in the Chaplain's office. There were two volunteers and we and the chaplains delivered the quilts to the wounded soldiers. In July, 2007, Chaplain Kallerson was sent to Fort Carson and the QOV program was turned over to the Red Cross with all donations going to SFAC (Soldier Family Assistance Center) for storage. Ultimately, that was not good for the Red Cross and they relocated all of their donated items back to their office. So, you should now be sending any QOVs c/o American Red Cross, WRAMC to the attention of Ray Obas. I remain a volunteer in the Chaplain's Office and pretty much do my job as always. The only difference is where I go to find the quilts that you have sent in.

I am sure that what you really want to know is what happens when I deliver your beautiful quilts. As you know, the QOVF has now directed me to give a quilt to any soldier in the hospital who has served in Iraq or Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom). That means that I not only visit the wounded, but I also look for soldiers at Walter Reed who may not have war-related issues. I have a cart and I line up the quilts on the cart so that the soldiers can see a little bit of what they look like. When I enter each room, I first tell the soldier the story of the Quilts of Valor program. I sure hope I have been telling it properly, but

basically, it is the story of how the program began with a phone call to a WRAMC Chaplain (Chaplain Kallerson) from one woman (Catherine) who had a son serving in Iraq. I tell them that she wanted to make a quilt for a wounded soldier and that the Chaplain really liked the idea. I tell them that before long, others joined her and they sent their quilts to the chaplains who delivered them to the wounded soldiers. I go on to explain that the QOV program grew and that a foundation was set up and that today, QOVs are sent to soldiers in military hospitals all over the world. In addition, I tell them that in recognition of the soldiers' willingness to put themselves on the line for their country, the members of the QOV Foundation now want the quilts to go to all soldiers in the hospital who have served in our war operations. I finish up by telling them that they can google "Quilts of Valor" on their computers and encourage them to write to the person who made the quilt they received if they so desire. After that, I let the soldiers select their own quilt. I have them arranged so that they have an idea of what they look like and then I proceed to open up any quilt a soldier selects so that he or she can see exactly what he/she is getting. Usually they select the first quilt they look at, but sometimes they look at several. Something else you should know is that I read out loud to them any words that you may have included on your label. If you include a letter addressed to the soldier, I let them read that on their own after they have been given the quilt. If you have not included "QOV" or "Quilt of Valor" on the quilt, I assure them that we determined it to be one because of the way it was addressed to the hospital. Many of you have a place for the soldier to sign his name and I encourage all of them to put their name on the quilt someplace as it will make it an even more special heirloom to be passed down in their families.

The reactions that I get from the soldiers are varied, but for the most part, they really appreciate your gifts which represent love and concern from the American people. Many tell me that they want to write to you, so if they do not, just know that their intentions were to do so.

Last of all, you should know that hospital volunteers are not allowed to talk about individual patients, but in general, I can tell you that these are incredible young men and women who understand that they signed on to put themselves

in harms way for the rest of us. On several occasions, I have seen soldiers who were sad and the reason was that they wanted to get back with the buddies and finish what they started. As my husband says, these soldiers are not victims; they are heroes. I am proud of them and I am proud of what all of you do to let them know that they are appreciated. I also think that I have the best volunteer job in the hospital and all kinds of people thank me for what I am doing. I let them know that I am just the lucky person who gets to distribute the quilts and if they have time to listen, I tell them your story as well. You are the true angels out there, doing what you do, day in and day out, and I salute all of you!

machines that beeped and flashed.

We were just waiting for the "phone call".

My heart was torn in two directions; the grief-laden certainty of losing my mother; the looming potential of losing my son. I was not pleased feeling the need to "neglect" the one in my heart and thoughts to focus on the other

Some of my feelings however were more familiar. Sam had been to Iraq before. His first time there was our first experience as a family having someone in combat. So much to learn. What about mail - how long it could take, what did he really need? How to get news?

I guess you wouldn't really say I was afraid, but I was something. I stayed up late to catch the last bits of news. I got up early and sat glued to the TV. I even watched The View on the outside chance they would have a guest who might mention the word Iraq. You understand I don't watch much television and I don't like The View. But I was hungry for anything. My heart had left the continent and was wandering around the desert midnight of the Middle East feeling for some touch of my son.

