

Quilts of Valor Foundation NEWSLETTER

Quilting to Honor & Comfort Our Wounded

A Monthly Newsletter

March 2011

Returning Warrior Workshop

QOVF'ers from across the country supplied the 80 quilts for the returning Warrior Workshop in Pensacola, Florida.

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Elephants? Where?

Deputy Director, Lori Kutch has spinach in her teeth! Or, how to say "Thanks, but No Thanks!"

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7 y.o. makes QOV

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Granny Geek's Tools & Tips

Granny will return in the next issue with another tip!

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QOVF Staff

Meet your QOVF Staff and get contact information. Email us! We love hearing from you!

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QOVF BLOG

Please visit our Blog for more articles and Regional Information
QOVF.blogspot.com

Yes or No - Who Actually Qualifies for a QOV?

Ellen Patton has the job of Destination coordinator at QOVF. It is her job to assign our QOVs to their final destinations. Occasionally Ellen receives requests from individuals and she has to figure out if the request meets our Mission Statement of covering combat warriors and veterans who are/were touched by war. Making these determinations are not as easy as it may seem. A situation recently came up where Ellen asked guidance in how a certain case should be handled. I invite you to read it and see how you would have replied to Ellen given our mission statement [STATE MS]. The final answer is provided by Chaplain (LTC) John Kallerson with whom I started QOV with at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. (CH Kallerson was a line officer before being a chaplain. He also deployed to Iraq for a 12 month tour in 2008).

REQUEST for QOV to CONSIDER:

My husband served as an infantryman in the U.S. army in the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York in the early 90's. He

was shipped to Somalia in December 1993 to take part in Operation Restore Hope. I found an article on the 10th Mountain Division which explains (better than I could) what that entailed:

"The 10th Mountain Division's mission was to secure major cities and roads to provide safe passage of relief supplies to the Somali population suffering from the effects of the Somali Civil War. Due to 10th Mountain Division efforts, humanitarian agencies declared an end to the food emergency and factional fighting decreased. When Task Force Ranger and the SAR team were pinned down during a raid in what later became known as the Battle of Mogadishu, 10th Mountain units provided infantry for the UN quick reaction force sent to rescue them. The 10th had 2 soldiers killed in the fighting, which was the longest sustained firefight by regular US Army forces since the Vietnam War."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2nd_Brigade_Combat_Team,_10th_Mountain_Division_United_States

My husband also received additional training as a combat medic and provided medical care to wounded military personnel as well as wounded civilians. For his service, my husband was awarded the Combat

Infantryman Badge(CIB)as well as the Armed Forced Expeditionary Medal.

Upon my husbands return to the States, he had a difficult time adjusting after everything he had seen and done. He was sent to see a psychiatrist by his Commanding Officer. He was diagnosed with PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) which subsequently ended his military career.

To this day, he still suffers from anxiety related to his experience. He has received counseling over the years and has been placed on various medications to help control his anxiety.

ELLEN'S QUANDARY:

I need an opinion. As you guys know I'm a real stickler for making sure requests that are granted fall within the mission statement we have. You can read the email and then ask yourself several questions--those that I have been asking myself and which I am now asking you. My heart says yes he should have one. My head says that he does not qualify under our mission statement. Somalia wasn't a war zone so wounds sustained while serving there wouldn't qualify under our mission statement. If we do in fact decide to step outside of our statement in this case then are not the flood

doors opened for all our warriors who have been wounded in any way in any area where the military decides to send them--including those that are wounded in training accidents right here in the US? Or what about those that have served in a war zone but their injuries are not because of being in the war zone but just because they are in the military. Case in pt: WWII man served on the Missouri in its engine room and now has hearing loss. OK, that loss would have occurred wherever the Missouri sailed because that was the nature of being in the ship's engine room. (I didn't assign him a QOV.) Back to this email tho....I have turned down others that have served in foreign countries because they weren't in a war zone so should I do the same here? If I don't then how can I turn those others down in the future? My head goes round 'n round with this.

