Analise Speaks

QOVF Newsletter  April 2008

Notes from Catherine...

Letter from Analise
by: Catherine Roberts, QOVF Founder  cath@QOVF.org

Given the state of affairs in my household, I am pleased to give this space to 17 year old Analise. She invites us into her world and by doing so, we get more than a glimpse of Analise's journey making her first wartime Quilt of Valor with her grandmother:

“Hi! My name is Analise and I'm 16 years old. Right now, my dad is active duty and we're stationed at West Point, where he teaches for two more years until we move to another assignment. Growing up, I've lived in ten different houses, six different communities and 2 different countries. This might seem a little odd to most people, but it's normal for my life as a military child. I remember on September 11, 2001, my dad was stationed at SHAPE, Belgium, working for NATO. When the attacks happened, I had just gotten home from school. All of our channels, which were limited to a couple foreign language channels and the AFN (armed forces network) channels, were all playing footage of the Twin Towers.

After completely shutting down post for a couple days, "normal" became a little different than it had before as ID cards became mandatory and words like deployment and temporary absence became more commonplace. I remember that the harsh reality of deployment first hit home when my friend's dad was deployed to Afghanistan. Luckily, he returned home within about six to eight months later with everything intact. I remember his first amazement when he came back and saw so much green.

Since then, I have had many more friends parents leave and stay longer. Dealing with the conversation "So, how's your mom/dad?" has become a little easier although the issue never gets nicer to deal with. Currently, I have two friends with deployed fathers and many with parents that are either waiting to leave or have just come back. It's not a happy situation but it has taught me about freedom in ways no other events could have.

Statistics:
As of April 28, 2008

IRAQ
Killed: 4,052
Wounded: 59,402

AFGHANISTAN
Killed: 494
Wounded: 7,795

QOVF
Quilts Awarded:
16,000

For much more information regarding the statistics from Iraq and Afghanistan, go to The Iraqi Coalition Casualty
and that without the brave men and women that defend our country, life would be totally different. As I grew older and became more interested in history and other countries, I began to see some of the differences between the United States and other countries due to the governments and their defense. Although I realize that our country isn't perfect, I have seen how different it can be. While I may think it's unfair that I have to wait until I'm seventeen to have my full drivers license or how I may like or dislike the upcoming move, I've realized that this is nothing compared to the sacrifices the soldiers in the Armed Forces make every day of their lives.

Being in the service is not a new thing to my family. With two great grandfathers, three grandfathers, one uncle, my father and my mother serving in different branches of the military, acronyms like TDY - temporary duty and BDU's - battle dress uniform (now I have to get used to ACU's - army combat uniform) were parts of my vocabulary ever since I can remember. Although it was weird having to explain to my friends why my dad would come home with black paint on his face or why I wasn't worried when I couldn't know all the details of his job, I've discovered that there's more to his job than that.

Everyone in the military has given up the chance they had to do something different with their lives to become a different person, a person that has agreed to give their life in the name of freedom for all American citizens. When I was little and my dad was be able to pull out different lines from the Commissioning Oath, I thought they were just phrases that had little meaning to me and my life, or even my dad's job. But looking back and hearing those phrases like "I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies foreign and domestic" mean that everyday he goes to work he is agreeing to put himself in a position to guarantee freedom for our country.

As a soldier in the Armed Forces, I appreciate that you have made one of the biggest sacrifices possible for one person to make. You have been part of something bigger than just a group of people; you have been a part of securing freedom for millions of Americans. As cliche as this first part of the journal may sound, the contribution you have put forth has helped secure freedoms put forth by the constitution for everyone called an American citizen.

I suppose now I should talk about the quilt. When my grandmother first
mentioned the idea, she told me she would appreciate it if I would do at least one quilt block for her quilt guild. This idea was appealing first of all because I enjoy spending time with my grandmother and quilting is a tradition she began passing down a couple years ago. The other draw to this project was the opportunity to do something for people who have done so much for my country. We went up to her sewing room and began looking at fabrics and patterns. I picked out the pattern and after deciding I wanted three colors, altered the pattern a little bit to work with the red, white, and blue fabric.

My grandmother began to take the position of overseer and instructed me on how to use tools such as sewing machines, rotary cutters and fancy rulers. This all came along with a new set of vocabulary words such as bias cut, half triangles, and seeing the difference in the woof and warp after making cuts. The Three Foot Rule came into play on more than one occasion: “If you can’t see the mistake from three feet away, don’t worry about it”.

Now it’s day three and we have five quilt blocks done. Today we have scoured Lancaster, Pennsylvania for fabric. We were somewhat successful and now just have to cut and sew some more.

I hope you enjoy this quilt as much as I have enjoyed making it.

Now, about a week later, I have made thirteen quilt blocks. It’s been an interesting experience. Learning about how to quilt and piece blocks together and thinking about making a quilt of valor has been unforgettable. I hope this quilt brings you comfort and that you know you have the appreciation of a country for all that you do and have done.”

