



From the Executive Director

by Tammany McDaniel

You might have heard, “Eat chicken soup to cure a cold.” In the late 1990s, scientific evidence began to support that chicken soup did affect the cold virus. Several studies showed that chicken soup increased the growth of cilia, thus helping prevent virus and allergy particulate matter from passing into the sinus system and, when eaten during a cold, it opened sinuses, affected white blood cells positively, transported mucous, and aided breathing. When we say *Quilts = Healing*, we are communicating the ways in which humans support each other through trauma, loss, stress, and fear. The comforting touch from a friend, the warmth of a quilt, and the beautiful patterns we trace with our fingertips stimulate sympathetic responses in our system that generate feelings of health, well-being, and calm.

Our motto, *Quilts = Healing*, was developed during Catherine Roberts’ leadership. Over the years, we have posted it on our website and social media, put it on flyers and notices, and used it during award ceremonies. Many of our awarded service members and veterans have written to us noting “this quilt saved my life” or something similar. This phrase is special and I am pleased to announce we have stylized the font in order to present a soothing look to



Tammany McDaniel
Executive Director

the motto. We will make this styling available in November in a message to State/District Coordinators and Group Leaders.

Quilts = Healing

This past weekend the first snow of October fell in Winterset. As I looked out the window, I thought of the past year with some mixed feelings. I remember moving to Winterset and going straight into isolation due to the pandemic. I remember writing notices addressing whether we were awarding quilts or if we had determined ways to safely quarantine tops and quilts going through our pairing system. I answered correspondence from individuals who wanted an award done, regardless of the potential risk to our volunteers and nominees. I watched as each of you tried to find ways to continue our work and I saw a significant increase in our united actions to ensure older nominations were completed—all this year!

I believe *Quilts = Healing*, but I also truly believe *Quilting Brings Healing*! This experience we share enriches us as much as it enriches the lives of our service members and veterans. I also believe that every member should make at least one award presentation because The Moment of the award also changes YOU! The look in the eyes of a person who is now being thanked, welcomed home, or hugged is part of the healing process. Thank you for your commitment and support of this mission!

UP AND COMING

by QOVF Marketing

- ★ Our Inaugural 5K event was a success, and t-shirts and medals are starting to be mailed to the participants. What a great way to show your support and get a little fresh air! Now you’re likely thinking of Thanksgiving and how your plans may differ this year, with many of us not traveling. Right around the corner is #QOVFGivingTuesday!
- ★ #QOVFGivingTuesday, December 1st this year, is just a few weeks away. Hopefully, the 6-week Plan has helped those of you that may be trying this for the first time or for those of you who may want to take your fundraising up a notch. For anyone with a Facebook page, the Together We Comfort graphic for Week 2 should be your cover photo.



- ★ The first release for our 2018 Call to Action had an overwhelming response! We are hard at work, reaching out to the states to coordinate the Veteran and cutting MORE kits. We are always in such awe of our members and their generosity! If you didn’t get a kit this round, don’t worry. January will

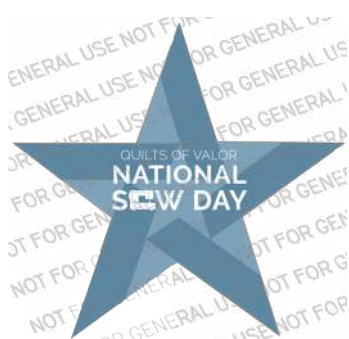
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have four new kit patterns when we send out the call, so you can get a kit then to help us catch up with the oldest requests.

- ★ Are you looking for new inspiration? Check out the [Spoonflower Shop](#) and see the new QOVF Eagle panel! The beautiful QOVF Eagle works great with Northcott Gradations and Moda Grunge fabric lines. Keep an eye on the Member Dashboard in November for a picture of a completed quilt and a chance to win your own QOVF Eagle Panel.



- ★ Save the date, #NSD2021 is February 6, 2021.



- ★ Enjoy your holiday season and Happy New Year! We hope that everyone gets to spend time with their family in some way, even if it is not in person this year.

