

QOV Ruffled Feathers October 2005 Newsletter

ONCE UPON A TIME...

Once upon a time, a long long time ago, there was a kingdom called Quiltland. Because of various war lords in the surrounding lands, Quiltland had been forced to defend its borders at great expense. Many of its fine young men were either killed or wounded. Quiltland's King and Queen's only son was among the wounded. Although he was attended to by the best physicians in the land, he lay in a deep sleep.

One day as the Queen was walking the streets of her kingdom, she happened upon an old crone. The crone stopped the lovely Queen and begged an audience with her. The good Queen leaned over to hear what she had to say. In a trembling and aged voice, the haggard woman said the only thing that would heal her son was a quilt that had enough love and prayers sewn into it to waken him.

The Queen cried aloud because at last there was hope. She ran all the way back to the palace with her attendants flying behind her to tell the King of this good news.

The King had his proclamation posted throughout the kingdom. "The quilt-maker who awakes the prince with her quilt will be his bride." No sooner was the proclamation made than you could see the maidens of the kingdom busily picking out their fabrics and designs for the prince's quilt.

It seemed as each quilt-maker was devising more intricately designed patterns than her neighbor and creating colors beyond the rainbow. Each maiden was sure her quilt would awaken the prince!

One poor and unfortunate young maiden named Gretchen lived outside the palace proper. She also wanted to make a quilt. But, alas, she only had enough fabric for the top of the quilt and that was not very regal.

That night when she fell asleep, she dreamt of a design for the quilt which she had never seen before. But what was more curious than the design was that there was a lamb lying ON top of the quilt! No matter how much she tried to shoo the lamb off the top, it would not budge.

The next day after her chores, Gretchen drew out the design she dreamt the night before but without the lamb. She got her fabric, measured and cut it and then sewed by candlelight. She prayed for the healing of the prince. In fact, she found that she was not only praying for the prince's healing but for the healing of all the young men who had been wounded in this terrible war. Tears welled up in her eyes and fell upon the top she was sewing. She wanted so much for her quilt to comfort the prince but knew she would never have enough material to finish the whole quilt.

Back at the palace, one young maiden after another went to the King and Queen with their lovely quilts. The King and Queen had never seen such delicate stitches nor colors which made the heart yearn. The Queen would expectantly put each quilt upon the sleeping prince but nothing happened. Every maiden in the kingdom and beyond had made a quilt but none had woken the prince.

Meanwhile, Gretchen had finished her top and it lay neatly folded at the end of her bed. There was a knock at the door and Gretchen opened it to find the old crone who had had the audience with the Queen.

"My dear, I am so old and withered that I suffer mightily whenever the weather turns cold like it is now. The only thing I have to keep me warm are these rags that you see upon me now. Do you have anything that will keep an old woman warm?"

Gretchen took pity on the old woman. For some reason Gretchen's eye caught hold of her quilt top but she could not believe what she saw. There was a lamb on top of it sleeping peacefully. She took a second look and the lamb was gone. Having looked at the quilt top, Gretchen knew what she had to do. She walked over to her bed and picked up the folded quilt. She turned around and as she was giving her beloved quilt top to the crone, she felt something very soft and warm in her hands. She looked at the quilt top. It was the same. But something was different underneath. She turned the quilt over and saw that her quilt had a backing. It was a sheep skin!

She then looked up and the old woman had disappeared. The next thing she knew, Gretchen was at the palace before the Queen with her quilt. Befuddled and confused, Gretchen made some incoherent remarks. The Queen couldn't understand what she said but saw the folded quilt in her arms.

"Oh, another quilt! I thought there weren't any more." The Queen took the quilt and unfolded it. The top was exquisitely pieced and the back? The backing was like none other the Queen had ever seen or felt! It was so soft and warm. The Queen walked over to the sleeping prince and put the quilt over him. No sooner had the sheep skin

touched his face and body then did the prince stir. Suddenly the prince was sitting up asking where he was and what had happened.

The prince and Gretchen did marry. Peace finally came to their kingdom. And, from that time on, Quiltland always had the most beautiful quilts and backings that were the softest and warmest to be found in all the lands around!

And, who knows when another prince may need awakening.

The End.

LATEST NEWS

Last week I had a full agenda. I was finally able to meet CH Kallerson at Walter Reed after two years of emails and phone calls. Lisa Langlais and I were taken on a tour of the hospital and were able to be present when seven qovs were awarded to wounded servicemembers. One young man, not old enough to buy a beer, broke my heart. He was so cordial in spite of his pain and then very grateful for the qov. Families and recipients were very surprised to receive your beautiful qovs. The staff at WR are very caring for our men and women and they seemed like one large family.

Last Friday night here in Georgetown, Delaware, Col. Oliver North presented Helen Ruiz' QOV for a navy seal, Mr. Toboz to Mr. Toboz' parents. (Mr. Toboz could not attend.) The Delmarva Christian High School had Col. North as their featured speaker and they were gracious enough to invite us so Col North could present and award this QOV to Mr. Toboz' parents.

I will be leaving for Houston and the International Quilt Festival next Wednesday. I am very thankful to Quilts, Inc for donating the booth and handouts for us. I am hoping to inspire many more quilt-toppers and longarmers to make quality qovs as the need is great. Because of the need for handouts, I have come up with some 'stuff'. I will have downloadable handouts for you on the website.

