



**From the Executive Director**

By Tammany McDaniel

Late spring and early summer have been abuzz with travel and special events. While traveling through Kentucky, I stopped in Paducah at the National Quilt Museum for a meeting with their Chief Executive Officer, Frank Bennett.



*Tammany McDaniel  
Executive Director*

Following a great meeting, I invited him to speak at our upcoming Annual Conference in Grand Rapids, MI. I believe you'll enjoy hearing from him. Watch for continuing e-mails regarding our invited guest speakers. I hope you're sensing the building excitement for participants. If you haven't registered, there is still time. (See the article on page 6 later in this newsletter for details).

The summer months also bring plenty of commemorative events. The world remembered the 75th anniversary of D-Day on June 6th and those who fought to bring peace on that day in 1944. On June 14th, America celebrated Flag Day. And, of course, in the United States we will also celebrate the 4th of July and our independence. In true American tradition, there will be picnics, fireworks, parades, and celebrations. I hope there is pie à la mode, too.

QOVF is also continuing to make important connections. We're pleased to announce our partnership with the bluegrass band, Nu-Blu. We will be sharing details soon on how to join in the fun on a Cruise-and-Quilt adventure. Our first cruises will port out of Charleston, SC, and Long Beach, CA, with potential for additional destinations, such as Alaska, in the future.

In other news, QOVF was contacted

with a request for information on starting a Quilts of Valor (Valour) in New Zealand. And the QOV that was shown in Seoul, South Korea, has returned home to be awarded to one of our service members or veterans. Our friends, Haejin Lee and Dr. JaeWoo Lee, are still working on building a Quilts of Valor South Korea. They sent great pictures of their first efforts, look for them inside this newsletter on page 4.

If you are keeping track, my QOVF travels have taken me to Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Arizona, Nevada, and California. I have many more places to visit. As I visit groups, I've been welcomed, treated with food and stories—it has been wonderful. In early August, we'll be wrapping up the final details for our GRAND Conference 2019. I can't wait to meet those of you attending. Thank you for your service to our service personnel and military.

**AWARDS EVENT HONORS  
WOMEN VETERANS**

*Information provided by Debbie Patterson,  
Windsor Gardens Denver QOV Group*

A surprise was in store for the veterans attending the 13th Annual Women Veterans Luncheon at American Legion Post 1 in Denver, CO. Held on April 13, 2019, the luncheon honored women veterans from World War II to the present day. As the quilt awards were to be a surprise for the recipients, members of the Windsor Gardens



*Deloris Thompson Love-Collins (left) and Mariam Denham (right), both WWII veterans, were awarded QOVs during the American Legion Post 1 Annual Women Veterans Luncheon.*

*Continued on page 2*

Continued from page 1

Denver Quilt of Valor Group arrived early and tucked their quilts away. Members decided to spread out at various tables to chat with the women veterans and learn their stories. This interaction proved to be very interesting to everyone involved. As the luncheon came to a close, group members began to bring the QOVs out and display them on a long table. The room started to buzz with questions and excitement as the women realized what was about to happen. It was quite a sight to see, more than thirty quilts lined up on the table.

Emcee Mary Karuzas gave a brief introduction of the group members present, a description of QOVF, and the mission we quilters all carry out year round with sewing and presentations.

Mary began calling the veterans forward one at a time to receive their special quilt awards. Beginning with the two WWII female veterans who were present. In total, 32 women were awarded quilts and wrapped in love that day as we thanked them for their service. The energy in the room was filled with gratitude, love, and wonder. All who were present were touched by the hard work and sacrifice of many. The entire Windsor Gardens Denver Group left that luncheon with full and happy hearts ready to carry on with our sewing of QOVs and future presentations.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Check out the QOVF [webpage](#). Did you know you could learn more about the QOVF Board of Directors, Executive Staff, and State Coordinators [here](#)? Click through on the photos you see on the pages and find contact information and biographies. At the bottom of every web page there is a place to submit your questions through the [Help Desk](#). From there, the questions are forwarded to the correct person to answer them. All of the back issues of [Threads](#) are available here. They are a great resource for history and inspiration. Enjoy exploring!