THE ART OF THE AMBUSH

by Allison Fentriss, Florida GL

If you're like me, surprise awards were part of the fun of our presentations. I have a good friend, a Vietnam veteran and Marine with two Purple Hearts, and he loves doing presentations - surprise presentations. "The Art of the Ambush," as he calls it. As a QOV recipient, this Marine knows first-hand the healing power of our quilts. He wants to wrap as many of his brothers and sisters as possible in their own QOV.

Some may want to continue to do surprise awards. The spouse, parent, sibling, or friend of the recipient has assured you there won't be a problem. However, the Foundation did not decide to discontinue surprise awards without much consideration. Here is my story.

I was fortunate enough to be able to ambush my Marine friend with his QOV years ago. His wife reached out because "you make Marines cry." When he saw me walk on stage with a QOV in the middle of his event, he immediately joked, "You've learned the art of the ambush too well!" I wrapped him while he stood at attention, fighting tears, humbled, alert and present. And then he wasn't. He was back in Vietnam; back in 1968.

This Marine was listening to the sounds of the guns, thinking of all he did or didn't do, the friends who came home, and the ones who didn't. Good times and bad; proud accomplishments

and things he wanted so badly to change. In an instant, all of the images that still haunted him 52 years later came roaring back to him, in full surround-sound and technicolor. When he prepared for his day mentally, he wasn't ready for this. And here I am, his friend and sister in service, forcing him to remember those horrors in public, surrounded by a hundred strangers. It made me second-guess surprise awards.

Today, when a nominator assures me, "they know this person," or "she doesn't have any war memories," or something similar, I explain it this way: "I don't know your nominee. I don't know what they did or did not experience. But even if we have a small presentation with only you and the recipient in attendance, I am a stranger. You're asking them to go back to their military days in front of a stranger. You are not them, so you cannot know with certainty how they'll react when faced with those memories."

Whether formal and lengthy or in their simple, beautiful form of just wrapping the recipient and saying nothing more than, "Thank you for serving and welcome home," our presentations are powerful. And we know, with great power comes great responsibility. Our responsibility is to keep our recipient safe, even from their memories, while we wrap them in their own comforting and healing Quilt of Valor.

I haven't broken the news to my friend just yet. PS: Hey, Richard, we can't do surprise awards any longer.



Richard H., USMC, Vietnam War

A DAD AND TWO SONS

by Dena Waddell-Genz Proud Family Member

The Quilts of Valor Foundation began in 2003, literally with a dream, by founder Catherine Roberts. From the beginning, Catherine had definite ideas about standards of excellence for the quilts. The quilts would be awarded and would say unequivocally, "Thank you for your service, sacrifice and valor."

I recently had the ultimate honor of nominating Command Sergeant Major Paul Brotherton, Major Jason Brotherton and Captain Devin Brotherton, my dad and brothers, to receive Quilts of Valor. Our hometown, Kahoka, Missouri, hosts an annual Parade of Champions, a Battle of the Bands event starting with a color guard led by a parade of the contestants. This year's color guard consisted of 58 years of service and one member of the next generation.

In 1968, Paul enlisted in the Army and spent five years on active duty and 22 years in the Reserves. He was stationed in Vietnam, Germany and other bases throughout the United States, earning the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Vietnam Campaign Medal. Recognized as Drill Sergeant of the Year, Paul retired as a Command Sergeant Major.



Brotherton family with Sewcial Quilters QOV of Clark County. From left to right: Barbie Bergman, Carol Johnson, Pam Oilar, Cinda James, Paul Brotherton, Jason Brotherton, Devin Brotherton, Becky Rodgers, Cheryl Buschling and Kathy Ferguson

Jason enlisted in the Army Reserves in 2000. Jason is a Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster recipient. Among his many medals and awards, Jason earned the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

In 2004, Devin joined the reserves. Currently active duty, we expect Captain Brotherton to promote to Major Brotherton on November 1, 2020. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal and the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal with Bronze Star.

It took a year from the time of the nominations to get everyone home simultaneously. The entire Brotherton family attended the ceremony held at the Clark County Veterans Memorial, in addition to many from the community. The quilts were awarded by the newly formed Sewcial Quilters QOV of Clark County. And the Brotherton men, a father and his two sons, stood humbled and proud as they were each wrapped in a Quilt of Valor stitched with tears and love.

