



MAY 2017

**From the Executive Director**

For most of us Spring has finally sprung, flowers are blooming, trees are leafing out and our thoughts are turning to gardening, baseball and outdoor activities. Quilting may take a back seat for a few weeks, but one thing that doesn't slow down is requests for quilts that come in via the website. To date, QOVF has received 969 requests for a QOV since January 1, 2017. This doesn't include the hundreds of requests that might go directly to a group. So, once the sun has set and/or the bugs have driven you indoors, spend a few moments with your latest beautiful creation to honor and comfort a veteran.



*Ann Rehbein,  
Executive Director*

Plans are being finalized for the QOVF Conference, June 5-6, in Colorado Springs, CO. Go to the [Events](#) page and you can find more information. Award ceremonies will be

held each day, the QOVF store will be open, and Mary Kerr's *Old Glory* display will be on exhibit for the first time. Aliza Sherman will be a keynote speaker, and staff will provide updates on the programs of QOVF. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. It's not too late to make plans to be there.

QOVF will be unveiling a new website design at the QOVF Conference and it will go live soon thereafter. The updated website will have all the current information and some new additions, all formatted for ease of use. A QOVF calendar will be included. If you have upcoming QOVF events or know of a quilt-related event, send the information to [calendar@QOVF.org](mailto:calendar@QOVF.org).

Group leaders should have received their complimentary copy of the new Quick Reference Guide (see photo, inset). It is a high quality, laminated, two-sided guide that features *Making QOVs* on one side and *Awarding QOVs* on the reverse. It offers clear, concise guidelines and is available for purchase in the QOVF Store or at [ReferenceGuide@QOVF.org](mailto:ReferenceGuide@QOVF.org).



Armed Forces Day is May 20, 2017. I'm sure there are many award ceremonies planned for that day. It's a great time to remember all of our service personnel both at home and abroad. Memorial Day is May 29, 2017. Let us remember all those that have gone before us and commemorate their service and sacrifice first before we declare summer officially started.

Until next time, quilt in peace and happiness, knowing that you are making a difference.

**"Snowbird" Veterans Receive Warm QOV Awards**

*Information provided by Marcia Stevens, Brainerd, MN QOV*

Wintering in the southwest is a regular occurrence for many who live in cold weather climates. Bev and Jerry Mollberg have been spending their winters at the Pioneer RV Park in Anthem, AZ, for 16 years. Bev has been leading the Sewing Divas, a sewing and quilt group at the park for years. Three years ago

she suggested that the group's members make QOVs. Her friend, Lyn Johnson, connected the Sewing Divas with QOV kits assembled by the Brainerd, MN, QOV group. The kits are pre-cut from donated fabrics and contain all of the fabric and instructions for a QOV. Bev took the kits to AZ in December 2014. The Sewing Divas met weekly, pieced the quilt tops, and Bev brought them back to MN at winter's end in March 2015. Those QOVs were distributed in Minnesota later that same year.

Returning to AZ, the next winter, Bev took along more QOV kits and when the Sewing Divas finished piecing the tops, they paraded the quilts throughout the Activity Center with music. Bev returned the quilts to Minnesota where they were quilted and distributed again to MN veterans.

Soon thereafter, Bev and Lyn talked about distributing the next round of QOVs made by the Sewing Divas within the Pioneer RV Park in Anthem, AZ,

and agreed it was fitting to do so with the number of veterans wintering in the park. The plan involved completing as many quilts as possible in time for a February 2017 event. The Sewing Divas went to work. Four ladies out of seven members pieced the majority of the quilt tops and together with some of their earlier quilt tops, Lyn started quilting them. Amazingly, she was able to quilt 31 of them using donated backing and batting. Lyn enlisted the help of friends and quilt guild members to sew the binding and labels on each of the quilts.

In early February, Lyn and her husband, Al, traveled via their RV to Pioneer Park to return the finished quilts for presentation. On February 4th, the names of the veterans were written on the labels as they walked up to accept their quilt, pillowcase and a thank you letter from the Brainerd, MN, group. The veteran recipients were from



QOVs were presented to 31 veterans, all "snowbirds" vacationing at the Pioneer RV Park near Phoenix, Arizona. Undertaking this QOV project was the idea of Bev Mollberg from Rush City, MN, and Lyn Johnson, from Pine City, MN.

MN and other upper Midwest states. This was the first time QOV award presentations were made in this RV park. Everyone received a program of the events. The Pioneer Quartet sang patriotic songs and when each veteran was called up for the presentation, Bev read their military biography, as the piano player softly played the anthem

for the person's branch of service. The awards program brought the recipients of QOVs together and new friendships were made. It was awesome!

Bev, Lyn, and the Sewing Divas are already making plans for another awesome awards ceremony of at least 25 QOVs to be presented in 2018 at the RV park.

## Crossing Paths, Converging Stories

Information provided by Beth Sizemore, Starr Mountain QOV Quilters, Englewood, TN

At a recent grants ceremony, I was visiting with a fellow recipient. Another grantee, Bruce Marshall, was at my table and when I introduced myself as being with QOVF, a very unusual look came across his face. He immediately reached for his phone and began searching for a picture. He couldn't find it fast enough, so his 12-year-old daughter took the phone and found the section he wanted. He brought up the picture, at right.

