From the Executive Director

This time of year, for many, thoughts turn to indoor activities and to making your latest, greatest QOV. I was researching past issues of THREADS recently and found this article by Catherine Roberts, our founder. Her words are just as meaningful today as they were in 2014. She wrote:

"Recently, our foundation’s "core values" were established via a formal vote of our Board of Directors. As QOVF founder, I am proud of our stated values because they speak simply and eloquently about who we are. Below are some of my thoughts regarding each of the four.

Treating people with respect. Our community (quilters, longarmers, points of contact, recipients, and donors) includes people from many walks of life. Each of us must promote inclusiveness, respecting the opinion of every other fellow volunteer. Let us always look for the common threads that unite us rather than the differences that could divide.

Promoting excellence. Quilts of Valor are civilian awards to those who have been willing to stand in harm’s way for our nation and been touched by war, not “charity quilts.” Of utmost importance is sewing with quality fabrics, working with skilled machine quilters, making quilts big enough for an adult to rest under, and labeling each quilt clearly to identify it as a Quilt of Valor.

Valuing service over self. Knowing I am as capable as anyone of self-focus, a goal from “day one” has been to keep the focus for our quilts on the recipient, not on us.

Being accountable. As our foundation grows, it’s a big challenge to transmit every communication with wisdom and compassion, but we must be accountable for our words and actions on every level. Being accountable to me means being truthful to all.

To some, these values may seem lofty. To me, they speak of belonging to a community where I will be accepted and where I will do my best to give to those touched by war.

Meaningful thoughts indeed. Wishing you a great autumn season, quilt in peace and happiness, knowing you are making a difference.

SC KERRY BARNES
HONORED AS A “MAKER”
By Kathleen P. Decker and Marianne Fons

WCNY, Central New York State’s members-supported public broadcasting station, has for several years recognized area women for their unique achievements, honoring them with an annual award titled “Makers: Women Who Make America.” These awards were inspired by the 2013 PBS documentary of the same name and are sponsored by the Lockheed Martin Employees’ Federated Fund with support from the National Park Service. You can view the original PBS documentary here.

NY State Coordinator Kerry Barnes, at right, received PBS affiliate WCNY’s MAKERS award on March 8, International Women’s Day. The ceremony took place in Seneca Falls, NY, where the first women’s rights convention in America was held in 1848.
On March 8th, 2018, International Woman’s Day, Kerry Barnes, QOVF’s State Coordinator for NY, was one of the ten recipients of the 6th annual award. She was secretly nominated by fellow quilt guild members Eleanor Green and Barb Snell. In her acceptance speech, Kerry said, “I can’t thank the QOVF and WCNY enough for making this happen. QOVF has made my dreams come true! My fellow quilters all deserve this honor; we do this to thank our veterans for their sacrifice for our country.”

Kerry says of her involvement with QOVF, “I saw an article in the Post Standard and said now that I’m retired, what a wonderful thing to do, to make quilts to honor veterans in my father’s name! From the minute I get the request to the last stitch, my thoughts are with that person and what they’ve been through. I’ll keep sewing until every veteran is covered! My dad, Christy Malone, fought in WWII. He would be pleased.”

One of her quilts was awarded to a Vietnam veteran, Mr. Ken Bundy, who was Kerry’s former supervisor at a nuclear power plant. In addition to being a veteran, Mr. Bundy serves other veterans. He takes veterans on fishing trips, he honors Gold Star Mothers in NY, and his VFW branch inaugurated a Vietnam Wall Memorial in Boonville, NY. Kerry represented QOVF at the dedication of the memorial, which travels throughout the U.S. bringing veteran PTS and suicide awareness to the general public. LCQOV partnered with Suicide Prevention Action Network of QOVs, the Old Glory Traveling Quilt Exhibit, and award ceremonies will be featured at joint effort of QOVF and Eyes of Freedom during the Bob Evans Farm Festival in Rio Grande, OH, October 12–14, 2018.

Information provided by Kerry Barnes and WCNY TV.

QOVF AND EYES OF FREEDOM: A PARTNERSHIP EVOLVES
By Sharon Ledbetter

QOVF, Eyes of Freedom, and “Silent Battle” are partnering to bring awareness to their interwoven missions of honoring, remembering, and comforting those touched by war and struggling with the invisible wounds of post-traumatic stress and survivor grief.

The seeds of the partnership were sown during National Veterans’ Week 2016, when the Lewis Clark QOV Group (LCQOV) of Lewiston, ID, joined with the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association (CVMA) to host the Eyes of Freedom (EOF) memorial, which consists of eight lifesize paintings of 22 Marines and one Navy Corpsman killed in action in Iraq.

In March 2018, LCQOV was honored to present the national debut of “Silent Battle,” a much awaited life-sized bronze statue centerpiece added to the memorial, which travels throughout the U.S. bringing veteran PTS and suicide awareness to the general public. LCQOV partnered with Suicide Prevention Action Network of QOVs, the Old Glory Traveling Quilt Exhibit, and award ceremonies will be featured at joint effort of QOVF and Eyes of Freedom during the Bob Evans Farm Festival in Rio Grande, OH, October 12–14, 2018.

The pairing of QOVF and EOF/Silent Battle is a perfect match, impacting the lives of veterans in positive ways.

