Running From Deadlines

Deadlines for our newsletters come in the form of Jan’s emails. They are always very polite and never worded with “you’d better get this done yesterday”. So, yesterday in the late afternoon, I sat down out here in the PawPaw Patch (my office) and read your articles and news from our community of Wartime Quilters. Once I started, I couldn’t stop reading. I bet you can’t just read one story!

Beth Sizemore tells a moving story about a young Marine whose parents came from Africa in *Quilts of Valor Touch the World*. Then for those of us who think we can’t do some QOV activity, she relates how she rose to the occasions. Now think, end of summer and sand underneath your feet. Susan Slaninka, our Journal Guru, takes that end of summer image and relates it to journaling for your QOV recipient. It is such a simple thing to do. Sand, cicadas and sitting down at the sewing machine. These seemingly simple stories help put a real person behind the QOV. Judy Teeples relates how her son John, an ultra-endurance runner ran 270 miles in four days for House of Heroes, a non-profit to help veterans. He did this in Georgia, in the heat, humidity and rain. *A Recipe for a Day to Remember* by Vicki Lemire and Janet Dugre describes their remarkable QOV Award’s Day in New Hampshire last Fall. As I read it, I marveled at how much 2 individuals drive could affect so many. So as you read it, don’t rule yourself out for doing the same time! Read it and think, “I can do that!”. Julia Schroeder (a most petite wartime quilter) takes on Quilts of Valor Legion Riders (read 6 Harley’s) with the Legacy Quilt of Valor raffle quilt.

In keeping with things military, our newsletter also includes authors who deal directly with our combat warriors in a non-quilt way. This month, we hear from Karen Fredrickson, Jan Bradley and Carole Crabtree. Karen Fredrickson is back with her Downrange column, telling us about the first 1/8 Reunion in DC this past July. Jan Bradley writes how she and her husband, General (RET) John Bradley are winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people with their new non-profit Lamia Afghan Foundation. And Carole Crabtree, a nurse who works at a VAMC, talks about Suicide Prevention for our combat warriors. Even
though this is not a subject that many like to talk about, it’s one that we need to know about. I feel this is timely and valuable knowledge for all of us who interface with our combat warriors.

Then you’ll read QOV news stories from Across America and Letters to the Editor (which I always find interesting.)

I wager you will be inspired with this month’s newsletter. I hope you’ll take that inspiration and do something to honor and comfort our combat warriors. Send care packages, adopt a servicemember, make a Wartime QOV for someone who has been touched by war.

Still at war; still quilting,

_Catherine Roberts_ (10/10)

_Executive Director/Founder, QOVF_

It was my privilege recently to present two quilts to two of our nation’s heroes. One quilt, made by Casual Quilters went to Jeremy Earl, whose family has been in the USA for several generations. The second quilt made by Wanda Donhne, Lona Schwab and Betsy Haney (Texas) went to John Okpara..

John is very special to me in several ways. First, my parents got to know his parents when they went to Nigeria to serve as missionaries for a year at the Baptist seminary in Ogbomasha, where Ibiba, John’s father, was going to school. Later they helped Ibiba and his wife come to the United States to attend school. While they were here John was born and they named him for my father.

Although John Okpara is an American citizen, he was raised in Nigeria. When it came time for him to go to college, he returned to the USA and enrolled at Middle Tennessee State University. To help pay for his education, he joined the Marines. He had only been in school for a couple of years, when he was sent to Iraq and was in one of the worst battles fought in Fallujah. He is now back home in Nashville and continuing his education. He plans to start his Master’s degree soon. Once his degree is completed, he plans to return to Nigeria.

At a Christian conference I attended years ago, it was pointed out that many of our world leaders have studied in the USA, Fidel Castro being the prime example. I wonder how many of those world leaders have served in our military. Could some of our current problems be results of how we treated our returning veterans who fought in VietNam? We may never know, but I do know that more than likely, some of the members of the 3/8 Marines at Camp LeJeune are internationals. If they return to their country to be leaders, will they respond to the USA in a positive way because of the QOV they received...tangible evidence of our gratitude for their service?

It is so easy for us to make assumptions. We can assume that if someone returns from war with no physical damage, that they are okay. It is so easy for us to assume that the only ones fighting for our freedom and our country are native born Americans. We can’t imagine what any of them have been through because we haven’t experienced it. The only ones who can are the Vietnam vets and veterans of other wars who are turning out record numbers of quilts.

I know a young man, a student from Columbia, not even an American citizen, who is serving in the US Army. He may someday have to hold his buddy (a US citizen) as he is dying. And yet he continues to serve honorably, just like all of his American military buddies.

Or what about the young woman, who has to leave her husband and two children behind, while she goes where our military sends her for over two years? What happens as she views first hand some...
of the atrocities of war, even though she never fires a single shot? How does she handle the adjustment issues when she returns home?

The military tells them to “Suck it up!” and we tend to have the audacity to indicate that unless there are physical wounds that there are no wounds. Shouldn’t we take the opposite approach? We can honor their service, just like we honor those who have obvious wounds. We can present a quilt to them and give them a “hug” from Americans, who are using this unique opportunity to say, “Thank you for your service.” It doesn’t undo the pain of the horrors of the war or undo the emotional distress that they have had to endure. That quilt serves as a physical reminder. A reminder, that somewhere in the USA, there are people (who they don’t even know) who put in the time and work and love necessary for them to know that their sacrifices have not gone unnoticed.

Neither John, nor the young man from Columbia, may become a world leader, but like the young woman, they too will go on to make an impact on each of their small parts of the world. In each case, their sacrifices have been very real and they have made them for all of us.

Beth Sizemore
Knoxville, TN

I decided in this month’s column to give you an example of what I do as I begin another Quilt of Valor. I cut out the pieces of the quilt and when I’m done, I write a short message to the person that might look like the entry below. I may not write in the journal every time that I work on the quilt, but I try to include at least 4-5 pages of journal to send along with the Quilt of Valor when it’s done. For those of you who are struggling with this piece of the Quilt of Valor process, I hope that this helps a bit. For those of you who are doing similar things, I would so appreciate it if you would email examples from your own journals to share with our readers in the future.

Simply write me at scsvu@juno.com and I’ll be glad to publish your journal entries in future issues.

“Summer is near an end and for those of us who live near the beach, this is a bittersweet time. We are sad that the summer is coming to a close since the weather is so beautiful here this time of year. The summer months bring with them so many wonderful activities. Family and friends visit often during the summer season and it’s wonderful to be able to share the beach experience with company. The sunsets are awesome and the flowers are blooming everywhere. I know that I never tire of the feel of the sand underneath my feet; the smell of the sea air; and the sight of the ocean waves. This is truly a slice of heaven.

On the other hand, we are happy to see the summer end because when the summer visitors leave the area, we can get back to normal. Getting from place to place won’t take quite so long; finding a parking place will suddenly become a breeze and as an added plus, the parking meters are taken away off season so we can park for free; walking and running on the boardwalk also become possible again since the crowds are gone; and of course the beach is filled with quiet and solitude which for many of us is why we moved here to begin with.

As I write this entry, I can’t help thinking of you as you serve our country and want to thank you so much for your service. I’m sure that for you the experience is also bittersweet and that you might be able to share both positives and negatives related to your duty time. Please know that those of us at home in the United States appreciate the sacrifices that you make as part of your service. Being away from family and friends I’m sure is difficult at times and yet you know that you have a duty and responsibility that far surpasses anything we could possibly imagine. I am writing this journal as I sew a Quilt of Valor for you. I hope that by reading my journal you will get to know the person at the other end of this quilt and feel a connection with those of us at home. See you tomorrow when I pick up this quilt again.”

Susan C. Slaninka, EdD, RN
Adjunct Nursing Professor
Villanova University
As I finished my Quilt of Valor for The Village Quilters challenge, I thought about the upcoming Memorial Weekend and what our plans were. Our oldest son, John was running across Georgia from Fort Benning to Tybee Island, Georgia in four days, 270 miles. He is an ultra marathon runner and was looking for a new challenge. He wanted to accomplish more than just finish his personal goal, he wanted to help somebody. A running buddy mentioned that he should raise money with this run for House of Heroes. The HOH provides minor repairs and improvements to the homes of veterans or service people and their spouses, at no cost to the veteran, through the generosity of individuals, civic organizations and corporations, (www.houseofheroes.org). We had planned to meet up with him for part of the race. I thought it would be great to bring the quilt my quilting friend and I had made along to the race and add to its’ history.

So we met John and his entourage, Melissa, his wife, Sam and Emma their children, Anna our daughter who came along to help Melissa with driving a rented RV and keeping plenty of hi-energy snacks and drinks available. Several of his running friends from Columbus, GA came to run sections of this trek on Saturday and Sunday. Rod Price from Fort Benning had heard about this run and took his own time to ride his bike the 270 miles with John. They ran on back roads through the small towns of Georgia. John ran about 70 miles a day in very hot and rainy weather. When Sue Gerkin of HOH saw the quilt I had made for QOV, she said how nice it would be if it could go to the veteran whose home John will work on this fall. I had committed this quilt to Quilts of Valor, but was so overwhelmed by the QOV luncheon our guild had and the surprise visit from Catherine and Gail on their way to deliver the quilts to Camp Lejeune, that I thought why not make another quilt for House of Heroes.

Besides raising blisters, John was able to raise over $15,000 for HOH through pledges. To learn more about Run for the Heroes and see pictures along the run visit www.runfortheheroes.com.

