



SUSAN GORDON NAMED NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Eric McCarty

It is my pleasure to announce that Susan Gordon, previously Quilts of Valor Foundation Destination Coordinator and State Coordinator for Georgia and North Carolina, has accepted the QOVF Executive Director position effective September 1 after June Moore's retirement.

Susan graduated from Florida Atlantic University with a degree in English education and from the University of Tennessee with a master's degree in adult learning. After graduation, she worked in the University of Tennessee's Department of Continuing Education, creating non-credit programs and events as well as recruiting teachers. Before retiring in 2005, Susan worked as an international trainer in leadership development and strategic planning for corporations. She has enjoyed using skills she learned in that role in planning



Susan Gordon

QOV retreats, helping groups get organized, and networking.

Susan got involved with Quilts of Valor because of Carlie Nichols, who has headed up the QOV program in western North Carolina for some time. She got more deeply involved a few years ago when Founder Catherine Roberts invited

volunteers nationwide to make Autograph Star blocks and send them or bring them to Washington for a sewing weekend. Washington was too far to go for Susan, so she asked some of her friends in northeast Georgia if they'd be interested in making blocks. They went to work.

Susan and her husband Bud live in Georgia. They have one son who is currently finishing a graduate program in school counseling.

Now, please join me in thanking June Moore (june.moore@QOVF.org) for her leadership during the past two years and congratulating and welcoming Susan to her new role. Susan can be contacted at susan.gordon@QOVF.org.

(Editor's note: Eric is QOVF Board of Directors president. He and his wife Michele and their two children live in Columbus, OH. Eric is a pilot at NetJets and enjoys spending his off time with his family traveling or out on the water. His email address is eric.mccarty@QOVF.org.)

FROM THE QOVF LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

By Susan Gordon

Welcome to a brand new column for *Quilts of Valor Threads*. I've called this column "From the QOVF Leadership Circle" because I see those of us in leadership positions encircling you at all times, whether you need specific help, or simply to lift up your efforts on behalf of the QOV Foundation.

Over the next few months, I will call upon various members at the leadership level to share with you what each is doing to support you and the growth of Quilts of Valor Foundation. Each will describe how she or he may be of service

to you, whether you are by yourself in your own sewing room, whether you are part of a group that wants help with fundraising, or whether you just need ideas to attract more sewers and quilters in your area. Each one is a national-level resource, just as your state coordinator (SC) is your most local resource.

As you probably know, 2013 is the tenth anniversary of Quilts of Valor Foundation. In ten years, the circle of our foundation has widened to include over 10,000 quilters and over 1,000 longarmers. As of this writing, we—meaning all of us: those of you at the local level, our QOVF State Coordinators, our national volunteers, and our board of directors—have awarded almost

90,000 Quilts of Valor to combat service members and veterans. You are an amazing group, and I am proud to have the opportunity to represent you to the world. I hope to be able to meet many of you in the coming months.

In October, you'll hear from **Sharon Ledbetter**, our Idaho State Coordinator. Sharon has recently accepted the position of Director, receiving the baton of leadership from Karen Demaree of Wisconsin. In the next "From the Leadership Circle," column, Sharon will share a little bit about the day-to-day operations of Quilts of Valor Foundation. She is always available to hear from you at sharon.ledbetter@QOVF.org

QOVF PARTNERS WITH OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

By Eric McCarty

Quilts of Valor Foundation embarked on a very special partnership this month. We have been fortunate to team up with a marketing class at Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business. Over 40 undergraduate seniors have been divided into eight teams by their professor and will be working over the course of the fall semester to research Quilts of Valor Foundation and deliver a marketing plan designed to grow and strengthen QOVF and ultimately help us fulfill our mission to men and women who have served in harm's way and have been touched by war.

The eight teams are already hard at work and, if you are one of the volunteers

who has agreed to be on the contact list, a student on one of the teams may reach out to you soon to learn more about our great foundation. The students will be asking questions about why you volunteer or how you view the impact of QOVs. Many thanks to all of you who said "yes" when asked to be a resource during this initiative. Your help is much appreciated!

At the end of the semester, in December, the eight teams will each present their marketing plan to members of our board of directors and other leadership. We will have the honor of recognizing one team as standing out from the rest. I could not be more pleased about this special opportunity and look forward to reporting to you about it in coming months.