I'll await your opinions.
Ellen

PS Maybe this goes all the way to the basic question of do we need a new or different mission statement?

Those of us who received Ellen's email answered with our own perspective. It was Chaplain Kallerson's response that answered her question with understandable rationales.

CHAPLAIN KALLERSON'S REPLY

I can certainly appreciate your concern about guidelines for determining who deserves a QOV. Yours is not an enviable job. Here are my thoughts.

If you choose to go by the letter of the law, neither Vietnam nor Korea were declared wars, they were "police actions or conflicts". Obviously we want to honor those veterans, as I believe we should.

That being said, what if we used a guideline, whether written or understood that awards quilts to those wounded or touched by actions in which purple hearts were awarded (not necessarily to the specific quilt recipient). A purple heart is not awarded for training accidents, only for wounds inflicted by an enemy. Purple hearts were awarded in the battle of Mogadishu because the battle was fought with an enemy, so I would recommend awarding this veteran a quilt. This guideline would also cover those Special Ops Soldiers who are wounded on covert ops.

This brings up another possible situation. Do you award a quilt to a service-member wounded in the Ft. Hood Massacre? There is currently a bill moving through Congress to award those wounded the Purple Heart and benefits that they would receive if wounded in a "war zone". Personally I believe they should be awarded a QOV, as they were attacked by an enemy; however that is another grey area which you may chose to address now or wait until the situation presents itself.

As for the machinist on the USS Missouri during WWII requesting a QOV. Many of those brave men suffered hearing loss because of the concussions of the constant guns firing, which would not have occurred if they were not in a war zone. They experienced the horrors of war, even if their place of duty was in an engine room. We recently awarded QOVs to an entire Marine Battalion, including the mechanics, mail clerks, and cooks because someone requested that every member of the BN receive one, regardless of their injuries or jobs they performed. QOV initially awarded quilts only to Purple Heart recipients. It was later expanded to include those who suffered mental injuries and/or PTSD. It was then further expanded to veterans of previous conflicts. I would suggest that opened the way for anyone who has ever been in a combat zone to be awarded a QOV I would strongly suggest we award a QOV to any surviving WWII veteran that requests one, just as we do for our Vietnam and Korean War vets. I think that many quilters would be proud to know that their quilt was presented to a WWII veteran.

Personally, I do not feel that any one person should have the pressure of deciding which conflict is worthy of a quilt and which ones are not. We have already presented quilts to those severely wounded, those with PTSD, those who served in wars 40 years ago, and those who simply deployed with their unit and survived the horrors of war with no distinguishable problems. We cannot put that genie back in the bottle. I would much rather award a quilt to someone who felt that it's comfort could help them heal, than tell that person that they are not worthy.

With respect for all you do,
CH (LTC) John Kallerson

We believe you will come to see the issue as we now do, and understand the mission as Chaplain Kallerson so aptly

stated it: The mission of the Quilts of Valor is to cover each of our service members and veterans who have been wounded or touched by war with a healing and comforting Quilt of Valor. It is neither our place nor business to judge the warrior. I believe it is our business to serve our nation and one way is by making healing and comforting QOVs.



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Gulf Coast Honors Returning Marines

QOVF quilters across the country provided the 80 quilts presented at a USMC Returning Warrior Workshop January 28-30 in Pensacola, Florida. The event provided topics designed to help the attending Reserve Marines reintegrate with their families and local communities.

At the Saturday Banquet of Honor, they received awards from the Marine Corps and then were gifted with the beautiful patriotic quilts that had been hidden at the back of the room. The response to this surprise was an awesome experience as well for the four local quilters who attended as representatives of all the contributing quilters.

"Their first reaction was an astounding "This is for us? WOW!," said Roberta Spheh of Foley, Alabama. "Then they gave the quilters a standing ovation. Later we all received many hugs and individual thanks."

"They are all so young to have seen so much," commented Ginger Maddox who brought fellow quilters Lynette Caulkins and Kim Colpitts from the Flying Needles Quilt Guild of Niceville, Florida. "The recipients appreciated the amount of work in the quilts and were pleased to be able to thank us in person."