That first round was mercifully short. I was just beginning to adjust to the new realities when it was over. I had to work at it but my news addiction slowly ground down. After while I was back to a more normal looking schedule of daily activities.

This second time I knew in my gut it would be much worse for Sam. I was not wrong. I hadn't counted on my mother's death though. This time I anticipated my obsession with the TV news; up 'til the last show that wasn't pure fiction signed off, up early for the morning show coverages. I was riveted to the set while my house went to wrack and ruin.

Writing to my son to tell him of his grandmother's death, I had the eerie sensation that I was living in a movie. It didn't seem real. Surely I was over-dramatizing my life.

Could this actually all be happening?

I prayed more hours of the day than at any other time in my life. I had learned that surviving the news meant sitting with pen and journal in hand for notes. After the last bit of news could be wrung from the television I sat up into the night on the couch going over my notes and

News from Downrange

from: Karen

(Karen@QOVF.org)

It's May, the month in which we honor, and give love and gratitude to our mothers. I did not think of that when I asked my sister-in-law Ann to write this month's column. After reading her column it is clear to me that her words embody the word "mother". Ann is not only the beautiful wife of my brother, she is mom to three adult children and grand mom to one very special two year old. Ann's youngest son, Sam, enlisted in the Marine Corps when he was 17. That was 10 years and many deployments ago. It is my privilege to introduce you to my much loved and multi-talented sister-in-law Ann:

by: Ann

November eighth of 2004 was an intense day. It was the birthday of my Marine, my youngest child, my last baby. And the battle for Fallujah had just begun with my 1/8 Bravo Marine right in the thick of it.

It also turned out to be my mother's last day on this earth. Many years dealing with leukemia, seventy-nine total years of life, had finally culminated in hospice and a hospital room, IVs and

praying about the things that grabbed my heart. I searched the Good Book for guidance and comfort. Early in the morning I started over again.

Could the Father have found any more effective way of focusing my prayers over there?! My heart was tied to Iraq. The love of a mother for her child can defy explanation. Sometimes I am a little stunned by the strength of that bond.

Across from the TV there is a large window behind the couch looking out from our living room and down the road that Ts in front of our house. I couldn't tell you how many times I stood looking as some vehicle appeared at the end of that road heading this way.

"Would it keep coming? Would it turn into our driveway?"

I was just watching for "the car".

I have no idea how many times I stood frozen there, watching, waiting, wondering.

"What color would it be? How big? Could Will this be them? Will it turn off? Closer now I can tell it's dark green and looks new.

Two people inside. It turns our way, but no. Not this time. Oh, look. Here comes another car."

That car never did turn into our driveway. Our Marine has been to Iraq and returned home twice more since '04. He has a lovely little family now and life seems to be settling into more common place patterns.

It was surprisingly difficult for me to write this down, and certain scenes from certain films will never be the same again.



QOVF Retreat

ATTENTION WARTIME QUILTERS!

by: *Lori Kutch*

lorilovesred@yahoo.com

Quilts of Valor Foundation Summer Retreat

Hosted by: QOVF Founder Catherine Roberts

Where:

BELLINGHAM WASHINGTON
550 Manley Road
Bellingham, WA 98229



When:

Second weekend in July
Beginning Friday July 10th at 5:00 PM
Adjourn by Sunday July 12th at 4:00 PM

Why:

To get acquainted, share fun, fellowship, support and inspiration.

Transportation:

You are on your own. There is easy access to the Bellingham Airport, and Train Station. Car pooling is encouraged.

Lodging:

There are many moderately priced Hotels and Motels in the area. Early reservations are encouraged.

Activities:

Get acquainted. share ideas, review our mission, plan our future. There will be inspirational speakers, and guests from the QOV community. Food, Fun and festivities. We are even going to get some sewing done!

Friday: evening we will have a casual meet, greet and buffet supper.

Saturday: we will sew, share ideas, inspiration, food, fun and more festivities.

Sunday: more sewing, sharing, and friendship building.

Cost:

\$50.00

(plus the cost of your travel and lodging)

This nominal fee will cover some meals, table rentals, and miscellaneous expenses.