Besides John’s accomplishment, I was most proud of him when asked by a local TV reporter, “What do you expect to get out of this run?” John’s answer was, “You don’t understand. This is not about me, it is about the veterans, the men and women who have given up so much for us and our country.” Last week I took 12 quilts to Columbus, GA. Ten quilts were made in our guild’s sweatshops, one by Carolyn Hampson,
Recipe for a Day to Remember
from: Vicki Lemire & Janet Dugre

*Take one small idea
*Let it simmer until it grows into a big one
*Add hard work and tears
*Stir in love and patience
*Shake until stubbornness and resistance are dissolved

End result: A Quilts of Valor Presentation that blew the socks off everyone involved.

Janet Dugre and I recently put together and hosted a QOV event that has never been seen in New Hampshire before. Since we had no idea where to get the names of wounded current war veterans, we contacted our local Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC). After our meetings where we explained our mission, we came to a mutual plan of how to proceed.

Jan and I had very strong ideas on how we wanted this event to unfold. First, and most importantly, we wanted the veterans to agree to be there and be comfortable about it. That was a big thing in itself. As most of you know, most of our service men and women don’t feel like they deserve special recognition. They feel they were only doing their jobs. Luckily, we were able to craft a letter that the VA sent out for us inviting our heroic men and women to receive a quilt. (A couple of the veterans actually told us that they attended because it was a QOV event, not a VAMC event...imagine our surprise – and pleasure!)

Each quilt was accompanied by two certificates, one from Janet and I on behalf of QOV, the other was signed by the VAMC director. Each quilt that had a tag on it was personalized to the veteran and was wrapped in a ribbon with a prescription tag attached. It looked like a big present. And judging from the response, it was well worth the time and effort to personalize each quilt.

We presented over 230 quilts that day. Since it was Gold Star Mothers (GSM) Day in New Hampshire, we put together a very emotional and moving slide show presentation which contained pictures of our NH Fallen Heroes, both in their uniforms and more importantly, candid home photos which showed what our guys were really like. The songs used as background were perfect. We worked very closely with guild member and one by me. These quilts will go to veterans in the Columbus, GA area that will receive help in home repairs by House of Heroes.

John plans to run the 270 miles next Memorial Day in a relay format. I plan to make a quilt or two for House of Heroes besides another quilt for Quilts of Valor. This was truly a meaningful experience.

Judy Teeples
Georgia
Have you ever felt like you have been sucked up into a tornado and just waited until it finally turned you loose to only discover that you don’t know how to act without the tornado around you? Well that’s kind of how I feel. Little did I know when I asked a simple question that I would get sucked into a whirlwind (sometimes called Catherine and Gail) that not only would challenge the heck out of me, but that would be the best roller coaster ride in the world.

The question: “Are you going to have a QOV booth at the AQS show in Knoxville in July?” I thought that I sent that in as a general query in April. I think Gail responded with something like: “We don’t have plans for a booth, but why don’t you put one together?” Well, my response was: “I have no experience with anything like that, so no thank you, but keep me in mind as a volunteer, if you do have one.”

The next thing I know, I’m getting an email from Gail asking if I would be willing to be the contact point in the Knoxville area for the Trip Across America. After I was told that it would mean that I would have quilts sent to me and I just needed to get them to the QOV team in Knoxville on June 11th, I thought, “What’s the harm in that? I can do that, although I was up to my eyeballs in completing a 776 recipe cookbook for my church.”

We did not want to make anyone uncomfortable, but we felt very strongly that we must remember our Fallen Heroes. (We got a lot of hugs and thanks afterward.)

We put together a program booklet that was given out to each of the recipients and their (over) 500 guests. In the program, we listed each state where a quilt had originated from (39!!) each recipient’s names as well as our Fallen Heroes’ names. (We also made sure to put “qovf.org” at the bottom of each page so everyone who read the program could find us.)

One of our National Guard units agreed to perform the presentation of colors as well as the retiring of the colors and benediction from the state chaplain. June Moore, QOV’S longarm coordinator, was in town that day and did a fantastic job of telling the audience what QOV was all about.

We had two photos stations set up where each veteran could have his/her photo taken with their quilt and loved ones. It was phenomenal!

The day was very emotional, very draining and oh, so worth it. In fact, we’re now in the planning stages of doing it again. We have 64 RSVPs so far, and that’s even before the official invitation letters go out.

We cannot thank June and the rest of the QOV community enough. Through your help, support (and quilts), we were able to host an event that will be remembered by all who attended for a very long time.

So when you see the SOS come out from us again asking for quilts (and it will be coming shortly—see page 33), please know that your help is truly appreciated by both of us and our veterans.

God Bless.

Vicki Lemire & Janet Dugre
Quilts of Valor, New Hampshire

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Vicki Lemire & Janet Dugre
Quilts of Valor, New Hampshire

Are We In Kansas Yet?
from: Beth Sizemore

Have you ever felt like you have been sucked up into a tornado and just waited until it finally turned you loose to only discover that you don’t know how to act without the tornado around you? Well that’s kind of how I feel. Little did I know when I asked a simple question that I would get sucked into a whirlwind (sometimes called Catherine and Gail) that not only would challenge the heck out of me, but that would be the best roller coaster ride in the world.

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Shanna Brown

Emily, Beth and Kate at QOV booth at AQS in Knoxville in July. The quilt made by Wanda (Texas) will be presented to a Tennessee warrior later this August.
Then it was: “By the way, Beth, do you know a hotel where we can stay?” From that point, the water only got deeper. I realized that as I watched the blog, they were hoping for escorts, media events, and no telling what else. Well, God has really got a sense of humor. He just looked down at me and chuckled, then told me that I had more contacts than I thought possible. What resulted was a major media event, a humvee escort, hotel expenses paid, QOVs presented, Quilt of Valor Day being declared in Knoxville, a trip to Camp Lejeune and an experience of a lifetime. (See Beth’s article in July’s Newsletter.)

When Gene, my wonderful supportive husband, and I got back from Camp Lejeune, it seemed impossible to let the experience go. I got to thinking, “So what’s a little booth at AQS compared to the challenges we’ve already had?” The next thing I know, I’m trying to convince AQS to let us have a booth free of expense. Well, I have to admit, I didn’t have enough clout, but Gail once again jumped to the forefront. The next thing I know, we have a booth, Jan called for volunteers and I had people contacting me from Texas to North Carolina. With two new wonderful friends (Ella Waters from Heritage Quilters in Athens, Tennessee and MJ Sepples from Tellico Village Quilters in Tellico Village, Tenn.) by my side, we pulled it together in short order. That seems to be the name of the game in our area when it comes to QOV. I had about three weeks to work on Catherine’s and Gail’s entrance into Knoxville and three weeks to put the booth together. And I’ve only done two QOV’s myself. This just goes to show that everyone can play an important part in this organization. It doesn’t just take quilters to make it all work.

Well, I’m proud to report, the booth was a success on many fronts and we have at least two new QOV groups starting in our area. We have the location for a third group in Knoxville, but we still need an organizer. I’ve got a whole new group of friends in the wonderful volunteers who manned the booth. A special thanks goes to: Ella, MJ, Margaret, Joni, Emily, Kate, Gene, Wanda, Rosalie, Chandrea, Mary, Jean and Sharon.

I’d also like to report that I’ve finally forced myself to slow down (although I dream about QOV in some way almost every night) and I’m working on some things that don’t relate to QOV. But never fear, it’s lurking in the future. One of the proudest moments I had was having two of my granddaughters, Emily and Kate, and my husband by my side working the booth. Part of what the girls did while manning the booth was work on our next QOV project.

Our biggest thrill was our granddaughters’ last night with us, when we presented a QOV (one that hung in the AQS booth) to a precious young friend who is returning to Iraq as a medic on his second tour. Approximately five minutes later, we stood in the dark with friends, the young medic and his wife and watched the Space Station fly overhead. I think it will be one of those nights that will stay in our memories for a long time. I’m so glad that I got to share it with those I love.

Who said, “Retirement is boring?” You just haven’t hung out with QOV folks very much. We may not be in Kansas, but QOV has just had a huge boost in Tennessee.

Watch out, here we come!

Beth Sizemore
Knoxville, TN

To me, a Vet is a Vet whether they fought Germans, Japanese, VietCong, don’t forget the Korean War Vets, Afghans and Iraqis. The women who flew planes to wherever they were needed during WWII are my heroes. The women nurses in VietNam are to be admired. These women broke down so many barriers as well as doing the jobs they were assigned. The women soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan are opening doors and performing heroic deeds and suffering quietly.
June 9, 2009, Quilts of Valor Across America stopped in Lincoln, NE. It was my pleasure to arrange for our local Legion Riders to escort the caravan to the International Quilt Study and Museum. That day is a heart felt memory for me, not only because we quilters were accomplishing something many thought we could not, but because of the veterans I met! These men have served our country honorably and continue to serve by escorting our fallen soldier’s home and participating in local and state Veterans’ events and many parades.

The picture was taken the following day, when Quilts of Valor Across America was leaving Lincoln. Catherine suggested I make a quilt for these guys ... QOV makes a great raffle item, she suggested. Captain Chuck smiled and mentioned the Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund. Each year the Legion Riders across the county hold events to raise money for this fund so that children of fallen veterans may attend college.

Later in June, I met with the Legion Riders to plan our Legacy Quilt of Valor. I was rather impressed that evening--these men had good ideas and did some research on what they wanted for their quilt. Do ya know what it’s like to have 6 Harley’s come roaring into your driveway??? Wonderful!! My hubby and I loved it!