A VETERANS DAY POEM

Submitted by Rhonda Albrecht, North Dakota State Coordinator,
with Arlene Meissel, Group Leader, Missouri River QOV group

John Benz is a resident of a nursing home in Dickinson, North Dakota. The Missouri River QOV group made and awarded a Quilt of Valor to John outside the nursing home. John was hoping they could see his room as it is full of veteran memorabilia. Unfortunately, that was not possible due to the nursing homes' COVID-19 restrictions in place. After they were finished with the award, John asked if he could read a Veterans Day poem that he had written. Of course, they said yes!

Arlene Meissel, Group Leader of Missouri River QOV, later asked John if she could post it on their group's website and Facebook page. Permission

was also granted to reprint in the Threads newsletter. John agreed and was very proud. Enjoy!

November 11
by John Benz

11th hour, 11th day, 11th month of every year,
We should honor our veterans here and those near.
Maybe walk up and shake their hand,
And thank them for protecting our land.
In all wars, a lot of good men lost their lives,
Leaving behind lots of children and wives.
A lot of veterans are getting older every year,
Some want to be here for their Vet Day next year.
But, if they aren't here, for sure they're in heaven.
We can still pray for them on **November 11**.

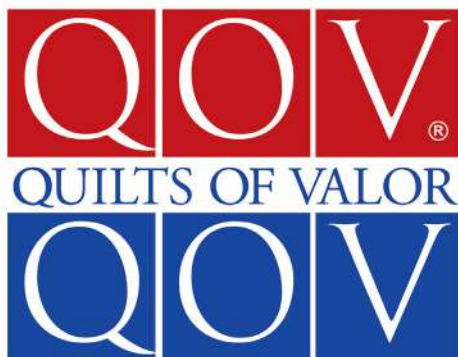


THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

by Queenie Quilter

Hey! I just heard something, but you have to keep it a secret! QOV member Nancy sews with Joni who works for a quilting industry bigwig. Well, Nancy is *always* talking about QOV when they sew together: what a great organization we are, how much it means to our recipients when we wrap them in their QOV, and how we just can't sew fast enough to meet the demand. Joni was brainstorming with this bigwig about ways they could give back. While they were brainstorming, Joni remembered what Nancy said about QOV. Joni talked to Nancy, Nancy talked to Tammany, Tammany talked to Joni, and whadda-ya-know! Quilts of Valor is going to be part of the next Build A Quilt. Or at least that's what I heard. I've tried asking around, but everyone is tight-lipped about it so far, but I did see this! [Flag Day Build a Quilt](#).

Editor's note: We reached out to Tammany McDaniel to find out if this grapevine conversation was the truth. She did not deny the story, but she didn't have any further information to provide at this time. Though we didn't want to let her off the hook that easily, she said to stay tuned to the Member Dashboard in November for more details.



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CRUISING WITH NU-BLU

by Queenie Quilter

We are blazing forward with 2021 plans, letting the pandemic know it can't keep a great group of volunteers down! So, we've scheduled the official [2021 Quilts of Valor® Cruise](#) with our wonderfully

talented partner, [Nu-Blu](#). Cozumel, Mexico, should be Spooktacular for an October 31, 2021, cruise. Mark your calendars now! #QOVFCruise2021



TAKING PHOTOS AT AWARD CEREMONIES

by Christopher Bates, Photographer and member of North Olympic Peninsula Quilts of Valor Group

You do not need a camera that costs several thousand dollars to take outstanding photographs. Here are a few guidelines to consider as you photograph quilt presentations.

1. *Practice* with your camera so you are thoroughly familiar with how it works. Practice taking photos of the same subject from 6 to 10 feet. Then try up close and personal. Practice on bright sunny days and cloudy days. Practice zooming in and zooming out for a shot. The more photos you take under different conditions, the better you will become. I have been practicing for 60+ years and still mess up now and then.
2. *Take lots of shots.* The more shots you take, the more likely you are to have at least one photo you like. The man who taught me basic photography said, "for every 10 to 15 shots you take you may get one good picture." When I shoot a presentation, I shoot as many as 100 shots. That is because my camera is capable of continuous shooting. Your camera may not be able to shoot continuously but shoot as many as you can. More is better!!
3. *Always be aware of your background.* A cluttered background can make the subject of your photo disappear. A cluttered background draws the viewer's eye automatically to the clutter. If you cannot avoid a cluttered background, consider shooting head to mid-chest shots, or move the subject to a better location.
4. This is a two-for-one guideline. *Avoid flash where possible.* People automatically blink when the flash goes off. There is nothing worse than a scrunched face because of the flash. *If the photographer talks while shooting, the subject tends to look at the camera.* This is a good thing!
5. *Take your time.* For those of us photographing QOV presentations,

make sure you do not cut off the top of the awardee's head! Do not take the time to review after each shot. That is best done later at home.