At the event, 32 QOVs were awarded by the Windsor Gardens QOV group in Denver to women veterans who'd served in multiple branches of the service.

## TWO HEROES MEET

Information provided by Harvey Mayhill,  
Old Glory Quilters Group Leader

The Samaritan's Angels Pen Pals program linked two lives together in 2009 when it paired Rita Cossio, a 40-year U.S. Army veteran with Deb Tomlin Sheets. At the time, Rita was serving in Iraq and Deb was living in Illinois, an aspiring writer, seeking to have her writings and a book published. Little did Deb know how the letters and cards (written weekly from March 2009 through June 2010) would impact Rita's life.

Deb moved to South Carolina in 2009 and Rita moved to South Carolina in 2016. Rita says that Deb's letters and cards of encouragement gave her support during her darkest times in a war zone. The constant positive encouragement that Deb wrote gave Rita reason to keep living and return home to the U.S.

"Forever my friend, my inspiration and my angel! Every week in Iraq, I got a card or letter of love and inspiration from a woman I had at no time met," Rita says. "For almost nine years we shared on Facebook, but still never met."

Their first face-to-face meeting occurred on April 8, 2019, when Deb surprised Rita at a QOV Awards Ceremony hosted by Ken Hinkle, a QOV coordinator in Simpsonville, SC. Deb, now a QOV quilter, made the quilt and wrapped Rita with it.

"The quilt she made is called *Coming Home*, and our meeting was



After years as pen pals and online friends, QOV quilter Deb Sheets finally met veteran Rita Cossio in person and wrapped her in a QOV.

truly a coming home for us! Love to this beautiful woman," Rita said with tears in her eyes.

A few days after receiving her QOV, Rita posted a message to Deb on Facebook: "Thank you isn't enough for all you have done for me! You were my angel of love and support when I was in Iraq. You sent me many cards of love, strength, and inspiration. You are truly a part of who I have become and the quilt you made me is beautiful. I wrap it around me and feel the love you put into it, I feel the peace it gives me, and the joy in my heart as I look at it! Thank you for coming to meet me! The quilt Deb made with her own hands, and her

special 'Coming Home' design, will give me love and warmth for the rest of my life!"

Rita served a total of forty years in the US Army, 18 years in active duty and 22 years in the Reserves. Deb became a quilter with her sister, Lin Mayhill, in 2013 when they formed the Old Glory Quilters QOV Group in Rock Hill, SC.

Deb says, "It is an honor to make and award a veteran a QOV. Meeting Rita personally and awarding her the QOV I made exclusively for her was special for me and will be a lifetime memory."

## QOVs AWARDED TO COWGIRLS AND WOMEN WARRIORS

Information provided by Diane Watters

Cowgirls and Women Warriors runs retreat weekends and other events for female veterans of all branches of the U.S. military services. Veterans attend these events at no cost. At the 2019 Cowgirls and Women Warriors Retreat in Greenbluff, WA, 22 QOVs were awarded to veterans, including one active-duty service member just returning from deployment. Tears were



At the 2019 Cowgirls and Women Warriors retreat, the Greater Spokane QOV group awarded 22 female veterans with QOVs.

shed by many during the presentations. Event organizers stated to the gathering group that the annual QOV presentation is the highlight of their closing ceremonies.

Nine volunteers of Greater Spokane QOV Group were on hand to help the presentation run smoothly. Twenty-one piecers, fifteen longarmers, and eighteen

binders had a part in the completion of the quilts awarded. Many hearts and hands working together!

A previously awarded veteran Rennae Rosenberg, US Navy, Retired, shared her thoughts on the event.

*"I wish to say THANK YOU to the Spokane area chapter of Quilts of Valor. On a Sunday morning just three years ago, I was wrapped in my QOV. What a feeling of national love your group spreads through*

*this act of kindness. Fine folks from the Spokane Chapter QOV have attended our Sunday mornings every year since to wrap our newest women veterans at the retreat in threads of love! My heart sang with memories of the day I was awarded my QOV. And now, our Grange Hall is filled with cots and air mattresses that are covered with a rainbow of colorful quilts. YES! Your QOVs are definitely in attendance at our retreat! Thank you all!"*

## WORLDWIDE VIEWS OF QOV

Information provided by  
Tammany McDaniel

In 1978, a young woman came to the United States with her family. Her father served during the Korean War. Now, he and his family were starting a new life together in America. Some forty years later, that same young woman, Ms. Lee, would cross paths with QOVF.