Their quilt will be twin size, a center panel of navy blue, approximately 40 by 60 inches, with Legion Badges, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Battle Field Cross. With some special quilting, they want STARS. That much was decided in one 1 hour session.

By the end of August I, had designed several sample quilts in EQ5. Mr. Brehm contacted me; he had received the badges that were ordered. We met and I sent with him the printouts of my quilt samples. The Riders decided their favorite was the navy blue center, inner border of flags on a light blue background (block size of 6 ½ by 6 ½), a 2 inch border of white then outer border of solid red. So now I have a task before me to be completed by January 2010.

To learn more about the Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund go to: http://www.lincolnalr.org. Make sure you look to the right; you will find a video of Quilts of Valor Across America.

Julia Schroeder
POC - Quilts of Valor Across America
Lincoln, NE

Some weeks ago, I had the blessing to award a QOV to my brother who served in Vietnam. He was honored but said “I was not wounded.” I told him he was, however, changed by having served and that was enough for me to realize he needed a quilt. By the way, I have heard that he proudly shows his quilt to everyone.
Thank you Quilts of Valor! Thank you for including Charlie, me and Joana! We thoroughly enjoyed the USMC Commandant’s reception and Evening Parade and our tour of Gettysburg. We are sorry that we were unable to accompany you to Walter Reed, the Pentagon, Capitol, and Arlington National Cemetery. Not enough time, too many people to see, but we are truly grateful for the time we were able to spend with each of you.

We three spent our time in DC making up for some of the things we were unable to do when we were there in early July. We three are Charlie and me (USMC Aunt and Uncle) and Joana. Joana’s brother served with our nephew and her brother lost his life in Fallujah, Iraq on Thanksgiving Day 2004.

As some of you know we, and an amazing reunion committee, recently hosted the first reunion of our 1/8 Marines, Sailors, and Gold Star families, their first reunion since the 1/8 deployments to Iraq in 2003 and 2004. 1/8 has been to Iraq three times since the 2003 and 2004 deployments. We focus on the men who deployed in 2003 and 2004 because our nephew served with them. And we focus on them because they went to hell and back. And we focus on them because we know them and they are amazing! And we focus on them because our emotional resources would be more than depleted if we tried to give back in a very personal way to additional Marines, Sailors, and Gold Star Families. The men who served in 2003 and 2004, their families, and the families of those who died are a family, truly, a family!

Our nephew has deployed to Iraq with the 1/2, twice, and we certainly did what we could for them. He is now an SOI instructor in California and we wholeheartedly support him and his family and will always support them, no matter where they may be or what they may be doing. Our 1/8 Marines and Sailors have gotten out of the USMC and moved on to civilian life, have joined other branches of the military, or have moved on to other USMC battalions or billets. No matter where they may be, no matter what they may be doing, we are here to cheer them on or lend a hand as needed. They know that.

When I say “we” I am not referring to Charlie and me, I am referring to wives, parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, grandparents of those Marines and Sailors who served with 1/8 in 2003/2004. We all share an experience, a time when those we love were in harm’s way. We share the memories, we share the anxieties, and we share the struggles, the good times and the bad. And we share the loss of outstanding young men who defy description. People ask me if every battalion is just such a family, if every battalion remains connected, if every battalion has an email network, if every battalion continuously works on projects to make sure the Marines who died are remembered? I don’t know the answer to that question but I certainly hope that every battalion is that connected.

The 1/8 2003/2004 reunion was held in Arlington, VA from July 2 through July 5. Our home base was a hotel in Arlington, not too uncomfortably close to the crowds. The Evening Parade, a Washington Nationals baseball game, presentation of Honor and Remember Flags to the families of those who died, and a buffet lunch, were the highlights of the reunion. Or were they? In actuality I think that the highlights of the reunion were the reuniting of Marines and Sailors with their brothers and the reuniting of those young men with the families of their brothers who lost their lives in Iraq.

Each event was optional; the Evening Parade might be too military for some, the baseball game was followed by fireworks and some can not bear the sight and sound of fireworks, the presentation of the personalized flags to Gold Star families was more emotional than we could have imagined, and far too emotional for some to witness. Hours and hours of free time were available to those who attended so that they could choose their own activities and so that they could spend time with people of their own choosing. And most took advantage of every hour of the day and night. There was very little sleep! The anxiety of seeing one’s combat brothers again was intense, too intense for many who felt they could not attend this reunion. The anxiety of seeing the
families of those who died, of talking to the families of those who died, was so deep, and again, kept many from attending. Many Gold Star family members could not face looking into the faces of a battalion that no longer included their son, their brother. These anxieties will keep many from attending future reunions, many Marines and Sailors, and Gold Star families will never be able to face a reunion. And even though we understand that we are sad. I hope that this reunion was a positive experience for all who attended. The guys told us they could not believe that they felt like no time had passed, that they picked up right where they left off with their buddies. They told us that they were relieved to see that the Gold Star families are ok, that they could laugh with them, and others now feel that at the next reunion they may be able to walk up to the Gold Star families and talk to them. The Gold Star families are grateful beyond words that they were able to be in the presence of young men who served with their sons and brothers. Please understand that this was not easy, the emotions felt during the reunion came from the deepest parts of our hearts and souls. But the hugs, the grasp of the hands, the tears, are first steps. We pray that more Marines, Sailors and Gold Star family members are able to take that first step at future reunions.

This reunion was far better than any of us could ever have imagined that it could be. One Marine told me that “everyone who attended this reunion will be at the next one and we will make sure that those who were not here know how great it was”. A Gold Star mom tells us that “her heart is full of so much more love since meeting everyone at the reunion”. So many did not want to leave, did not want it to end.

The one thing we all know is that we are a family! We are always available to each other. Weeks and months can pass but each one can pick up the phone and call any time, day or night, and encouragement and love and complete lack of judgment will be waiting at the other end. I do hope that every battalion has just such a network, is just that kind of a family.

To all who donated money, books, gift bag items, thank you! To Holiday Inn Arlington, George Lutz, Bob Ford, Susan Warren, Chaplain Denis and Karen Cox, and all of our reunion committee members, thank you! To the Marines, Sailors and families of 1/8, thank you will never say enough. You are the best!

To those who send care packages to “our” 1/8 Marines and Sailors who now deploy with other units, thank you!

To Quilts of Valor, thank you for allowing us to stand in the shadow of your family, and thank you for covering our Marines and Sailors with your warmth, love and gratitude. We were truly humbled and honored to be included with you as you visited Washington DC and presented QOVs to so many who serve us all.

And to who all who serve: military men and women and their families, thank you and,

Semper Fi!

Karen Fredrickson
From Downrange
The Lamia Afghan Foundation is an all volunteer, not for profit foundation, registered and chartered in Tennessee---Founded by Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley (USAF - ret) and Mrs. Jan Bradley to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan, especially the widows and children. We also support our military serving at Forward Operating Bases all over Afghanistan.

We airlift our aid through Denton Airlift(USAID) into Kabul, Afghanistan. We are partnered with the President of the Afghan National Olympic Committee for distribution of our aid. This aid will be given to the most needy people in the most remote areas of Afghanistan. Distribution will be video-taped and media attention brought to the work of The Lamia Afghan Foundation.

We are partnered with the Minister of Education and we have his blessing to build schools wherever we choose----which will be in remote areas. The Minister will provide the land and the teachers for us.

We will build our first school in Shakarak where LAMIA lives--the little girl who is the INSPIRATION for the name of our foundation. It will be called The Lamia School. Lamia asked my husband for some boots for her little sandaled feet in the winter of 2007. The foundation is not about LAMIA, even though my husband and I help her and her family on the side. The foundation is about all the children like Lamia in Afghanistan who deserve the chance to be educated and eventually help their country thrive again.

We have airlifted over 150,000 pounds of aid and have another 200,000 pounds waiting to go. Even though we will continue our humanitarian aid----winter clothing, blankets, boots, medical supplies and school supplies, we now would like to focus primarily on education --building schools, getting huge numbers of backpacks and school supplies and teacher supplies to Afghanistan. A child in Afghanistan will always turn down a toy or even a pair of shoes for a BOOK!!! Pretty amazing!!

The effort to "win hearts and minds" of the Afghan people is a huge part of the military strategy in Afghanistan. We need to support our military in their efforts to bring security to and support of the Afghan people.

Jan Bradley

Please visit our web site:
www.lamia-afghanfoundation.org
Recently, a young reservist, thinking of suicide, sought help at a VA facility. The building he entered was not a treatment facility, but he was given directions to the main center across town that could help him. He never arrived at the other facility. Instead, he went home and took his own life.

A recent study attributes the startling rise in suicides and attempts to lengthy and repeated deployments which undermine relationships at home. Financial problems, made worse by difficulty finding employment after discharge, add to the burden. Depression, substance abuse, survivor guilt . . . the list of causative factors goes on and on. Other factors associated with an increased risk for suicide include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), physical health problems and anger management issues. Veterans with a psychiatric disorder are at even greater risk for suicide.

Combat veterans suffer mental health consequences of their battle experiences, but the rates of suicides and attempts are climbing with the recent Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) veterans. One theory for the increase in suicides is the improvement in trauma treatment. Soldiers in earlier wars saw horrific battle scenes, but were less likely to survive a close encounter. Another theory involves the training of soldiers prior to combat. Psychological preparation focuses on heightened watchfulness and hair-trigger responsiveness. Reinforced by repeated exposures to real threats, the brain of the young combat veteran has been re-wired permanently. The fast food debris on the side of the road may contain nothing but trash, but to the returning Iraqi veteran it looks an awful lot like the roadside bomb that dismembered his best friend as they rode along, talking and making plans for their return home together.