Several members of the QOVF leadership team met at Ohio State University August 27 to introduce Quilts of Valor to a class of marketing students. Pictured are Heather Raynack, Ohio State Coordinator, Susan Gordon, Executive Director, Eric McCarty, President of the QOVF Board, Di Richards, Coordinator of Marketing & PR, and Betsy Podriznik, Coordinator of Special Events.

SOMETIMES, WE RECEIVE LETTERS

By Jeff Thorne

Often, those who make QOVs never know who receives them. Other times, QOVs are acknowledged unexpectedly.

Recently, we received a letter of recognition from former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who saw Quilts of Valor on a trip to Landstuhl, Germany. He sought out Gwinnett QOVF Quilters because their name was on a label, and wrote asking them to let everyone at QOVF know how much "the support you provide to the troops and their families" is appreciated.

A DESTINATION FOR EVERY QOV

By Judie Yates and Jeff Thorne

In case you are curious about what your QOVF Destination Coordinator does, day-in, day-out, here's an update.

QOVF has standing monthly requests for 254 Quilts of Valor. Destinations in this number include Kandahar and Bagram in Afghanistan and three destinations in Germany. These quilts comfort recently wounded warriors. Additionally, we work with 14 stateside destinations that provide quilts to returning warriors and veterans with medical issues.

While your destination coordinator gathers these quilts each month, local

QOVF sew-in groups provide quilts for local veterans, individuals nominated through our website, and for large group events. This year, we have recorded an average of almost 1000 QOVs awarded each month, either at destinations assigned by the QOVF Destination Coordinator or reported as locally-awarded QOVs.

Think we have enough QOVs? We don't. American Combat Veterans of War (ACVOW) estimates there are between three and four million combat veterans in America today. The estimate of all living veterans is over 22 million. Additionally, 40,000 service men and women are currently deployed in combat zones.

Here is more destination info:

- Most QOV volunteers requesting a destination via www.QOVF.org request a location for a single quilt.
- Your destination coordinator assigns your QOV to a stateside destination near you, to save postage.
- If you want your quilt to go to a recipient in your home state, contact your state coordinator instead of the destination coordinator.
- Our overseas destinations request patriotic (red, white & blue) QOVs only.
- We have stateside programs that welcome generic and feminine-fabric QOVs, so we match up those quilts with them. We also try to place undersized quilts (smaller than 55" x 65"). Please let us know a quilt is undersized when you request a destination, and please adhere to size requirements as you make future quilts.
- Your quilt and presentation case should be washed, and a note from the quilter(s) written before you request a destination.

When it comes to our mission of "covering all combat service members and veterans touched by war," we have a big job. The impact made by a Quilt of Valor, whether awarded down home or down range, is significant. QOVF, through the efforts of our 10,000 volunteers, is felt worldwide.

(Editor's note: Judie Yates is Destination Coordinator. Her email address is judie.yates@QOVF.org. Jeff is a volunteer coordinator for the National Capital Region (Washington, DC). His email address is jeff.thorne@QOVF.org.)

QOVs AWARDED

AT HIGHLAND GAMES

By Marianne Elliott

“For uncommon valor, on and off the battlefield.” These heartfelt words opened the Frederick Celtic Festival’s 2013 Highland Games held in Mt. Airy, Maryland, earlier this summer, where four wounded warriors were presented Quilts of Valor. The men receiving QOVs were Mark Little, Jason Strum, Matt Ramsey, and Chris Carlsen, all amputees. Like the professional and amateur athletes present, these men trained for months to compete in the festival’s traditional Scottish athletic events. Both during competition and while present at the games, just as other participants wore kilts, these Army vets did, theirs in a camouflage pattern.

Southern Tier Quilts of Valor (STQOV) members drove from central New York to the Festival, showing their support of wounded warriors, to present the QOVs and spread the word about QOVF. Using a hands-on approach, this small, hard-working group set up a “sit and sew” station where folks could choose the pieces for a block, sign the block and sew, iron and display it, or simply pick the pieces, sign them, and let the

STQOV members do the sewing. When this quilt is complete, it will be presented to another deserving veteran.

The STQOV group also brought a pre-made raffle quilt and sold handmade cards decorated with patriotic-colored quilt patterns. Nominations for QOV recipients were sought; said nominations can be made by anyone: family members, friends of veterans, other service members, and so forth.