The four women agreed it was a blessing to be there. Maddox had also volunteered to serve as the collection point for the majority of the quilts while Spheh collected quilts from Mobile and Pensacola. Once again, the QOVF quilting community showed its continued support for our military servicemembers who sacrifice so much and for their families who also sacrifice much during deployments. (cont. on our [blog](#).)

Leading the Elephant out of the Room

or How to say “Thanks, but No thanks”, or “Excuse me, you have Spinach in your teeth!”

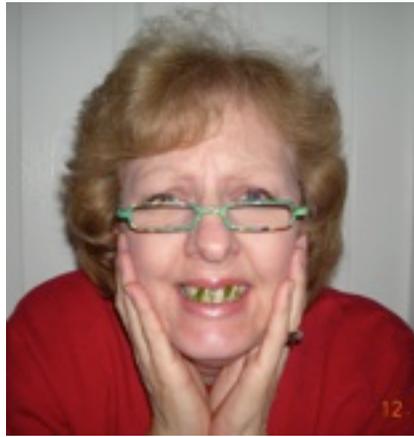
After the article I wrote regarding Quality Control issues was published (December QOVF Newsletter) it had a very favorable response; I received a lot of “thanks for saying what needed to be said”. I also had some comments and questions as to how to deal with the saying “Thanks but no thanks” part.

Let’s play “Let’s imagine”....

Imagine you have been out to lunch with a group of friends, had a wonderful chatty time and a delicious spinach salad, parted ways with hugs and agreements to meet again real soon? When you get home, you discover you have a nice big green chunk of something stuck in your teeth! What is the first thing that pops into your head? “Oh no, I wish someone would have told me!” or maybe, “Yikes! I wish I would have known I could have done something about it.”

Back to the reality: To be informed at the time may have caused an awkward moment, a bit of discomfort initially but saved a lot of embarrassment and further humiliation in the long run. You probably would have been grateful, Right? Isn’t saying “thanks but no thanks” really the same thing?

I think we all agree that our product is special. That those who have stood in harms way deserve the finest our talents and resources can provide. With that comes a responsibility to follow the guidelines provided on the QOV website. www.QOVF.org. It also comes with a responsibility to educate others. How can volunteers follow the guidelines if they don’t know what they are? It is pretty easy to make printed copies of the guidelines available to volunteers or refer them to the website. These guidelines have come from feedback from piecers, quilters and from those who actually distribute the quilts. They are not in place to make life difficult or be critical. They were designed as parameters to make a product that can actually be used and provide comfort to



an adult recipient. By following the guidelines there is a consistency in the quality and size of our product and a huge reduction of confusion. By following the simple guidelines our product makes grade and becomes QOV label worthy.

OK, so what happens if you get a quilt or donation that is outside the parameters or doesn’t make grade then what? (You risk that awkward moment and point out the spinach in their teeth.) Kindly and gently guide and educate. You will have to take responsibility to point out the guideline. Does it make size, has it been washed and dried, is it appropriate for an adult, is it labeled properly, does it have a presentation case? The alternative of not telling is continued production of product that is going to have to be culled and sent else where or continued frustration of having to do the fix up /clean up repair work! Would you rather be in charge of that? By just being appreciative of the effort but honest can save everyone from wasting time and energy and resources shuffling stuff around that is not going to make the cut. It is going to save you time and energy of trying to figure out what to do with the stuff that doesn’t work. This same rule can apply to fabric and other material donations. If you know that it is not going to be something that can be used, it is OK to respectfully decline. It is OK to direct them where it might be used and appreciated. It is OK to share your wish list of what you really need. If someone really wants to be helpful they will understand and be agreeable. (In other words...it is OK to be a good friend and tell them they have a big green blob in their teeth! They will thank you for it.)