The Department of Veterans Affairs provides a Suicide Prevention Lifeline specifically for veterans: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**. The phone line is staffed by trained professionals around the clock. In its first year, approximately 62,000 veterans, family members, and friends of veterans have used Lifeline to cope with a crisis situation.

How can you help? Know the warning signs and provide the Lifeline number to anyone exhibiting them:

- Talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Trying to get pills, guns, or other ways to harm oneself
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide
- Hopelessness
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge
- Acting in a reckless or risky way
- Feeling trapped, like there is no way out
- Saying or feeling there's no reason for living.

Several factors have been identified as helping decrease the risk for suicide among returning veterans. A positive social support network, spirituality, sense of responsibility to family, children in the home, and pregnancy lower the risk. Therapy can help improve reality testing ability, positive coping skills, and positive problem-solving skills.

For more information on how to find help for veterans, the VA Suicide Prevention website is an excellent resource for veterans and those who care. The site, which includes a pocket resource tool and videos by Gary Sinise and Deborah Norville, is accessed at [http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/).

**Carol W. Crabtree, RN MSN**
Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Lexington KY
Editor’s Corner

Getting the Word Out

A few days ago I sat in a Doctor's waiting room and noticed a woman reading her quilting magazine. Later that day, I saw a car in a mall parking lot that read “Quilter.” I started thinking about all of the ladies who quilt that don’t know about QOV. I am now carrying copies of the QOVF “Quilters wanted” in my purse. When I see these cars, I put one of them under the wiper. If I see someone in a waiting room and they indicate they are a quilter, I'll pass along the information. If all of us who make QOVs did this we could recruit many more quilters to help us out.

Shirley Hammelef, Michigan

News from the Quilters Den - I am launching my involvement with QOVF on 24th September, when Smith Street, Warwick has a 'Ladies Pamper Day'. The Quilters Den will be inviting people to come along and make a 12” block from materials already cut out and showing for the first time, two quilts already donated. Tea and coffee and hopefully cakes will all be available for consumption on the day.

Anita Higgin, The Quilters Den Warwick, England

July Newsletter

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Catherine, I just finished reading the July Newsletter (through many tears and tissues). It was exactly what I needed on a quiet Sunday afternoon. 28 pages? Amazing. I read and savored every single word. You and the others who put the newsletter together really outdid yourselves. Since I don’t know anyone (other than my sister of course and her neighbor Susan S) involved in QOV, I really appreciate "knowing" these wonderful quilters through their words and pictures. I am so inspired when I read the letters and stories of what other quilters are doing. In this issue, I recognized some of our longarmers, some of the POC’s where we have sent quilts and a couple of quilters that I’ve sent fabric to. The newsletter makes me feel like part of the "family" of QOV. Thanks so much for putting it together each month. Like you, I am thrilled to see the participation by the young ones. I worked in a high school for over 30 years and I know that, given the opportunity, kids will dive right in to a worthwhile project. I hope more people who are working with our young folks will consider QOV as a community project. When the kids actually see where the quilts go, they get an even greater sense of accomplishment, I’m sure.

Sandra Hawthorne

I followed the QOV Roadtrip across America praying and crying all the way. I just finished reading the July newsletter and again cried all the way through reliving that fantastic adventure. (Thanks to the person who also said she cried, I don't feel so dorky!)

I am truly blessed to be involved with the Quilts of Valor Foundation. There are so many good ministries to be involved in to help others but QOV blends my desire to serve in a useful way with my creative talent working with fabric to make quilts. My husband and daughter tell everyone they meet about my quilts for soldiers. They KNOW that when I die my fabric stash goes to QOVF. Thanks for helping me find a totally fulfilling outlet for the talent God has given me. Thanks QOV Foundation.

Sharon Ball

Revision of Mission Statement

(Following are only a few of the responses received. Others have been placed throughout the Newsletter.)

“Thank you so much for the change in the mission statement. It is so much more now what I believe to be QOV to be about. My reality was different from yours in that I have been touched by war during the Gulf War and have friends who have been touched from the Korean Conflict forward. Just the other day, when I was filling out an employment application, they wanted me to classify my veteran status. I serviced during the Vietnam Conflict until after the Gulf War. I personally was appalled that I had to attempt to put a finite description to my service to my country. The Gulf War wasn’t even part of the list. Our own government has done/is doing enough disservice to our service men and women. I am proud to be part of a group that is doing it’s darnedest to recognize everyone.”

~

“Thank you, I really like the new mission statement. It truly does say what we are trying to do. I just awarded a QOV to my husband’s cousin who had been wounded in Vietnam back before I was
part of the family. He loved it, his wife loved it and I loved giving it to him. I decided to do that after you had emailed us with “permission” to give these out to veterans we knew. I hadn’t even thought about that until you brought it up. So thank you for all you do...

“I thought the change in the mission statement was great. Succinct and to the point. Even though I think of “wounded” as mental, emotional, and physical, the change in wording covers it all. I may need to revamp my recipient letter, or at least review it.”

“When I first found your QOV site I took to heart your suggestion to contact local VA hospitals and homes on my own here in Minnesota. I took your wonderful suggestion and went to work! I found veterans (most I’ve never met) of all conflicts and began making quilts to honor them. I found a family member who would help me make the vets quilt personalized just for them. Your encouragement has sent me on a mission to make quilts for veterans of WWII, Vietnam, Korean and the current Middle East conflicts. Thank you for making these changes in the mission statement for QOV. These changes have encouraged me all the MORE!”

“The email I received today has prompted me to write. I might have my thoughts a bit mixed up, but I believe the reason for the truck/trailer to travel across the US was to pick up quilts was they were going to be given in support of a certain platoon/regiment of non wounded soldiers. Are there so many quilts available that every soldier that’s been “touched by war” will receive a quilt? Isn’t every soldier who is enlisted touched by war in some way?

Yes, it would be nice for all of our military to receive something as lovely as a quilt for their contribution to our freedom, but from what I read there aren’t enough to cover the wounded. If quilts are given to those “touched by war” at what point do they receive them, upon finishing their commitment, or as soon as they feel they are touched by war? Are quilts given in the war zone or when they are on friendly soil? If they are on active duty where would they keep it? If they live in barracks are they allowed to have it out on their bed and if not do they have a safe place to store it? These are not just my thoughts and questions, they are the thoughts and questions of many quilters involved with QOV.”

“We too are touched by war because we care for these American Hero’s like our own sons. When I meet a Soldier on the street or usually in an airport when traveling, I tell them, “Thank You Soldier, You are an American Hero, God Bless You”. Most seem embarrassed, shy, or “It’s my Duty, Ma’am.” I tell them, “It’s My Freedom!”

I do like that we’re about tearing down walls not erecting them. While I have my doubts that we can ever stitch enough quilts for each person who needs one, I’m still willing to keep at it until someone somewhere says enough quilts already!

I am really touched by your new mission statement. It is just great! There is no other way to put it. Yes, there are many kinds of wounds, not all of them visible.

Very nice. The most important thing in all our lives is the ability to grow and change. Hopefully we are all better for it. This DOES make a wonderful organization a better one.
We are individual quilters in the Lewiston, ID - Clarkston, WA valley. Our communities are separated by the Snake River.

We have a passion for the QOV project. In an effort to involve more of the community, we have banded together to have a Block Challenge.

November 11, 2007 we presented our first QOV locally to Kenneth Parham. He was a Purple Heart recipient and had NOT received a QOV. We were aware there were many of our young men and women in the community having a difficult time adjusting after being touched by war. We were impassioned to keep our quilts local. We have well over 800 men and women serving in our area.

To-date, we have presented 100 QOV (more or less). The privacy act has hindered our progress. We rely on family members or friends to tell us about a soldiers return home. The QOV carries a label with the name of the maker and quilter. We also prepare a label with the rank, name and branch of service of the recipient. There are times we have less that 24 hours to get the label prepared and to present the quilt.

I would like to share some touching moments with you:

A young man returning home. He was a member of the Nez Perce Tribe. His quilt is now hanging next to the American Flag which draped his grandfathers casket.

Several mothers have told us they have awoke, in the morning following presentation, to find their son wrapped tightly in their quilt. They have slept peacefully for the first time since returning home.

LT Col Steven Hefflin, having flown many missions in Iraq and Desert Storm, is now retired from the Air Force and teaching aeronautics' at Clarkston High School. He is also the head of the ROTC unit. He wept as he accepted his quilt on behalf of all who have served in all branches of the military and in remembrance of those who did not return. It was made more special with his wife and children present.

Violet Opdal made a quilt she was going to present. At the last minute the soldiers orders were changed. He would be flying in to the other side of the state. His mother was going to meet him and have 1 day with him. She took the quilt for him. He wrote the most touching letter. "....quilt means more to me
that any of my medals bought at a store. This quilt was made by your own hands for me."

The quilt I started 1 year prior to presentation....I started it at a sew-in for QOV. The mother of Capt. Luke Wullenwaber, killed Nov 16, 2004, was at that sew-in. Leaving the sew-in I took my machine home, set up and started to work on the quilt. Something told me to put it away. I just couldn't work on it. Over the course of the year, I would bring it out and the voice would say........it is not the time. Sept 15 of last year, I was asked if I would be able to come up with a quilt to present to Capt. Wullenwaber's family on Nov 11........the voice said "now is the time". I can not tell you how it shook me to my inner core. He was with me every step of the way, finishing HIS QOV which is proudly displayed with his medals and picture.