In early 2019, Executive Director Tammany McDaniel received an e-mail from a woman seeking advice on how to start a Quilts of Valor Foundation in South Korea. Ms. Lee grew to love quilting over the years and maintained friendships in the country of her birth. New to her position, Ms. McDaniel contacted Lezley Zwal, Quilts of Valour Society Canada, and both were able to provide insight to Ms. Lee. Through the relationship they formed, a QOV was shipped to Ms. Lee to her home state of Ohio, then carried to Seoul for an exhibit there in April 2019. The QOV was proudly displayed as part of an exhibit by Dr. JaeWoo Lee.

Dr. Lee will continue outreach to South Korea's citizens in order to form the non-profit equivalent of a QOV foundation. South Koreans take great pride in honoring their military personnel and veterans. The local citizens also want to show gratitude and recognition for those who served South Korea.

Ms. Lee has returned home to Ohio with the quilt, but she continues to keep QOVF advised of her progress in building QOVF South Korea.



*Dr. JaeWoo Lee (left) and Ms. Lee pose in front of the QOV loaned to them for an exhibit in Seoul, South Korea.*



*Visitors to the exhibit learned about QOVF and how QOV awards honor and recognize U.S. veterans and service members.*

## QOVs BY AIR

*Information provided by Karin Perkins, Myrtle Beach Shorebirds Quilter and Volunteer*

For the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds, creating QOVs requires the work of many South Carolina volunteers. But, there is also an actual “bird,” flown by pilot Susan Fosdick Valentine, that assists in this work. Susan is a volunteer with the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds. After longarming twenty quilts, she flies in her very own Piper Arrow from her home to hand deliver the completed quilts to Joan and Jim Wobbleton. Joan and Jim greet her at the airport in Conway, SC, or the Myrtle Beach International Airport, and they exchange the finished quilts for another group of twenty unquilted tops on subsequent runs. The finished quilts are delivered to awardees in South Carolina.

The daughter of an Air Force pilot of P47 Thunderbirds and flight instructor, Susan has discovered that flying must always have been in her blood. As she says, “There is nothing I’d rather be doing!” Her armed services connections are strong with two of her brothers having served and her husband Peter having served in the Coast Guard as a pilot. In fact, her father was the flight instructor for Susan’s husband.

As a passenger in her husband’s plane, Susan felt she needed to learn how to land the plane and completed a “Pinch Hitter” course in flying about a year ago. Those flight lessons led to more, and she became hooked on flying. Susan’s flight instructor noted, “I can take a good pilot and make them a great pilot” with instrument training. With that encouragement, Susan completed her instrument training, which allows her to fly a plane in all kinds of weather.

Like many quilters and longarmers, sewing has been a lifelong passion. For Susan, she learned at the age of eight to sew clothing for herself. Once she was an empty nester in 2002, she had time to return to sewing and started making quilts for friends and family. Like many avid quilters, she ran out of people to gift her quilts and turned to QOVF, an organization which she could support. This mission has given her sewing

talents new life with the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds.

Combining her newfound love of flying and her passion with sewing and quilting has given Susan a purpose. Susan and Peter continue to support the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds by completing quilts on the longarm and flying the quilts to their SC destination in their Piper Arrow, repeating the process as often as possible. Why twenty quilts at a time? There’s room for only about

that many in the plane’s cargo hold. Susan’s journey is one that allows her to become a better pilot and to continue to complete quilts for QOV. Susan and her “bird” help the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds award QOVs to veterans in their region. Since 2009, the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds have awarded over 3000 QOVs to date. The work continues as they have more than 400 requests pending.