This is the story behind the photo. Bruce Marshall was an Air Force Chaplain and he rode on a medevac military transport from Kuwait to Germany, then later on to the United States on October 15, 2016. He said that each of the wounded warriors aboard the flight had QOVs on their bunks and that the scene was so touching that it also affected him. He felt the quilts were such a comfort to the young people who had them on their beds

Bruce shared the story of one young man who was injured by an IED on the day he was supposed to return home. That soldier lost both legs and an arm to his injuries.

When Bruce captured the photo with his phone, he made a point to make sure that he didn't show any of the young men's faces. He forwarded the photo to me with a note.

*Hi Beth, attached is the photo of the quilts "in action." This was near the end of a medevac from Germany back to the U.S. Please thank your group. Their work means more than I can ever express.*

*Warm regards, W. Bruce Marshall*

Upon taking a closer look at the photo, I noticed that a label was

showing that read "Irving Quilt Guild, Irving, Texas." I know that those who send their quilts off usually never know where they are distributed or how much they are appreciated. I think this picture speaks volumes and lets all QOV makers

know just how much their quilts mean.

It reminded me that we are still covering wounded warriors in war zones, even in places where we are peacekeepers. No matter where our military is stationed, we still have those who will be injured because they swore to put themselves in harm's way.

Thank you for what you continue to do to help us to continue honoring our heroes.



## TOUCHED BY WAR: ONLY THE VETERAN KNOWS

Information provided by Ann Rehbein

*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.* That statement is taken verbatim from the Policies and Procedures available for all to read on the [QOVF website](http://www.qovf.org).

A bit of history, also taken from the Policies and Procedures:

The organization's original mission statement said its purpose was "to cover all those service members and veterans wounded physically or psychologically with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor." Catherine Roberts recalls:

No one really liked the word "psychologically." Brilliantly, Chaplain Kallerson suggested using the phrase "touched by war" as a replacement for the words "wounded physically or psychologically." This simple phrase was perfect. The group's mission statement was revised to read, "The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover all combat service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor." Later, the words "all" and "combat" were removed, further reflecting our understanding of the true meaning "touched by war."

In the early days of the organization, the primary focus was on awarding quilts to service members wounded in the Iraq (OIF) and Afghanistan (OEF) conflicts. Catherine Roberts remembers:

The light of inclusiveness began to glimmer at an awards ceremony at a VAMC in White River Junction, VT, in 2006, where wounded veterans from all conflicts were being awarded quilts, not our policy at the time. My husband Chris "got it" right away, but it took several years for me to really understand. That happened in 2009 in Bellingham, WA.

A group of us got together for a quilting retreat. One of our activities for the weekend was to award quilts at an event called "American Veterans Tribute and Traveling Wall Exhibit" in Bellingham. I could not find a group of OIF/OEF veterans for the QOVs we

brought that day. A group of Vietnam veterans were there to perform a "Patriot Guard" ride past the Vietnam traveling memorial wall on their motorcycles. This event changed my whole outlook on who should receive a Quilt of Valor. As we were awarding quilts, the Vietnam vets said over and over again, "Ma'am, this is the first time in forty years anyone has ever thanked me for my service." All of us were thunderstruck. From then on, **any warrior who had been touched by war, no matter when his or her service, could receive a Quilt of Valor. No questions asked.**

No questions asked, words spoken by the QOVF founder, Catherine Roberts.

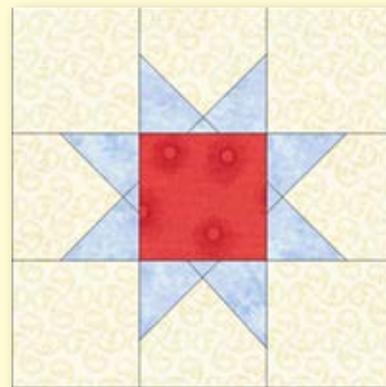
Part of the oath of enlistment states, "I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

All enemies, foreign and domestic—these veterans vowed to lay down their lives for you and me, no questions asked. We cannot judge what "being touched by war" means to a veteran. It will be different for each one, no matter where or when they served—a nurse serving in Landstuhl, Walter Reed, or Topeka, KS; a general serving in the Pentagon; an infantry soldier serving in a war zone, in a humanitarian effort, or down the street at the local armory. No judgement, but trust. Trust that these veterans have been touched by war. Trust that they will tell you if they don't feel they deserve a QOV. Be inclusive, not exclusive. For in reality, who today has not been touched by war, veteran or civilian, abroad or in our own country?



Created by Freepik

The 2017 Block Drive  
is now underway.  
Snowball and Floating Star  
blocks are being  
collected by  
Karen Demaree,  
Wisconsin State Coordinator.  
For more  
information, see  
<http://www.qovf.org/events/>.



## QOVF Certified Quilt Shop Program

By Myra Coddens

Welcome aboard to our newest members of the QOVF Certified Quilt Shop Program. The latest addition to our growing list of shops completing certification is:

Quilt Lovers' Hangout North Fort Myers, FL

Our program continues to expand with 28 states represented. Please share with shops in your local areas so we can further grow our list.

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

## Quilts Reported

**2012:** 6,169

**2013:** 12,314

**2014:** 17,373

**2015:** 18,772

**2016:** 19,051

**2017:** 4,959

**Total: 159, 201**

(as of 30 April 2017)

*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

**QOVF Founder and Board Member Emeritus**  
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**Board Member Emeritus**  
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For more information about QOVF, see [www.QOVF.org](http://www.QOVF.org)

For more information about the BOD, the QOVF staff, and how to contact your State Coordinator (SCs) go to <http://www.qovf.org/content/about-us.html>.

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### Newsletter

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