Our motto is "Honoring Those Who Serve". These quilts are not comfort quilts. We are very adamant that these are quilts of honor and, in so being, deserve the best work we can do. They have given the best for their country, they, in turn, deserve the best from us.

Sharon Ledbetter
Coordinator
QOV Lewis-Clark

QOV Presentation
Idyllwild, CA

Our last community Summer Concert, held at the Idyllwild Community Center, featured the Marine Corp Band from 29 Palms. How fitting that the Mountain Quilters of Idyllwild were able to present Quilts of Valor to four young Marines who had just returned from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mountain Quilters are now working on quilts for the VA Hospital in Los Angeles for wheelchair patients. We will also be having a sew-in at the American Legion the end of September.

Mary Whittaker
Mountain Quilters of Idyllwild, CA

From left to right: Sgt. John Skaggs, Sgt. Steven Santiago, Mt. Quilters President Annamarie Padula, Sgt. Mark Stricket, and Sgt. Rob Brooks
On Monday, my husband and I stood in the pouring rain in Concrete, Washington with about fifty Veterans. We were part of a Flag Line for a fallen US Afghanistan Soldier. Jerry and I were honored to be asked to escort the soldier’s family to the service. We stood there for two hours holding our American flags in the downpour. To announce that this Soldier’s funeral was taking place, Concrete set off an air raid siren. Little did they realize that they caused fifty veterans to break into tears and, at the same time, fight back the flashbacks of their time in the Vietnam war -- hearing the air raid sirens before bombs and incoming rockets and mortar fell on them. The siren scared these veterans very badly. I could see that they are still on alert and very jumpy to this day.

After the funeral, we rode home with Ray to his house on the Skagit River. Ray had requested a quilt but never dreamed he would actually receive one. He was so excited. I just don’t have the words to tell you how excited he was. I’ve included some pictures that speak for themselves. The pictures don’t show it, but we were all soaking wet while presenting this QOV for the Foundation. I sure hope you know what a huge impact you ladies are having on these Vietnam Veterans.

Thank you for the honor of acting on your behalf.

Shelley Prentice
Washington

This is Gary from Sedro Woolly, WA. He wanted a quilt so bad and was sooo happy to get his. We made him wait to build his anticipation. He wouldn’t let me take his picture until he had fixed his hair properly.

Shelley Prentice
Washington
Greetings from Idaho Falls, ID from the Snake River Valley Quilt Guild (SRVQG). Our guild hosts an activity we call Community Support where we have so far completed and delivered 12 Quilts of Valor. We have at least 20 plus in the cue. These quilts have been delivered to the Salt Lake City, Utah Veterans Medical Center. We have received gracious thank you letters, and have been told by the Director of Volunteer Services in Salt Lake that “they LOVE the quilts”.

Our SRVQG guild members make the quilts from beginning to end. We slice up the strips, sew it together, assemble a top with borders, long arm quilt each one, bind and sew on labels. Every month, our QOV group meets with plenty to do. The pillowcases have been so much fun to make and we can now make them in our sleep. At our monthly guild meeting, we distribute little packs with strips and 3 -10” foundation pieces. Last month the guild members took home 45 packs. The response to this effort is amazing! Even some people visiting from out of town have donated great quality fabric because they love what the guild is doing for our war touched/wounded returning soldiers.

The guild’s website is: ifquiltguild.citymax.com and we have a special section dedicated to QOV.

The following words are used in our labels:

“This quilt was created especially for you. It is a gift of thanks for all you have done to defend and protect us. We want to express our deepest feelings of pride, respect, gratitude and affection for you through the presentation of this quilt. We pray that it will comfort you for all time.”

QUILT OF VALOR (in gold)

Date:

Dee Bowman
Idaho Falls, Idaho

I found veterans (most I’ve never met) of all conflicts and began making quilts to honor them. I found a family member who would help me make the vets quilt personalized just for them. Your encouragement has sent me on a mission to make quilts for veterans of WWII, Vietnam, Korean and the current Middle East conflicts.
Hill Air Force Base, in Utah, held its quarterly award ceremony last week, honoring the best of the best in 13 categories. Volunteer of the quarter went to Diane Jaeger of Quilts of Valor for her dedication of quilting for our military past and present. The week before she had won another volunteer award from the Ogden Air Logistics Center as well.

I was quite thrilled just be nominated and recognized for my work with the Quilts of Valor Foundation, I never had thought of actually winning. It is quite nice to know that the QOV word is getting out there in our area and having the support of Hill Air Force Base that help get the quilts to the regions of conflict that we are currently in.

Picture has one of the four QOV signatures and messages from around the world I have collected over the summer.

**Diane E. Jaeger**
Hill Air Force Base, Utah

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**Fall is in the Air**
**Valley Springs, CA**

Fall is in the air in Valley Springs, CA. Now that summer vacations have drawn to an end, we are looking forward to greater participation in our Quilts of Valor workshops which occur on the 4th Wednesday of the month at Belmont Quilts. A group of quilting ladies get together and work on QOVs, have lunch and work some more. It’s our way of keeping our warriors in our thoughts.

Recently we held a fundraiser in Folsom at a car show sponsored by the VFW. Homemade pies (apple, apple rhubarb, peach and apricot) and jams (peach in different varieties, plum strawberry and nectarine) were sold and funds raised to help with the cost of batting and fabric.

Members of our Loose Threads Quilt Guild, Sue Macias, Cathy Morris, Maria Aquino and former members Daisy Kasun and Lynne Storm designed and appliquéd a quilt that members Cathy Morris and Gail Belmont presented to the Woman’s Memorial at Arlington during a recent trip to Washington DC. The quilt also had a label with a picture of Cathy’s Mom, during her service for our country. We are quite honored to now have 2 quilts hanging in our nation’s capital -- it joins the one in the 9/11 display at the Pentagon. Both of the...
In May, the NE Oklahoma Quilts of Valor group, that meets at SewFlakes Quilt Shop in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma sponsored a challenge to all wartime quilters to make specially designed autograph star blocks using red, white and blue fabrics. Le Ann Weaver, owner of Persimmon Quilts in Claremont, OK, offered her longarm services to assemble blocks mailed to her into quilts for eventual presentation to wounded service personnel.

We are currently planning our next Bunco Tournament – a Halloween Costume Party. We have a lot of community support for our QOV program and the Bunco Tournaments bring out a lot of folks looking for fun and laughs. There will also be a quilt to raffle with the winning ticket drawn at the Bunco Tournament.

**Trip Follow-up:**

*After his recent surgeries and hospitalization, Bob “Dad” Belmont was the center of attention at a recent family reunion and surprise 80th Birthday party celebrating with family and friends.*

Keep quilting for our warriors! It’s getting harder everyday for our servicemen and women and they must know they are not forgotten here at home.

*Debbie Anderson*

*Valley Springs QOV, CA*

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**Quilts of Valor Across America**

*“From the Center”*

**NORTH EAST OKLAHOMA QUILTS OF VALOR CHALLENGE**

In May, the NE Oklahoma Quilts of Valor group, that meets at SewFlakes Quilt Shop in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma sponsored a challenge to all wartime quilters to make specially designed autograph star blocks using red, white and blue fabrics. Le Ann Weaver, owner of Persimmon Quilts in Claremont, OK, offered her longarm services to assemble blocks mailed to her into quilts for eventual presentation to wounded service personnel.

The Tidewater Quilters Guild of the Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Chesapeake, VA area enthusiastically embraced the challenge and during the two July meetings 100 blocks were signed with expressions of gratitude and well wishes. Five quilt tops were made using the autographed blocks and the completed quilts were on their way to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Germany in early August. Longarm quilter Nancy Wines of Orange Park, FL and her sister Mary Lynn Slough of Virginia Beach, VA are seen holding one of the completed quilts. Additional information and instructions for the autograph star block can be found at [www.persimmonquilts.com](http://www.persimmonquilts.com).

*Mary Lynn Slough*

*Wartime Quilter*
In 2006, I finally had finished making quilts for all of my family members and was wondering what to do next with my quilting passion.

I was so inspired by Catherine Roberts’ suggestion to search out veterans who may be at our local VA hospital or VA home.

For my first assignment I made a flag-inspired quilt for a WWII USMC Marine Raider in our church congregation.

I call them “Honor Quilts”.

People ask me how I find the veterans to make quilts for and I have to tell them that really the Lord puts them across my life’s path. The quilts are always done in secret and usually I can find one good “spy” (usually a family member) to help fill in some of the details of the veteran’s service and their life. I research and find service patches, old uniforms, old photos transferred onto fabric, fabric maps that show a country where they may have been in battle and various other items in fabric form that portray the veteran’s life interests.

Since 2006, I have made well over a dozen honor quilts for WWII, Korean, Vietnam and Iraqi Freedom veterans, many of whom I have never met. This is my heart-felt way of saying to many vets who may never have heard these simple words, “God bless you and THANK YOU for your service to our country.”

Sandy Tuzinski
Bloomington, MN

PS: The new mission statement has encouraged me all the more to continue on my heart-felt and ever rewarding quilting mission!

Catherine, you touch so many lives with your passion, direction and encouragement. Thank you!

Recently, I took a Quilt of Valor with me to the Knoxville Quilt Expo and left it with Beth Sizemore to be awarded. I had asked her to send me pictures of the presentation ceremony. What follows is Beth’s message telling about the young Marine who received the quilt:

“Hi Wanda,

This is the presentation of your quilt to John Okpara. John is very special to me in several ways. First my parents got to know his parents when they went to Nigeria on their first sabbatical to serve as missionaries at the Baptist seminary where Ibiba, John’s father, was attending. Later they helped Ibiba and his wife come to school in the US. While here, John was born and named for my father. That also made him an American citizen.