JUDITH KOCK of 2 RIVERS

Please contact me. cath@govf.org

MYSTERY QUILT

Thank you Nancy for completing our second mystery qov quilt. We will be having a new one after the new year starts up. I had much fun and looked forward to each Friday when the new clue would be posted. If you haven't done a mystery quilt, I suggest you try it. I think it will grow on you. You can check it out here:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/quiltmystery/>

LONGARMING EXPOSURE

Our group is unique in that a qov team consists of a quilt-topper and a longarmer. Many of us quilt-toppers have not had our quilts professionally machine quilted and our QOV longarmer is our first exposure. This relationship is doing two things. It is opening up our eyes to the *unlimited possibilities* the longarming world has for us and two, it is also making our QOVs sing and shine like no others!

On a practical note, because of this newness it is important for the longarmers to tell the quilt-topper exactly what you expect in terms of backings and tops.

June Moore is now settled in her role as longarmer coordinator. She has had an unprecedented number of longarmer requests this month. The word is spreading. Her email is: lacoor@comcast.net.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

I am a proponent of using quality fabric and supporting your local quilt shop. I am also finding that if you are using quality fabric AND making many qovs, it gets costly. The backings are what are the costliest. Given that this is America, I am thinking that some enterprising person(s) could supply our qov needs with deep discounts.

If you are a quilt shop owner and would like to take advantage of this opportunity, please let me know. I will be happy to post your website under a separate section for 'gives QOV discounts'. I would love to see minky included among the discounted fabrics.

QUALITY QOVS EXPOUNDED

Are you tired of hearing about this? A couple of weeks ago, a woman emailed me demanding to be taken off the mailing list because I insist on using quality fabrics/battings. She hurled insults at me saying her fabrics were just as good as anyone else's and that she was going to join another group who wanted her and her quilts!

I responded to her saying as long as the fabric is 100% quality, I don't care where it comes from. I have bought good quality fabric at Wal-mart. My recommendation is to CLOSE your eyes and FEEL the fabric. If it isn't soft and pliable, forget it.

LABELS

The VA Medical Center in Los Angeles has specifically asked that you only use your first name and city/state. This is for your safety. This is the only center that has requested this. What do I suggest? You can wait til you get your final destination. If it is going to Los Angeles, be circumspect. Otherwise you can put whatever you want. Sorry to be so vague about this but I am only the messenger. Even if you are vague re: your name, etc, you can include a letter for the chaplain/service director that gives that information.

SHIPPING & NOTIFICATION

If there is one cockroach bug in this program, this is it. We all spend a lot of time and expense making qovs. We want some evidence that it arrived safely to its intended destination. Here is what I suggest and there are no guarantees that come with it.

Use your shipper's tracking and insure your package. Take a pix of the qov. Include a stamped/self addressed postcard inside the package that is easily seen! Make it a no-brainer to find it. Put a note saying something like "please put this postcard in the mail when you receive this." If you want someone to contact you, you must include your name, address, phone number and/or email. Now having written this, I can say that some of you will NOT get your stamped self-addressed envelope back. This is the nature of the beast. The chaplains/service directors have the best of intentions of getting back to you but sometimes something may way-lay them and then it's unintentionally forgotten.

STATS

I urge you ALL to go to <http://icasualties.org/oif/> often. A good guideline to calculate wounded is to multiple the number of killed times ten.

Iraq (OIF) (10/20/05)

Fatalities 1,992

Wounded 15,220 (10/14/05)

Afghanistan (OEF)

Fatalities 246

Wounded 583

Total QOVs awarded.

3,099.

I know this number is much higher. This 3,099 is the number that I have from your reports to me. I know many send their qovs out on their own.

SPECIALTY QOVS NEEDED

Patriotic QOVS are still the number one desired qov. Also, there is a need for women's qovs, texturally rich qovs, Lone Star qovs for Native Americans.

NEW PROJECT IDEAS

For those of you who are hyper-manic, I have a couple of suggestions for needed projects. One such need is something like QOVs for Viet Nam vets. Anyone interested?

QOV BOOK-WARTIME QUILTS % THEIR MAKERS

I have had several of you email me re: this. I also have several submissions of qovs with photos and journals. This is fantastic. I am thinking next year I will compile the book. I will probably self-publish. If you are interested in submitting your qov for this book, please consider this. You must keep a journal. Take pixs throughout the process. Contact a professional photographer to get pixs taken. They are very open to do this. Who do I think would be good candidates for this book? I'll give you a couple of names/ideas.

Jan and her crew up in Alaska. Making qovs during the long dark winter.

Flossy-a 91 year old quilter.

Louise -a retired nurse, quilt designer and longarmer in Montana.

Shy Judy and her New York Beauty.

Ron, a longarmer who pushes the quilting pattern's envelope.

Mr. Lee-a WW2 marine vet who makes and quilts his qovs for marines.

Helen who made a qov for a navy seal silver star recipient.

I can see children's groups here.

And, the list goes on. What I am saying is that each and every one of us has a story to tell. Your stories of making wartime qovs need to be told. I am committed to this venture.

LASTLY

I have heard from many a Viet Nam vet that they are grateful that the OIE/OEF vets have something tangible that says "thank you". Don't be fooled into thinking there isn't a great need for qovs just becuz you don't hear much about the war. I realize there is much competition for your quilts and that is why I am especially grateful to each and every one of you for participating in this wartime effort to comfort and honor our wounded.

Most respectfully submitted,

Catherine Roberts

Founder Quilts for Soldiers