The QOV display booth was visited by many attendees, and the first Honorary Chair of the Games, Colonel Ramona Fiorey (Chief of Staff of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda), stopped by to speak with STQOV members and express her interest in quilting. For the first time, wounded warrior veterans from WWII competed in the games.

(Editor’s note: Marianne Elliott is a member of the Southern Tier QOV in NY and MSP Quilting Angels in MD. She and her husband, Bill, live in Frederick, MD. She became involved in QOVF about a year ago through her longtime childhood friend and avid quilter, Teresa Simmons. Marianne’s email address is Marianne@mmeelliott.com.)



Wounded Warriors Mark Little, Jason Strum, Matt Ramsey, and Chris Carlsen displaying their Quilts of Valor at the Frederick Celtic Festival's Opening Ceremony in Maryland. Photo by Bill Elliott.



Quilts of Valor booth display with “sit & sew” station, raffle quilt, and Quilts of Valor information available to all attendees. Photo by Jeff Thorne.

IOWA AMERICAN LEGION

AUXILIARY “DAY OF SERVICE”

By Ann Rehbein

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is the largest women’s patriotic service organization in the world. Boasting nearly 800,000 members, the ALA “is fiercely dedicated to serving, helping, and meeting the needs of service members, veterans, and their families.” ALA members in Iowa were looking for a spring 2013 statewide project and Quilts of Valor, and especially its “Under Our Wings” program, seemed like an excellent fit for a “day of service.”

An informational letter from the Iowa leadership was sent to all Iowa units (small groups of at least ten) explaining the project and asking for donations, hoping for enough funds to finance fifteen quilts. To the delight and humble appreciation of the Iowa ALA leadership, enough donations for forty-five quilts came in.

On April 27, 2013, forty-three participants met in Des Moines for a day of fellowship, giving, and quilting, resulting in many quilt tops. Also available that day was participation in the QOVF program “Under Our Wings.” Guided by an experienced quilter called a “coach,” a rookie quilter learns how to confidently sew patchwork blocks.

Six finished quilts were presented at the ALA State Convention in July to men of what Tom Brokaw calls The Greatest Generation—World War II veterans. “Thanking these men in their late 80s for their service was one of those rare life-altering moments,” commented organizer and presenter Ann Rehbein.

The QOVF connects people—quilters with longarmers, quilters with service members, and quilters with each other. To help extend those connections, the Iowa ALA presented the QOVF with a very generous check of \$3,000. The Iowa ALA has other days of service planned.



Coaches, Rookies, and other volunteers work on Quilts of Valor tops at the Iowa American Legion Auxiliary headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, April 27.



A WWII veteran receives a Quilt of Valor at the Iowa American Legion Auxiliary's State Convention this past July.

“QUILTED IN HONOR” NOW AT YOUR LOCAL QUILT SHOP

By Marianne Fons

Island Batik’s line of beautiful patriotic batik fabrics introduced at Spring International Quilt Market in Portland this past May are now available at your local quilt shops. The group of fabrics, called “Quilted in Honor,” is part of Island Batik’s initiative to raise money for Operation Homefront, the fundraising

organization that provides emergency and other needed support to families of military service members and wounded warriors.

A special label has been provided by Island Batik for our community to use when making a Quilt of Valor using the “Quilted in Honor” fabrics. The “two-up” label, available here, is a downloadable pdf that can be printed at home using an ink-jet printer and a printable fabric sheet.

STATISTICS

Iraq

Killed: 4,486

Wounded: Many

Afghanistan

Killed: 2,262

Wounded: Many

Suicides to Date:

30,137

Total QOVs Awarded as of 8/13/13

89,312

Reminders

Remember the R's

REGISTER Yourself, your group, or your shop as a part of the QOVF community.

REPORT quilts awarded directly by you or your group <http://www.qovf.org/quiltsawarded-report.html>

RECRUIT friends, family and locate organizations to donate time, talent and/or funds. We need Coaches, Rookies, Local Quilt Shops to cover all combat service members and veterans touched by war.



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Let us know how we can help you ...

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State Coordinators (SCs) are here to assist you establish new groups, help fundraise, establish new points of contact and to maintain QOVF standards. If you have any questions or need guidance, please contact the SC for your state. A full list can be found at <http://www.qovf.org/content/regional-coordinator-overall-view.html>

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

Newsletter

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The mission of Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover all those service members and veterans touched by war with wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor (QOVs). Quilts of Valor Foundation is not about politics. It is about people.