He was raised in Nigeria, but when it came time for him to go to college, he returned to the US and enrolled at Middle Tennessee State University. To help pay for his education, he joined the Marines. He had only been in school for a couple of years, when he was sent to Fallujah and ended up in the worst battle in that city. He is now back home in Nashville and continuing his education. As I understand it, he will start his Master’s degree this Fall.

His plan is to get his degree in accounting and maybe start one of the first accounting firms in Nigeria. He is a dedicated Christian and a fine young man. It is my privilege to know him and I was honored to be able to give him a Quilt of Valor for his service to our country.

Thank you for giving me that opportunity.”

Beth

Wanda S. Doehne
Quilts of Valor Across America
“From the East”

Quilters Guild of Indianapolis Partnership
Indiana

(Article from Quilters World Newsletter)

A partnership between the Indiana State Museum and the Quilter's Guild of Indianapolis has resulted in 50 handmade quilts, which were presented to soldiers who were wounded serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. The ceremony was held on June 24, 2009, at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center. These quilts were given in the spirit set forth by the Quilts of Valor Foundation.

The partnership between the Quilter's Guild and the Museum was created as part of an exhibit at the museum in the spring of 2008. Museum visitors and school groups took quilt-block kits home to complete, and sent the blocks to the Quilter's Guild for assembly into quilts. The goal was to have enough for five to 10 quilts.

According to Joanna Hahn, program coordinator and Indiana State Museum cultural history specialist, "The response to the program was overwhelming, and the results more than exceeded expectations. It's amazing how much impact it has had. The 1,340 quilt blocks that came back were from 24 states, 62 Indiana counties, and from as far away as Bristol, England. More than 900 people participated in the sewing adventure resulting in 50 completed quilts for distribution." Once the blocks were sent back, the Quilter's Guild of Indianapolis volunteered hundreds of hours to stitch the blocks into quilts with a similar 4 by 3-foot pattern.

The Quilts of Valor Foundation has a mission to cover all war-wounded and injured service members and veterans from the War on Terror, whether the wounds are physical or psychological, with Wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor. As of June 29, 2009, this organization has donated more than 23,000 quilts to soldiers and veterans. If you are interested in being involved in this mission, go to QOVF.org to get more information. To learn more about the Indiana State Museum go to IndianaMuseum.org or IndianaStateMuseum.Wordpress.com.

Kathy Chiocca
Indiana
I was at a Christian camp for kids in northern Michigan, Camp Barakel, last week and had the privilege of meeting one of the Marines from the 3/8 that received a QOV quilt at Camp LeJeune....

This Marine's Uncle (Dave Proper) is the cook on the East side, where we were volunteering for the week. We'd called Dave while we were in N.C. and when we were in Camp, Dave said that's funny that I had two calls from NC in the same day....one from you guys and one from my Nephew.....that lead to questions about the Nephew....long story short...the Nephew was a QOV recipient.....AND he was spending a few days at Camp so we got to meet him and talk about the presentation...he was very excited and thankful for the quilt and all the efforts of everyone involved. He said he had his quilt on his bed even though he felt funny about using something so special. I told him QOV wanted him to use it and feel loved when he did.

How exciting to be a part of all this!

RuthAnn Palacios
Michigan

Our Guild, "Hearts and Hands ECA Quilters Guild", of Sanford, N.C. is going through an especially busy time right now, and for several weeks past, and several more to come. I hardly know where to start. Perhaps a few months ago when the idea of wildly decorated bra's to be raffled or auctioned, the benefits to go to Breast Cancer Research. Or when we were told that the Silent Auction would be Table Runners, instead of mini quilts and small wall hangings, and hang two weeks in each of several different Quilt shops for viewers choice votes. Or when our little Lee Regional Fair, hosted by the Lions Club, was moved back a month without much notice. Or Community service for a teen pregnancy clinic, Haven House family crisis center.

About this same time, we received the letter from Catherine, about the change of wording regarding Quilts of Valor and a few other very important points regarding the quilts. I have asked our guild editor to include the whole letter in our newsletter along with the QOVF web address.

This year I am the guild’s Fair Exhibit Booth Chairman. A member of the committee, Ann C. and I decided to use Quilts of Valor as the focus of our exhibit booth. One of the things we will focus on are the steps which go into making a quilt from piecing to longarm quilting. We will have folded fabric, fabric cutters, mats, rulers, ironing board (small one), small sewing machine, and hopefully a longarm quilting machine. We will have a backdrop with photos of family members who were in the service.

We have managed to interest more and more of our members in Quilts of Valor and will be displaying QOVF information at our Quilt Show in October. The theme will be "Quilts Where Memories Live".

Rita Armstrong

I have two brothers who were in the service in the VietNam era (Navy & Air Force). Both were affected by their tours of duty and although neither have physical wounds, I truly believe they are in need of their individual personalized acknowledgment of that time in their lives. I am in the process of making QOV's for both of them.
Quilting on the Line, a local quilt guild, had a dedication ceremony on August 5, 2009 for ten completed Quilts of Valor. The ceremony was performed by the Reverend Carletta Curley at the Slateville Presbyterian Church. These quilts are now ready to be given to wounded veterans.

In April 2009, twenty members of the guild decided to volunteer their time to make quilts for wounded service personnel from Iraq and Afghanistan. Quilting on the Line Guild, which has subsidized the effort, and the Delta Senior Center, which has given us a place to sew, has enabled 20 members to have at least 26 quilts at different stages of completion this August. We have sent one quilt to Williamsburg, PA and one to Delta, PA. Ten more will be going to Walter Reed Hospital in MD as soon as transportation can be arranged.

Participating quilters meet the first and third Wednesdays of the month at the senior center.

Everyone is invited to participate. Donations are needed to buy fabric and supplies and they can be sent to QOL, PO Box 81, Fawn Grove, Pa 17321.

Ruth Cheslock

The Monday Morning Quilters of Brownville Junction, Maine held their annual quilt show on August 15th. We have been involved with Quilts of Valor for a year. On display were some of the recent quilts which we are preparing to send. The display was a very popular one. The town’s people, and the American Legion made very generous donations which help defray the cost of shipping.

We are proud to be a part of this fine cause.

Joline Frazier
Monday Morning Quilters
It is truly amazing what happens when people work together. Saturday, August 1, over 40 of our wonderful quilting friends came and sewed a block (or two or more) to make quilt tops for Quilts of Valor. We made enough blocks for 4 tops in less than 7 hours!

This was the second year Cotton Patch Quilt Shop held a sewing day for Quilts of Valor. Last year 3 quilts were made, this year 4 quilts were created in this one day event, and next year we will shoot for 5! The shop set up 20 workstations, 10 with machines provided and 10 for people to bring their own machines. Each person who came to sew received a free pre-cut block kit and a free lunch. Fabrics were donated by Cotton Patch Quilt Shop, Moda Fabrics and Batik Textiles. Volunteers were on hand to help the sewers make their blocks. Each person made at least one block, many made two or more.

Local professional longarm quilters, Cindy Baily and Karin Clay are donating their time and talents to quilt the quilt tops. After the quilts are bound and completed, the four quilts will be sent to the Quilts of Valor organization for distribution to wounded soldiers.

It was heartwarming to have people give up their Saturday for this worthy cause. Thank you to all who participated, and a special thanks to Joy Abbott, Janet Krail, Lynne Minguez and Cathy Washburn for spending the entire day assisting all the sewers. You are all wonderful!

Cotton Patch Quilt Shop is a 6 year old Bradenton, FL quilt shop owned by Laura and Tim Flynn. The shop is 5,000 square feet filled with top quality quilting fabrics, books, notions and the many needful things that quilters covet. The shop boasts a 1,000 square foot classroom and offers a range of classes during the day, evenings and weekends. Check out our web site at www.cottonpatchquiltshop.com for classes, fabrics and inspiration.

Laura Flynn
Bradenton, Florida

I agree with and support the New Mission Statement completely. Every bed in every VA facility would look lovely with a quilt on it made by a grateful American. Then we can start handing out quilts in out patient facilities. And then we can make wall hangings. And then we can give quilts just ‘cause"
NEW BEGINNINGS FOR TWO NEW QOV GROUPS VIRGINIA

We are starting two new QOV Groups in Virginia. They will be old fashioned sewing bee potlucks. Participants are asked to bring their sewing machines and supplies - irons and cutting surfaces will be provided. Bringing a dish to share is appreciated but not required.

There will be music, food, support and instructions when needed (did I mention food?). I can’t want! There will be patterns and some fabric to get us going (fabric donations are welcome and appreciated).

So come on out! We will meet once a month to support our troops and each other. You will gain more than a few friends -- you will gain that great feeling of helping on a Quilt of Valor that lasts for a lifetime.

**Group #1: Meets the 2nd Saturday of the Month Starting in October.**
Fairview at River Club Church
10835 Tidewater Trail
Fredericksburg, VA 22408

**Group #2: Meets the 4th Monday of the Month Starting in October.**
Ebenezer United Methodist Church
Room 220
161 Embrey Mill Road
Stafford, VA 22554

We would love to see you there!
Please email Catherine Snyder for more information: off2qlt@yahoo.com.

**September Block Drive**
We are having a “9/11” block drive during the month of September. Quilters have been asked to send either 9” or 11” (9 1/2” or 11 1/2” unfinished) patriotic quilt blocks which we will sew together to make Quilts of Valor. These blocks are a tangible way to commemorate an anniversary honoring those lost while also honoring those still fighting for our freedoms. I know most of you reading this Newsletter are already busy in this worthwhile and noble cause, but if you are inclined to send a block, you may do so. Send completed blocks to Catherine Snyder, PO Box 14, Ruby, VA 22545-0014.