It is now September and Analise is back in high school. All summer her quilt blocks have been in my sewing room, waiting to be put together. This week the time was right and I put the blocks together as Analise had wished.

She is a remarkable teenager. She learned a lot about quilting this summer, but she also learned about giving to others. It was a joy to see her learn new skills, fuss over colors, trying to make a beautiful quilt for someone special. As I put her blocks together I thought of all the family members who proudly served. Thank you for also serving.

May you have many blessed years ahead of you.

Analise’s Oma
MAKING THE WEBSITE WORK FOR YOU

We designed this website to work for you. It is an on-going project and changes as needed. A tool which can be very useful to you is our Local Group section which is headed by Katy Vickers.

It works this way. You are taken to a page where you will have three choices to choose from. The first choice is to “Register Your Group”. This choice will allow others in your geographical area to see that QOV has a presence and also will give information re: meetings or simply a contact.

The second choice “Start a QOV Group in Your Area” has how to information. Katy has given you lots of ideas plus an account of how they started their group in Kansas.

The third choice “Find a QOV Group Near You” is pretty self-explanatory. If you don’t find anyone near you, email Katy as she may know of people. You may wonder why more of our QOV community don’t register. I think one reason just may be that they aren’t aware of this need. We encourage all to register with at least an email address and/or phone number.

If you have any suggestions as to how this area could be improved, please let us know. We’re all ears! Email us!

FREE QOV PATTERNS-PIECED AND QUILTED

Did you know that we have free quilt patterns for piecers and for machine quilters? You can find these patterns on our website. Go to the homepage (www.QOVF.org) and look at the menu on the left hand side. Look for Patterns and click.

This pattern you see here “Valor” is from the pieced section. Daniela Stout of Cozy Quilts designed it especially for QOV.

Mary Lynn Slough took the Valor pattern and made hers for marines. She said is was fast and easy to piece and put together.

I saw it and it is striking. What I liked about it is you could make the pattern specific for a particular branch or service by keying in on specific colors and themed fabrics.

Mary Lynn is working this up to be distributed as individual blocks. You can email her for more information if you are interested. sloughml@verizon.net
QOV OPPORTUNITY QUILT WINNERS

Dexter Greer announcing the winners of the Opportunity Drawing at MQX 2008. For more of Jackie Dudek's MQX photos, visit http://www.flickr.com/photos/jackiedudek/

We have two winners!
The winning numbers were randomly selected at the Machine Quilters Expo on April 19, 2008.
# 6392  Margaret Bruns, Park Rapids, MN
#10718  CCC (Community Church of Columbus Indiana) - Kathy Fruhner, coordinator

QOVF NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!

We want whatever you have that will help get more wartime Quilts to our war wounded. Write your news/suggestions and send them to newsletter@QOVF.org. If you have pictures that you would like include here, send them along too.

UPCOMING!

Starting next month, we will have our annual QOVF fundraiser. I believe Memorial Day month is perfect for asking for donations to help support us at the national level.

CALENDAR EVENTS

I am going to ask that you refer to the homepage for upcoming events—look at the right hand column, lower right. You can also include your own event by registering with the site. By doing this, you have the ability to add your local event.
VOLUNTEER STAFF

CATHERINE - Founder/Director of the QOV Foundation.  cath@qovf.org
JUNE - Longarm Coordinator.  june@qovf.org
KATY- Coordinator of Local/Regional QOVF groups.  katy@qovf.org
MICHELE - Newsletter Editor.  michele@qovf.org
LENNY - Handles the books & answers tax donation questions.  lenny@qovf.org
LEZLEY - Coordinates QOVF efforts in Canada.  lezley@qovf.org
DEBBIE - Events Manager  Debscozz@aol.com

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

HOW TO DONATE

Since the QOV Foundation started out in November of 2003 as Quilts for Soldiers, we have run on a shoe string budget. Staff members work on a voluntary basis. The monies we received are directed back into the Foundation and used to increase our visibility.

The thousands of members in this group give of their time and money. To date, we have collectively spent over $2,880,000 dollars in making QOVs.

When you make a monetary tax deductible donation, you can request where it should go. The various choices are: administrative, fabric, shipping and printing handout literature.

You also can contribute fabric, sewing machines, batting and quilting threads. if you would like to go this route, please email Catherine at cath@qovf.org or call 302 236-0230.

Please help us keep this project alive and well with your tax exempt donation, visit www.qovf.org.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the QOV Foundation is to cover ALL combat wounded service-members whether physical or psychological with wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor (QOVs). The wounded service-members from the War on Terror or Long War are to be considered first and foremost.

The second mission is to teach our children how to sew QOVs. This skill will teach sewing skills in addition to encouraging civic involvement and volunteering for the betterment of our nation.

A natural extension of our mission will be to link up with our coalition countries and see that their combat wounded are also covered.

When all is said and done what we are doing is providing a means by which our combat wounded can have a better life. This foundation will do whatever it takes to reach this goal.