RSVP:

Deadline is **May 30th**

Reserve by sending your \$50 check (payable to Quilts of Valor Foundation) to:

Lori Kutch
310 Canyon Place
Wenatchee, WA 98801

Questions:

e-mail me: lorilovesred@yahoo.com

Or give me a call
509-669-4529 - cell
509-662-2991 - home

Block Drive:

For those of you who can not attend but would like to be with us in spirit, please participate in the block drive!

Go to www.persimmonquilts.com follow the link to "block drive" download or print the "star block" pattern. Make it up and send it to me and I will see to it that it gets to the retreat for assembly into QOVs. Please don't forget to sign your block!

Initial response to this retreat idea has been outstanding so let's put that enthusiasm into actions and get those checks in the mail and reservations made!



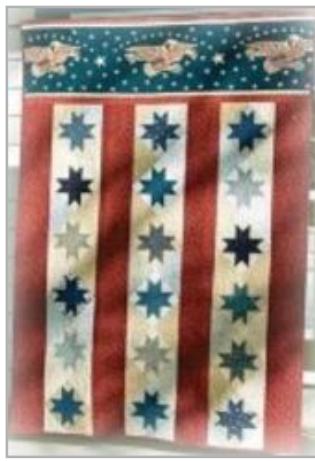
Greetings from the QOV Shop!

by: *Joyce*

joyce@qovf.org

This month we have a new item offered through the Shop.

This beautiful "Welcome Home" quilt kit is based on the pattern designed by sisters, Laurie Simpson and Polly Minick, designers for Moda Fabrics, and is used with their permission. This pattern was originally published in the August 2006 edition of *McCall's Quilting*.



Many thanks to Holly Potvin and Nancy Parker for obtaining the materials and kitting. The kit includes the banner material and all fabric required for the top. Backing and batting are not included and, except for the banner materials which is in every kit, other fabrics may vary from kit to kit. This is truly a very special quilt. If you know someone who needs a special "Welcome Home", this is it. There are only a limited number of these kits, so when they're gone -- they're gone.

\$130.00 each

I have created a new category at the shop called "QOV Quilt Kits." Go to www.qovf.org then click on Shop and then QOV Quilt Kits.

Also, we are having a special this month on lanyards. Buy one at \$6.50 and get a second one half price. Enter coupon code **2FOR975** at check out.



Thanks for supporting the Quilts of Valor Foundation through your purchases at the QOV Shop.



by: *Lezley Zwaal*

Quilts of Valour-Canada has been busy at quilt shows in Ontario. Our eastern Canada coordinator has been busy with our QoV display at these shows. Also, another group in Ontario just had a quilting bee day--and 20 quilters came out and worked on denim rag-style quilts. Many were started, and 2 completed in the day!



Our 2nd newsletter has just been released and can be found on our website for Canadian information: www.automatedquill.com/QoV



Quilts of Valor- United Kingdom

by: *Jean Morris* (Jean@QOVF.org)

Below is a link to the “Welcome Home Parade of the Commandos in Plymouth”. About 600 service personnel from 42 Commando Royal Marines took part in the homecoming to mark their return from Afghanistan.

We had been to the barracks the day before to present 10 quilts to their injured, so spent a couple of days there.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/cornwall/8037792.stm>



"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: LENNY TRUITT

We received the following “Thank You” note”

Dear Quilting Buddies,

Thank you so much for the Quilt of Valor you have made my husband. He is a wounded soldier from Afghanistan. His name is SSG Gabriel Garcia serving with 1st Infantry Division. He was injured in January 2009 and is now recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. We have a 3 year old son who is also here and some nights me and him stay the night at the hospital with Daddy. We sleep here in the room with the quilt and appreciate all the work you have put in to make it. Thank you for all the effort you put in to making them for families like us.

*Sincerely,
Christina Garcia*



FROM: GAIL BELMONT

I received the following “Thank You” letter from a Vietnam Veteran:

Dear Gail,

I want to express my most sincere appreciation for the beautiful hand made Quilt of Valor that you and your sewing guild made and presented to me in February of this year. I do not, nor did I ever see myself as valiant during my military career nor in my participation in the Viet Nam war. I choose a military career and performed my duties to the best of my ability. I have always been unwavering in my love of country, family and God.