The responsibility and commitment to following the guidelines and being honest and up front with those who are not aware of or not following the rules is especially

timely with the launch of the “Under Our Wing” promotion. We have wonderful educational opportunities with the introduction of our mission and mentoring (Coach) possibilities for new quilters (Rookies). It is critical that we get them off to a good solid start so they can confidently join us in our efforts.

We have entered a new year full of opportunities to share, educate, enlighten, encourage and rededicate ourselves to our guidelines and mission to honor and comfort those touched by war.

Let’s get the spinach out of our teeth and go forth and conquer!

Lori Kutch
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Riley makes a QOV



For more pictures of Riley and his QOV story visit our Blog: www.qovf.blogspot.org



Quilts of Valor Foundation

News from National. Editor's Corner. General Info. Keeping you in the Know.

Statistics



Iraq Statistics

Killed - 4,432
Wounded - Many

Afghanistan Statistics

Killed - 1,448
Wounded - Many

QOV Statistics

Total QOVs Awarded - 37,993

Awarded this week -
Awarded this month - 1,563

We need significantly MORE QOVs.

Please keep up the good work and we'll keep covering our nation's war wounded.

Reminders



Remember the **R's**

REGISTER as a member of the QOV community <http://www.qovf.org/localqov-list.html>

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

Request Destination form. If you don't complete it before you submit it, it does not get sent, recorded or received.

RECRUIT friends, family and locate organizations to donate time, talent and/or funds.

UNDER OUR WINGS

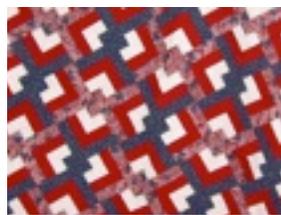


Under Our Wings

No Matter what your skills are, you can be a part of this fabulous program. The concept is simple and does two things: first, makes more QOVs; and second, brings non-sewers into our quilting world using American Valor Fabrics for QOVs. Which in turn supports local quilt shops.

Please visit the QOV website to register and learn more www.QOVF.org. To find a local UOW Quilt shop in your state visit www.qovf.org/localqov-list.html

Longarmers!



Please take the time to make sure you have read and understood the message at the top of the "Request a Longarmer" form. If you work with a group, please make sure all toppers are reminded.

From the form: Check list to make sure you are ready to send your top to a longarmer: You have read [Overview of the QOV Process](#) and [The Team](#)

- Your top is pressed, free of odors or pet hair (due to allergy concerns), and threads are trimmed.
- Your backing is 6" to 8" longer and wider than top.
- Any seams in backing have selvages trimmed.

Regional News



Many additional stories including Regional News can be found on our blog: www.qovf.blogspot.com

This month's articles include:

- Gulf Coast Honors Marines
- Riley's QOV
- News from Region 1
- Article & pictures from Gwinnett QOVF Quilters
- Links to articles about
- 4H Nebraska's QOV efforts
- Seamstresses in Temecula CA and their QOV mission

Please visit www.QOVF.org to do the following:

- Register yourself and/or your group
- Sign up for newsletter
- Find out about requirements
- Get a longarmer
- Get a destination
- Report Quilts Awarded if you did not go through the Request DestinationForm
- Learn about Under Our Wings
- Use the Contact Us form or telephone number if they can't find an answer to their question
- Volunteer as a longarmer
- Contact their regional coordinator
- Inquire about volunteer opportunities

QOVF Volunteer Staff

Let us know how we can help you...

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For more information regarding QOVF Structure and Volunteers, please visit:

<http://www.qovf.org/content/about-us.html>

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Regional Coordinators

RCs 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 RC assigned to your state. A full list can be found at <http://www.qovf.org/content/regional-coordinators.html>



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Mission Statement

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



Please Remember...

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Contact Us

Do you have comments, questions, concerns about an article you've read in a QOVF newsletter? Please feel free to contact us at newsletter@QOVF.org. We welcome your input and thoughts regarding the topics that matter to you most.

Donations

Please visit our website www.qovf.org/index.php?page=donate for more information regarding Monetary and/or Fabric donations.