*It takes a village, and in the case of the Myrtle Beach Shore Birds it also takes a small airplane to shuttle QOVs back and forth with dedicated longarm quilter and pilot Susan Fosdick Valentine. Photos courtesy of Jim Wobbleton*

## PROGRAM REFRESH BRINGS BROADER REACH

By Myra Coddens, Certified Quilt  
Business Coordinator

The Certified Quilt Shop program started more than three years ago and has more than 100 participants. In the spring of 2019, the program was updated, expanded, and renamed the Certified Quilt Business Program (CQBP). This refresh gives QOVF the opportunity to partner with not only traditional quilt shops, but also now includes retreat centers, design and teaching studios, sewing machine centers, and longarm quilting businesses. These businesses may join as either an individual business or as a sponsor to a QOV group. With this program refresh, it is anticipated that QOVF will enroll many more quilt businesses and have their support of our mission.

How were these changes implemented? CQBP teamed up with IT Support staff member, G. Ann Bryant. Through automated registration, new and renewing quilt businesses can now use the website to process their information, make fee payments, and enjoy almost immediate turnaround on registrations. Successful registrants receive an email with a link to their login, and a printable membership card attached to the email. Each Certified Quilt Business then receives a welcome package in the mail (thanks to volunteer Linda DeGraw) with a window cling, poster, brochures, and cards. Want a lapel pin? That will be included too. Use of paper enrollment forms were minimized in

favor of this online data-driven system. This also means less data entry and paperwork for QOVF staff to handle. As the CQBP continues to expand, these efficiencies will benefit us all.

Consider the success we've achieved by reading the stories of two different types of quilt businesses we interact with—one a larger, more established company, and the other a smaller, newer shop. Each is a Certified Quilt Business working to create quilts, encourage volunteers, spread the word, and support the QOVF Mission.

Clay Luttrell, Marketing Director for Stitchin' Heaven: Texas' Premier Quilt Shop, contacted the information line on the QOVF website for details about starting a QOV Group in November, 2016. In a twist of fate, Suzanne DiCarlo, QOVF Information Desk Coordinator, had recently retired to Texas and lived just five blocks away from Stitchin' Heaven in Mineola, TX. Suzanne followed up on the request, meeting with owner Deb Luttrell and her son, Clay, both of whom had seen a QOV award ceremony. They signed the membership papers and immediately embraced the Certified Quilt Shop program. But this Certified Quilt Business has a unique business model consisting of three parts: the fabric store; a travel and cruise division; and their laser cutting service. Additionally, they have a great bunkhouse nearby for retreats. The expansion of our CQBP enables their entire quilt business to embrace the QOVF mission and they are truly supportive. The business staff contributes blocks to help, and the Stitchin' Angels QOV Group

continues to add members because the staff encourages the customers to join. They're now preparing for a big move up the road nine miles to Quitman, TX, where they're constructing a single building to house all three parts of the business. We're excited to see them grow further. Please check out this Certified Quilt Business online at [www.stitchinheaven.com](http://www.stitchinheaven.com) and check out the May 2020 Red, White and Blue Texas Pride Cruise. Stitchin' Heaven and Stitchin' Angels will be there awarding QOVs.

By contrast, Sunshine Stiches, Belvidere, IL, is a smaller quilt shop that has been in business for two and a half years. Owner Shelley Johnson enjoys giving back to the community and was drawn to become a QOV Certified Quilt Business as she was moved by the QOVF mission. Shelley is honored to bring sunshine to veterans and service members touched by war through the QOV program. Sunshine Stiches does not sponsor a QOV Group yet, but Shelley was able to join the program while she continues to recruit members to begin a group. This is one of the key changes in the refreshed program allowing shops to connect with QOVF before a group is formed.

Stay tuned! In the next few months, continued improvements will be made to the website, creating sections for information and resources, Certified Quilt Business Only login page(s), and complete listings of certified businesses for anyone to view/print. In addition, a new contact email, [CertifiedBusiness@qovf.org](mailto:CertifiedBusiness@qovf.org) has been set up to receive and answer any questions and inquiries.