If your community is interested in hosting the Eyes of Freedom exhibition, visit their website: http://www.limacompanymemorial.org/. For information on Silent Battle, visit http://www.limacompanymemorial.org/the-silent-battle/. Questions about the new partnership with QOVF may be directed to Sharon Ledbetter, lcqov.sharon@gmail.com

QOVs, the Old Glory Traveling Quilt Exhibit, and award ceremonies will be featured at joint effort of QOVF and Eyes of Freedom during the Bob Evans Farm Festival in Rio Grande, OH, October 12–14, 2018.
A QUILT FOR BELLA
Information provided by Kathleen Van Orsdel, Group Leader, Jefferson City Quilters #544

US Marine Corps Sgt. (Ret.) Bradley Walker was awarded a QOV during a presentation at the Jefferson County High School in Talbot, TN, at the “Night of the Patriot Celebration” in 2016. Sgt. Walker was wounded in combat during the Iraq war, and Bella, his devoted service dog, attended the event. According to Kathleen Van Orsdel, “It was a wonderful presentation where veterans from four different war eras were awarded quilts from the local QOV Group 544.” After the ceremony, one of the members of the Jefferson City Quilt group, Bobby Shore, thought Bella should be honored as well with a quilt. She sewed a dog-sized quilt, which was later awarded to Bella.

Several programs train and/or place service dogs with wounded warriors. One such program is the program in which Bella was trained, Smoky Mountain Service Dogs (SMSD). It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to: “Enhance the Physical and Psychological Quality of Life for Veterans with Disabilities by Providing Custom Trained Mobility Assistance Service Dogs” in a service area within six hours of Knoxville, TN. SMSD has been awarded Gold Star Accreditation by Assistance Dogs International. This validates that the facilities and operation of the SMSD program meets or exceeds ADI standards.

Once dogs “graduate” the program they are placed with a wounded veteran, and the final phase of training includes training the veteran and dog to work together. More information is available here. Other programs focus on training dogs to assist with mental health issues in wounded warriors, such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Information on the distinction between emotional support animals, service animals, and how to officially register animals with the U.S. Government, can be found here.

Note from Executive Director Ann Rehbein: Quilts presented to service dogs are NOT QOVs, but they are frequently awarded and much appreciated by the dog’s “person.”

Longarmers Needed!
Information supplied by Sheryl Bullman, Longarm Coordinator

You may have noticed a longer wait time in getting a longarmer request filled. The reason for that is that you are such great topers! Quilt tops are being produced at a much greater rate than our longarm community is able to complete them. For example, in July there were 274 tops in queue. Several states have three to four times as many tops in queue as there are registered longarmers in their state.

If you’re a longarmer who can help alleviate this backlog, please consider joining the QOVF family as a registered longarmer. Need more information? Contact Sheryl Bullman at sheryl.bullman@QOVF.org. Here are a few details about becoming a registered QOVF longarmer:
• Join QOVF, either through a local group or the National Longarmer’s group for $5.00.
• Your contribution to a QOV is time, thread, batting, and return postage if needed.
• Your name will be listed on the label as the quilter.
• Regardless of the number of quilts you’re able to complete each month, your contribution will be greatly appreciated.

Did you know?

Member groups or individual members in good standing may request a Certificate of Insurance (COI) for events where they will represent the QOVF. To obtain a copy of the Foundation’s liability insurance, contact accounting@QOVF.org and provide the information below.
• Name of QOVF group or individual requesting the COI.
• Name, phone number, and email address of contact person for QOVF group or individual.
• Name and address of business or event requiring proof of insurance.
• Name, address, phone number, and email address of primary contact of the business requiring proof of insurance.
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

Quilts Reported
2012: 6,169
2013: 12,314
2014: 17,373
2015: 18,772
2016: 19,051
2017: 24,009
2018: 16,689
Total: 195,054
(from date of first award through 31 August 2018)

QOVF Certified Quilt Shop Program
By Myra Coddens
Welcome aboard to the newest members of the Certified Quilt Shop Program. The following shops completed certification since the last newsletter:

Freedom Bound Quilt Company  Wauseon, OH
Julie’s Pins and Needles  Alachua, FL
Prairie Points  Peoria, IL
Sew Always  Paris, TX

We welcome Ohio to the list of states with certified shops.

(Myra Coddens is the QOVF Certified Quilt Shop Program Coordinator. Contact Myra at myra.coddens@qovf.org.)

QOVF Founder and Board Member Emeritus
Catherine Roberts

Board Member Emeritus
Eric McCarty
Marianne Fons
Walt Davis

Board of Directors
Sue Reich, Chair
Michelle Nelson, Treasurer
Jeanne LeBron, Secretary
Elizabeth Nolan, Fundraising
Renelda Peldunas-Harter, Member
Mary Persyn, Member
Marianne Elliott, Member
Tony Jacobson, Member
Mary Kerr, Member

Executive Staff
Ann Rehbein, Executive Director
ann.rehbein@QOVF.org
Ginger Fondren, Assistant Executive Director
ginger.fondren@QOVF.org
Jackie Dudek, Membership Director
jackie.dudek@QOVF.org
Sheryl Bullman, Longarm Coordinator
sheryl.bullman@qovf.org
Janice Lewis, Individual Request & Destination Coordinator
janice.lewis@QOVF.org
Jeff Thorne, Marketing and Public Relations Director
jeff.thorne@QOVF.org
Suzanne DiCarlo, Information Desk Coordinator
suzanne.dicarlo@QOVF.org
Jennifer Keltner, Managing Editor
jennifer.keltner@QOVF.org
Myra Coddens, Quilt Shop Relationship Development Coordinator
myra.coddens@QOVF.org
G. Ann Bryant
IT Director
ann.bryant@QOVF.org
Saundra Chambers, Special Events Coordinator
underourwings@qovf.org

Newsletter
Ann Rehbein, Editorial Director
Jennifer Keltner, Managing Editor
Tony Jacobson, Graphic Designer
Marianne Fons, Contributing Editor
Kathleen Decker, Contributing Editor

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

Photos that appear in Threads are either used with permission or are public domain images. The editorial team makes every effort to credit photographers.

Quilt of Valor®, Quilts of Valor®, and QOV® are registered trademarks of the Quilts of Valor Foundation.