All blocks are greatly appreciated and all will be used whether they arrive before or after the end of September.

Block by block we will be able to honor all those touched by war.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please email me.

_Catherine Snyder_
Ruby, Virginia

GOLF COAST QOV NEWS

It’s been an eventful summer, beginning with a booth at the Mobile, AL 3-day quilt show, presenting 7 quilts, and ending with establishing two new military destinations! I met with the VA and the Veteran’s Center in Biloxi, MS September 3 and they are very interested in receiving quilts. To begin, I am concentrating on patriotic design quilts for the PTSD programs at both places. More on this in another newsletter.

Robert Speh
Pensacola

The most important thing in all our lives is the ability to grow and change. Hopefully we are all better for it. This makes a wonderful organization a better one.
Quilts of Valour – Canada is getting the word out to our quilters with the fantastic support of the quilt and craft show organizers and our fantastic quilters!

Mary Ewing, our Eastern Canadian coordinator and her quilters in Ontario spent several weekends at various quilt shows handing out brochures and talking to quilters about our support for our wounded soldiers.

This spring the Halton Quilters’ Guild in Burlington, ON sponsored QoV Canada’s space at the Quilts in the Gardens show. This fall, the coordinator for the two Alberta shows is sponsoring space for our quilters to promote QoV Canada in Calgary and Edmonton.

The Halton Quilters’ Guild is also sponsoring our web presence! Go to www.quiltsofvalour.ca for more information – and our newsletters!! The summer newsletter can be found at http://www.quiltsofvalour.ca/2009.08.Newsletter.pdf

Lezley Zwaal
Founder
Quilts of Valour - Canada

Quilts of Valour

Upon reaching a hundred!

A milestone? An achievement? A sense of pride? We have now awarded a hundred Quilts of Valour in the UK.

We know the sense of achievement we get when we finish a QOV, as the label is attached, as the quilt is carefully folded and it is put into its’ presentation case.

We know the pleasure we feel when another quilter volunteers to make a QOV and then again when it is delivered or collected from a Drop off Shop.

We know that there is a small corner of our brains that gives a feeling of satisfaction when we get feedback from a recipient showing that the QOV is appreciated.

So, a hundred must be an important event. Indeed it justifies a note to the Newsletter.

But it also reveals that there have been a hundred of our brave soldiers who have suffered and maybe are still not fully restored to well-being. It also highlights the fact that there have been so many more that have been injured and have yet to receive their QOVs. I understand that our “official” wounded casualty count stands at 700, but that this is not a true reflection of the injuries suffered downrange.

Our Points of Contact in the regiments, the Unit Welfare Officers and Padres, who have facilitated the first one hundred quilts, have been so helpful and their efforts must not go unrecognised. However, more POCs are needed to ensure that we get the total coverage that our soldiers deserve.

Therefore it is with mixed feelings that I report that One Hundred QOVs have been despatched to UK named soldiers injured in Afghanistan. The urge to continue making QOVs and to recruit others, is as strong as ever.

Jean Morris
QOV - UK
To: Carlie Nichols
QOV given at the Knoxville AQS Show in Knoxville, TN
“Just wanted you to know how very appreciative of your group for giving this old veteran a quilt. There are so many that are so very much more deserving than I. It is received with reverence and will be treated that way. Thank you.” God Bless you and God Bless America, Leon

Dear Violet,
“My name is Corporal Michael Williams and I received the Quilt of Valor that you made. I know that you wanted to present the quilt yourself and indeed that would have been a great honor for me. Although you were not able to I am deeply honored to receive the quilt. The thought of how much work must have been put into it with your bare hands makes it the best award that I have received in my three years as a United States Marine. Medals that have been earned serving in the military never bring quite the satisfaction that equals all that has been lost during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The Quilt of Valor on the other hand, hits so much more to home. Medals and ribbons are made in factories, packaged and sold. The Quilt of Valor is made by hand, comes from the heart, and is presented.

My whole time in Iraq I received letters from children and packages from adults who show their support for their troops. Everywhere I go in the United States people tell me ‘Thank you for serving.’ When it should be me saying ‘Thank you for supporting.’ Without people like you our military members would have no will or motivation to do what we do. It is people who support our troops that are the ones who should be receiving the Quilt of Valor and the nations thanks.

You can rest assure that every Marine, Soldier, Sailor, and Airmen that has given the ultimate sacrifice are standing right behind me when I say this. Thank you from the deepest part of my heart. Never stop supporting your troops. We all appreciate everything you and everyone like you do for us.”
Sincerely, Corporal Michael Williams of the United States Marine Corps

To: Jean Jaeger
Hello Jean, My name is Andrew Carpenter I am a Lcpl. in the United States Marine Corps with 3rd battalion 8th Marines. I wanted to let you know that the quilt you worked on was given to me and I wanted to let you know that I speak for all the marines in my platoon when I say we are very appreciative for the work you and your friends put into these amazing quilts. As you walk through the barracks your quilts and hundreds more like it are lining the racks of the marines in 3rd battalion 8th marines. We can’t tell you how much it means that you dedicate your time in order to show appreciation for us. I hope this letter shows you the appreciation we have for you.
Sincerely, A. Carpenter

Dear Quilts of Valor,
“You are all wonderful human beings! God Bless you all for the time and efforts you provide for our marines and sailors. 3/8 had a very difficult deployment, I know that they were all very humbled and honored to be a recipient of your quilts. God knows they earned them. Keep up your wonderful work and thank you from a Mom of a former 3/2 Marine.
THANK YOU ALL! I am so impressed by your patriotism!”
Patty, Founder/President, moms4marines.org
From a mother of a Marine who received a quilt at the ceremony at Camp LeJeune:

Dear Ann, Thank you and your family and friends for the beautiful quilt my son received after coming home from Afghanistan with the 3/8 at his Purple Heart ceremony. I know he should be writing this but it is not the right time yet. He is still battling with remembering and trying to forget. He has cuddled up with it and he does appreciate your kindness. The Psalm (fabric print) is most appreciated as it was truly the hands of God and His angels’ wings around my son that night of the IED blast. Please continue to pray for our troops.

I took the quilt home as he did not want it to get dirty in the barracks. He came home later that week to our home for his post deployment leave. It is then that he totally opened the quilt and used it. After he had left to go back to Camp LeJeune, when I was cleaning his room, I found the quilt folded and placed back in its case, but on top of the dresser were the letters and post card from the quilt. I knew that I had to write to you to express what I know he was feeling. I copied your address onto the other letter so that at a later date he too could write to you.

These boys, and they are still boys, do have such a transition to go through. They fluctuate from being proud of what they did to feeling that they did nothing and don’t know how to accept your gratitude. They want to talk about it and just as quickly don’t want to talk. They want to be part of the family again, but do not want to be touched. And then the guilt of not being able to overcome these feelings and concerned that they are hurting you by their actions. I know time and God will heal and He does too.

Please continue to pray for our troops in harm’s way but also for these boys as they try to overcome these trials and acclimate back into civilian life.

Love, A Marine Mom

The following letters were received by Ellen Patton after giving QOVs to the Chaplains from all the services that work at Arlington National Cemetery:

I would like to thank you and your organization for the beautiful quilt that was given to me yesterday. What a wonderful work of art. I will cherish it as I cherish those I have from my grandparents hands. Each time I use it or see it I will be reminded of the care and commitment of those who made it. Please let Tammy Jones who pieced it together and Betty Isemanann who did the quilting know of my appreciation. May God continue to bless you and strengthen you as you care for our wounded warriors each and every day. What a difference you make in their lives because you let them know someone cares.

Sincerely - Charlie R. Stutts, Ch, Col, USAF, Senior Chaplain

Mrs. Patton, Thank you and thanks to the other ladies on your quilting team for your very nice “Quilt of Valor”.
Chaplain (LTC) Harry Rauch

Mrs. Patton, Mrs. Bowersox, and Mrs. Ehrhart,
Thank you all so much for the quilt. My wife is a quilter so I know how much time, energy and love goes into each one. It is beautiful and will have a prominent place in my home. My wife Lissette sends her thanks as well.
Every few months I get the opportunity to greet the wounded warriors flying into Andrews Air Force Base. At a time when they need reminders of home your handmade quilts bring a special touch that they desperately need. May God continue to bless you in this most important ministry.
Chaplain (Captain) Jason Nobles, Office of the Army Chaplain

Dear Mrs. Ellen Patton;
I just got home from six weeks of study leave. My husband, Bill Middleton, met me at the airport and right after greeting our anxious dogs, he took me to our spare bedroom where quilt lovingly made by your group "Quilts of Valor," was displayed on the bed. Bill told me about the quilt on the phone, some five and a half
weeks ago, but he did not do it justice. The stars and the stitches and the red white and blue design? Well, it just took my breath away.

I love quilts. I have never made one on my own, but always thought I would one day. I even go to quilt exhibits, one recently in Baltimore focusing upon the Gee's Bend women and their creative designs. I have a few quilts from my great grand mother's collection, but never one made with me (rather us!!) in mind. I was greatly touched by the quilt, the photo, and the small signed patch on the back with all of your names.

Thank you so much. Your wonderful ministry and the work you do are in my prayers.