*...it started as a dream...*

## *Get More in Michigan*

# *Conference 2019*

*August 19-20*

*Grand Rapids, Michigan*



Get MORE in Michigan! More for your money and more for your time! And, more for the mission of covering our service members and veterans touched by war with Quilts of Valor!

The conference features exciting speakers, timely information, quilting demonstrations, a jam-packed conference bag, a limited edition Conference pin, and more!

Complete conference registration information is [here](#). **Registration closes July 18, 2019.** There is no on-site registration.

## QOVF Certified Quilt Business Program

By Myra Coddens

Welcome aboard to our newest members of the Certified Quilt Business Program. The following businesses completed certification since the last newsletter:

A Scarlet Thread	McDonough, GA
It's Sew Time	Ringgold, GA
Rome Quilt Repair & Design	Rome, GA
Stitches Fabric & Yarn	Charles City, IA
K&K Logo Design Ltd.	Dyersville, IA
Sunshine Stitches, Inc.	Belvidere, IL
Sew Sweet Quilt Shop	Jacksonville, IL
First City Quilts	Leavenworth, KS
Quilts Plus	Kalamazoo, MI
Christmas Goose Quilt Shop	Las Vegas, NV
Patchwork Garden	East Amherst, NY
Pam's Quilting Corner	Amarillo, TX

## Quilts Reported

**2012:** 6,169  
**2013:** 12,314  
**2014:** 17,373  
**2015:** 18,772  
**2016:** 19,051  
**2017:** 24,123  
**2018:** 30,745  
**2019:** 12,675

**Total: 221,785**

(from date of first recorded award through 26 June 2019)

*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**  
Catherine Roberts

**Board Member Emeritus**  
Walt Davis  
Marianne Fons  
Eric McCarty  
June Moore

**Board of Directors**  
Sue Reich, Chair  
Maggie Klenke, Secretary  
Brenda Edwards, Treasurer  
Renelda Peldunas-Harter, Member  
Mary Persyn, Member  
Marianne Elliott, Member  
Tony Jacobson, Member  
Mary Kerr, Member

**Executive Staff**  
Tammany McDaniel, Executive Director  
[tammany.mcdaniel@QOVF.org](mailto:tammany.mcdaniel@QOVF.org)  
Ginger Fondren, Assistant Executive Director  
[ginger.fondren@QOVF.org](mailto:ginger.fondren@QOVF.org)  
Jackie Dudek, Membership Director  
[jackie.dudek@QOVF.org](mailto:jackie.dudek@QOVF.org)  
Sheryl Bullman, Longarm Coordinator  
[sheryl.bullman@QOVF.org](mailto:sheryl.bullman@QOVF.org)

Janice Lewis, Individual Request & Destination Coordinator  
[janice.lewis@QOVF.org](mailto:janice.lewis@QOVF.org)

Marketing and Public Relations Director (open position)

Suzanne DiCarlo, Information Desk Coordinator  
[suzanne.dicarlo@QOVF.org](mailto:suzanne.dicarlo@QOVF.org)

Jennifer Keltner, Managing Editor  
[jennifer.keltner@QOVF.org](mailto:jennifer.keltner@QOVF.org)

Myra Coddens, Quilt Shop Relationship Development Coordinator  
[myra.coddens@QOVF.org](mailto:myra.coddens@QOVF.org)

G. Ann Bryant, IT Director  
[ann.bryant@QOVF.org](mailto:ann.bryant@QOVF.org)

Special Events Coordinator (open position)

Under Our Wings Program Coordinator (open position)

**Facebook/Twitter Admin**  
Terry Burtchell  
[terry.burtchell@QOVF.org](mailto:terry.burtchell@QOVF.org)

Mailing Address:  
Quilts of Valor Foundation  
PO Box 191  
Winterset, IA 50273

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 (SC) go to [www.qovf.org/meet-us/](http://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.

 **amazon smile** [here](#)

### Newsletter

Tammany McDaniel, *Editorial Director*  
Jennifer Keltner, *Managing Editor*  
Tony Jacobson, *Graphic Designer*  
Kathleen Decker, *Contributing Editor*  
Marianne Fons, *Proofreader*

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