During a tour of duty in the Viet Nam war I experienced a degree of demoralization due to the attitude of Americans toward our participation in the war. In 1969 I returned from Viet Nam to attend my father's funeral and was treated very disrespectfully by protestors. I was not expecting anything special, however, I was not expecting the degree of virulent, negative actions that confronted me at the airport. Being in a combat zone when citizens like Jane Fonda and protestors expressed themselves in such a seditious manner had a negative effect on my attitude and it stayed within me like a festering wound.

The thoughtfulness of your Quilt of Valor has been a healing balm to my soul. My love of country has never waivered and my confidence in the American Spirit has been uplifted and fortified. For myself and other veterans, I thank you and your sewing group for making and the presentation of my wonderful hand made Quilt of Valor.

*Sincerely and God Bless,
Frank McCombs
Capt. USMC Ret*



Emails to the Editor

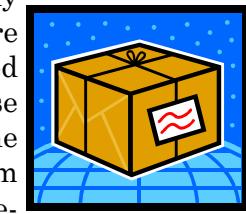
We welcome your Comments and Suggestions.
Send to: newsletter@qovf.org

FLUFFY'S CONTRIBUTION TO LAP QUILTS

I have a concern I would like to address, and I sincerely hope I do not offend anyone. This past weekend, at the Bee, while Martha and I were sorting through quilt tops to assign numbers, I had an allergic reaction to a couple of the quilt tops. I ended up having an asthma attack on the way home, and several more followed over the course of the following 24 hours. What triggered all of this? **Cat hair.** I am very allergic to cats, and because I had handled a quilt that was covered in cat hair and it had transferred to my clothing, I had a very bad reaction. I realize that cats, like dogs, husbands and children, are members of the family. And like dogs, husband and children, cannot (and should not) be completely banished from the sewing room. I would like to ask, however, that you do try and keep your pets from laying on, or too near, any QOV projects you are working on. I know I will breathe easier handling the quilts personally (pun intended). And, just something to think about: *what if the soldier who receives the quilt is as allergic as I am (or more so) to pet hair, and doesn't have the mobility of two legs to run for his fast acting inhaler?*



Katy Vickers



UNDELIVERABLE QOVFs

The Quilts of Valor post office box has recently received 2 QOVFs that were undeliverable to the intended service member. Each of these quilts had the names of the person who was to receive them written on the label and the return address was the main QOVF post office

box. In both cases I took the liberty of opening the letter sent with each quilt to find contact information. I contacted the quilters and asked if they would like the quilt returned to them or a new label attached and sent along to another service member. Each opted for the latter and I re-labeled them. Perhaps, sending a permanent fabric pen with the quilt and leaving a space for the recipient to add their name would be a better choice. But, please make sure you have included contact information somewhere with your quilt.

Lenny Truitt

Mission Statement

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 (QOVFS). **This foundation is *not* about politics. It's about people.**

Podcasting- Video Interviews



Interviewees needed! Email Catherine to schedule your interview today! We know you have a story to tell! cath@QOVF.org

Now Playing: Join Catherine for her interviews with:

Rev Liz Wold - Rev Wold is an interfaith minister, chaplain, red cross volunteer and most importantly, a Gold and Blue star aunt. You will be uplifted and inspired by her. You will also feel your heartstrings being tugged.

Steve Wilson - Steve Wilson is retired Army. He now works in the eastern Pennsylvania VAMC as a patient transition advocate. He talks about his background, his warrior patients and how working as a Point of Contact (POC) for

Quilts of Valor has impacted warriors, families and his work.

MB of Thangles - I have the pleasure of interviewing MB of Thangles. If you don't know what Thangles are, stay tuned. They are sold worldwide and have made sewing half-square triangles easy as pie. MB has also created a QOV pattern using Thangles which you can find on our website or hers



Having problems navigating the QOVF Website? What areas are you having problems with? Please let us know.



Contact Us

Editor: editor@QOVF.org

Your feedback is invaluable.



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.

Statistics

These are the latest statistics as of 5/11/09. It is difficult to get an accurate wounded number as it is for quilts awarded. We do know the two hallmark injuries of this war are post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Total QOVs awarded..... 21,239

*Iraq/killed (US) 4,292

*Afghanistan/killed (US) 682

*Wounded Many

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