Peace and Grace; Rev. William Middleton - Rev. Barbra Hardy (Bonnie)

Thank you for the wonderful quilt.
I was taken back when a coworker handed me the quilt and said it was made by some nice ladies who belong to QOVF. I opened it up right there in the office and was very impressed. “For me,” I asked? Then I read the very nice note from Sharon Mayers and Jo Stauffer. It was a personal thank you for being a Chaplain and providing ministry to soldiers and families at Arlington National Cemetery.

Then I took it home and showed it to my wife. She was extremely impressed and almost speechless. We both want to thank you for your appreciation and gratitude of our ministry. We have hung it on the wall and will proudly look at it every day to be reminded of your act of kindness to us.

Blessings, CH (MAJ) Stanton Trotter, Arlington National Cemetery

From Jennifer Anthony, Navy Region Midwest RCC N613:
I was sent this from one of our Health Outreach ladies that was part of our RWW staff. She received the email below from one of the service members, and they SPOKE OF YOUR QUILTS, out of everything, your quilts is what made it special... this is great!!!! if you can share the message with anyone that would be great!

"Thanks, too, for the RWW. It was just great of the Navy to put on the workshop for us. I feel very honored and appreciated. We are going to try to find a way to thank the people who made our quilt. What a marvelous tribute. It will become a family heirloom, I think because we will tell the story that goes with it. " If I forgot anyone, please share w/them.

Patti E. Krivo, LCSW, Psychological Health Outreach Program, Outreach Coordinator, Navy Region Midwest

From Sandra Hawthorne:
My sister Karen and I make our QOV’s together. We received a heartwarming letter from a female recipient of one of our quilts. I’d like to share some of it with you.

"Thank-you for the wonderful Butterfly Warrior Quilt. I received the quilt while attending the WRP PTSD Program of 8 weeks in Batavia, NY. I’m a disabled Vietnam Veteran who served as a medical Corpsman. I belong to a local and national butterfly club. I’m a butterfly fanatic. I definitely will use the quilt to comfort my soul on bad days. How special for a quilt to be made especially for me! I never thought I would be a recipient of a WARRIOR QUILT and thanked for serving. It warms my soul."

P.S. It’s hard to believe that we sent a quilt with butterflies on it and that there would be a butterfly lover there to receive it. Serendipity!

From Wanda Doehne:
I received this email today from the father of John Okpara (see ‘Presentation” page 21). I took a QOV with me to the AQS Knoxville Quilt Expo and left it with Beth Sizemore to present to a service member. She awarded the quilt to John Okpara, a Marine who served his country in Iraq. It means so much to me to receive this message, which I am forwarding to all of you who have helped and encouraged me along the way:
Hello Wanda,
I am sure you do not know me, but I have come to know you through Beth Sizemore (my adopted American sister), and the Quilt of Valor you and others made in appreciation of my son's (John Okpara) service in the United States Marines. I cannot tell you how deeply honored John felt, and how very appreciative I am as his father. As our only son, it was hard for me and his mother, Belieba, when John was in Iraq. We constantly prayed and requested for prayers. We are happy and proud that he served with courage, completed his tour of duty and returned home safe and sound. For that we thank the Almighty God, and also pray for the safety of those men and women who are still out there in the heat of the conflict either in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Your dedication to the welfare of the men and women in uniform is greatly appreciated, and we cannot thank you enough for the Quilt of Valor presented to John and others in the service. John was proud to receive it with deepest gratitude!

Thanks and keep up the good work!
Ibiba Okpara

From Sandy Tuzinski:

Sometimes we as quilters feel as though our little bits and pieces of cotton fabric, thread and batting do not amount to much but this letter tells a different story. This precious letter was received from Army Chaplain Rod Mills from Alaska (Arctic Wolves) after receiving a quilt to honor him for his service while in Iraq. I was given Rod's name and information through our pastors. Hope this letter is an encouragement to all:

Dear Sandy, Patrick & Pastors Dale & Sandy,

I just received in the mail the patchwork quilt you sent. It is the most precious gift anyone has ever sent me in two combat tours. When I opened it up and realized what it was, I just cried. And every time I look at it, I start crying. I must say that the very love and kindness of our Lord is woven into its very fabric and His love touches my heart in the deepest places each time I look at it, touch it, or even think about it.

On the 13th of January this year, I was praying over our 5,000 soldiers and many troubled spots of relationships. War is a very harsh environment, and in that environment many people get angry with each other, don’t sleep much, and some hold grudges and walk in anger. As I prayed that morning, the Holy Spirit directed me to pray that the Lord would send forth His angels, pouring the oil of His Presence upon our brigade combat team. In my heart, I saw them pouring and the oil soaked in to many places. But some places it would not soak in. They were like plastic. The hands of the Master gently cut these places out and replaced them. After He was finished, I saw and it had become a beautiful patchwork quilt! Then the Holy Spirit encouraged me that He would send me a simple sign that this was from Him and that these were His intentions for our team. I called and shared the prayer and vision with my wife the next day or two (14 or 15 January). And then, this week I received this precious gift from you. Our Lord has a way about Him, a tenderness, a profound love for people; and He has used you to touch my life in the deepest way. I will never be the same again.

Thank you for sharing your love and your gift with me. I am deeply grateful. Your Servant and Friend in the Lord, Rod
From Marti Zimmerle:
During the run up of making quilts for the Camp LeJeune project, my sister, Carolyn Froning of Brea, CA, made this quilt for the project during a weekend retreat we attended. The pattern is called "Stars and Stripes Forever". At some point the thought occurred to her that she personally knew someone who was surely deserving of a QOV, the husband of her best friend during their school years. He was a combat pilot, shot down and captured during the Vietnam War. He was a prisoner of war for almost 6 years and retired as a Reserve Major Gen. after almost 4 decades of active-duty, Guard and Reserve service. Because we don't always see or hear the gratitude recipients of our QOV's feel, I think the following note of thanks from this former POW should be shared with all the true patriots who contribute to making these gifts for those who do and have served:

"The adjective to describe the quilt or the motivation behind it's creation isn't in the dictionary. You have created something that will be a family treasure long after I am gone. In the meantime, I accept your gift as a tribute to not just my service but to other family members, also including my daughter and son, both of whom have served this nation in Iraq and Afghanistan. So, thank you for the thoughtfulness and the time to recognize one of the countless millions of men and women who serve in uniform."

Meet Louise Tanno

Creative Quilts
San Francisco Bay Area

About: Louise Tanno

Louise has been quilting for over 25 years. She started sewing at an early age and made many of her own clothes. Eventually her interest turned to quilting, and she has never looked back! She is a self-taught quilter, using books, magazines and photos as her guide.

She loves working with the colors and textures of the abundant quilt fabrics available. She likes the challenge of designing her own quilts and enjoys creating many styles of quilts.

Louise was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area where she currently resides. However, she and her family also spent many years living in Connecticut. Both areas of the country, with their different lifestyles, landscapes and seasons, have inspired her work.

Louise designs and pieces the QOVs that she donates, then adds the binding after they are quilted by another volunteer.

You can visit Louise’s website to view other QOVs that she has created at: http://www.creativequiltsonline.com/index.cfm/fa/pages.main/pageID/10
QOVF Shop
“Fall” Into Savings

In order to make way for some new items, the QOV Shop is having an inventory reduction sale on these wonderful QOV totes and QOV lanyards.

While supplies last, the tote bags will be $19.99 and the lanyards will be $4.99. Don’t miss out! The totes are 100% heavy duty cotton canvas, made from recycled cotton. Made in the USA! I use my tote for everything – grocery shopping, quilt projects and stuff for the beach...

Also – if you have ideas for items you’d like to see the shop offer, please email me. We’ll investigate the possibilities and feasibility’s.

Joyce
Joyce@qovf.org

Classifieds

April 20 - 23, 2009
Baptist Conference Center
Toccoa, Georgia (www.sewfree.net)

One of the options for our quilters is to sew Quilts of Valor for one, two, or all three days. Carlie Nichols of Smoky Mountain Quilt Guild, Franklin, NC is heading up that part of the planning. We are planning on 200 quilters for the retreat and think we might have as many as 25% being QOV quilters. We are going to have quilt block "kits" and invite all the participants to make at least one block which will become part of our Quilts of Valor. We plan to have a hand quilting frame set up, perhaps some of our participants will take a turn at hand quilting on one of our QOVs.

Contact susangordon@sewfree.net for further information.

QOV Quilters – New Hampshire Needs Your Help Again!

With your help in April, we presented quilts to over 200 OEF/OIF veterans currently receiving services from the VA Medical Center in Manchester, NH.

Some of you met Vicki Lemire when she joined you on the QOV Across America Road Trip. Well, Vicki and I are planning our 2nd presentation on November 8 in Manchester, NH and already have 100 RSVPs with more pouring in daily.

We desperately need your quilts. Give me a call at 603-634-7612 or 603-315-3827 and let us know if you can send some quilts ...we need to have a count by October 15. You can send your quilts to:

Victoria Lemire
382 Wallace Rd.
Goffstown, NH 03045

Again, many thanks for your continued support of this very worthy cause.

Janet Dugre
Do you have a story to tell to our QOV community? If you do, please contact Catherine Roberts to arrange an interview.

**QOV Podcast Interview with 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.

**QOV Podcast Interview with 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 site or hers.

**QOV Podcast Interview with Rev Liz Wold**
Join me for my interview with Rev Liz Wold. She 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.

http://quiltsofvalor.libsyn.com/

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**Statistics**

These are the latest statistics as of 9/09/2009. 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 .......................... 24,125
*Iraq/killed (US) ................................ 4,343
*Afghanistan/killed (US) ................. 821
*Wounded ................................................ Many

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

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