My experience is that most awardees and their family and friends love being photographed. However, there are situations where it might not be appropriate to take photographs. *Always ask* for permission and *never push*. Remember to get a signed photo release for each person in the photograph if you intend to use it anywhere.

A brief word about cellphone cameras. Most cellphones have surprisingly good cameras. I have seen some remarkable photos taken with a cellphone. All of the same guidelines apply to photos taken with a cellphone.

Lastly, *have fun with your photography*. Share your photos with the awardee AFTER you have had the chance to screen them for the best shot. I give the best photos to my wife (the quilter in the family) who emails them to the awardee where possible.

QOV GROUPS JOIN FORCES TO RECOGNIZE A FAMILY OF SERVICE

By Lou Ann Lee, Eastern ND District Coordinator/Stitching Hearts QOV group co-leader

The Stitching Hearts QOV group and the Missouri River QOV group, located over 200 miles apart in ND, joined forces on October 30th to award Quilts of Valor to a husband and wife, both retired from the US Air Force, and their son, a former Air Force member who is now serving with the ND Air National Guard. The Stitching Hearts and Missouri River groups worked together to schedule the awards in Bismarck, ND, where the son resides.

Retired Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Rustvang was active duty with the US Air Force Nurse Corps from 1975 to 1998. His wife, Retired Lieutenant Colonel Pamela Rustvang, was active duty with the US Air Force Nurse Corps from 1974 to 1994, including some time with the USAF National

Guard. The Rustvangs, who met and married while on active duty years ago, were previously stationed at numerous Air Force bases in the US, along with Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines and RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk England, UK. Their busy careers, which included a total of 43 years' military service, included raising six children, five daughters and a son.

Daniel's career included at times the role of clinical nurse, chief nurse, intensive care nurse, and as a critical care coordinator in the Philippines. When Daniel retired in 1998, he was the Commander, Health Promotions Flight for the 319th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, at the Grand Forks Air Force Base in Grand Forks, ND. Pamela's career included, among many other things, the role of nurse practitioner where she provided health care to dependent wives and their children whose spouses were deployed and as a staff nurse in the OB and pediatric units where she provided healthcare to active duty members and their dependents. Pamela also cared for



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pregnant Vietnamese refugees and their babies in the tent cities.

Their son Erik, following in his parents' footsteps, entered the US Air Force in 2012. Erik was deployed for Operation Inherent Resolve in 2017 and 2018, working with the security forces in Qatar, Iraq, and Kuwait. Erik is currently a Technical Sergeant with the ND Air National Guard in Bismarck.

Most recently, the Rustvangs' youngest daughter just completed

Basic Training with the ND Air Guard. Apparently being military kids for many years did not deter them from deciding to serve their country. So, for now, we are 51 years and still counting for this family's service to our country!

The QOVs were all pieced by Daniel's sister, also a Stitching Hearts member. Thanks to Arlene Meissel of the Missouri River QOV group who helped coordinate this event in conjunction with two awards done by the Missouri River group.

Quilts Reported

2012: 6,169
2013: 12,314
2014: 17,373
2015: 18,772
2016: 19,051
2017: 24,123
2018: 30,745
2019: 33,375
2020: 17,556

Total: 260,041

(from date of first recorded award through 31 October, 2020)

The mission of the Quilts of Valor® Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor.

QOVF Core Values

Treating people with respect • Promoting excellence • Valuing service over self • Being accountable



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For more information about the BOD, the QOVF staff, and how to contact your State Coordinator (SC) go to www.qovf.org/meet-us/

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Newsletter

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Do you have an article, idea or suggestion for Threads? Email it to us at newslettersubmission@qovf.org.

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